

From Cohesion to Fragmentation: A Case Study of the Ecuadorian Indigenous Movement



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Abstract

The following research tries to find a causal explanation of the transformation of the Ecuadorian Indigenous Movement, from its rise to its progressive decay in the first decade of the 21st century. The method used to understand this process has been the implementation of qualitative research, namely fieldwork interviews and path tracing processes to find critical junctures and the use of archive material. As a result, I will argue that the mechanisms that made the weakening of the Indigenous movement possible rely on two aspects: the movement's decision to not pact with mestizo parties after the failed alliance with the ex-president Lucio Gutierrez and the instrumental use of the movement's framing by Rafael Correa and his political project.

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I. Introduction

“We that have suffered, that have cried, that have received the scourges and the beats... must be together”

Transito Amaguana

Research on political phenomena tends to narrow its attention on the understanding of how power structures influence societies. The danger of this approach relies on understanding civil society as a passive entity with a strong degree of influential agency coming from external actors. In this sense, stories of resistance coming from society that delimitate the influence of the state upon them are remarkable. The reason relies on the fact that the capacity of civil groups, compared with the state, in their exercise of developing influence face several limitations. However, this condition has not stopped civil agents from fighting for social changes. Latin America has had different stories of resistance in their different countries. Coming from a shared history of colonialism, poverty, scarcity, and hence, resistance have similar patterns of discrimination. Considering this, the history of Indigenous people in Latin America has a constant component of struggle that changes depending of the regional and temporal context in which takes place. From colonialism towards globalization, the struggle of Indigenous people against social structures that attempt to marginalize their existence has been transforming through the centuries. Strategies, social actors and contexts vary, yet the tension between the ancestral cosmovision of these communities and its relationship with western modernity seems to be a situation more characterized for the presence of friction rather than dialogue.

There are cases in which the situation of being in a condition of marginalization and discrimination by other sectors of society has accomplished the opposite effect in Indigenous communities. This means that despite the negative circumstances and disadvantages that these

groups have experienced, there have been remarkable efforts in which their presence and agency has shaped the political landscape of the regions where they live. These efforts are not spontaneous manifestations, but rather the result of extended processes in which Indigenous people have transformed themselves to become active agents of social change. Examples of this ethnic empowerment and its political implications can be tracked down in different regions and contexts in Latin America. From conditions of marginality and economic disadvantage, Indigenous movements have taken strategic actions to make local governments aware of their respective needs. For instance, the Uprising of the Ecuadorian Indigenous movement in 1990, the appearance of the Mexican Zapatista Liberation Army in 1994, and the Uprising of the Bolivian Indigenous Movement and its subsequent transformation into the MAS (Movement for Socialism) in 1998, are processes that have shown changes in the social role in which historically oppressed groups presented themselves with the capacity to develop political actions. As a result, through years of articulation and political consciousness these movements have been able not only to become relevant political players but have also been able to raise discussions and alternative postures on how democracy and economic development are meant to be thought.

The relevance of the case study of the Ecuadorian Indigenous Movement (EIM) relies on the fact that this movement has been catalogued as the most powerful of its kind in Latin America because of its capacity to shift public policy using repertoires of contingency (Mijeski & Beck 2011:36, Yashar 2005:85). Several works of literature, and previous research, have analysed the development and the impact of the rise of the EIM during the 1990s, and its progressive struggle with the Ecuadorian state to ensure their rights in the constitutions of 1998 and 2008. Nonetheless, the successes of the movement have not been tracked into the contemporary era. Once the so-called Pink Wave in Latin America, brought in the election of Rafael Correa, the dynamics of EIM was no longer systematically studied. These approaches

do not address the dynamics and consequences that the movement experienced during and after the rise of Progressivism governments in Latin America, in the case of Ecuador through the government of Rafael Correa. This context created new kind of complications towards the movement in the sense that the structure and identity of the Ecuadorian state changed drastically from the previous administrations. In particular, while the rise of the movement is documented, its demise will be the focus of this study. Following the emergence of progressive governments in Latin America at the beginning of the 21st century, the place of social struggles and its relationship with the state changed. Social struggles were no longer exclusively part of outsider movements. Instead they were incorporated into the states agenda and discourse to maintain high levels of legitimacy. Nonetheless, it is in this period in which the Indigenous movement, far from strengthening its presence by having a state that was sympathetic with its causes, started to become weak and fragmented. The social movement literature as a whole does not provide sufficient tools to understand the erosion of such a strong movement. This project thus attempts to overcome both the weaknesses in the literature on the EIM, as well as contribute to strengthening Social Movements study through an analysis of its progressive decline.

The following thesis narrows on the transformation of the EIM in the last two decades. The question that this thesis attempts to answer is to understand why the EIM experienced a process of decay during the period of the regime of Rafael Correa. I will expose that the mechanisms in which the coexistence of a regime that promoted itself as the result and defender of social struggles, and social movements with similar objectives, evolved in a conflictive relationship in which the EIM progressively ended in a situation of marginalization. It is important to mention that the crisis that the Indigenous movement experienced should not be thought of in terms of its dissolution or disintegration. Regardless of the difficulties that the movement has experienced it still exists with its institutional structure. However, the movement

lost its capacity to incorporate other movements and groups of civil society that structured around this movement in moments of developing repertoires of contingency. As Ospina mentions, during the 90s, the EIM was the organization that managed to articulate all the social movements and insurgent organizations that opposed the structural adjustment aligned with neoliberal policies. However, the EIM is not the main actor that organized social movements around its structure anymore (2017). Considering this, I will argue that the weakening of the EIM took place mainly for two reasons: the temporal decision of the movement of not developing alliances with mestizo parties as a consequence of an ethnic retreat, and secondly, an instrumental use of stronger political actors, such as Correa's party, of the framing that the Indigenous movement has used historically to present itself as an anti-neoliberal actor.

I will analyse three different stages that are crucial for the understanding of the EIM transformation. The first one is related with the long processes of cohesion in which the Indigenous people in Ecuador changed from being a marginal sector in Ecuadorian society to becoming a strong political actor with the capacity to influence larger political scenarios. This process has evolved progressively over time from the establishment of the first Indigenous organization in the 1940s FEI (Ecuadorian Federation of Indians) to the establishment of CONAIE in 1986 (Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities in Ecuador), and later in the foundation of the political party Pachakutik in 1995. The second period addresses the crisis of democratic rule in Ecuador between 1996 towards 2006. In this period the EIM reaches its highest peak of influence as a social movement and as a political party, yet by its end it was subject to strong internal conflicts that marked the start of its process of weakening. Finally, the third period explains the dynamics of the EIM during the rule of Rafael Correa from 2006 to 2016. This period is characterized by a curious phenomenon in which social movements in general have an ambiguous stand towards Correa's rise that progressively shapes into a strong antagonism towards his political party and administration. However, because of the deliberate

appropriation of Correa's project of social movements political initiatives, movements that were not aligned with the state and that share the same ideological space would experience high degrees of demobilization. The critical junctures described above are part of the path dependency approach taken in this study.

Methodology

The methodology used in the research follows the study of critical junctures in the development of the Indigenous movement to track the impact of specific moments in which the movement was damaged. The variables taken into consideration are the internal dynamics of the movement and their relationship with external actors, mainly the state, in specific moments. In that sense, the research tries to find specific critical junctures in which the outcome of the movement started to follow specific pathways which were able to change with the pass of time entering in circumstances of positive reinforcement. As Capoccia states, critical junctures constitute starting points of path dependence processes which are very difficult to alter (2007:342), or in words of Mahoney, these are circumstances that once that have been selected, it becomes progressively more difficult to return to the initial point when multiple alternatives were still available (2007:347). Consequently, this research aims to understand the EIM's temporal trajectory to find an explanation of its weakening by tracking the antecedent conditions that triggered this circumstance, and the factors that accentuate this situation under a dynamic of positive feedback. Even if the research provides highly contextual causes for the explanation of the weakening of the Indigenous movement, it aspires to provide elements of theoretical enquiry into the understanding of social movements and their relationship with other political actors in other contexts beyond this case study.

In addition, in order to understand the current state of the EIM I conducted fifteen elite interviews with the current Indigenous leaders of different factions to understand the political

stand of the different blocks that fragmented after the period of Correa. The period in which I carried out my fieldwork was between July and September of 2017. This period had special characteristics since Ecuador was experiencing a process of presidential transition. The current president of Ecuador, Lenin Moreno, assumed power in May of 2017. His posture regarding how to deal with forces of the opposition has had a different stand from his predecessor, a situation that has had a significant impact in the re-structuration of the EIM. During this period of time, I was also able to attend the national congress of CONAIE, an event that is celebrated every three years with the aim of changing the authorities that are in charge of the movement. Finally, the analysis of Ecuadorian and foreign academics that have studied the EIM in depth are also included in this research. The field research allowed me to test my existing hypotheses derived from Social Movements literature and my own observations of the EIM. Initially, I assumed that the fragmentation resulted from competition between leaders and ideologies within the movement. I further assumed that the weakness resulted from the formation of a political party and the loss of a coherent ethnic movement. However, after carrying the fieldwork, the phenomenon of demobilization and fragmentation follows different types of causes that are going to be developed in the thesis.

Chapter Outline

The current work of research is divided into six chapters. The first one describes the theoretical framework that is going to be employed to understand the behaviour of social movements. The second provides a brief history of the process of cohesion of the Indigenous movement from its first appearances in the 1940s towards the Uprising in June of 1990. The objective of this chapter is to analyse how the identity of Indigenous people was transformed after a long process of political consciousness and organization which resulted in the presence of Indigenous people as strong political actors in the Ecuadorian landscape. The third chapter analyses the process in which the EIM creates its political party Pachakutik and enters the realm

of formal politics. This attempts to bring understanding to the limitations that the movement starts experience in their repertoires when they deal with stronger political actors that have performances that go beyond actions of contestation. The fourth chapter analyses the critical juncture of the failed alliance with Lucio Gutierrez and the ethnical retreat that the movement experienced after this decision. The fifth chapter analyses how the already weakened Indigenous Movement enters into contact with the emergent movement of Rafael Correa, and how this context presents new challenges that accentuate the critical condition that the movement was experiencing. Finally, there is a discussion regarding the theoretical implications regarding social movement theory based on the case of the weakening of the EIM.

II. Theoretical Framework

The original framework that I developed to address the research question around the EIM demise focuses on two main mechanisms: an ethnic retreat and an instrumental use of the framing of the EIM by a stronger political actor. Putting these mechanisms in a timeline provides a sound explanation of how several factors converged simultaneously creating a crisis from which the EIM has not been able to overcome completely. The choice of the movement, and its political party, to not join forces with mestizo parties happened right before Correa's party, *Alianza Pais*, appeared as the political project that attempted to establish a presidency that followed the principles of the emergent progressivism left. In that sense, the first mechanism is the ethnic retreat (Ramirez 2009), which is the tendency of the Indigenous movements to not develop alliances with actors that do not belong to their ethnic group. Even though the EIM stopped doing this practice, the moment when the EIM chose to use this strategy had a strong negative impact on the future of the movement since it became too weak to face Correa's emergent growth. The method of probing this mechanism relies on tracing the process of alliance between Pachakutik, the political party of EIM, and the former president of Ecuador, Lucio Gutierrez. On the other hand, the discursive strength of the EIM in its peak was characterized by its clear antagonism towards neoliberal and conservative projects. This framing, which has been a central characteristic of the identity of the EIM, was used by Correa's party during his regime to provide national elements to his populist discourse. Social struggles became a brand that the state promoted to give identity to its rule and by doing it re-signified these discursive elements through its practice. In order to bring evidence of this aspect, I will develop content analysis to show how the discourse of Correa appropriates in different levels of the political project of the EIM, and through its use, it dissolves its political presence progressively.

The approach developed in this study contrasts with existing analysis of EIM because it gives a temporal explanation to this phenomenon and addresses different causalities to explain the demobilization of social forces that coexisted with progressivism regimes. Previous discussions have narrowed their attention mainly on two factors that negatively influenced the development of the EIM. The first one, defended by Ospina, attributes the crisis of the movement to not having a degree of institutional development capable enough to respond to situations beyond establishing repertoires of contingency. In the words of this author,

When CONAIE acquired a significant degree of political power, which translated into having the capacity to negotiate with other political actors and the management of political institutions, several of the factors that once were an advantage became flaws. The structure and functionality of CONAIE was not capable of adapting to new duties, responsibilities, and demands that its new political role imposed (Ospina 2009: 133).

This author addresses the problems that the EIM, through its institutions CONAIE (Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities in Ecuador) and Pachakutik, rely on internal conflicts and its lack of response from a position of influence. This explanation is partially true on the sense that it adjudicates the weakness of the movements as the result of the movement's poor performance from a position of power. However, this power has been very limited to few local administrations and places in the congress since the influence of CONAIE relies on being a contingent actor. Nonetheless, CONAIE was able to reach a strong influence in a national level in a process of electoral process during the election of Lucio Gutierrez in which the mechanism of weakening relies on other factors that are going to be explained afterwards. Considering this, instead of not being able to adapt to new duties, the reason of the weakness of the EIM relies on its incapacity of establishing healthy alliances when it attempted to reach higher positions of power.

On the other hand, another explanation attribute the weakening of the EIM towards the co-optation of Correa's party, *Alianza Pais*. This explanation could be perceived as sound

in the sense that several leaders of CONAIE left Pachakutik to join the lines of *Alianza Pais* after the former decided not to join forces in first place with this party during the presidential race of Rafael Correa. Nonetheless, co-optation understood as the capacity of a larger entity to absorb smaller organizations for its purposes did not happen. It was important for Correa to maintain dialogue with Indigenous organizations for the construction of his discursive platform that promoted an image of inclusiveness and popular support. Consequently, *Alianza Pais* managed to co-opt Indigenous organizations and leaders of CONAIE for the purposes of their party. However, the central core of CONAIE did not join forces with Correa's party and its relationship evolved progressively into a situation in which members of CONAIE that joined *Alianza Pais* were expelled (Ospina, 2017), and several leaders of CONAIE were criminalized during Correa's regime. Considering that CONAIE is the organization that agglutinates the majority of the Indigenous population in Ecuador, its behavior towards the regime of Rafael Correa could be described under a situation of evolving resistance rather than assimilation from part of the state.

