Transnational Normative Struggles and Globalization: The Case of Indigenous Peoples in Bolivia and Ecuador

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Since the 1990s the indigenous rights movement has catapulted from resource-poor, local activists to global activists. The rise of transnational indigenous rights movements has paralleled and interfaced with significant structural developments at the international and state-systemic level, raising questions about the interplay between global and local politics as arenas of social change. States are increasingly open and transnational networks facilitated by non-governmental and inter-governmental organizations are proliferating. Accelerating neo-liberal reforms have entrenched the indigenous movement in conflicts over natural resource use and extraction. The opening of political spaces in which indigenous are more influential in local, transnational, and global political processes is evident in political outcomes including constitutional reform and increased governmental representation that, in turn, have further empowered indigenous movements.

“Indigenous” refers to those peoples descended from the original inhabitants of a place where state institutions not of their own making assert jurisdiction and who, as a consequence, do not now control their own political destinies. Their very activism exposes and contests the normative basis both for the world-system and the state as the primary institutional mechanism through which the values and resources of the world-system are allocated (Wilmer 1993). Since indigenous peoples’ social organizations predate the capitalist world system (Hall and Fenelon 2004), indigenous social movements provide a lens through which to view civil society resistance from a group with communally held property conceptions and non-capitalist systemic roots. Broadly speaking, indigenous peoples’ activism advances a claim to exercise sovereign control over resources sufficient to sustain their cultural and physical existence as a right.

The path of normative conflict and norm transmission instigated by indigenous activism is not a case where norms arising from international consensus are diffused “downward” into domestic state environments as it is with issues involving human rights and humanitarian intervention (Finnemore and Sikkink 2001, Kowert and Legro 1996, Klotz 1995). Instead, indigenous rights and the norms on which they rest arise from the “bottom” and are asserted “upward” in order to mobilize an international consensus, which in turn can be marshaled in support of indigenous peoples against state and transnational power. These aspirations represent a fundamental challenge: a) to what have been arguably the most impenetrable normative underpinnings of the present state system and b) to how the entitlements associated with either sovereignty or self-determination have thus far been allocated.

Making Connections from the Global to the Local and Vice Versa

To trace the transnational networks to the articulation of norms supportive of indigenous claims and the interplay between local and global political processes, we examine two cases of transnational indigenous activism and domestic responses in the Andean region of South America. We are particularly interested in whether the additional dimension of domestic and transnational mobilization that first contests existing international norms, and then seeks to diffuse normative changes at both the domestic and international levels provides new insight about norm formation, transformation, and diffusion in international politics.
Our approach draws on both international relations and social movement theory. Recent studies in international relations theory (Keck and Sikkink 1998; Risse and Sikkink 1999; Brysk 2000; Wapner 1996) point to the influence of non-state actors in the international system, while globalization studies (Held and McGrew 2002; Mittelman 1996; Scholte 2002; Guidry, et al 2000) show the interpenetration of non-state actors at multiple levels of the world system. Although much work on social movements (Tilly 1978, Meyer and Tarrow 1998, Tarrow 1994, McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald 1996) focuses on the state as the provider of political opportunity for social movements, increased transnational mobilization calls into question the pinnacle role of the state and emphasizes global coordination processes of movements at both domestic and transnational levels (See also Brysk 2000; Smith and Johnston 2002; Sklair 2002).

Keck and Sikkink (1998) originally described the process of transnational advocacy networks as having a boomerang effect in which domestic actors circumvent the state through transnational coordination. Recent analyses of the Argentinean human rights movement, Sikkink (2003) shows that transnational coordination has its intended impact: an increase in political opportunity at the domestic level. Therefore, once transnational movements succeed in opening local spaces for political influence, they begin “spiraling” down their activity to concentrate on domestic policy issues. While Latin American indigenous rights actors have gained increasing access to domestic political institutions and governance, their transnational movement has at the same time broadened in resistance to neo liberal economic reforms, encroachment on their territories and resources, growth in international transnational coalitions, increased accessibility of communications technology and channels, and an increased presence and activity within international intergovernmental organizations. Rather than re-focusing attention to one level or another, indigenous peoples have mobilized and coordinated at local, regional, and global levels simultaneously.

The UN estimates that there are over 350 million indigenous peoples in the world constituting approximately 8-15 percent of the global population of which 40-55 million live in Latin America. Since the massive indigenous uprisings in Bolivia and Ecuador of 1990 and the Quincentenary of Christopher Columbus in 1992, indigenous peoples throughout South America have actively engaged in mobilization for increased political and economic rights within their states, regions, and globally. While both Bolivia and Ecuador have high percentages of indigenous populations (60% in Bolivia and 40% in Ecuador), their movements have responded distinctly to transnational networks and norms, as well as to the impact of globalization. The following cases examine the parallels and differences between the indigenous movements of each country and their relationship to the transnational level, as well as their coordination.

