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Indigenous Political Participation: The Key to Rights Realization in the Andes

Abstract

"There is no way back, this is our time, the awakening of the indigenous people. We'll keep fighting till the end. Brother Evo Morales still has lots to do, one cannot think that four years are enough after 500 years of submission and oppression," said Fidel Surco, a prominent indigenous leader, reflecting on Bolivia's first indigenous president entering his second term (Carroll & Schipani 2009).

The Andean region is particularly appropriate for examining indigenous political rights because 34-40 million indigenous people reside mostly in this region. The actualization of human rights for Andean indigenous groups is an inherently complex issue, especially in Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru, which have similar colonial legacies and have developed along comparable political and economic trajectories. Indigenous communities need political access in order to fight for their rights and to hold their governments accountable. The key to the actualization of human rights for indigenous peoples lies within their greater political inclusion.

Keywords

Human rights, Andes, Bolivia, Ecuador, Peru, Indigenous rights, Civil rights, Political rights, Development

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Indigenous Political Participation: The Key to Rights Realization in the Andes

By Stephanie Selekman

"There is no way back, this is our time, the awakening of the indigenous people. We'll keep fighting till the end. Brother Evo Morales still has lots to do, one cannot think that four years are enough after 500 years of submission and oppression," said Fidel Surco, a prominent indigenous leader, reflecting on Bolivia's first indigenous president entering his second term (Carroll & Schipani 2009).

The Andean region is particularly appropriate for examining indigenous political rights because 34-40 million indigenous people reside mostly in this region. The actualization of human rights for Andean indigenous groups is an inherently complex issue, especially in Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru, which have similar colonial legacies and have developed along comparable political and economic trajectories. Indigenous communities need political access in order to fight for their rights and to hold their governments accountable. The key to the actualization of human rights for indigenous peoples lies within their greater political inclusion.

The significance of political access for indigenous people's human rights is threefold. First, the existence of relatively stable democracies in Bolivia, Ecuador, and Peru present opportunities for indigenous communities to participate politically through legitimate means. Second, only the indigenous communities truly know the unique challenges they face and must have political representation to voice these concerns and to ensure legislative change. Finally, without the specific knowledge that is held by indigenous peoples, outsiders have few opportunities to appropriately and accurately represent them. This paper will examine the current status of indigenous peoples in Bolivia, Ecuador, and Peru; the status of their human rights; and the obstacles that must be overcome for them to have full political access.

The current status of the Bolivian indigenous as the political minority stands in contrast to the fact that they are the statistical majority, making up 60 percent of the population (Inter-American Commission on Human Rights 2009). The 2006 election of Evo Morales was a major indigenous landmark in Bolivia's history, as was the new Bolivian Constitution in 2007, which includes many provisions for indigenous peoples. Indigenous Bolivians have also aligned with a well-established political party--the Socialist Movement Party (MAS)—which led to the election of Morales. The MAS party also recently gained the majority in the Chamber of Deputies. Significant legislation concerning government decentralization reform was also passed supporting the political rights of the indigenous Bolivians, with the aim of encouraging their political participation. The Law of Popular Participation was adopted in 1994, leading to the creation of new municipalities (314 in total), direct election of municipality officials, and a general increase in available resources and power to these municipalities (Reyes-Garcia 2010). This created many opportunities for the marginalized indigenous groups to participate in decision-making processes at the local level. Instead of political majorities dominating at the federal level, the political arena has expanded in a more participative democratic? democracy-esque way.

Despite progress since the first indigenous mobilization in the 1980s, the need for improvement remains, as evidenced by the lack of adequate indigenous representation in the Bolivian legislative bodies, the Chamber of Deputies, and the Chamber of Senators. There are only

seven of 130 seats in the Chamber of Deputies reserved for representatives from indigenous areas, indicating that pro-indigenous rhetoric surrounding increased representation via ethnic quotas “prove hollow” (Schaefer 2009). Though the MAS are supported by most indigenous groups, this support emerged from the lack of political access in the 1990s rather than from the fact that MAS accurately reflects indigenous peoples’ views. Furthermore, information about the Law of Popular Participation has yet to reach rural areas; therefore, indigenous peoples are unaware of its existence and the corresponding details that apply to them, such as their available options for participation. Consequently, it is no surprise that indigenous peoples have not yet been elected as municipal officers. Ultimately, indigenous Bolivians now have many codified laws to protect and to encourage their rights, yet the legislation does not accurately reflect the reality of indigenous political access.