Understanding Politics of Contingency

The aim of the following chapter is to provide analytical concepts to enhance the understanding of the study of the EIM and its transformation. Considering this, theoretical approaches around social movements should be understood from the perspective of *contentious politics*. By *contentious politics* I refer to when ordinary people join forces in confrontation with elites, authorities or opponents (Tarrow 1998: 2). Social movements are the result of struggles in which people that are not part of an institution that exercises power, decide to act to contend, pressure, or limit, measures that put their social existence at risk. In that sense, the realm of *contentious politics* tries to analyse the frictions between civil society and institutions that exercise governance. This kind of action usually takes place when people are threatened with costs they cannot bear, or which outrage their sense of justice (1998: 71). In that sense,

contentious politics should be viewed as a rational way to achieve political goals, riskier than more conventional types of political action (such as voting), but reasonable for those unable to exert influence through conventional, institutionalized means (Burstein, Einwohner & Hollander 1995: 275), but confident enough to do it by coordinated collective action.

Struggles between regular people against institutions have characteristics that are not present in another kind of political conflict. In *contentious politics* challengers do not have the same logistical capacity as actors that exercise power. Consequently, they are forced to use the political opportunities they can find by using contextual vulnerabilities that institutions might have. The presence of contentious politics highly depends on the degree to which mobilization is possible among civil society, and the levels of repression that the institutions that are challenged can deploy. *Mobilization* refers to the capacity of people, who at a given point in time are not making contentious claims, start to do so collectively (Tilly & Tarrow 2015: 38). On the other hand, *repression* refers to the attempt of a state against challengers to end their challenge by arresting them, harassing them, or destroying their organizations (2015: 37). *Contentious politics* is triggered when changing political opportunities create incentives for social actors, who lack resources of their own (Tarrow 1998:2), to join larger networks of people to make the result of their claim substantial and effective. When the combination of these elements starts to happen in a consistent and sustained manner through time, it is plausible to say that the manifestation of contention could potentially become a social movement. The approach of *contentious politics* has been chosen to analyse the transformation of the EIM and its relationship with the Ecuadorian state given the fact that the evolving character of the state has constantly marginalized Indigenous communities. As a result, the EIM developed actions of contingency that have progressively evolved into more complex practices, whilst constantly keeping its identity structured around an outsider actor that is highly critical of the performance of state institutions.

Social Movements

The definition of what a *social movement* is makes sense exclusively considering the dynamics of friction between institutions and regular people. A contentious collective action is the basis of social movements, not because social movements are always violent or extreme, but because it is the main and often the only resource that ordinary people possess against better-equipped opponents or powerful states (Tarrow 1998: 3). There is not a unique definition of what a *social movement* is, and the reason of its multiplicity relies on the different nature that social struggles have taken in different places around the world. However, what is common pattern in these definitions is the predisposition of a group of people to challenge larger institutions that exercise power among them with the aim to change specific aspects of their social experience in a given place. For instance, Brysk mentions that a *social movement* is collective efforts from socially and politically subordinate people to challenge the conditions of their lives (2000: 33). Likewise, Blumer states that *social movements* can be viewed as collective enterprises seeking to establish a new order of life and that they have their inception in a condition of unrest (Crossley 2002: 3). In addition to the willingness of regular people to shift structural conditions of their social experience, a social movement is differenced from riots because its existence persists in time. Consequently, a *social movement* is a sustained campaign of claim-making, using repeated *performances* that advertise the claim, based on organizations, networks, traditions, and solidarities that sustain these activities (Tilly & Tarrow 2015: 11).

This study case puts in crisis particular notions of social movements and their relationship with political parties. For example, Rutch mentioned that, whereas interest groups and political parties are basically formal organizations, social movements typically lack formal rules to define a clear-cut membership and to regulate the internal process. The ideal typical form of a social movement, then, is a network of more or less informal groups, at least groups

that are not formally and hierarchically coordinated (1996:187). This understanding of social movements such as the EIM could be misleading in the sense that even if they had the capacity to agglutinate informal groups around them, especially in moments of contingency, it cannot be said that they lack formal rules and that are not hierarchically coordinated. There can be a blurring between social movements and political parties because movements do often end up forming political parties. However, the EIM has a political party that is part of the structure of the movement, yet the EIM is not a party. The EIM is composed by two strong institutions that promote its action in different collective fields. One is CONAIE, which is a social movement, and its political party Pachakutik, which is a non-ethnic party that is subordinated towards the command of the movement. In the case of the EIM, given its long process of political development, the structure of the social movement is strong and large enough to embrace the party as a subordinated organ of its institutional body instead of being the other way around.

Performances and Repertoires

The terms *performances* and *repertoires* refer to the kind of actions that a social movement executes, according to their capacity and knowledge, to deploy contingency. *Performances* are familiar and standardized way in which one set of political actors make collective claims (Tilly & Tarrow 2015: 14). This could go from presenting a petition, taking a hostage, blocking highways, or mounting a demonstration. What constitutes and defines a *performance* is the fact that its action links at least two actors, a *claimant* and an *object of claims* (2015: 35). Usually, the *claimants* are sectors of civil society composed of regular people, and the *object of claim* tends to be institutions that exercise power. Its practice, even if it is improvised in a beginning, is the result of inherited cultural practices (2015:7). The reason relies on the fact that individuals act based on their learning of previous practices of the same kind. Consequently, new performances can appear as the result of the interaction of new

contexts and known practices (2015:7). If a *performance* proves to be effective it standardizes, in which case it becomes a *repertoire*.

Repertoires are the result of standardized *performances* when they have become embedded cultural practices. In the course of contending or watching others contend, people learn the interactions that can make a political difference as well as the locally shared meanings of those interactions (2015: 20). Social movements' *repertoires* are affected by the interplay of social structure with culture, by state structures and policies, and features of the political economy in which people's lives are embedded (Eckstein 2001:27). Consequently, *repertoires* demonstrate interesting information about a society in the sense that they show which kind of contentious practices are possible under the regimes where they take place. *Repertoires* also have a strong relationship with the movements *identity*. As Tarrow mentions, the repertoire is at once a structural and cultural concept, involving not only what people do when they are engaged in conflict with others, but what they know how to do and what others expect them to do (1998:30).

The Role of Identity

Social movements depend on the solidarity of their members to gain strength. This solidarity relies on an inner group recognition that regardless of the multiple differences that are present among them, there is a cleavage that makes them similar in terms of struggle. Therefore, a division around a notion of "us," which refers to the actors of contention, and "them," the institution that constrains the existence of the first, develops among the group. According to Hardin, by drawing on inherited collective identities and shaping new ones, challengers delimit the boundaries of their prospective constituencies and define their enemies by real or imagined attributes and evils (Tarrow 1995:21). Once there is a delimitation of people executing performances around and specific *identity* against an antagonist, social movements

tend to use *symbols* to portrait the struggle that identifies the group. These are taken selectively by movement leaders from a cultural reservoir and combined with action-oriented beliefs (Tarrow 1998:112).

In order to understand analytically the *identity* of a social movement, there are three levels in which this aspect develops. The first one could be applied to any form of contestation regardless of the status of organization that the movement possess. This means it could go from a sporadic riot towards the systematic campaign of a movement towards a specific cause. This level of identity develops from a situation of friction between actors that become antagonist around a specific matter. In this level, it is necessary to analyze:

Actors: Who makes the claims, and why they do so?

Identities: Who do they and others say they are, and why do they say so?

Actions: what forms do their claim making take and why? (McAdam, Tarrow & Tilly 2001:126)

The *identity* of a movement becomes more solid depending on how much of their performances progressively become repertoires. This means that the more constant and complex are the actions of contention, they provide a stronger sense of identity towards the group. Considering this, the second level of analysis relies on understanding the type of identities that actors assume when they engage in contention (2001:34). Finally, the third level is perceptible in social movements in which its *repertoires* and *identities* are well established. In this level, *identities* have four components, a boundary separating “us” from “them”, a set of relations within the boundary, a set of relations across the boundary, and shared understandings of the boundary and the relations that are present (Tilly & Tarrow 2015:107). What makes different this level of identity is that there is a strong and shared meaning built upon the relations of the actors who exercise contention from emergent contentious actors.

Identity is one of the main categories through which the EIM should be understood, given the fact that all the processes of their struggle and political engagement were the result of specific connotations and practices that were exercised against them. This concept operates on two levels, the first one relies on how their identity has occupied a marginal position in Ecuadorian society during and after the establishment of this state, and the conscious effort that Indigenous communities once they are articulated developed in order to re signify their identity by a process of empowerment that eventually translates into their political activism. This means, that as the result of the struggles of the EIM, the relationship of exclusion in recognizing Indigenous communities as an essential part of Ecuadorian culture started to be shifted through the recognition and legal protection from the state towards this culture. However, this situation has different nuances given the fact the presence of a persisting racism in different sectors of Ecuadorian society.

Framing

Social movements develop repertoires to achieve social change often mobilizing around identity. To do so, it is necessary that their members are aware of the context in which change is meant to be achieved. Therefore, an exercise of interpretation is compulsory before the execution of agency and strategic use of political opportunities and resources takes place. What the concept *framing* pretends to explain are the dynamics between the exercise of interpretation, and how this influences the structure of a movement. *Framing* addresses a group's creation of collective identity and ideology as the result of its identification in existing structures of domination and subordination (Morris & Braine 2001:21). In words of Goffman, this term denotes a schema of interpretation that enables individuals to locate, perceive, identify, and label occurrences within their life space and the world at large (1974: 21). This means, the linkage that an individual develops with a social movement when there is congruency and complementarity between the values and beliefs that he or she possess and the

interpretative orientation of movement (Snow, Rochford, Worden & Benford 1986:464). Considering the study case of the EIM, the framing that this movement used was to construct itself as an anti-status quo actor that became a strong antagonist towards attempts of the Ecuadorian state to implement neoliberal policies during the decade of the 1990s. As it is going to be presented after, this interpretation of Ecuadorian history was highly exploited by Rafael Correa and its party *Alianza Pais* to position its group as an antiestablishment political force.

Political Opportunities and Resource Mobilization

A *political opportunity* means a consistent, but not necessarily formal, permanent or national dimension of the political struggle that encourages people to engage in contentious politics (Crossley 2002:110). Following this line, people will rise in contention under the most discouraging circumstances, as long as they recognize collective interests, join others like themselves, and think there is a chance their protests will succeed (Tarrow 1998:198). In that sense, people will engage in collective action when the context offers incentives for the actors to mobilize, and institutions show a degree of vulnerability in their structure. According to Goldstone and Tilly, *political opportunities* include aspects of a regime that offer a challenger both opening to advance their claims and threats and constraints that caution them against making these claims (Tarrow 2015:50). By *political constraints*, we mean factors like repression, but also authorities' capacity to present a solid front to insurgents, that discourage contention (Crossley 2002: 110). In this sense, political opportunities are circumstances in which the institutions that could potentially exercise repression present gaps in which the action of collective agents could modify the influence of the institution upon them.

Political opportunities are compromised with specific configurations of *resources*, institutional arrangements, and historical precedents that influence the capacity that the movement possess in the pursuit of its objectives. It can happen that the context of action is

favorable for contention, yet the impact of the movement could be severely diminished if the movement is not able to articulate properly *resources* among its network. By *resources*, we mean anything from material resources like jobs, incomes, savings, and the right to material goods and services, to nonmaterial resources as authority, moral commitment, trust, friendship, skills that can be used for the movements purpose (Crossley 2002:79). This means the group of capacities that the members of the movement possess and put to use to achieve social change. In that sense, *resources* refer to discretionary goods, whose use actors can control, and *opportunities* are elements of the environment that objectively or subjectively are relevant for goal attainment but cannot be controlled by the actors (Opp 2009:178). Therefore, social movements' actions are the performance of *repertoires* that use *resources* strategically according to the *political opportunities* that they find in a given context. This set of contexts would give us enough elements to understand the process of the Uprising in 1990s during the period of Rodrigo Borja, and the late mobilizations during Rafael Correa's rule in 2015 that are going to be addressed further.

What happens after mobilization?

The result of the action of social movements has not been analyzed in depth. There is plenty of literature that tries to understand the motives and trajectory of the rise of social movements, yet there is not the same amount of material to understand why social movements finish, weaken or disappear. Hypotheses and explanations have been drafted. Nonetheless, the degree of understanding that they provide is superficial. One of the reasons for this situation might rely on the fact that the diminishing of the action of social movements relies on strong contextual factors that make the enterprise of generalization difficult. Tilly and Tarrow tried to understand why contentious politics decay in intensity and perhaps this understanding could possibly lead us to draw theories regarding the dissolution and end of social movements. As they state,

(...) how contentious actors demobilize? Do they simply disperse after their claims are made, from either satisfaction or disillusionment? Do governments repress them or co-opt them into tranquillity? Or do internal divisions lead to factional splits and to polarization? How inevitably is demobilization? (...) Most mobilization processes eventually reverse themselves. How, and how soon they do so depend on the initial conditions of mobilization, on the strategy of elites and authorities in response to challenger's claims, and on the degree to which they provide themselves with enduring structures to maintain their solidarity (Tilly & Tarrow 2015: 27).

This attempt, even if does not offer a direct answer, offers elemental aspects in which the understanding of this phenomenon could be grasped, and provide an essential guide to find an explanation in the particularities of case studies.

Tarrow has established a schema that describes three causes that could promote immobilization. The first one relies on *exhaustion*, meaning that the members of the movement are not willing to assume the personal cost that implies mobilization, or they realize that mobilization is not causing any potential change against the institution they are facing. This explanation could be plausible regarding riots, yet a characteristic of social movements is their capacity to be organized outside of a dynamic of contention which means that if in occasions they chose to be absent does not imply that they disappear. Likewise, *polarization* could be a cause of demobilization. The term refers to a situation in which there is an internal division in the movement between those willing to compromise with authorities and those who seek continued confrontation (Tarrow 1998:148). As a result, militants who remain on the radical side start to lose support from the former group. This phenomenon creates situations of *extreme identity definition* in which the movement raises walls of their collective identity higher and higher, defining themselves through increasingly narrow definitions of identity and rejecting potential alliances (1998:119). Finally, *dissolution* takes place when a social movement loses its sense of opposition in contrast with institutions that for political reasons change their status of belligerence (1998: 110). This type of case is most common usually when governments change their ideological trend making the activism of social movements no longer necessary.