From Dictatorship to ‘Bloody October’ and Beyond: Bolivia’s Indigenous Rights Movement

The poorest of South America’s nations with the largest population of indigenous peoples – over 60 percent in a recent census – Bolivia is the second largest hydrocarbon producer in South America. Given their historical lack of resources and political representation, it is surprising that indigenous protestors were able to overthrow a
president in 2003, and challenge the United States, World Bank and International Monetary Fund’s neo liberal economic reform and coca eradication campaign. The Bolivian indigenous rights movement is framed not only by ethnic identity and increased political and economic autonomy, but also as part of a larger, worldwide anti-globalization movement. The Bolivian indigenous movement is neither a simple case of mobilization by solely domestic or solely transnational means. Rather indigenous activists have “spiraled” to include struggles at the local, state, and international levels. Indigenous organizations and leaders are not only respected and known on a state level, but often appear in the reports of UN Working Group on Indigenous Peoples, lists of NGO-sponsored workshop participants, and as hosts of international congresses. Social, political, and economic discrimination against indigenous peoples has been evident throughout Bolivian history. Indigenous peoples maintain distinct communities that include the cultures, languages, and ethnic identities of the Highland Aymara and Quechua, and the Lowland Guarani and Arawak peoples. Division between Highland and Lowland indigenous organizations was mitigated by their unified political mobilization in 2003. Aymara Indians, politically active since the 1940s, make up nearly half of the indigenous population of the Highland region. Their most important legacy was the Katarista movement, identified with the Aymara leader Tupac Katari who led an anticolonial uprising in 1781(Gurr and Burke 2000:178-179). Indigenous leader Felipe Quishpe and his Pachakutik movement have recently used symbolic power effectively by harkening back to the Katarista separatist/revolutionary spirit. The 1990-95 indigenous protests in Bolivia provided openings for effective indigenous political action resulting in domestic victories including constitutional reform and a decentralization of political power. While neoliberal reforms touting the “Bolivian Miracle” initiated by former Presidents Victor Paz Estensoro and General Hugo Banzer in the 1980s were infusing loans and touting privatization, such adjustments were also supportive of the decentralization of the Bolivian state, increasing opportunities for indigenous peoples. The paradox of threat and opportunity marks the challenges for the indigenous rights movement throughout Latin America, particularly in Bolivia.

Transnational Network Developments

Though less internationalized than Ecuador, indigenous activism in Bolivia is still embedded in global neo liberal economic reform and fiercely opposed to it. Aymara leader and newly elected President, Evo Morales, who said during his campaign “Long live coca, death to the gringos,” met on several occasions with Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez, touting the Bolivarian movement platform against “US imperialism. Such discourse not only aligns Bolivia with its Venezuelan neighbor, but it also adds to the transnational normative repertoire for indigenous peoples’ organization as part of a larger movimiento bolivariano.

Although international mobilization is less apparent in the highlands, church-funded NGOs did support earlier grass-roots confederations in the 1950s including the Centro de Investigacion y Promocion del Campesinado (CIPCA) and various Katarista movement organizations. But their identity was campesino, or peasant, rather than ethnically Indian or indigenous. This type of fluidity between the campesino and indigenous identity is not uncommon in Bolivia where campesino activists are also
primarily indigenous. Thus, Bolivia represents a case of fluid relationship between the
class and indigenous identity.

Other international support for the indigenous movement of Bolivia was funded
by the European Union in the Northern Oruro department called the Campesino Self-
Development Project. This project, which funded local community development in the
form of *ayllus*, or traditional Andean political and social/community structure, preceded a
similar efforts by Oxfam America in the mid to late 1980s (Andolina 2001). The *ayllu*
organization projects linked Oxfam representatives, indigenous leaders and communities,
and local NGOs, and, in conjunction with the political reforms of 1994-95, greatly
strengthened indigenous movements throughout the Andes.

In addition to Oxfam, the Danish NGO IBIS has worked with Bolivian indigenous
organizations for over 20 years, aiding in the coordination of the 190 “march for territory
and dignity” and actively supporting the lowland organization CIDOB. Since the 1990s,
IBIS has supported the national ayllu organization, CONAMAQ, and its development in
conjunction with Oxfam and DANIDA, another Danish NGO. In a recent program
evaluation and goals agenda, IBIS notes fractions among indigenous organizations over
economic models and political institutions. The plan to initiate various forums of
“political dialogue,” including a new Indigenous Leadership School aimed at “creating a
space for political analysis and strategy definition as well as promoting women leaders.”

IBIS plans to monitor the progress of such projects through the goals and desire set forth
by local indigenous organizations and communities.