Similar to Bolivia, the indigenous of Ecuador have made tremendous strides since their first mobilizations in the 1970s and 1980s. They only comprise 20 percent of the total Ecuadorian population, yet they are considered to be the strongest indigenous group in the Americas (Radcliffe 2007; DeShazo 2007). This is mainly due to the formation of the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE) in the 1990s. In 1995, CONAIE joined the *Movimiento de Unidad Plurinacional Pachakutik*, (the Pachakutik party) because of the shared goal of uniting minority voices under a single umbrella political party. The Pachakutik party was remarkably successful in its first legislative election in 1996, winning ten percent of the seats in Ecuador’s National Assembly and at one point, nominating a candidate for the presidency (DeShazo 2009; UNHCR 2006).

The success of the Pachakutik was significant yet short-lived. The last elections in April 2009 revealed that most of the larger parties won seats, but the Pachakutik party was not mentioned in the results. Despite the view of CONAIE being one of the most successful indigenous movements in Latin America, much remains to be achieved in terms of their political representation and access to the political arena. For example, Ecuador drafted and passed a new constitution in 1998, including provisions for indigenous political participation, yet this reform has brought “no substantial policy changes” (Schaefer 2009). Also, many indigenous Ecuadorians face discrimination at the polls and the Supreme Electoral Court was reported by the United Nations Human Rights Council as “promoting discriminatory practices against the country’s indigenous citizens” (UNHCR 2006). This illustrates that CONAIE is making progress, but remains an inadequate remedy to the issue. The attempt of the indigenous to politically participate via CONAIE reveals a level of freedom that has yet to be realized in Peru.

Peru has a substantial indigenous population, in which 45 percent of the population identifies as Quechua or Aymara (Morrissey 2009). Unfortunately, there has been scarce recognition at the legislative level concerning indigenous people’s political rights; this results from the attitude of the Peruvian government, which has adopted an “indigenista” policy aimed at the “elimination of the ‘Indian,’ deemed backward and illiterate, and his assimilation into an urban and educated society” (Morrissey 2009). The government’s racist and discriminatory approach permeates throughout every level of society, especially as the media criminalizes indigenous protestors and portrays them as terrorists. One of the regrettable reasons for blatant rights violations by the government stems from mining disputes; mining accounts for 64 percent of Peru’s income and much of the land the government wants to exploit is indigenous land (Poole 2010). Ultimately, the respect for indigenous rights, especially land rights, comes at too high of a cost.

Another obstacle to the mobilization of Peru’s indigenous population is the schism between highland Andean groups and lowland Amazonian peoples. At times they both have united under

various organizational names to discuss issues, yet the Amazonian indigenous groups remain more successful and organized in their solo endeavors. This is partly due to the massive uprising of the Maoist insurgency known as “Shining Path” in the 1980s and 1990s, a group that “actively disdained indigenous ideologies” (Greene 2006). At the same time, the Amazonian indigenous were able to react to Alberto Fujimori’s 1993 Constitution, which annulled the inalienability of indigenous communal land with a petition containing 55,000 signatures (Greene 2006). The Peruvian indigenous must contend with very different issues than their Bolivian and Ecuadorian counterparts and, therefore, have an even more pressing need for political access.

As illustrated above, the indigenous of Bolivia, Ecuador, and Peru have extremely different political statuses; however, they all face the same key impediments to having adequate political representation and access. These obstacles are either developmental or cultural. Developmentally, the indigenous peoples lack physical infrastructure, adequate healthcare, and access to education. Because the majority of the indigenous live in rural and geographically hard-to-reach areas, there needs to be a way for information to reach the indigenous communities; this deficiency is illustrated by the lack of knowledge about the Law of Popular Participation in Bolivia. If the indigenous are not in good health and are illiterate, becoming politically involved becomes nearly impossible. The fact that indigenous has become synonymous with “impoverished” and “poor” ultimately demonstrates the developmental obstacles that have impeded their political participation.