The previous scenarios provide a typology of the weakening of social movements. Nonetheless, under what circumstances is the action of a social movement successful? There are several approaches that have tried to underpin this question with the common pattern that defends the fact that a movement could be considered successful if its actions shape or influence public policy. Consequently,

(...) success should be defined in terms of the political system responsiveness to social movements demands (...) this happens in five stages (...) 1) the willingness of the target to hear the concerns of the movement, 2) the willingness to place in an agenda the demands of the movement, 3) the targets adoption of new policies congruent with the demands of the protest groups, 4) the effectiveness of the implementation of these policies, 5) the degree which the actions of the political system succeed in alleviating the grievances of the protest group. (Burstein, Einwohner & Hollander 1995: 283).

After having this theoretical approximation, the following research will stick to the guidelines that these concepts have pinned down in order to understand the progressive transformation of the study case of the EIM.

III. Cohesion among the Different (1940-1990)

To think about the EIM as a homogenous entity would be inaccurate. In the words of Becker, it is a mistake to speak of a singular united Indigenous movement; instead, it is important to recognize the multivocality that led to a plurality of movements with different tendencies. The Ecuadorian Indigenous community is composed of thirteen nationalities that are present in the whole country, yet most of them are present in the Andes and in the Amazon region. There are several organizations in Ecuador that try to represent and organize Indigenous population, but the largest and stronger institution is CONAIE (Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador). CONAIE declared itself to be an organization of oppressed and exploited people and it defined its struggle as anti-colonial, anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist (Becker.2010:70). CONAIE is composed by three institutions that represent the Indigenous groups according to their region: ECUARUNARI (Confederation of Kichwa Nationalities of Ecuador) in the Andes, CONFENIAE (Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of the Ecuadorian Amazon), and CONAICE (Coordinator of Indigenous and Black Organizations in the Ecuadorian Coast). CONAIE also controls the political party Pachakutik that represents its interest in the congress and pursues public office positions during elections. Because of this plurality of actors and organizations this movement shouldn't be thought as an army with a central command, but rather as a federal organization composed by local movements that are united on an identity cleavage (Ospina 2017).

Even though CONAIE articulates most of the actions of the EIM, there are other sectors of Indigenous populations that are politically active outside of this institution, as the result of the weakening and transformation that the movement has experienced. For this study, when we refer to the Ecuadorian Indigenous Movement (EIM) we are mentioning the complex conglomerate of political efforts that come from Indigenous people that in most of the cases

translate into the agency of CONAIE and Pachakutik, yet not exclusively to them. In addition, for methodological reasons, the dynamics of CONAIE are going to be analyzed through the scope of social movements. The reason being that CONAIE is the central structure from which other organizations, including the political party Pachakutik, are subordinated. CONAIE is the result of multiple efforts that have evolved through time into a consistent and stable political force. The Indigenous movement is intrinsically full of diversity that translates in different political stands. However, the shared antagonism against neoliberal policies such as reducing the jurisdiction of the state, price rises and market liberalization, have been strong motives to develop cohesion among them (Ospina 2017). For this reason, despite the diversity inside of the movement, the EIM managed to appear during key periods of time as a coherent voice on behalf of Indigenous people as a whole.

The Rise of the Ecuadorian Indigenous Movement

The history of how Indigenous communities became a political actor in Ecuador has been deeply researched. The trajectory of its rise evidences a progressive evolution of oppositional consciousness among its members. This means, an empowering mental state that prepares members of an oppressed group to act, undermine, reform, or overthrow a system of human domination. (Morris & Braine 2001:25). To be brief regarding this issue, it is necessary to consider three important moments that show the movement's progressive transformation from a marginal actor to an active agent of social contingency. The first known articulation took place in the 1940s when representatives of the Ecuadorian Communist party establish alliances with organized Indigenous populations that were working in haciendas under the movement FEI (Ecuadorian Indian Federation). The Ecuadorian Communist party during this time wanted to include new actors that in a national level could embrace the Marxist mission of the proletarianism in a country where industrialization has been almost absent. In that sense, the subject who could potentially develop a revolution against the owners of the means of

production were the Indigenous people since they were experiencing exploitation and abuse of their workforce. The FEI was composed by different representatives of multiple *huasipungos*¹ and its main objective was to find solutions to stop the forms of violence and abuse that they experienced in haciendas. However, these actions did not develop further because hacienda owners had strong relationships with the Ecuadorian state and were able to exercise repression towards the Indigenous attempts of political organization that could potentially threaten the social relationships that were structured during this time. Additionally, the relationships of the FEI with the Communist Party did not consolidate strongly given the fact that the kind of demands these organizations possess were different. The Communist Party tried to find actors for a potential revolution to take control of the state while the Indigenous people tried to find mechanisms to obtain rights of property over their land. This lack of mutual understanding would be present in further tensions between Indigenous actors and left parties. Nonetheless, what is relevant from this initial period is the fact that Indigenous people started to be perceived as a potential actor of social change, and that their main priority is to obtain rights over the land they work.

The second moment took place in the 1960s when the Indigenous movement starts to be strongly influenced by actors that promoted liberation theology. The Salesians played a key role in sending Catholic missions to areas with a strong concentration of Indigenous population mainly in the Andes. The combination of existing leaders of Indigenous communities with the knowledge and philosophy of liberation theology was a key factor in understanding the subsequent changes that the movement experienced afterwards. In this period, new institutions and a new discourse of contingency was established in rural communities with Indigenous populations that fostered an ideology of self-dignity and pride around Kichwa culture. The

¹ Forced system of labour in the Ecuadorian highlands.

work of the priest Leonidas Proaño ² was outstanding in this moment. The main purpose of Proaño was that Indigenous people achieved a level of education and political organization strong enough to make this group become agents of the struggle of their own interests. The legacy of Proaño's actions and thinking was crucial in the further actions of the Indigenous people since he was the main actor that put in contact liberation theology with Indigenous people in the highlands whom started to acquire political awareness of their own agency. As a consequence, Indigenous communities start to articulate their networks for political purposes after becoming aware of the importance of being and acting coordinately in order to shift the circumstances that threatened the integrity of their communities.

The third moment was the Uprising of the *Inti Raymi*. In June of 1994 during the administration of the president Rodrigo Borja, the Indigenous movement used its national contingent to paralyze the country as part of its repertoires of contingency. The different networks of CONAIE blocked the main highways of Ecuador and mobilized a strong contingent of people into Quito, Ecuador's capital, occupying different spaces of the city. They demanded to speak with the president to address issues regarding land and pushing an agenda to recognize Ecuador as a plurinational country. After this episode, the Indigenous movement was able to become and appear in the public scene as a political actor after the development of their contingent action. This episode reshaped the identity of the EIM, among themselves, and how they were perceived in Ecuadorian society. It was after this moment that the EIM acquired

² Called the "Priest of the Indians," his campaign focused on promoting education in Indigenous rural areas. His thinking narrowed in struggling for the acquisition of rights for Indigenous people in terms of economic inclusion and poverty reduction. His projects were highly controversial among his religious counterparts in the Catholic Church since they believed he was developing guerrilla warfare in the EIM, situation that took him to face a trial in Rome. For the conservative sectors of Quito and the Ecuadorian Catholic Church, the projects of Proaño were perceived dangerous given the fact that he acted to promote a political culture of fairness among those who were supposed to be subordinated.

its reputation of being an outsider force capable in deploying contingent actions on a national level with sound results for their populations coming from shifts in public policy. This chapter was the result of a long process of political consciousness that resulted in a rupture of a continuous line of colonial relationships that was maintained through centuries (Ospina 2009: 8). It is after this chapter that the Indigenous movement started to be a political actor since it became difficult to develop politics in Ecuador by being indifferent to them (Garcia 2017).

Considering the development of Ecuadorian history, Indigenous identity should be though not as a situation, but rather as a condition characterized for political, social, economic marginalization from other sectors of Ecuadorian society (Porrás 2005: 64). Indigenous people as a community have been exposed to something that could be named as forced illegalization of their identity (Reascos 2017). Since this notion is not natural, but rather ideologically and historically constructed, implies its possibility to be de-constructed (Porrás 2005:54). The rise of the *Inti Raymi* was a symbolical episode in the history of the EIM given the fact that the movement becomes aware of the capacity of its agency to shift conditions that were normalized against the integrity of their population. As Porrás states, after the Uprising, the Ecuadorian state faced a new Indigenous identity. They were no longer unprotected or incapable individuals. Instead, they became a political actor with whom they had to negotiate and reach agreements (2005:324). The empowerment of the movement's agency is the result of a large process of an ethnic and political consciousness that was translated in the deployment of repertoires of national impact. The insubordinates were able to put into the national political opinion the figure of revolution as a potential channel of social transformation (Ramírez 2009:76). In words of an Indigenous leader "since the *Inti-Raymi*, we are not the same, we have our heads held high" (Becker 2010:40). After the rise of the *Inti Raymi*, Ecuador experienced a strong shift towards the perception of this sector of society in which if before, being Indigenous was something bad, now it was surrounded with a sense of dignity that it was not

present before (Reascos. 2017). This chapter was a landmark that triggered further political involvement of the movement on a larger scale.

Riots and protests developed by the EIM were not new in the Ecuadorian political landscape. However, what was surprising regarding the case of the Uprising of the 1990s relies on how this event evolved and the consequences that followed afterwards. The Uprising of the *Inti Raymi* during the presidency of Rodrigo Borja was not casual. Exercises of resistance have been a strong characteristic of Indigenous people in previous times. However, they finished with strong repression from the state without any positive shift despite the exercise of contention coming from Indigenous populations. The articulation of a national network was the result of years of work and political consciousness. Therefore, its deployment needed an accurate strategic diagnosis of the political context to not waste the resources that the movement was able to concentrate. Borja was elected president representing the party “*Izquierda Democratica*” (Democratic Left). His administration was characterized as being considerably less repressive as previous Ecuadorian presidents, a situation that was read by Indigenous leaders as a political opportunity to establish a condition of dialogue. Why did the Indigenous movement make its mobilization in a government that has been partially conciliatory with their actions? The action of the *Inti Raymi* should not be read as an action strictly against Borja. Instead, it was a demand against the Ecuadorian state, and to the Ecuadorian society, for the exclusion that they have experienced historically. In words of Becker, the main problem that the *Inti Raymi* addressed was not only the political exclusion of Indigenous people but rather the failure of the dominant class to create an inclusive political system (2010:29).

An Anti-Neoliberal Actor

Social movements framing is the result of the self-awareness of the group in relation to the context they are embedded in. After becoming a new agent of political action, the EIM showed new demands coming specifically from their ethnic condition that were not similar to other actors that shared their ideological inclination among the left. The main characteristic of the Indigenous movement was their capacity to articulate several discourses of historical claims in a single bloc given the fact that they were effective in coordinating their different intentions and postures in a single agency. As Sanchez mentions,

(...) a strong characteristic of this movement has been able to articulate three models of collective action: to prioritize national social conflicts, the promotion of an anticolonial nationalism, and fostering a revolutionary agency against the established order. By doing this the Indigenous movement combined class struggle with nationalism, associating them with the construction of an identity of social integrity (2007:87).

The specific vectors that converged around the Indigenous identity in terms of the ethnic cleavage that sustains their movement, and their social position in the Ecuadorian society, brought new discourses of thinking politics that had been absent before this actor acquired strongly relevance.

There are three key elements that arose once the EIM became an active political actor and from which other elements derived. The main issue was the struggle of land property. The demand for rights regarding land ownership is a common denominator in Indigenous movements in cross country perspective. Taking into consideration the cultural background of Indigenous communities, land goes beyond what is considered private property. It is the space where communal life is possible, and it is an essential part of Indigenous cosmology. The problem of the land evidences the first level of struggle that Indigenous people had experienced from institutions in charge of public administration from the period of colonization towards the establishment of a democratic regime. Likewise, another issue was the notion of nation-state

developed in Ecuador which did not allow Indigenous people to be recognized as citizens. Consequently, the Indigenous movement has struggled to implement the notion of plurinationality in the constitutions to have laws that protect the cultural differences that exist in relation to the rest of the population. The final issue is related with the relationship of the state, and civil society towards nature. Environmental consciousness has been constantly present in the cosmology of Indigenous communities. Nonetheless, its political addressing started to be developed strongly with the rise of the political participation of the Indigenous movement. This conflict would evolve given the structure of Ecuadorian economy which highly depends on oil extraction.

The articulation of these three issues is what composes the main ideological posture of the Indigenous movement. For these reasons, its militancy and actions have been occupying a relevant role among left-wing movements and parties. They both have a deliberate antagonism against strong economic groups called "the right" since their agency has been the main responsible of their exploitation. The "right" is recognized among them to be a conservative, privileged and discriminatory group that owns several economic resources. The EIM and left wing parties shared the same antagonism towards these groups in the sense that they adjudicate responsibility for the inequality present in Ecuador because of their agency. However, there has been always tension among them, even though ideologically the left and the EIM occupy a similar posture. The strength of the alliances between these two forces has varied depending on the context in which they take place. The discourse and militancy of the left in Ecuador has been principally promoted by the Communist and Socialist party, they have been inclusive to some degree with the Indigenous movement, yet they have been historically administrated by mestizo or white mestizo people who have not been exempt from showing racism towards the movement. In this sense, even though left-wing movements and the Indigenous people share a similar antagonist, the issues they have addressed in public opinion differ strongly. For

instance, left-wing movements have not raised issues of land, ethnicity and its policies regarding nature protection have been poorly developed.

In addition, it is worth mentioning two key aspects regarding the EIM in terms of its role and relationship among the left. The first aspect relies on the fact that the EIM occupies a position in the left spectrum given the type of demands and agenda they possess. However, according to their cosmology, even though they have a strong distance towards conservative right groups, they also do not fit into the left in an orthodox manner. As Tituaña states,

(...) the traditional left has an empty space of comprehension regarding the national reality in terms of ethnicity, economy and sociology. They promote the development of a proletarian revolution, yet Ecuador does not have a strong presence of factories and industries. Under this circumstance, promoting the idea of an organized group of workers is not possible. In the struggle of workers against capitalists, our struggle does not fit into this theory (2017).