In this case, the norms have come from indigenous actors from below with the aid
of implementation from transnational actors. Additionally, as Robert Andolina (2001)
oberves, the funding flows in Bolivia have changed since the 1970s organization with
the Catholic Church. More recently, funding to the ayllu organizations is being directly
received, rather than through state mediators. This direct funding not only infuses local
organizations and movements, but also directly empowers them on a local-global level.
Therefore, the Bolivian movement is no longer one in which local organizations receive
direction from a national organization, but rather one in which the local and the global are
intertwined. Andolina notes that the World Bank is also analyzing the *ayllu* form of
organization and considering funding projects (2001). The decentralization of funding,
coupled with possible cooperation with the World Bank, presents opportunities for local
organizational development and threats for friction among organizations and between the
local and state level organizations.

**Bloody October and the Gas Wars: Turmoil in the Andes**

In 1993, an advisor to President Sanchez de Lozada declared that Bolivia needed
to “get away from the rigid centralized system that had been in place…” (Ho 2004, 10).
Ironically, Sanchez de Lozada decentralized the Bolivian state throughout the late 1990s
and empowered many of the ayllu system in place under the Popular Participation Law of
1994. However, Sanchez de Lozada was ousted by the same indigenous peoples who
were benefiting from decentralization in October 2003 in one of Bolivia’s most violent
protests. Estimates from 80 to 120 people were killed when Bolivian military forcefully
responded to six days of protest in La Paz, including the dynamiting of bridges and
burning of roads. On October 17, 2003, President Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada fled the
country via helicopter, resigning from his presidential post, and fearing for his life among the angry crowds of primarily indigenous activists.

Following protests against the US-backed coca eradication plan and the 2002 protests against the privatization of water by Bechtel Corporation in Cochabamba, a Quechua city, the announced proposal to export gas to the United States and Mexico through a pipeline across Chilean territory outraged indigenous peoples throughout the country. Two significant indigenous leaders emerged united against such plans, Evo Morales vi of the Movement Toward Socialism (MAS) and Felipe Quishpe of the Pachakutik Indigenous Movement (MIP). Both leaders organized against the privatization of Bolivia’s natural gas resources in favor of a more nationalized plan that would provide resources to the Bolivian peoples. From the dust of the violence, the vice president, Carlos Mesa, assumed power and pledged to hold a popular referendum on the natural gas pipeline project, led by Sempra Energy of California and Shell Oil Company.

On July 18, 2004, the referendum was held, including five questions that asked whether citizens wanted natural gas nationalized, a restoration of the state company YPFB, access to the Pacific Coast through leveraging natural gas, and a tax on companies for the production of oil and gas in Bolivia. All questions received a resounding Yes answer. vii In the process of the referendum and its votes, violence again emerged among indigenous protestors who differed over the exact form of nationalization, including division between Morales and Quishpe and their organizations. While Morales sought nationalization without absolute state ownership, Quishpe called for absolute ownership of the natural resources of Pachamama (mother earth). viii

**Domestic Outcomes and Transnational Norms – Democratization or Fragmentation?**

Violence has escalated in the Bolivian case since the October 2003 protests. Felipe Quishpe has called for indigenous peoples to “take up arms,” as strikes and marches no longer seem effective (Weinberg 2004). In Achacachi, two public officials who jailed indigenous activists were killed, and Quishpe referred to then-President Mesa as a “bearded conquistador.” Moreover, July 12 – 16, 2004, witnessed continued indigenous protests and blockages against natural gas fields in Santa Cruz, Chaco, and El Alto. Such events signify high probability of future protests if President Mesa does not implement the results of the July 18th referendum.

While Evo Morales’ MAS party held the second largest majority in the Congress, in the December 5, 2004, by 2006 his party won 140 of the 157 seats in the Congress and Morales was inaugurated as the first indigenous president of the country on January 22, 2006. However, indigenous peoples are still not without fragmentation. Felipe Quishpe’s MIP movement is calling for a radical change in Bolivian society away from capitalism toward the ayllu form of governance. While the CIDOB, the national indigenous organization, is still in tact, leadership seems to be increasingly divided among local, municipal or ayllu lines. It is unclear whether indigenous peoples in Bolivia will be able to agree on a path of reform in the wake of the 2006 inauguration of Morales.

While Donna Lee VanCott (2002) sees constitutional and legal reforms as providing increased access to indigenous peoples and Deborah Yashar (1998) views neo liberal economic policies as threats to indigenous organizations, we view mixed results for the indigenous peoples in Bolivia. Clearly, their representation has increased at the
local level, as evidenced by the Popular Participation Law and the over 420 indigenous organizations that participated in the December 5, 2004 election. However, it is not as clear that this decentralization has created a united mobilization on a national level for the indigenous movement. As noted by Robert Andolina (2001), direct funding from NGOs has provided a local-global network, which may divert leadership attentions from the national movement. Alternatively, such fragmentation may be the inception of a new kind of mobilization of the movement: one that is localized, yet empowered via transnational networks and funding mechanisms. The delicate balance between needed economic development and investment and indigenous concerns for environmental and social justice policies will be the continued basis of threat and opportunity in Bolivia. Will Morales be able to grant the demands of his indigenous constituents for an alternative model to neoliberal reform, an end to the coca eradication policy, and the nationalization of natural gas, or will he be constrained by his own position of leadership within a state system that does not promote those norms?