The tensions among left movements and the EIM rely on a misunderstanding of who is meant to be the main actor of developing contingent actions that could threaten the status quo present in Ecuador. This situation leads us to the second aspect of this relationship. Labor unions in Ecuador have not been strong actors of social mobilization and contingency, a role that started to be occupied by the EIM. As Reascos states,

(...) labor unions lost their hegemony of insurgent representations during the 60s. This means, labor unions lost their status of representation of struggle inside left politics. If a movement loses this status, another one will cover that space of demand. Consequently, the rise of the Indigenous movement takes place in a context in which there is an evident decay of the labor movement. This movement starts to lose its meaning of struggle, when a stronger force that has been exposed to situations of discrimination around ethnicity starts to emerge. The consolidation of the Indigenous movement takes place in the 70s, it grows substantially during the 80s, and it reaches its peak of practice during the 90s (2017).

After the *Inti Raymi*, the role of the EIM consolidated its position as antiestablishment force that came from marginalized sectors of civil society. An aspect that was going to be determinant in their actions during a decade of political instability that Ecuador experienced after this chapter.

Overthrow of Two Presidents (1996 and 2000)

The rise of the *Inti Raymi* was the first manifestation of following demonstrations of power that the EIM deployed on a national scale. After the end of the presidency of Sixto Duran Ballen in 1996 three coups were developed in which three presidents were forced to resign due to the pressure of popular mobilization. Following repertoires that were effective during the *Inti Raymi*, the Indigenous movement was a key actor in the first two coups against the presidents Abdala Bucaram in 1997 and Jamil Mahuad in 2000. The execution of repertoires of contingency such as the massive occupation of public spaces, had a strong effect towards the population in Quito, who joined the manifestations that took place during these two coups. In this sense, the use of repertoires used by the EIM had a strong role on the repercussion of mobilization of other sectors of civil society that were necessary for the development of the overthrowing of these presidents. However, the third coup against the president Lucio Gutierrez was deployed by other actors of civil society evidencing the first signs of weakening of the EIM.

The first coup developed by popular pressure was against Abdala Bucaram at the beginning of 1997. After winning the presidential elections against the conservative candidate Jaime Nebot, by promoting a strong populist discourse, Bucaram was able to get in office in 1996. Since he assumed power, his personality and actions have been perceived as controversial and dangerous by several sectors of Ecuadorian society. The motive of his political crisis relied on a combination of nepotism and corruption scandals, which were strongly present in public opinion regarding his presidency. However, what fostered actions of contingency against him was his decision to raise fuel prices to cover the debt of the Ecuadorian state. When this happened, the EIM started to develop its repertoires and deployed a massive mobilization towards Quito. A key characteristic of social movements is that they not only react towards what is happening, but also, they produce events and situations for their benefit

(Sanchez 2007:85). For instance, the presence of a large movement in action of contingency fostered the participation of student movements and as other sectors of civil society to mobilize in the streets. Large sectors of the population in Quito, and after on a national level, found a voice to express their discontent towards the personality and administration of Bucaram. These mobilizations had an impact on political parties and municipalities that joined the exercise of contingency. As a result, the national congress in an emergency meeting stated the mental incapacity of Bucaram to rule, and after named Fabian Alarcon, to become president of the nation. This episode was the first time that the EIM used a repertoire in which other sectors of society found a space to develop contingent performances.

Repertoires evolve in their implementation as every aspect of cultural practice that has proven by experience to be effective. In 2000, the coup against Jamil Mahuad exemplifies this since the contingent action of the EIM was more complex and sophisticated than just developing mobilizations on a national scale. During the administration of Mahuad, Ecuador experienced its strongest economic crisis when adopted the U.S dollar as national currency to avoid inflation. Part of the policy implied declaring a banking holiday, a period in which people were not able to take out money from banks. As a result, massive mobilizations took place among Ecuadorian citizens in the major cities to show discontent. The EIM acted as a contingent agent again, yet its actions did not only rely on mobilizing people to exercise pressure. The president of the Indigenous movement during that year, Antonio Vargas, worked closely with a group of military insurgents led by the Coronel Lucio Gutierrez. This alliance called itself the *Junta de Salvacion Nacional* (National Salvation Board) worked strategically with sectors of popular mobilization to reach the Congress to depose Mahuad. Their objective relied on removing the president from power to stop the implementation of economic policies. This alliance succeeded. However, once the president was removed, this board was not able to maintain its power since they were not recognized as legitimate in the international community.

Following the constitution, the national congress designated Gustavo Noboa to assume the presidency. This chapter shows a peak of strong influence in which the EIM, in coordination with sectors of the military forces, were able to remove a president that was elected constitutionally.

Most of the power and influence that the EIM was able to develop in Ecuador relied on its condition of being an outsider force. Repeating and evolving their repertoires of contention through strategic deployment of their forces the results were increasing in effectiveness when the EIM acted in coordination with other sectors. The presence of the EIM rose in relevance during periods in which weak presidential rule tried to implement unpopular measures. Therefore, contingency was the most effective resource to raise issues regarding, not only regarding the specific condition that Indigenous people experienced, but also to other sectors of Ecuadorian society that found in contingency a solution to address limits to the policies that governments pretended to implement. The EIM had experience in mobilization and, after the coup against Mahuad, had also experience in deposing a president. Its role created a strong degree of expectation in other sectors of civil society that found in this actor the strength to address a potential project in which popular classes were involved.

However, to develop these demands, contingency was not enough. As Noboa stated during his presidency “if the Indigenous people want power, they need to win elections (Davalos 2001:43). The struggle of obtaining votes was a completely different dynamic. There was something that the leaders of the movement were already aware after the result of the coup against Mahuad. Their success was possible because of the strategic alliances with sectors that were not exclusively Indigenous, a strategy that might be evident in the dynamics of political parties, but that showed the limitations of a social movement given the complexity of this dynamics. In that sense, after two successful coups, the movement realized the importance of obtaining power through the process of democratic elections.

The importance of these periods of up risings relies on the fact that it shows the results of periods of progressive empowerment around Indigenous identity that condensate? in becoming a social movement with a strong degree of influence. The transformation of being a marginal actor that was subordinated into becoming an autonomous agent of their own change was a signal of the political awareness to change social conditions that could potentially improve the wellbeing of their communities by addressing issues directly with the Ecuadorian state. In addition, the practice of performances of contingency would have an impact in other sectors of civil society that after being aware of the repertoires that the EIM had used, incorporate these practices to show discontent. The EIM in this period showed that the state was an institution that has limits and vulnerabilities, that its power could be challenged, and that social mobilizations could bring results in shifting the social and political panorama that the country was living. At the same time, these successful actions as an outsider movement paradoxically would cause the establishment and exposition to other practices in which, given the emergent influence that the EIM was having, would push the movement to enter in an arena that would challenge and damage the process that they have able to achieve.

IV. From Movement to Party (1990-1996)

The EIM had a national structure of communities that proved to be effective in developing repertoires of contention whose demands were addressed by the state. The key to their success, as a social movement, relied on their capacity to challenge or limit the action of the state. In addition, the cultural framing in which they organised their mobilizations projected ways of thinking that challenged the notion of neoliberal development promulgated by the Ecuadorian state during the 1990s. The empathy of working classes and other popular sectors that were non-Indigenous relied on this aspect that was growing in legitimacy. Social movements have the advantage to have a closer contact with the bases of their supporters and narrow their action towards specific objectives that go beyond obtaining power in the state. However, their scope of influence is highly diminished beyond creating pressure. On the other hand, political parties have a wider scope of action since its purpose is narrowed in controlling the state rather than addressing specific issues through contingent action. Indigenous organizations are more likely to extend their activities into the electoral arena after they have secured significant substantive policy achievements as social movements (Hug 2013:213), a situation that was already part of the history of the EIM. The following chapter will explain how the attempt of the EIM in entering formal politics had relevant outcomes for the movement at a very high cost. On one hand, the activism of the movement put, into public opinion, different ways of thinking that were empathetic with several popular sectors of Ecuadorian civil society. However, the structure of the movement was not appropriate to coexist with other political forces.

Pachakutik

The evolution of the EIM shows a classic sociological problem in which social movements demand higher degrees of institutionalization and its transformation pushes them to reform its structure into political parties (Ramirez 2009:65). CONAIE developed the political party Pachakutik in 1996. Its consolidation took place in the middle of strong tensions inside the movement. The reason relied on the existence of factions that wanted to maintain the position of the movement as an outsider force, while others realised the need for another type of performances to obtain power inside the state. As Tituaña stated,

(...) some sectors in the movement did not want to be engaged with the dynamic of electoral processes. The extremist members inside the group claimed that the struggle of the Indigenous movement should attempt to transform the state from the outside for Indigenous purposes. On the other hand, other members believed that it was necessary to enter the political game, to participate and to learn by doing mistakes (2017).

In addition, the initiative to create Pachakutik happened not only because CONAIE wanted to obtain quotas of institutional power, but because it was a mechanism to protect the movement to be co-opted by external parties. A situation that would have put in danger the integrity of the movement if they did not create their own party is that several parties tried to establish alliances with Indigenous leaders separately (Ospina 2017). For instance, the socialist and communist party in Ecuador did not have a healthy or positive approach towards Indigenous people since they had used them or attempted to appear as their defenders. Consequently, to free the movement from any kind of patronizing relationship, CONAIE decided to create Pachakutik (Tituaña 2017). Additionally, the development of a political party evidences a maturation in the political consciousness that the movement possesses about themselves and the measures they should take in order to achieve their institutional objectives. As Garcia states,

Until 1993, the indigenous movement had a strong discourse against the existence of the state. After this moment, there was a shift since they did not renege the existence of the state itself, yet they narrowed on the issue that the state should behave in a different way. They believe that the state should put a conscious effort regarding

something called historical fixation, which translates in a recognition that these communities existed before the national state (2017).

With these factors in mind, the creation of an Indigenous party as part of the movement structure followed a dual logic of institutional maturity in which they not only aimed to reach higher positions of power, but also to protect the movement from being fragmented by other political parties.

Considering that an ethnic party is an organization authorized to compete in elections, where most of its leaders and members identify themselves as belonging to a non-dominant ethnic group, and whose electoral platform includes, among its central demands, programs of an ethnic or cultural nature (Van Cott 2007:3), Pachakutik fits partially to this theoretical definition. In first place, Pachakutik is an intercultural party and it is not strictly ethnic since they include the participation of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people (Garcia 2017). This party has chosen Indigenous and non-Indigenous members to run for office and most of its electorate are non-Indigenous people. However, the agenda that the party attempts to develop is the result of the decisions that are chosen inside CONAIE, the social movement, and are narrowed in create better conditions for Indigenous communities. These two characteristics have triggered strong debates inside the movement and with this political party because of the implications that they have brought. The reason relies on the fact that there have been moments in which CONAIE and Pachakutik have decided not pursue political alliances on an ethnic base, and others in which members of Pachakutik resented the situation of having CONAIE above them. Nonetheless, even if these factors have influenced the joined action of these two organizations, the main purpose they serve is to shift social conditions that affect Indigenous communities through the design of an agenda thought as a national project. The main difference relies on the fact that CONAIE is an exclusively Indigenous organization, while Pachakutik was, from the beginning, an intercultural organ that joins Indigenous and non-Indigenous actors (Lalander 2018).

A transformation that can put at risk the structure of the movement is the transition from movement to a party because is a complex process. In addition, the EIM had another layer of complexity since they did not transform CONAIE into Pachakutik, but rather maintained both structures simultaneously with clear hierarchies. The EIM used these two institutions to face the new challenges that their growing influence brought. The development of this performance obeys a strategy that pursues the transformation of the state from the inside without losing its position as an outsider (Ramirez 2009:74). However, sustaining this simultaneity exposed the EIM to other types of circumstances by becoming engaged into formal politics that create the first scenario of making its weakening possible. The reason behind this situation relies on the fact that the strength of a social movement relies on its condition of being different from the current political forces that are present (Parga 2007:103), a situation that the movement chose not to be anymore by creating a political party of its own. For above reasons, the establishment of Pachakutik should not be thought as the result of a linear process of evolution in which CONAIE evolved into another kind of institution. Considering the aspect of hierarchy mentioned before, Pachakutik is the political party that CONAIE used to launch candidates for democratic elections, but it is subordinated to the structure and organization of CONAIE. In this sense, the political decisions that Pachakutik obeys comes is the result of consensus reached between the bases of CONAIE and its leadership.

Among the left, Pachakutik is the only political party that is sustained in a larger institution that fits into the category of a social movement. In that sense, their power does not rely only on being able to accumulate votes, but also in creating pressure against the state through contingency. By being a very organized movement and being effective in contingency, CONAIE and Pachakutik have been constantly perceived as a key actor for larger political forces among the left. Left-wing parties wanted to ally with the EIM for their national structure and contingency strength. Likewise, the EIM searches other political forces for the opportunity

to occupy high positions of representation in which their interests are present in the development of larger policy projects. However, this relationship has different layers of complexity given the fact that racism is strongly present. Larger left wing political forces have tried to pursue alliances with the Indigenous movement to obtain votes and possibly use the repertoires of contention from the movement in their favour. Leaders of the movement are aware of this circumstance and part of their performance in how they establish alliances is highly influenced by skepticism.

There are two strong aspects that compose the external relevance of Pachakutik in a wider context. Through the progressive rise of ethnic consciousness, and its constant activism, Pachakutik managed to put in public opinion their vision regarding the type of society that CONAIE demanded in other spheres. A vision that could only come from a movement that articulated as the result of historical exclusion, and with a strong potential to become empathetic with working classes in other sectors of Ecuadorian society. The movement proved that being marginal actors did not represent an absolute obstacle in developing contingency against the Ecuadorian state. The execution of consistent mobilizations and performances of pressure put in public opinion the fact that policies coming from the state could be challenged by actors of the civil society. This characteristic that the EIM possessed became part of the ideological platform of the party. Therefore,

(...) Pachakutik party explicitly identified itself as part of the new Latin American left that embraced principles of community, solidarity, unity, tolerance and respect. Pachakutik opposed the government's neoliberal economic policies and favoured a more inclusive and participatory political system. It represented a culmination of CONAIE's drive to insert Indigenous peoples directly into debates, giving them a voice and allowing them to speak for themselves (Becker 2010:184).

With these elements, Pachakutik political framing presented an emergent search for alternatives against the project of nation promoted by conservative sectors and their inclination for neoliberal policies.