When Transnational Networks and Allies Matter: The Indigenous Rights Movement of Ecuador

While the case of Bolivia has its origins in a strong indigenous identity with the Katarista movement and an antipathy for transnational actors, the case of Ecuador demonstrates the impacts of transnational networks and actors on an indigenous movement, which has become one of the most successful in Latin America. The Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE), its national indigenous organization, unites the lowland, highland, and coastal indigenous organizations under one umbrella and has successfully connected with other non-indigenous actors within Ecuadorian civil society. Furthermore, CONAIE’s leaders have become well known on the world stage as what Sidney Tarrow terms “rooted cosmopolitan” leaders, hosting international conferences in Quito, such as the Indigenous Continental Congress and a Global Day of Action against the World Trade Organization regional meeting for Latin America in Quito. Indigenous leaders have not only become savvy participants in the INGO world, but they have successfully negotiated agreements with TNCs, primarily oil companies, in the Amazonian region, and more recently have united the frames of human rights and the environment in legal lawsuits within the Organization of American States Inter American Commission on Human Rights in conjunction with Earthrights International. Most significantly, the strategies of the indigenous rights movement of Ecuador have been dynamic throughout their mobilization period (since 1989-1990), not only reacting to national and global issues, but also taking a proactive stance.

Historical Underpinnings

Ecuador has a population of about 12 million, 40-45 percent of whom claim an indigenous identity. The largest indigenous group in Ecuador is Quichua in the highlands, including peoples from Otavalo, Carangui, Salasaca, Saraguro, Chibuleo, Chimbu, and Canari. The Amazonian region is inhabited by the Cofán, Secoya, Siona, Huaorani, lowland Quichua, Shuar, Achuar, Shiwiar, and Zápara nationalities. The Awa-Coaquier, Chachi/Cayapa, Epera, Tsáchila and Huancavilca nationalities inhabit the coastal region. Regional differences do exist among the indigenous nationalities in Ecuador, similar to that of Bolivia. The Amazonian region of Ecuador
was not exposed to outside development or peoples for a significantly longer period of time than were the highland Indians. Additionally, the highland experience is one of agrarian issues historically, hacienda servitude and systems, and direct influence of European elites from the colonization time period. While Amazonian Indians have focused on the issues of oil extraction and logging (Coastal Indians are also focused on natural resource extraction, particularly logging), Sierra Indians have focused on issues of agrarian reform and agro industry. However, such differences have been mutually supported by the regional indigenous organizations within the country.

Indigenous organization, like that in Bolivia, began in the 1940s in response to leftist political party organizations. In 1944, the Ecuadorian Indigenous Federation (FEI) was founded and protested government distribution of land. The organization of most historical significance is ECUARUNARI, the Sierra indigenous organization, whose inception began with funds from the Catholic Church, but has since abandoned this connection. In 1980, the Amazonian indigenous confederation, CONFENIAE, was founded by Shuar and Quichua leadership. Today, the CONFENIAE represents all ethnic groups in the Amazon, which number near 200,000 peoples. Also in 1980, CONFENIAE and ECUARUNARI joined forces in a national organization, the CONAIE. This unification inspired the Coastal indigenous groups to form COICE and join the national organization as well. Thus, Ecuador’s indigenous movement has a strong history of regional organization that is unified and coordinated under a national organization (Martin 2003).

CONAIE’s leadership, however, extends from local, municipal levels to the global arena. Its transnational networks include local NGOs and INGOs that provide funding and technical assistance, as well as assistance from the World Bank and other IGOs. While state funding to the CONAIE is nonexistent, it maintains its level of power through outside funds, or as Alison Brysk states, “foreign aid as a counterweight” (2000, 120). An example of such a counterweight is the $1 million dollars that Danish NGO IBIS provides to the CONAIE for bilingual education programs and $35,000 annually for its operating budget (Brysk 2000, 121). Moreover, Oxfam American, Amazon Alliance, Rainforest Action Network (RAN), Earthrights International, the Inter-american Foundation, and the UN Development Program’s Global Environmental Fund, in addition to IBIS Denmark, have all contributed to a plethora of programs in the Sierra and the Amazon in which funds have been directed to both the local indigenous organizations and the CONAIE (Martin 2003).

In June 2004, the World Bank announced that it had awarded a $34 million loan to support the development of indigenous and Afro-descendent communities in Ecuador. This grant will be facilitated through the Indigenous and Afro-Ecuadorian Peoples Development Project (PRODEPINE) with the purpose of strengthening indigenous and afro-Ecuadorian membership in social organizations; promoting educational and cultural initiatives; increasing the control over land and natural resources; and enhancing the government of Ecuador’s capacity to formulate intercultural policies with consideration of indigenous and afro-descendent peoples. While not a grant directed specifically to the CONAIE, it certainly carries great impact for its organization and other local and regional organizations. Furthermore, it presents the dual threat and opportunity of funding by international financial institutions: such institutions encourage decentralization and
direct funding for projects, yet also restructure national economic policies, which may counter indigenous peoples’ needs and demands.

This dilemma was presented to the indigenous rights movement in 2003 when President Lucio Gutierrez signed a new agreement with the IMF. The then-President of CONAIE, Leonidas Iza rejected the agreement as a lack of “credibility” on the part of the president. However, Marcelino Chumpi, the Executive Secretary of the Council on the Development of Nationalities and Peoples (Condenpe – directed by the CONAIE), noted that the IMF agreement provided important resources for projects in indigenous communities and included over $50 million from the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank for Agriculture, the European Union, and the Spanish Government (El Comercio, February 24, 2003). This situation illustrates the conflicts that neoliberal economic policies present to coordinated mobilization of social movements, in particular to indigenous organizations of Ecuador.

While the CONAIE was consolidating power domestically throughout the 1990s (including national protests in 1992, 1993, 1994, 1996, and 1997), it was also active in the anti-globalization protests of 1999, or the Battle of Seattle. On one level the CONAIE protested the WTO in Seattle, yet it was also readying itself for another battle at home with then President Jamil Mahuad who was planning to dollarize the economy through the help of $900 million in international loans. By January 21, 2000, the Mahuad administration had been toppled by massive social movement organization protest throughout the country and a rare collaboration of Antonio Vargas of the CONAIE and members of the military (including the current president, Lucio Gutierrez). This event sparked both empowerment and division within the indigenous movement as transnational allies became uncomfortable with state takeovers and military leadership (Rohter January 30, 2000). Although the takeover lasted only one day and Vice President Jaime Noboa assumed the presidency, this event crystallized the authority of the CONAIE and Ecuador’s indigenous movement both locally and globally. Furthermore, CONAIE’s frame had expanded from solely indigenous issues to those of anti-globalization and social justice issues.

Insiders or Outsiders? The Election of 2002 and Its Impacts

The election of 2002 seemingly brought great success to the indigenous rights movement of Ecuador. Where it was previously known in municipalities, the national Congress, and international organizations, it had never been officially politically recognized at the national level. However, through an alliance with the indigenous political party Pachakutik, Lucio Gutierrez won the presidency in 2002 and appointed former CONAIE leader and attorney Nina Pacari as Minister of Foreign Affairs and former (and current) CONAIE President Luis Macas as Minister of Agriculture. These once outsider activists were now part of the status quo government of the state, yet were promised true reform on behalf of the indigenous population.

Within the first six months of the Gutierrez administration, the president announced natural gas price increases and new petroleum concessions for the Amazon (including those in Block 23 of Sarayacu). These policies placed Macas and Pacari in direct opposition (as government leaders) to their movement counterparts in the CONAIE. Additionally, President Gutierrez signed a $600 million loan with the IMF,
which called for a reduction in spending on social equity programs. Then-President of the CONAIE, Leonidas Iza, called for opposition of indigenous communities to these new economic policies of the administration, which also implied opposition to his former colleagues Macas and Pacari. At the same time, Pacari traveled to a UN Forum on “Maintaining Indigenous Identity Against Globalization,” complicating her role as activist and government official (El Comercio May 15, 2003). To further embroil the polemic, the CONAIE called for resignations of indigenous leaders in the government, yet Pachakutik leader Miguel Lluco called for indigenous leaders to remain in office, thus resigning his position in Pachakutik (El Hoy, July 6, 2003). Finally, both Macas and Pacari resigned their ministerial level positions after a little over 200 days in office in protest of the anti-indigenous policies of the Gutierrez administration.

Following their resignation, Macas and Pacari worked to re-unite the CONAIE and Pachakutik against the social and economic policies of the Gutierrez regime. In October 2003 (just after the Bolivian overthrow of Sanchez de Lozada), Bolivian Felipe Quishpe attended an international indigenous workshop in Quito and hailed the international coordination of the CONAIE, and called for strengthened indigenous networks in the region (El Comercio, November 18, 2003). By 2004, the CONAIE was actively opposing Ecuador’s participation in the Free Trade of the Americas Act (FTAA), thus adding the frame of social justice to its menu of strategies.