The impact of Pachakutik in Ecuadorian society has not been as strong as the trajectory of contingency that CONAIE developed. Pachakutik's political impact has been substantial at a municipality level mainly in certain areas of the highlands and the Amazon rather than a national scale. Larger parties have been more effective in the acquisition of votes because of the amount of their resources which enables them to develop clientelist practices. However, the framing of being an antiestablishment force that has been effective in the past against the state and its political class played a huge role in its benefit. The strongest moment of Pachakutik came when it established an alliance with the PSP (*Partido Sociedad Patriótica*) and managed to win the presidential elections in 2002 with the victory of Lucio Gutierrez, the insurrect coronel that worked with CONAIE during the coup of Mahuad in 2002. If the development of this alliance would have been successful, Pachakutik would have been considered an institution that in coordination with its social movement base was able to evolve its action from being marginal, to contingent, and finally to electorally successful. Nonetheless, as it is going to be analyzed after, even though the development of this evolutive trajectory certainly took place, it posited the basis of the further weakening of the movement.

The Limits of Contingency

Dynamics of elections differ structurally from actions of contingency that the movement was used to deploy. After having decided to consolidate a political party that is subordinate to a social movement, the structure of the EIM was pushed to enter the arena of formal politics. This shift showed strong difficulties for the movement because even if they have been effective in the development of contingent actions, its structure showed to have strong limitations in the pursuit of running for democratic elections. Once Pachakutik and CONAIE operated together in a different area of political action, the exposition towards new political dynamics shaped the structure of the movement negatively since its participation threatened to dismantle the coherence of the movement (Becker 2010:77). Latin American

party systems are characterized by associations based on personal connections, corruption, and clientelism (Van Cott 2007:11), circumstances that EIM was not exposed openly before. In that sense, the EIM experienced new problems once Pachakutik became an active political party.

For instance,

(...) once Pachakutik entered electoral politics their members and leaders started to become institutionalized, every time more distanced from the movements' basis. Its leaders became more moderates and less contingent against the established order (...). Instead of changing the political institutions, these changed the movement (Ospina 2009: 125).

In that sense, the EIM, by entering in a new sphere of action through its political party Pachakutik, was exposed in becoming an example of situations what they wanted to combat on first place.

The limits of the structure of the EIM and its repertoires became the first factor that produced a progressive weakening inside the movement. The evolution of the EIM created a paradoxical situation in which its growing complexity pushed the movement to become exposed to situations that had the potential to make it weaker. The creation of Pachakutik was necessary for CONAIE to pursue larger objectives that the social movement by itself was not able to achieve. Nonetheless, the creation of a political party opened the scope of new challenges in which the rationality of the movement acquiring power and contesting power were happening simultaneously. Repertoires of contingency were effective in putting limits to possible actions that could threaten the integrity of the bases of the movement. However, the bases of the movement started to experience a strong lack of representation once the party was created. The establishment of a political party as the result of a progressive evolution of a social movement is certainly remarkable, yet the scope of its action was highly limited when the movement started to think in taking wider actions beyond contingency.

In that sense, the impact of the EIM in the national scene has been by far better achieved for the actions they developed as a contingent actor rather than a political party. The

consolidation and strength of a social movement consists in their difference and distance from political forces (Sanchez 2007:103). Therefore, the question will remain if the creation of the party was the only and major possibility of political expression and representation for the EIM (2007:9). The risk that the EIM decided to take in becoming a player of political dynamics, that they chose to challenge, presented new difficulties regarding the institutional identity of the movement and its role. On one hand, the movement was exposed to the influence of new social actors that could use the party for their own purposes. Secondly, the leaders of the party started to have distance from the demands of the movement putting in crisis the apparent situation of subordination that put the party under the control of the movement. Finally, the political proposal of the party was limited in the sense that the scope of the party was highly affected by the ethnic character of the institution that it was controlling the party. Considering the simultaneous presence of these new difficulties CONAIE narrowed mostly on solving the last point which relied on enhancing the scope of the capacity of the party as long as it maintained the leadership of the social movement upon them. Following this line, the EIM was aware of its lack of power as a political party, a situation that would push the movement and the party to pursue for political alliances with other actors.

V. The Mestizo Scepticism

Mestizo, the ethnic group that is the result of the mixture of Indigenous people and the Spanish colonization. They compose most of the population in Ecuador and in Latin America. Race is a strong category to understand the dynamics of power that are present in the political landscape of this countries. Narrowing strictly in Ecuador, mestizos have a void of identity between two poles that were structured in colonization. As Echeverria states, the normal racism of modernity is a racism of whiteness (2007:12). The identity of the mestizo is in a constant struggle of becoming modern given the fact that the institutional development that took place in Ecuador was constructed in correlation with a racial ideology that privileged some individuals and excluded others. Mestizos are the group that struggles to be recognized as being modern and tries to avoid or hide its Indigenous side since this could connect this group with situations of marginalization. Culturally, there are systems of normative discipline in which mestizos try to give an artificial shape to their habits to difference themselves from Indigenous groups. Under the eyes of the Indigenous groups, mestizos do not recognise and value who they are in the pursuit to become something that they are not.

Ecuadorian institutions have been built by economic elite groups with a vision of the nation that they wanted to achieve, and who were the citizens that could potentially benefit from this. The tension between what development should be and who are the social groups that are going to experience this development is still a struggle that possesses racial dimensions even though that the pass of time has had a strong impact on the transformation of the cultural identity among the Ecuadorian population. There is a curious paradox among Ecuadorian society regarding the relationship between race, social movements and economic inclusion. Mestizos are the largest group among the country and are present in different social classes. However, considering that there are very few cases of Indigenous people that are not in a

situation of economic scarcity and that the levels of poverty and unemployment in Ecuador are high, it is plausible to infer that mestizos are the ones that are most affected by the situation of inequality in the country. Mestizos have the tradition to take distance from being associated with Indigenous people in a strong and conscious effort to improve their social status.

This brief sketch of how race and culture play a strong role in the development of political scenarios in Ecuador helps in the understanding of the analysis of two historical chapters that had a strong impact on the weakening of the Indigenous movement. The level of penetration of CONAIE among the Indigenous communities is impressive in the sense that this institution included most of the Indigenous population into the movement. The dialogue between the bases and the board is structured in a way that leaders of the movement cannot make decisions that were not discussed with the bases in depth. Nonetheless, Indigenous people and its political party Pachakutik are not hegemonic political forces in Ecuador. For that reason, it was compulsory for them to pursue further alliances with other political forces. As it was mentioned before, the strength of the Indigenous movement relied on its capacity to foster social mobilization against the state to create a situation of contingency in which state institutions had to negotiate with demands that followed rationalities that differ from an orthodox view of modernization and development. Coming from an emergent complexity that the movement achieved, the EIM made the decision to pursue its political objectives through formal politics. Considering that their party was new, they pursued to form alliances with left-wing parties that could potentially help their representatives to reach power beyond the exercise of contentious politics.

The First Fragmentation

Movement repertoires evolve based on the challenges that they face. Innovation is a complicated aspect of their performance given the fact that trying new strategies implies risks

that could potentially lead movements to deal with situations that their structure cannot bear. The Indigenous movement experienced a progressive evolution of the repertoires of contention of the Indigenous movement from the Uprising of the Inti Raymi towards its direct involvement in a military coup against Jamil Mahuad. However, these repertoires even if effective in developing contention were not consistent enough to obtain power. For instance, the strategy of the Indigenous movement to join rebel military groups was enough to depose a president. However, the exercise of governance goes beyond the exercise of contesting power against the state. The "Junta de Salvacion Nacional," the rebel alliance between insurgent military forces and the Indigenous movement in 2000, was the beginning of a new chapter and a new strategy of the EIM to obtain power after becoming aware of their limitations. As a result, the EIM was about to reach its highest level of legitimate power, yet its scepticism against the *mestizos* was about to begin. Lucio Gutierrez, a coronel of the army in Ecuador was the commander in chief against the strike towards Jamil Mahuad. He knew that by becoming a rebel against the armed forces of Ecuador he would be challenging the constitutional order of the state, a reason why he needed an alliance with groups that had experience in developing contingency. However, even if this coup was successful, Gutierrez suffered a reverse after deposing Mahuad when military groups of higher degrees in the armed forces did not support his cause. The coup against Mahuad was the end of Gutierrez's military career. Nonetheless, it was the beginning of his political one.

Gutierrez's action against Mahuad acquired a symbolical significance among the Ecuadorian population. After all, he was an individual who risked his career to stop the implementation of policies that were affecting the working and middle class in the country. Having this in mind, if Gutierrez was effective at something it was in transforming his symbolical role into political capital, and his Indigenous allies were not indifferent towards this situation. Pachakutik decided to make a formal alliance with the emergent political party of

Gutierrez, *Partido Sociedad Patriótica* (PSP). This alliance is the result of the successful coup in which Gutierrez and Antonio Vargas, president of CONAIE, worked together. However, processes of contingency differ substantially from electoral races. The decision of joining Gutierrez in a presidential campaign was also full of controversy inside the movement. The alliance with Gutierrez in 2002 was a decision in which most of the movement said no. However, the board of CONAIE, without any kind of consideration for this fact, accelerated the process of alliance with the PSP (Tituaña 2017). These types of actions evidence the tensions in which a social movement and a political party started to experience strong degrees of friction based on how the board of the movement responded towards the posture of the basis.

Once the alliance was established, in the process of choosing who would be the presidential candidate of the PSP and Pachakutik's coalition, the Indigenous movement would experience its first process of fragmentation. Sectors of Pachakutik, following the tradition of the EIM, developed a dialogue with its bases to choose a presidential candidate that represented Pachakutik. Auki Tituaña, the successful mayor of Cotacachi, was elected to represent the presidency of Pachakutik and its participation was going to be discussed with representatives of PSP to reach the presidential pair for the presidential elections. This decision, however, was not accepted by Vargas the former president of CONAIE and main ally of Gutierrez in Mahuad's coup. The conflict between Vargas against the decision of CONAIE and Pachakutik made it so that the movement started to become fragmented compromising the support that Pachakutik was given for granted in its alliance with PSP. Consequently, CONAIE asked that neither Tituaña or Vargas attempted to be representatives of the presidency in primary elections since the division was causing problems among the movement. Tituaña agreed to desist, even if he was chosen by CONAIE in first place in order that Pachakutik kept maintaining a consistent support. Vargas on the other hand decided to keep his candidacy, yet CONAIE and

Pachakutik retired his support.³ The conflict between Vargas against Tituaña shows the dichotomy of the movement friction regarding the simultaneity of having a political party and a social movement with different leaderships. They also show the frictions among the EIM between choosing the right candidate based of performances in public offices, or episodes of contention. Given the fact that Pachakutik could not achieve a proper a member of their choice in the presidential pair, Gutierrez negotiated with Pachakutik to give key ministers and positions to Indigenous representatives in case he wins elections, as well as pushing CONAIE-Pachakutik agenda from inside the government.

Lucio Presidente

In a country where most of its electoral distrusted representatives came from the conservative right during this period, it was not difficult for Gutierrez to win this election in the second round. The commander in chief of the Mahuad presidential coup was elected president and its political coalition Sociedad Patriótica and Pachakutik obtained power over the state. For the first time, the political party of the Indigenous movement, through its political alliances, was a legitimate member of the coalition in power. Gutierrez was evidently a political actor that was present in the most influential victories of the Indigenous movement as contingent force, during Mahuad's coup, and as a political ally during presidential elections. Processes of social demand fostered from social movements were going to be addressed by Gutierrez if he was able to win the elections. The support given by CONAIE and Pachakutik was essential for his victory given the fact that his emergent party did not possess a national

³ Vargas started to join factions that supported him to launch for the presidency with a new coalition called Amauta Jatari which agglutinated several sectors of the Amazon region. However, this will be the first case of an oversized perception of the capacity of a social movement in acquiring political support based in repertoires of contention. Vargas obtained less than 1 percent of the national vote and finished last in the elections in which the coalition Pachakutik-PSP won the presidency.

structure; a situation that the EIM had. The alliance with Gutierrez, in the beginning, brought the kind of success that the Indigenous movement has been pursuing for decades, not only as a social movement, but also as a political party. Indigenous people colloquially believe that mestizos should be handled with scepticism since they do not know where their loyalty lie. Since they do not know who they are, they do not know who they should stand for. Gutierrez was able to obtain power since his ability to promote a discourse of inclusiveness and social struggles was highly reinforced with his alliance with the EIM. A discourse that made sense among their voters given the fact of his political project, his allies, and his history.

Gutierrez's alliance seemed to be the first attempt of expanding the demands of the Indigenous movement to connect with wider sectors of the Ecuadorian society in the pursuit of alternative political projects that could also benefit working and lower classes in Ecuador, which composed most of the country's population. Gutierrez was a clear challenger of the status quo in alliance with social movements that have also shown the exhaustion of other left-wing forces that lost during the presidential race of 2002. However, the alliance of the Indigenous movement with Gutierrez represented a critical juncture of prejudicial consequences for the movement in the following years. After six months of being in power, Pachakutik decided to break relationships with Gutierrez and his party *Sociedad Patriótica*. The reason relied on the fact that Gutierrez party PSP started to prioritize its relationships with conservative parties which structurally differed from the project that was built with his coalition with Pachakutik. The EIM could not support the right, because they are the ones who have historically exploited the Indigenous population (Becker 2010:109). However, these sectors quickly became the new priority of Gutierrez once he was in power.

Atrophied Contingency

The tensions between Pachakutik and Gutierrez evolved progressively fast. Once in office, Gutierrez cabinet was composed by characters from military circles and banking sectors in key ministries, while Pachakutik representatives had a secondary role (Ramirez 2010:79). When he started to settle its government, he barely took advice from its Indigenous allies and representatives of the social movements. Instead, he was more narrowed in the pursuit of the favor of private and elite sectors by maintaining neoliberal policies such as maintaining dialogues with IMF and working in the integration of Ecuador to ALCA positions that he rejected when he was in campaign (Becker 2010:91). By using social movements to obtain power during elections, and then change the scope of its government to favor economic elite groups made that Gutierrez got trapped in two contradictory positions, neoliberalism and plurinationality (Almeida 2005). By not being able to be consistent with his initial government plan, Gutierrez lost the support from Pachakutik, and in the long run, it was the cause of his destitution by mass mobilization of other sectors of civil society.