In typical transnational style, the CONAIE called for another nation-wide uprising against the free trade and neo liberal policies of the Gutierrez regime on June 6-8, 2004 – coinciding with the Organization of American States Assembly in Quito. While the protest did take place in concentrated areas of the Sierra (Cuenca, Carchi, Ibarra, Ambato, Riobamba), it did not extend throughout the nation, nor did it attract the non-indigenous sectors as in previous campaigns. By June 8th, CONAIE disbanded the protest and Pachakutik leader Jorge Guaman publicly admitted to “fractures” among indigenous leaders (El Comercio, June 6, 2004).

Although the recent election of Luis Macas as president of the CONAIE is a sign of attempted unification, the CONAIE remains fragmented in the wake of the rupture of popular Otavalan mayor, Mario Conejo, from Pachakutik. This separation of an internationally recognized indigenous leader from the national indigenous movement calls into question internal organization and national identification with CONAIE and with the political party, Pachakutik.

Supported by Pachakutik and the CONAIE in the second round of voting, President Rafael Correa, a socialist, anti-neoliberal economic policy economist, was elected and assumed office in January 2007. President Correa’s ideas of constitutional reform and anti-free trade policies, including nationalization of Ecuador’s petroleum industry, were highly supported by Pachakutik, the CONAIE, and other regional indigenous organizations within the country. The indigenous social movement norms of global social justice and deeper democratic national representation of its peoples, plus respect for their lands and territories, are currently being debated through a new Constituent Assembly appointed by President Correa to ultimately revise the 1998 constitution (The Economist, March 15, 2007). This social movement is organized across the Andes in Bolivia, Venezuela, and to a lesser extent in Peru as the “Bolivarian revolution.” Given the distinct situation of Ecuador as a dollarized economy and exporter
of oil to the United States, its clearly embedded nature in the world system will likely derive very different outcomes than that of their Bolivian neighbors.

**Domestic Outcomes and Transnational Networks**

The indigenous rights movement of Ecuador is a strong case of a movement spiraling its needs to respond to both local and global issues and demands simultaneously. While on transnational levels, indigenous organizations have gained resources and bargaining power with NGOs, IGOs, and TNCs, at the domestic level, they have gained political power and access. For example, after the 2000 uprisings, Pachakutik obtained nearly 15% of the electoral vote at the Congressional and mayoral levels (Garcia Serrano 2003, 207). Furthermore, the CONAIE led a constitutional reformation in 1998, which now includes the pluricultural nature of the Ecuadorian state. Lastly, indigenous leaders Macas and Pacari did assume levels of national political authority, albeit briefly. Most significantly, Pachakutik is a major political party now in Ecuador that is allying with other parties in the Congress, including President Rafael Correa’s new social movement/party Alianza País. None of these accomplishments or opportunities existed even ten years ago.

With regard to transnational norms, the CONAIE has been a trendsetter among indigenous movements. As recent as July 25, 2004, they sponsored the Second Continental Summit of Indigenous Peoples and Nations of Abya Yala in Quito. Leaders there declared their collective rights to their territorial areas and countered the neo liberal reforms of the IMF, World Bank, and IADB (Norrell 2004). Thus, CONAIE plays a key role in the anti globalization coordination among indigenous peoples. Furthermore, the funding and coordination of activities with its coalition NGO partners has created a space for indigenous peoples at the transnational level not only within NGOs and IGOs, but also with TNC executive boards. While such transnational mobilization has certainly gained CONAIE access to political representation and power, it remains to be seen whether it has also caused fragmentation among leaders who are competing for funds from the same transnational allies.

**Case Comparison and Lessons Learned**

As Hall and Fenelon (2004) find, when indigenous autonomy is contested or bounded (levels 3 and 4 in their typology), there is both opportunity for indigenous mobilization, yet the possibility for increased contestation and violence over dominant capitalist system commodities, such as mineral, natural gas, and petroleum rights. They attribute this systemic conflict to the state’s position within the hegemonic world system and its role within the global economy. This study has found that indigenous organizations and their nongovernmental allies within the TSMOs are part of the larger global economy and thus, work within the world system, while at the same time contesting its very foundations and seeking (struggling for) alternatives. However, they too find themselves bounded by the rules within which they mobilize, which include: a)necessary resources for mobilization from larger NGOs generally from the North, b) reliance on representation from and with NGOs from the North, and c) necessary negotiations within capitalist structures, such as compromises with multinational oil companies and nationalized natural gas extraction plans. While not at all co-opted by the
dominant capitalist system, indigenous peoples certainly work within it for change and policy outcomes at all systemic levels.

As Hall and Fenelon (2004) note signs of long term change toward inclusion of indigenous values within the world system, this study also finds normative change exemplified in recent elections in both countries. While to the date of this writing, no larger systemic changes have occurred, nationally both countries are reviewing their constitutions for issues of social justice, altering their economic systems to include more equitable distribution of wealth, and both are seeking forms to more deeply include indigenous peoples and their cosmovisión in the democratic structures of their political systems.

Whereas diffusion models ask: what are the conditions “under which international human rights ideas and norms contribute to domestic political change [?]”, our case studies suggest slightly different questions (p. 18): (How) does domestic transnational mobilization affect norm formation, transformation, and diffusion by (1) advocating norm formation, adaptation, and diffusion, and/or (2) contesting existing norms, at both international and national levels? Indigenous political activism in both national and international arenas does not reflect an attempt to mobilize international actors (human rights organizations and western powers) to bring pressure to bear on domestic politics to incorporate or conform with existing international human rights norms so much as it seeks to validate normative claims that either have not been widely recognized internationally in the past (such as land rights and cultural rights), or that require an adaptation (or expansion) of existing norms (to add self-determination rights to human rights, or to include indigenous peoples as groups entitled to self-determination), or that actually contest existing non-human rights norms (in particular, neo-liberalism and globalization). Thus these cases offer the opportunity to gain insight into an area of international norms as “principled ideas” not otherwise addressed by diffusion models, which focuses on existing norms widely supported by rich, democratized, western states, such as individual civil and political rights.

Before concluding with some observations about these issues in light of the two cases presented here, we should also note that they highlight some factors that may influence the strategies and effectiveness of indigenous TCs and TSMOs not explicitly taken into account here, but which might warrant further study, particularly when compared to some cases not considered here, such as those involving the rich and democratic “settler” states in North America, and Australasia. These factors include:

1. the proportion of the population that is indigenous (in Ecuador 45%, Bolivia 60%, Mexico 12-15%, US 1.5%)
2. the degree to which Neoliberalism is perceived to be a contestable versus an entrenched norm within the domestic environment
3. the relationship between indigenous groups and other regional and domestic actors such as labor unions, political parties, international regional organizations, as well as NGOs
4. cohesiveness of indigenous group(s) within the setting of domestic politics
5. whether indigenous claims are advanced primarily through TC or TSMO or both
(6) coincidence of agendas advocated by different indigenous groups; relationship between the groups
(7) the domestic contexts in which indigenous political organization took place
(8) whether indigenous leaders hold national office, and if so, do they represent indigenous interests and perspectives in national politics

The advantage of studying these two cases is their similarity along a number of these issues, in particular, their high proportion of indigenous populations compared to most states where indigenous peoples live; the two states are similarly situated vis-à-vis the diffusion of Neoliberalism through globalization; both cases involve indigenous groups with regional and transnational ties as well as with domestic political parties; both have achieved some success in unifying as indigenous peoples, though both have also experienced periods alternating between unification and fragmentation; both states have recently emerged from a long period of undemocratic government; both have had some experience and success in participating in national politics. But there are also differences (some a matter of degrees with respect to the characteristics above) which are summarized in the table below.

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<td>Stronger on transnational level</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Leadership</strong></td>
<td>Less cosmopolitan leaders</td>
<td>More cosmopolitan leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organization</strong></td>
<td>Historically weaker unification of national movement</td>
<td>Historically stronger national movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Base groups indigenous</td>
<td>Base groups non-indigenous and indigenous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Resources</strong></td>
<td>Less transnational funding</td>
<td>More transnational funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Issues</strong></td>
<td>Indigenous cultural rights, coca growing, nationalization of gas pipeline, ayllu governance</td>
<td>(anti) neoliberalism/globalization, oil development, social equity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategies</strong></td>
<td>Protest, direct action</td>
<td>Protest, direct action,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alliance with political parties</td>
<td>Political party formation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Anti-US and anti-World Bank</td>
<td>Willing to coordinate and compromise with US and multilateral financial institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More Marxist, willing to use violence (influence of Quishpe?)</td>
<td>Less violent (but militarization in Sarayacu and assassination attempt on CONAIE President Iza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outcomes</strong></td>
<td>Indigenous leader elected V.P., Constitutional recognition, Education reform, decentralization with aylla</td>
<td>15% electoral vote in mayoral and congressional elections; constitutional reform, strengthening of indigenous</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Although the inclusion of indigenous rights issues within the framework of international human rights has been the subject of international activism by TSMOs (and Tcs) and on the agenda of regional and international IGOs for the past three decades, progress toward international recognition in the terms advocated by indigenous activists has been slow and uneven. This is unquestionably because the rights advocated by indigenous TSMOs and by national indigenous activists are in conflict with norms deriving from both Neoliberalism and state sovereignty as practiced over the past several centuries. These conflicts, however, have centered on the powerful and influential settler states of North America and Australasia in general, and in particular (and often most vociferously) with the United States.