Gutierrez's presidency lasted almost two years since he suffered a coup in 2005. Nonetheless, the Indigenous movement did not play a protagonist role as in previous cases. Leonidas Iza, president of CONAIE during the period of Gutierrez presidency stated emphatically that if Gutierrez did not honor the alliance between Pachakutik and PSP, they would mobilize people to develop protests. Indignation was present and persistent among the Indigenous movement since their ally had become a clear belligerent. Once Gutierrez's presidency started to experience symptoms of political instability, the Indigenous movement tried to develop their repertoires of contingency to stop the actions of their previous ally and his new agenda. However, inner fragmentation and low trust in the leaders of the EIM translated into not being able to mobilize the movement against Gutierrez. The Indigenous movement that once was an actor of contingency against the state, was giving signs of

becoming marginal again (Becker 2010:106). The political evolution of the EIM after the failed alliance with Gutierrez was giving signs of having a diminished capacity of contingency that movement used to possess before entering formal politics.

Repertoires are learned based on previous experiences of contingency. The Indigenous movement had a tradition of being the strongest contingent actor during 1990s in Ecuador. However, given the weakening that the movement experienced during the rule of Gutierrez, it was not possible for them to become a significant contingent actor even if they attempted to depose Gutierrez. The coup against Gutierrez had other actors of contingency. Middle-class and working-class sectors of Quito under the name of “*forajidos*” decided to develop repertoires of contingency that became common after the tradition of contingency established by the Indigenous movement. This episode showed different characteristics given the fact that it was a contingent action promoted by other actors. As Ramirez points out,

(...) it was the first time after the Up-Rising in 1990, that social mobilization was not led by the Indigenous movement. Its place was occupied by a plurality of amateur protesters which under the badge of being anti party, without networks, reached high levels of effective coordination. (...) The bad experience of Pachakutik in the exercise of power and the absent participation of the Indigenous movement in the coup against Gutierrez were clear signals of the end of a cycle of strong political mobilization and participation from the Indigenous movement” (2010: 82).

The Ethnic Retreat

The Ecuadorian context after the fall of Gutierrez was characterized by a strong skepticism from civil society towards the political class. There was a strong trend of distrust against the political system evidenced in the chorus of “*que se vayan todos*” (everyone must leave) once the coup of Gutierrez was successful. Ecuador had not been able to have a democratic transition since 1996 and its political stability seemed to be impossible. The EIM was weak, and its political party experienced a strong degree of discredit since they were part of the coalition of the president that was recently removed from office. The EIM was not

present anymore as an actor of contention, and their degree of trust regarding fostering relationships with external political forces was completely damaged. In fact, the incursion in spaces of electoral race threatened the movement with its destruction and all the progress that they were able to achieve during ten years with their actions of contingency (Becker 2010:65). Considering this, it is not casual that after the bad experience with Gutierrez the EIM chose to act in terms of an ethnic retreat in order to stabilize the movement from this negative experience. Consequently, after the failed alliance with Gutierrez, Pachakutik was reluctant to establish relations with political figures that were not part of their movement (Ramirez 2010:118).

It is in this context when the candidate Rafael Correa attempted to establish an alliance with the EIM. The anecdote says that when Correa went to the first meeting to try to establish a formal alliance for the presidential elections of 2005 he gave a speech in kichwa. In response, Tituaña answered him in English establishing symbolically two strong trends that would affect the future of the Indigenous movement: its temporal ethnical retreat and its skepticism towards outsiders. Correa and his new political movement *Alianza Pais* occupied the same discursive field constructed by the Indigenous movement in the last decades (Ramirez 2010:91). There are several versions in terms of understanding if the outcome of this non-alliance was something positive or negative for the movement. What is a historical truth, however, is the fact that presenting a presidential Indigenous candidate during the presidential elections of 2005 brought a devastating defeat towards the movement causing higher tensions among its members. After long periods of inner debates in which some sectors wanted to join Correa and others remained skeptical about Gutierrez, CONAIE and Pachakutik decided to support the candidacy of Luis Macas, president of CONAIE during this period. However, after the first round, he was able to obtain slightly more the 2 percent of the vote in a national level.

The failure of Macas, Becker says, possibly was not because he was Indigenous, but rather of the strategy of their political platform that did not allow to create successful alliances with other political forces (2010:125). Ethnicity by itself, does not provide a solid base to develop social change, a situation that possibly class struggle could exploit further (2010:32). This problem shows again the power and limitations of the EIM as a social movement and as a political force. The political impact of the movement is highly limited if it only relies on the bases of the movement. However, the framing of the movement had a strong impact in activating other sectors of civil society beyond the ethnic cleavage that the movements possessed. Social movements are successful in many ways, and one of them is the substantial change in public opinion and public discourse that they can provoke. In this sense, the cultural framing of the Indigenous movement not only was strong but also was persuasive enough to create empathy with other sectors of society that were not Indigenous. The framing of contestation through action was strong enough to create a political environment easily persuasive enough towards the idea of political reestablishment. Given the context of the ethnic retreat, these ideas were highly exploited by new political actors, that, were effective enough to transform into political capital this situation.

This critical juncture in the development of the EIM will establish a pathway in which the movement will experience a progressive weakening. Junctures are critical because they place institutional arrangements on paths and trajectories, which are then difficult to alter (Pierson. 2004:135). When Pachakutik decided to establish a relationship with Gutierrez, one of its strongest allies in process of contingency, the EIM would enter in a situation of positive feedback in which further development of events in the future would play a reversal in the process that the movement developed in the 20th century. The election to ally with Gutierrez was the result of exposing the movement to political dynamics that established new forms of performance among the EIM. For instance, the decision of joining Gutierrez was done by a

political elite that developed inside the movement whom in several occasions has been indifferent from the movement bases and develops pacts according to their convenience (Garcia 2017). The cost of the choice of adopting political procedures that did not converge with the dynamics of the movement was high since Gutierrez shifted his intentions once he was in power. Consequently, the movement and the party of the EIM entered into a situation of conflict that translated into its incapacity to mobilize against Gutierrez destitution. The result of this crisis produced an ethnic retreat in which the EIM sought to fix its inner conflicts, a decision that push the movement to be marginal again.

The impact of this critical juncture relies on the fact that the EIM after acquiring a strong degree of national presence as a movement attempted to enter into formal politics. However, after what has been described in this chapter, this practice presented strong negative consequences. The EIM was not an outsider force that challenged the practice of the state anymore. Instead, it became an actor that posited a failed presidency exposing the party to a crisis of legitimacy and the movement to a situation of inner conflict. This historical chapter represents the moment in which the movement turned from achieving its largest presence in the state, to damaging considerably the structure of the movement that was not able to articulate repertoires of contingency against the state. Gutierrez reinforced the idea that politicians act according to the agenda of conservative parties in Ecuador regardless of the political project they promote to develop. This context took place when the Pink Wave in Latin America was gaining strength and discourses and frames of social struggle were rising on popularity. However, even if this international context would have been beneficial towards the type of activism that the EIM developed, given its recent fragmentation, the moment was going to be used by other actors that apparently shared similar political stands.

VI. The Citizens Revolution (2006-2017)

The regime of Rafael Correa, and its political project *Revolucion Ciudadana*, was a complete shift in the course of Ecuadorian history. The polarization that his rule caused is present from historical interpretations of contemporary Ecuador, towards the realignment and restructuring of social forces in the country. Political parties and social movements entered a new realm of belligerence and struggle in which a new actor, a new movement, and a new way of doing politics rose and evolved during a decade after the end of Palacio's government in 2006. The rise of Correa in politics could be understood as the entrance of a strong outsider in a moment in which social movements and political parties were weak, and the population was highly sceptical regarding their performance. As the result of a decade of political instability and contingent campaigns from different sectors of civil society, the expectation of anti-system discourses and proposals had an effervescent moment of legitimacy in which left-wing coalitions seemed to be perceived as the political solution after a failed decade of neoliberal attempts of ruling. The international scenario also influenced this tendency. Strong representatives of labour movements and left-wing parties were rising in power in several countries of Latin America guided mostly by the figure of Hugo Chavez. The Pink Wave governments were becoming a trend in Latin America, yet it was necessary for the active participation of strong movements and actors to take advantage of the moment. Given the crisis of the EIM after the chapter of Gutierrez, the representatives of the left in Ecuador narrowed strongly around the figure of Rafael Correa and his new political movement *Alianza Pais*.

The relationship of the EIM and Correa has been complicated given the fact that both characters occupied the same ideological posture. However, there are three areas of tension that are going to be analysed in depth to understand the dynamics of this relationship. From an

overall perspective, to assume that Correa was a sufficient historical condition for the weakening of the movement would be misleading. By the time Correa appeared in Ecuadorian politics the EIM already experienced a strong degree of weakening as the result of the failed alliance with Gutierrez. However, the presence of Correa's movement from its rise towards its progressive establishment accentuated the previous crisis that the EIM already had. Correa embraced a big part of the framing and the political project of the EIM in his discourse given the fact that initially both movements shared common political antagonists, such as the conservative right of Ecuador and the current political parties and shared a common agenda that prioritize to solve social and economic inequalities present in Ecuadorian society. However, during the development of Correa's regime, the EIM became weaker and progressively established a belligerent relationship with Correa's state. The reason relied on the contradictions that Correa's political project had and the tensions that these aspects caused with the EIM. These aspects of contradiction expose the level of instrumentalization that Correa employed in the appropriation of an indigenous frame to name his political project.

It is necessary to take into consideration the following question before developing the analysis of this relationship: how was it possible that the EIM became weaker in a national, and international, context in which it was expected to be stronger considering the political character of a progressive government? As Ospina states,

Correa has been a cloudy adversary for social movements, for that reason to build a discourse of antagonism against him has been difficult. This has been a constant problem for every social movement that started to dissent with progressive governments that are apparently representatives of their interests. This element is a key obstacle for the Indigenous movement to become once again the actor of agglutination of social struggles. During the 90s every government in Ecuador tried to become neoliberal regardless of their discourse. Correa did not. Consequently, in a beginning the movement find difficulty to find reasons to mobilize against a government that at some degree they meant to defend (2017).

A counterfactual example comes immediately when we consider the scenario of a hegemonic left-wing party that could not develop a formal alliance with the largest social movement of

the country. For instance, the Indigenous movement in Bolivia under the leadership of Evo Morales was able to become the strongest political force in this country by transforming the demands of social movements into political capital for a larger party. The case of Ecuador could be distinguished from this example regarding the difference of leadership in both countries. In that sense, even if Correa shared the same discursive and ideological spectrum as the Indigenous movement, his leadership comes from the appropriation of a political project in which different left-wing coalitions wanted to develop a new constitution and needed a presidential candidate that did not have a strong relationship with local social movements. Correa was a left-wing academic with a clear inclination of non-orthodox economic thinking that started to call media attention after being the minister of finance. Evo Morales, on the other hand, comes from a tradition of being a leader in social and labour movements of coca growers. Consequently, his presidency possesses a stronger connection with different movements bases that are articulated around his party MAS (*Movimiento al Socialismo*). To understand it in terms of this research, Evo and the rise of the MAS would represent what would have happened with Pachakutik if Gutierrez did not change his political project once he was in power. However, the bond between Correa and the Indigenous movement was not possible from the beginning of Correa's campaign. In that sense, even if the political scenario was more favourable for the EIM to acquire a more relevant presence with Correa's initiative. Its previous weakening influenced the fact that firstly that the EIM did not join forces with Correa officially, and among other factors, it weakened its presence once the relationship acquired a character of belligerence.

The dynamics of the transformation of the antagonist character between Correa and the EIM had different stages of development. In the beginning the EIM decided not to join forces with *Alianza Pais* when Correa pursued this aim during his first presidential campaign. However, once in power, the support of the EIM towards *Alianza Pais* was substantial in

Correa's campaign to approve the referendum that would enable him to develop the constitutional assembly. The reason relies on the fact that through the establishment of a new constitution the EIM pursued to finally insert the notion of plurinationality and another set of rights could benefit them officially. This context made Correa obtain strong support of the Indigenous sectors regardless of the decision of CONAIE and Pachakutik of non-adherence to *Alianza Pais*. However, the issue that triggered an evolving conflict among these two actors relied on the character of Correa's economic plan. Correa's political plan relied on expanding the capacity of the state in terms of economic capacity and jurisdiction to make it the central actor of social dynamics in Ecuador. In order to do it, he relied on using the high price of raw materials during his period to finance this aim. These translated into the execution of large projects of oil and mining extraction. The first population that started to show their disagreement with these types of policies were the communities that live in the Amazon region. Actions of contingency were deployed. However, they faced new obstacles given the fact that several Indigenous leaders aligned Correa's project, and a strong exercise of repression coming from Correa's state. Additionally, corruption scandals regarding the administration of Correa's party accentuated these tensions in the late years of his governance strengthening the arguments of the EIM to be against this party. As Macas stated in his speech during the national Congress of CONAIE referring to the national situation after Correa's government,

My friends, you are very aware of what happened in these 10 years. What has happened with our nationalities, what has happened with our organizations. We are going through a generalized crisis. A deep crisis. This is not only related with the economic crisis that the country is experienced as the result of the corruption that has been taken place in the last 10 years. The most serious problem then is the moral crisis that we are experiencing. Our members get confused because of the roads. They say they are beautiful. However, what has been the cost of those roads? The cost has been debt. The practice of doing public work has been so corrupt that people in charge has benefit enormously of those actions. (Macas. 2017)

Consequently, the opposition of the EIM towards Correa structures around its antagonism towards his economic model, the criminalization of social protest, and the corruption irregularities of the public administration of his party.

Ecuador, a Plurinational Country

Social movements are a key driver of ethnic inclusion in societies with a history of ethnic discrimination (Vogt. 2016:791). The struggle of shifting policies that have promoted marginalization coming from the state has been the main motive of mobilization for the EIM since its creation and of its political party. Historically, the Ecuadorian state has not given the guarantees that Indigenous communities firstly to be recognised as citizens, and secondly in addressing explicitly the cultural background that they possess. In that sense, the state and its institutions in Ecuador were characterised for maintaining colonial characteristics that were legal under the frame of the constitution. This means that there was an internal ideological component in the structure of the Ecuadorian state that persisted regardless of the political changes that it experienced. As Fernandez states,

(...) the concept of internal colonialism relates to the continuation into the Republican era of colonial structures of domination based on racism, exploitation, servitude, and landgrabbing. This direct expropriation of surplus (now not through tribute but through the “free market”), supplemented by the casting aside of Indigenous authorities in favor of a liberal-exclusivist form of citizenship, hardly corresponds to the democratic ideals that the Republic promised. (2017:194).

Regarding this issue, the EIM has been more successful at limiting the implementation of policies that could potentially damage the integrity of Indigenous communities rather than developing political proposals that could potentially benefit them in its implementation. The reason relies paradoxically in their condition of political marginalization that pushed them to develop repertoires of contingency to achieve a degree of political presence in the country. Nonetheless, the evolution of their militancy made it possible that they had a degree of influence in how their social needs were addressed in Ecuadorian constitutions.

For instance, part of the results of their political activity was translated into the establishment of the recognition of Indigenous rights in the Ecuadorian constitution of 1998.

As it is stated in this constitution,

Article 83. Indigenous people, those who define themselves as nationalities with ancestral roots, and the black Afroecuadorian people, are part of the Ecuadorian state, unique and indivisible (Republic of Ecuador 1998).

However, this constitution did not recognise the plurinational aspect that the EIM aimed to achieve. The significance of this word implies several aspects of the Indigenous struggle in the sense that the diversity and autonomy of the Indigenous communities are not recognised by the Ecuadorian state. Plurinationality has been a term of strong debate among the authors who wrote the constitution of 1998 given the fact that its definition could connote the creation of micro estates outside of the jurisdiction of the central one. However, the autonomy and the rights that the EIM refers to have other type of meaning. To demand the right of plurinationality implies having a degree of recognition from the state for two historical reasons. The first one narrows on the recognition of their status as communities that existed before the creation of the Ecuadorian state, and the second one is a demand of compensations for historical mistreatment towards this population. The combination of both factors condensate in addressing plurinationality as recognizing that indigenous people's culture should not be exposed to forced transformations coming from the state, and that their status as Ecuadorian citizens should be recognized and respected. In words of Santi⁴, the notion of the plurinationality remains strictly in the recognition of our people as being Ecuadorian citizens, but also as communities that existed before the creation of the republic of Ecuador (2017).

⁴ Marlon Santi is the current president of Pachakutik and former president of CONAIE in 2008. His actions have narrowed mostly on the defence of Amazon territories from oil extraction from the state and private companies.

Garcia states that a high degree of the misunderstanding between the demands of the Indigenous communities and the those who developed the Ecuadorian constitution in 1998 rely on the distance that these two sectors possess. Autonomy has always been perceived with suspiciousness from the national authorities. Nonetheless, the demand of autonomy implied in the demand of plurinationality coming from the Indigenous communities should be understood in the following way,

(...) the degree of autonomy that Indigenous people claim is partial. It narrows in on a degree of political autonomy in which they can choose their authorities, a legal autonomy to exercise their ancestral justice, and to be able to administrate their communities. The rest would be considered competency of the state such as national security, administration of public resources, etc. In Ecuador this has not being a prosperous enterprise. Even if these issues are legally recognized, the impact is still under debate (Garcia 2017).

The EIM has been strongly critical towards the fact that the construction of the Ecuadorian state and its notion of citizenship was developed under a logic in which they have been perceived as another type of citizens. Therefore, as long as their ethnicity is an obstacle to develop their social existence, the state had to be aware to grant specific rights to diminish the discrimination that they have been exposed to.

The main proposal of Rafael Correa during his first presidential race was to develop and establish a new constitution: an aim that he was able to achieve once he got elected president and won the constituent assembly referendum in 2007. By 2008, Correa and his political movement *Alianza Pais*, were able to reshape the rules of Ecuador under a context in which the presence of the demands of social movements and *Alianza Pais* possessed a considerable hegemony. This moment was a key landmark in the development of the new constitution given the fact that different actors of Ecuadorian society, that have not been included before, played a determinant role on its formulation. It is in this context where the notion of plurinationality was included officially in the constitution of 2008 as a defining characteristic of the country. As the document states,

Art 1, Ecuador is a constitutional state of rights and social justice, democratic, sovereign, independent, unitary, intercultural, plurinational and secular. It is organised as a republic and it is governed in a decentralized manner (Republic of Ecuador 2008).

The constitution of Montecristi of 2008 was recognised as one of the most advanced in its time given the fact that established new guarantees of inclusion to marginal sectors, the explicit recognition of plurality among Ecuadorians, and the recognition of rights to natural environments inside the country. From the perspective of the EIM, the acquisition of the new set of rights that the Montecristi constitution guaranteed to them was a strong victory since it was a direct achievement on the goals of their movement. However, this success also brought a strong sentiment of division among the EIM after this chapter. Considering that CONAIE was never able to achieve its more ambitious goals of structural change (Ospina.2009: 129), Correa started to be perceived as an actor among the EIM that managed to deliver substantial change in the lives of the Indigenous communities in his first years of presidency. As Silva mentions, the left governments demobilized social movements by addressing some of their material, cultural, and political demands (Almeida & Cordero 2015:141). The effectiveness of Correa's party started to create mixed opinions considering the fact that CONAIE was not able to establish a change of this magnitude after several decades of contingent action. Therefore, the presence of Correa became a new factor of division on this stage given the fact that he presented a plausible political proposal with the same ideological horizon of the EIM but was able to deliver changes.

Extracting now to not extract in the Future

Even if Montecristi's constitution was certainly a document that condensed Correa's project in terms of his political vision, it also did it in terms of his ambition. It is through the establishment of the new constitution of Montecristi and the following referendums that Correa deployed that made him able to concentrate more power in the executive branch. To enter into the dynamics in which Correa was able to achieve and maintain its power during his regime

goes beyond the scope of this research. Nonetheless, to make a brief sketch of his rule, his presidency could be catalogued as imperial under the typology of Basabe (2017:7). This means it was a presidency that joined three strong elements that highly increase the impact of his political project. Correa had a constitution that enabled him to have a larger quota of power under the executive branch, majority of the Congress was under control of his party, and finally he benefited from a considerable amount of public resources as consequence of the growth of fiscal capacity of the state and high prices of oil. Because of these reasons, it was not difficult for Correa to progressively detach from the pressure of other social forces that at some point offered their support. As a result, the situation of initial support that the EIM was experiencing towards Correa's party after the establishment of the new constitution, started to turn into progressive scepticism. The reason relied on the fact that the growing power of Correa inside the state was started to be perceived as a threat for society in general, even though the establishment of the new constitution benefited strongly the Indigenous population,

The constitution of Montecristi in the long run would evidence the factor in which the demands from social movements that were recognised by the state and the development of Correa's political project would eventually enter into conflict. In that sense, it is the progressive transformation from a state that recognised the participation of a plurality of actors in the formulation of a new constitution into a personalist political project that would use its hegemony to nullify the presence of other voices inside the government what generated a growing antagonism from the EIM. Before understanding the dynamics of this conflict, it is necessary first to analyse the characteristics of his economic program. Correa's project was aware of the economic constrictions that Ecuador possessed as a country whose economy depends mostly on the extraction of oil. Considering the Progressivism character of Correa's administration, his projects relied on maintaining the state as a source of social investment in public services, and to diversify the economic income of Ecuador in order to not rely

exclusively on the exploitation of raw materials. To do so, Correa justified the need to use the high price market of oil during the period of his administration to be able to finance his political project. His aim was to use the high price of the natural resources that Ecuador possessed temporarily to reach a level of development in which Ecuador should not be in the compulsory situation to use them anymore. Oil was the motor of Correa's Citizen Revolution, yet at the same time its rule established a constitution that was meant to protect the natural resources of Ecuador from exploitation. As the document states,

Art.395. The constitution recognizes the following environmental principles (...) The state will guarantee a sustainable model of development, environmentally balanced and that respects the cultural diversity, that conserve the biodiversity and its capacity of natural regeneration, ensuring the satisfaction of current and future needs (Republic of Ecuador 2008).

Correa's project promoted a rational use of the natural resources that Ecuador possessed, yet the volume of this resources is what maintains its political hegemony. This contradiction of Correa's political project, caused by a serious of factors beyond the jurisdiction of his presidency, is what would cause its break with sectors of the left including the EIM.

The EIM has been historically exposed to circumstances in which the indigenous communities living in the Amazon have suffered from the bad practices of oil extraction from private or public companies. Therefore, part of their demands narrowed strongly on opposing these type of practices, first by demanding the extractive practices of the state and its environmental impact, and most importantly because of the consequences that these practices have brought towards the health of their communities. However, once Correa became president he nationalized oil reserves and increased its constant extraction to maintain the operativity of its state. Postures regarding the state and the EIM regarding this issue have a strong degree of complexity. Nonetheless, the issue puts in relevance two postures of non-reconciliation between Correa's project and the EIM. On one hand, Correa's state defends the possibility of

being able to use the resources of oil extraction to improve the living conditions of rural populations such as the Indigenous ones. As Viteri⁵ states,

There are sectors that have a radical antagonist against extractivism. However, the issue it is not if there should or should not be extractivism. It is how you do extractivism. The result of extractivism should be invested in human capital that has the capacity to generate a new type of economy. We must take care of the impact of our actions, yet actions of this kind are necessary (...) Indigenous nationalities want to improve their lifestyle, to have good education, good services and good economy. This is the reason why they have been in constant dialogue with the project of the Citizen Revolution (2017).

On the other hand, the focus of belligerence coming from CONAIE and Pachakutik relies on the fact that they claim that the state uses the resources in other areas in which the local populations do not receive a direct benefit. As Quishpe⁶ stated regarding to this point in relation to Correa's policies,

We will struggle against extractivism since we are against a system in which the state favors capitalism by privileging the interests of big enterprises, market, utility and competition. In that sense, the state does not act accordingly with the needs of the people. I want to be clear, we are not against a rational use of mining activity, but certainly we are against human ambition (2017).

The posture of the EIM regarding extractivism practices has promoted the development of repertoires of contingency in the Amazon region that have had violent outcomes between indigenous groups and members of the police and the Ecuadorian army. In that sense, by reaching a point of non-consent, the relationship between Correa and the EIM took an

⁵ Carlos Viteri Gualinga currently occupies a seat in the national assembly of Ecuador. He belongs to the Sarayaku Indigenous community in the Amazon. Viteri was elected under the badge of Alianza Pais. However, after the fragmentation of the party he decided to join the coalition of Rafael Correa after he decided to leave Alianza Pais party.

⁶ Salvador Quishpe is the current prefect of the province of Zamora Chinchipe in the Ecuadorian Amazon. He is an active member of CONAIE and militant of Pachakutik. His role in the EIM has been highly admired regarding his compromise with the struggle of Indigenous rights from his public office position and for being present in mobilizations against Correa's government.

antagonist character in which the structural principles of both forces found a point of strong divergence.

The contradiction between the rights recognised in the constitution and the government practices of extraction revealed two determinant aspects regarding the political project of Correa. Firstly, it exposed the limits of his political project regarding the dependency of Ecuador's economy on commodities in the world market, and secondly, it exposed the instrumental use of social struggles for political purposes. In that sense, the conflicts around oil extraction and mining exposed a big gap between Correa and the Indigenous movement (Becker 2009: 214). As Fernandez states,

A characteristic of posneoliberal governments is that they have politics of inclusion, and politics of repression. They promoted the discourse of eradicating poverty, to promote the notion of intercultural nations, a situation that in 2008 becomes a reality in Ecuador, yet at the same time there are policies of criminalization and repression against protest (Fernandez. 2017).

Correa accused the Indigenous movement of being infantile ecologists who restricted any potential of development. As a result, it is under these circumstances that it is possible to understand then that despite Correa's seemingly leftist credentials, Ecuador's militant Indigenous movement moved deeply into the anti-Correa camp (Becker 2009: 207).

Framing Appropriation

The incorporation of elements of the Indigenous cosmology in the discourse of the political project of Correa was a characteristic that provided symbolic force to his movement. As it has been shown before, the activity of the EIM from its Uprising in the 1990s put cultural elements of popular struggle in public discourse. Given the weakness of left-wing movements after the end of the rule of Borja in 1994, the strength of the Indigenous movement beyond its activities of contingency relied mostly on providing a framing of opposition against political projects that were more empathetic with neoliberalism. The framing of the EIM embraced a

process of struggle that initially was embraced exclusively by the Indigenous movement and progressively started to move towards the agency of other actors. Correa was able to articulate his populist discourse of polarization among the Ecuadorian society in a moment where the credibility of the Ecuadorian population towards the system of parties was low. Considering a decade of failed governments that tried to develop policies that highly affected the popular classes of the country, the symbolical appropriation of the struggles of social movements was a key factor to portray Correa's movement as an alternative that was empathetic with the needs of the popular classes of Ecuador. Consequently, the framing of the EIM provided substantial elements to the articulation of the populist discourse of Correa and the identity of his party.

The EIM through its historical performance became a clear anti-neoliberal subject. Their framing decoded the state and the economic elites as the main actors of producing conditions that could significantly threaten the integrity of their communities. As a response, they developed a discourse and actions in which they tried to present and struggle for a political alternative of the model that was being executed by the state in the decade of 1990. Correa's political movement possessed the same discursive structure with the major difference that tries to articulate more sectors beyond an ethnic cleavage. He also promoted the idea that the main contender of the Ecuadorian popular classes were the political and economic elite that has been ruling the country since its foundation. Consequently, the use of Indigenous symbolism was used to develop a sense of identity in his movement with the aim to foster ideas around class and nationalism. In that sense, Correa handled to make of social struggles a brand which he highly exploited to maintain its level of acceptance high during the periods of electoral campaign and government. The appropriation of the Indigenous framing was present in several levels: in its discourse, its political and economic proposals and the aesthetics of the party's communication.

For example, it was not casual that the aim of the political project of Correa wanted to achieve was called *Sumak Kawsay*. This kichwa word means living well and it is present in the constitution of Montecristi as an alternative way of achieving development. *Sumak Kawsay* is the product of ancestral knowledge of Indigenous cultures in which the respect towards the environment and the land is an essential part to foster wellbeing among the community. This idea was politically used by Correa to show its distance and demarcation with economic processes that narrow more strictly around capital rather than individuals. The idea behind *Sumak Kawsay* was to find an autonomous pathway in which the state promoted the establishment of an economic model able to foster wellbeing while maintaining its respect for nature. This, however, responds to an instrumental use of indigenous concepts to provide a misleading image of a political project that follows other dynamics. As Reascos states,

Rafael Correa's movement, the citizen revolution, appropriated and misused some categories of the indigenous world in a technocratic context. In fact, it could also be told that Correa's regime used indigenous categories and re signified them in a capitalist sense (2017).