In light of this record, the cases here represent an interesting departure from the cases evaluated by Risee et, al (1999) for three reasons. One is the ways their deviation from the “spiral model.” Neither Ecuador nor Bolivia were major targets of international criticism for their violation or denial of indigenous rights, in part because of the weak relationship between indigenous rights and human rights, but also possibly because indigenous peoples represented substantial proportions of the population and, in turn, were able to (or perceived to be able to) advance their claims both by participation in “normal” politics (elections, party formation, alliances with political parties). In neither case did governments respond to what criticism was targeted at them with “denial,” which is the second phase of the spiral model. But they did, as the fourth phase of the model suggests, institutionalize norms pertaining to indigenous rights within their constitutions, and by appropriating some of the language and symbolism of indigenous peoples, one could say that both also engaged in discursive practices that acknowledged the validity of indigenous rights norms.

Other theoretical work on TSMOs focus on institutional mediation (Tarrow 2005). The cases studies examined here point to the importance of states as mediating institutions functioning in a kind of Janus-faced dual role both disseminating norms as well as facilitating international mobilization around certain norms. Indigenous movements are also at least as engaged in political practice as a means of changing actual power relations as they are with articulating, diffusing, or strengthening norms. They are, in other words, practical. To those who play down the role of the state, the Bolivian case confounds, or at least complicates this claim.

These cases also implicate a more important role for coercion than prevailing models of norm-diffusion acknowledge (Risse and Sikkink 1999: 35-6). Coercive power is implicated here in two ways. The first is that indigenous activists in these cases deployed coercive power both nonviolently through mass protest, and even by threatening, using or provoking violent tactics. The other is implied, but not directly involved in these cases and that is that the ability of, for example the U.S. to resist precisely the kinds of changes Ecuador and Bolivia were compelled to make in large part because power enables the U.S. to resist or ignore international normative pressures. At the same time, the small proportion of the population represented by indigenous peoples
in the U.S. and most other states diminishes their own coercive power. So the role of coercive power must be taken into account when explaining the successes and failures of indigenous rights activists in ways that do not figure so prominently into the diffusion of more well established and less controversial international human rights norms.

Ecuador and Bolivia provide interesting cases through which to evaluate the role of modernization in norm diffusion. It seems that democratization does coincide with greater responsiveness on the part of new governments in these cases, but also with the new governments’ incorporation of policies favorable to the globalization of Neoliberalism. However, in the case of indigenous rights, “modernization” just as often (or more often) threatens, rather than supports or promotes indigenous rights, particularly when indigenous rights are asserted over territory and material resources, and most of all when that includes energy resources, like natural gas or oil. Like other human rights activists, indigenous activists tend to be somewhat cosmopolitan (more so in Ecuador than Bolivia). But at the same time, policies that appear to produce an improvement in aggregate socio-economic conditions are also often the very policies that do so at the expense of indigenous peoples’ claims to self-determination, particularly if doing so obstructs various kinds of “modernization” projects that are deemed necessary to the globalization of neoliberalism, such as oil and gas exploitation or the appropriation of territory for infrastructure development (highways, hydroelectric power, for example). In these cases, indigenous activists formed alliances with other groups who either opposed or sought to mediate the infiltration of Neoliberalism into their domestic arenas. One lesson here is that their ability to influence national policies can be enhanced by forming alliances with, for example, labor unions, environmental groups, and others who share some kind of “anti-globalization” agenda.

And what do these cases tell us about international normative development? That non-state actors’ or TSMOs not only promote improvement in their domestic political circumstances when they appeal to international and transnational norms and actors, but they engage in norm-making, or at least norm-shaping by doing so. This is perhaps nowhere better demonstrated than by TSMOs whose normative objectives contest or seek to adapt pre-existing and well established international norms, such as Neoliberalism, or a framework for human rights that emphasizes individual rights and only weakly promotes or takes into account collective or group rights. The successful election of Evo Morales in Bolivia and Rafael Correa in Ecuador, based in large part on a transnational norm of anti-globalization and community equality, demonstrates a resonance of these norms. The significant question is whether el movimiento bolivariano will truly deepen democratic representation of indigenous peoples and provide normative space within national and international institutions for alternative visions of the globe.

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ii McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly (2001:331-332) refer to this as a “downward scale shift.”
vi Morales lost the 2002 bid for the presidency by 1.5 points.
vii Weinberg, Bill (2004); For specific referendum results, see Electionguide.org at http://209.50.195.230/eguide/resultsum/bolivia_ref04.htm. It is also noted that spoiled and null votes made up 20% of the results.
ix It should be noted that official Ecuadorian government statistics claim that indigenous peoples are 25% of the total population. However, indigenous peoples boycotted this census and therefore, claim that the data is inaccurate. CONAIE and other state-indigenous agencies claim that the figure is closer to 45% of the total population.
x The OAS, which was investigating human rights abuses of indigenous peoples in Ecuador, criticized Vargas’ role in the military takeover.

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