An interesting aspect about Reascos analysis relies on the aspect of using cultural elements of a group and providing them with another meaning. Correa, as mentioned before, used the framing of Indigenous struggles and elements of their culture to provide identity to his movement to acquire its aspect of an anti-establishment force. This action, however, would bring other consequences on the capacity to the EIM to develop contingency considering the evolving levels of belligerence that this two groups had.

Social movements weakened from their peak during anti neoliberal mobilization given the fact that the framing of their causes was active with the rulers of the post-neoliberal period. Even though the EIM would eventually become an antagonist towards Correa's government, the development of a new framing of contingency with the same degree of strength was not possible for them given the fact that the brand of struggle was highly positioned in another

actor. The EIM was not the only contingent force that experienced this situation. The development of a populist left discourse used by Correa's government demobilized other actors of the left that tried to make explicit its distance from this political project. Correa's project developed strong rivals during his period of presidency, a period in which the identity of his movement evolved strongly by expanding the credentials of being a leftwing Progressivism government. Correa's opposition is a conglomerate of different groups that respond to the new re alignment of forces that structured during his presidency. These groups have developed repertoires of contingency to show their disagreement. However, the capacity of the EIM to foster mobilizations and to structure non-organized actors around their development of repertoires was highly diminished. Therefore, during Correa's presidency to combat the political class and neoliberalism stopped working as the discourse that articulated progressivism forces in Ecuador (Ramirez 2010: 104). This aspect of framing appropriation has a strong similitude with what Lupu has called as brand dilution. In his words, "(...) parties cannot always control their brand. A party's brand can dilute because of its competitors' behaviors." (2016:29).

The results of the framing appropriation of EIM by Correa's party became evident in the two dimensions that compose this movement. This means in the capacity of CONAIE in developing contingent actions, and in the electoral results that Pachakutik had after the consolidation of Alianza Pais. For instance, Correa's presidency experienced the development of several riots during august of 2015 after he propose to implement two laws regarding inheritance and plus value. The first one relied on taxing until 47,5% of a good when this one was given as inheritance, and the second one was a tax established towards the speculation of territories where the state was going to develop public investment. As a result, several sectors of the middle classes of Quito and Guayaquil developed massive mobilizations to show its rejection against Correa's administration. New actors of contingency appeared leading this

trend of process, such as Jaime Nebot, the mayor of Guayaquil; Mauricio Rodas, the mayor of Quito; and Guillermo Lasso, the leader of the liberal right party CREO, framing their protest under the defence of private property and the development of better democratic institutions. The EIM was present in these protests. However, it did not occupy the role of leadership that it used to possess. This exhaustion was also present during the presidential elections of 2016. Pachakutik and remnants of the left that were not co-opted by Correa's project structured around of a new coalition called *Acuerdo Nacional por el Cambio*, that promoted the presidential candidate Paco Moncayo, ex-mayor of Quito. After the first round Moncayo finished fourth showing that the potential of opposition against the victory of *Alianza Pais* would hardly took place from left wing coalitions (revise). The limited degree of influence that the EIM started to experience comes from the fact that it organises its opposition from the same ideological space as Correa, even though its relationship with this actor is involved with conflict.

Considering this, the framing of social struggle promoted historically by EIM and its political party reached its limits once these characteristics provided elements to structure Correa's party. Taking into account that the framing of contingency was used by the ruler, sectors that develop contingency articulated around new actors, developing different repertoires and structuring new discourses that distinguished from the characteristics that defined Correa's movement, characteristics that need to be different from the ones promoted by the EIM. The EIM by being clearly an antagonist actor of Correa's administration has tried to develop actions of contingency and of political struggle coming from the structure of its movement. However, the impact of their militancy has been strongly limited, as well as the efforts of other social movements that have tried to mobilize against Correa coming from the same ideological tendency. These phenomena seem to be common on social movements that disarticulate, or never joined, the political projects of Progressivism governments but share the

same framing as the state. In that sense, the appropriation of progressivism governments of social movements framing made that their support for contingency was no longer possible. The reason relies that this governments appropriate, used and re signify these elements that compose the identity of social movements with other meanings.

VII. Conclusion

In order to conclude, the following thesis aimed to find a causal explanation towards the decay of the participation of the Indigenous movement as the main actor of contingency in Ecuador during the first decade of the 21st century. The current research emphasises that the critical juncture that developed the progressive decay of the EIM took place after the movement entered in an ethnic retreat. This decision was a consequence of the failed alliance of the political party Pachakutik and the Lucio Gutierrez' party *Sociedad Patriótica*. The exposition of the EIM to the dynamics of electoral politics once its repertoires of contingency reach its limits, and the use of the EIM structure for the benefit of Gutierrez during the presidential race of 2002. Once the alliance finished, the EIM enters in a context of ethnic retreat in which a stronger political actor, Correa's political project, who uses the framing of the movement for his purposes and occupies the ideological space that the EIM used to occupy. During the Progressivism rule of Correa, the EIM would develop a relation of belligerence towards Correa because of its distance with the political and economic project he executed. As result, the EIM developed repertoires of contingency with the characteristic that the impact of these efforts is strongly diminished given the resignification of their framing of struggle. Consequently, the decay of the EIM is the result of the action of two mechanisms that affected the movement in terms of its structure and afterwards in terms of its identity.

The study of the EIM entailed a variety of complications in terms of the nature of its composition. A situation that constantly challenged the literature that addresses the study of social movements. In first place, the EIM is composed of an extended plurality of sub-organizations that work in a coordinated way through CONAIE. In that sense, thinking about the Indigenous populations and its core structure as a single group with a smooth and homogenous performance would be misleading. However, their position in the Ecuadorian

society, a situation that has been constructed around them given historical prejudices and continuous economic and social exclusion, has made it possible to study as a single unit that has been in a constant process of transformation. However, there are other Indigenous organizations that are not part of CONAIE that also work for acquiring better conditions for their communities that for methodological reasons were not considered in this study. The second level of complexity relies on the relationship of CONAIE and its political party Pachakutik. The transformation of a social movement into a political party has been addressed by previous literature as an evolving process. The case of the EIM shows that this is not case given the fact that the structure of its movement and its party are simultaneous, and the second one is hierarchically subordinated to the movement. In that sense, CONAIE as a social movement possesses a degree of authority over Pachakutik given the fact that the latter represents a direct canal between bases and leadership whose dialogue is later transmitted to Pachakutik. A situation that has not always being smooth.

Analysing the dynamics of the EIM in the process of its rise and weakening according to the theoretical framework presented in the beginning of the dissertation, the movement presents characteristics that challenge the conceptions of these approximations regarding the study of social movements. Literature regarding the study of social movements tend to analyse it as a progressive process of maturity in which riots acquire gradually more complex characteristics that evolve into a social movement. This means the development of performances and repertoires eventually achieve levels of cohesion that provide elements of the construction of a sense of identity. The process of the EIM followed an inverse process. It was through the political awareness of the identity of its members that several communities started to develop levels of complex organization in which the manifestation of repertoires of contingency evidenced the result of their process as a movement instead of triggering its beginning. In addition, identity plays a strong role on the articulation of the movement given

the fact that the symbols, framing and ideology of the movement gave characteristics to a political actor that posited new ways of thinking in Ecuadorian society, characteristics that were later used by other political actors as we have analysed before. Regarding this point, the articulation of social movements around identity has been developed by the theoretical scope of New Social Movements, a situation that remains controversial in its use in Indigenous movements given the fact that the nature of their political mobilization around identity has been a constant element before the historical context where this theoretical approximation was developed.

In terms of understanding if the EIM has been a successful movement in the pursuit of its objectives it is worth mentioning that the impact of the EIM has been strongly relevant for Indigenous communities and for other sectors of Ecuadorian society. This movement created the possibility for Indigenous people that through an autonomous initiative, with the help of external actors, it is possible to develop deep networks of solidarity structures that articulate for political purposes. Consequently, the EIM has been effective in addressing historical demands into the elaboration of the last constitution of Ecuador in 2008, a document that ensures several guarantees of rights recognition to Indigenous people. The EIM is still active through its main institution CONAIE and its political party Pachakutik. Even though the scope of influence that both institutions had substantially diminished, its structure has not disintegrated and has maintained a stable level of organization regardless of the different difficulties experienced in the changing political landscape of Ecuador. In that sense, Indigenous people in Ecuador have managed to develop and sustain a political movement with complex levels of organization that are continuously working on improving the difficulties that this ethnic group experience. Nonetheless, the struggle to overcome poverty and exclusion remains a challenge for the movement and the Ecuadorian state since these conditions keep persisting regardless of the process explained in this thesis.

New Actors of Contingency

An interesting characteristic of repertoires of contention is that they can be learned by different actors in a given society. These phenomena take place when sectors of civil society who have not developed actions of contingency before imitate actions of this nature that have shown to be effective in other periods of history. The repertoires and strategies deployed by the Indigenous movement found its peak of effectiveness in a context in which institutional weakness and the implementation of policies that were sound with a neoliberal paradigm represented a threat towards the integrity of their communities. However, the inclination of the political forces in favour of these type of projects experienced a shift after the election of Rafael Correa and the progressive rise of the Pink Wave governments. With a discourse that promoted social justice and that attacked the previous system of political rule, it seemed that the government of Correa was the one who carried the voice that the EIM was struggling to find during their previous years of struggle. However, as has been explained, the tensions between these two forces were present from the beginning and they progressively evolve into a more direct antagonism. Correa's project, even if addressed directly the struggles of social movements, had its own priorities which differ strongly from the actors that in a given point claimed to represent. These situations caused that the symbolic force that the Indigenous movement possessed, as other actors that occupied the left spectrum, experienced strong setbacks given the fact that developing an opposition that shared the same ideological objectives was not strong enough to distance itself from Correa's project.

The chapters of contingency that took place during the rule of Rafael Correa evidenced the consequences of a country that reorganized its political forces in a context of rising populism. This means that the new actors that mobilized contingency during the period of Correa were composed by a heterogeneous group of different ideologies that articulated around their antagonism towards the Correa's state. The motives of mobilization rely on new frames

of contingency that characterised the strong contradictions and flaws that Correa's period presented. For instance, the demands of democratic inclusion, social inequality, and lack of state presence attending social problems stopped being arguments of mobilization. Instead Ecuadorian society started to articulate around defending natural resources, to address the presence of an authoritarian style of governance, to show its criticism towards the ideological paradigm that Correa followed during his administration, the emergent presence of corruption scandals inside of Correa's party in the development of public projects, and the party's control in institutions that guarantee the presence of democratic practices such as the National Electoral Council. In that sense, the development of new political practices caused new frames of contingency and mobilization that activated other sectors and demobilized others. Consequently, the coexistence of previous actors of contingency, such as the Indigenous movement, accompanied by the mobilization of new sectors, such as conservative groups and middle classes in Quito and Guayaquil, announced a transformation and realignment in the political forces of Ecuador.

The Future of the Indigenous Movement

The presidential elections of 2016 announced the end of a period in Ecuadorian history. After 10 years of the rule of Rafael Correa, a democratic transition took place in which Lenin Moreno, his former vice-president, was elected to become constitutional president of Ecuador. Once in power, Moreno was expected to be a puppet government of Correa's leadership. However, after putting in jail to Jorge Glass, his initial Vice-president, for his presence in illegal use of public funds and having launched a strong campaign against the corruption present inside of the state and the party *Alianza Pais*, Correa has become his main opposition. As Ospina describes,

The conflict between Moreno and Correa was a complete surprise. Everyone expected a change, but not with the speed and antagonism that we perceived. Correa is putting

effort in becoming the main opposition of the new president. Speaking from a hypothetical point of view, what CONAIE needs to become stronger, is a weaker government in the sense that it is forced to make alliances with actors beyond the party they represent (Ospina. 2017).

The distance of Moreno from Correa in Ecuador has been considered as part of the decline of Pink Wave regimes that were popular in Latin America in the 21st century. However, it is not clear what direction Ecuador is taking under the administration of Moreno. It is a fact that his priorities have relied on increasing horizontal accountability inside of the government and fostered more spaces of democratic expression, yet the economic policies that he is going to implement to face the crisis that Correa left are still unknown. In addition, part of the priorities of the new government rely on maintaining a constant dialogue with different sectors of Ecuadorian society that have distanced from having a certain relation with the state. Part of this policy follows Moreno's guideline that in order to face the difficulties that Ecuador has to challenge in the future it cannot limit towards the help and support of those who were condescending with the previous administration.

In consequence, the posture that Moreno has taken with the Indigenous Movement is, as expected, radically different from the one that Correa had. For Moreno, CONAIE is one of the pillars of Ecuadorian politics given the fact that they have promoted the struggle of issues of concern regarding inequality and exploitation of natural resources. In this sense, there is not a conscious effort coming from the government to criminalize or pursue the political activity of the Indigenous movement which has caused that acquired more strength and concentration compared with the year 2016. As Santi states,

There is a current re order of the movement. Problems such as oil and mine extraction push us to be together. Regardless the preference of the government to give to other organizations spaces of representations, we maintain a strong number of members that remain with us in the different regions of the country. Now that we have less fronts of struggle, we can take some oxygen and put efforts in the regrouping of the movement (2017).

Nonetheless, the Indigenous movement faces the situation of not being able to promote their struggles in the arena of politics as it happened in the previous two decades given the fact that the framing of their political activism has acquired other meanings after the government of Correa. In that sense, after the end of Correa's period the chances of strengthening the EIM are higher. However, the elements that provide meaning to their demands face the situation of being exhausted because of their instrumental use by the previous government.

Social mobilization in Ecuador is currently developing a framing of deepening democracy and quality of institutional rule. In that sense, the frame of contingency regarding the evolution of the Ecuadorian state has transformed from attacking the state for being weak and non-effective towards demanding limits of its increasing control and influence towards different spheres of Ecuadorian society. Many objectives that the EIM aimed have been accomplished by the Indigenous movement during the last 20 years and their ideas have become part of the state apparatus and public discourse. Nonetheless, the need of the movement to be structured around an ethnic cleavage remains given the situation that Indigenous population are still exposed to conditions of economic vulnerability and political marginalization regardless the historical efforts that have been taken to transform it. This situation has decreased substantially, however, given the fact the dynamics that the current Ecuadorian contexts presents the EIM must be aware of opportunities that this imply as the weaknesses that the movement possess. As Tituaña states, the indigenous movement must update its discourse to keep their political participation alive (2017). A type of participation that beyond the consequences that they have had for their community, had also resonated in other sectors of Ecuadorian society by showing that actively work in the construction of a different society is possible.

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