Furthermore, entrenched cultural attitudes toward indigenous peoples have greatly hampered their efforts to become politically involved. In Bolivia, the Ese Ejja fear for their lives outside of their communities and, therefore, refuse to participate politically. The existence of enslavement of the Guarani people in the Chaco region of Bolivia shows that institutions lack the ability to “safeguard” the human rights of this group-- who don’t even realize they have rights at all due to their captivity (IACHR 2009). Discrimination is rampant “in the behavior of public officials at the national and subnational levels and the attitudes of political parties” (IACHR 2009). The Peruvian government’s attitude exemplifies the hegemonic discriminatory views toward indigenous peoples. Unfortunately, this omnipresent issue is not easily remedied; steps can be made through education though, which may alter peoples’ perception of the indigenous-- especially at the non-indigenous level.

In conclusion, the key to actualizing human rights for indigenous peoples lies in their legitimate and successful political participation. Though Bolivia and Ecuador have a longer history of indigenous mobilization and more codified laws concerning indigenous political rights, their full political access is impeded by the same obstacles that face the Peruvian indigenous. The lack of development in these rural areas prevents the indigenous from having the physical infrastructure, education, and healthcare they need to effectively participate in politics. Culturally, the hegemonic discrimination faced by the indigenous even by federal institutions has proven to be extremely problematic. The highly complex nature of this issue suggests it will not be solved in the near future unless drastic economic and cultural changes are made. It is only with perseverance and dedication on the part of the indigenous, with support from the international community, that human rights may finally be realized for this vulnerable population.

Annotated Bibliography

Albro, Robert. 2005. "The Indigenous in the Plural in Bolivian Oppositional Politics." *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 24 (4):433-453.

Annotation: Albro evaluates the move of members of the indigenous population to more urban areas and describes how they are subsequently becoming an integral part of political life in Bolivia. He writes that Evo Morales's rise to power has changed the discourse of what it means to be indigenous. Morales has balanced the indigenous agenda with other Bolivian interests by equating the "indigenous" Bolivian with all Bolivians-- uniting all Bolivians through their shared heritage. This shift towards the shared heritage of all Bolivians helps Morales appeal to every citizen, thereby solidifying his stance as a populist. Most of Albro's article analyzes Morales's political party, the Bolivian Socialist Party (MAS), in regards to how it must strike a delicate balance between championing indigenous groups' rights and appealing to urban Bolivians. The article is very academic and not accessible to all audiences.

Anaya, S. James. 2009. Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of Indigenous People A/HRC/12/34: United Nations. Available online: <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/refworld/rwmain?docid=4a9d1befd>.

Annotation: This article is very informative about the status of indigenous people in Peru, especially in the Amazon region. There is a specific need for a commission to be set up to address recent violent events in the Utcubamba and Bagua provinces and it was recommended to have the international community participate in this commission. Also, the report recommends certain policies and procedures need to be created as a way for indigenous groups to exercise and to protect their land rights, as the current system is quite inadequate in this regard.

Carroll, Rory and Andres Schipani. 2009. "Evo Morales Wins Landslide Victory in Bolivian Presidential Elections." *The Guardian* (7 December). Available online; <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/dec/07/morales-presidential-victory>.

Annotation: Carroll and Schipani concisely describe the victory of Evo Morales as the new, and first indigenous, Bolivian president. They paint a picture of the current status of Bolivia at the time of the election in a way that is accessible to all readers. The article is a useful source for anyone needing or wanting a quick idea of the election results and the work that Morales has cut out for him in terms of developmental, social, and economic issues.

Chaplin, Ann. 2010. "Social Movements in Bolivia: From Strength to Power." *Community Development Journal* 45 (3):346-355.

Annotation: Ann Chaplin writes an article that would be of interest to academics studying social movements in Latin America. She successfully outlines how the combined efforts of the impoverished, indigenous, and labor unions impacted the rise of social movements in Bolivia and their ability to forge their way into the political arena. The *campesino*/indigenous movement's efforts culminated in an unprecedented victory with the election of Evo Morales as president in 2006. Under Morales, a new constitution was drafted giving indigenous groups more rights, as much of the language was based on that of the United

Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The new rise and success of social movements in Bolivia has drastically changed the political climate, considering that since the 1980s, political parties only used to cater to the interests of small elite groups.

Colloredo-Mansfeld, Rudi. 2007. "The Power of Ecuador's Indigenous Communities in an Era of Cultural Pluralism." *Social Analysis* 51 (2):86-106.

Annotation: Colloredo-Mansfeld makes a well-formulated argument about the power of community in simultaneously serving as the "base" of the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE) and potentially undermining the organization by prioritizing community needs as most significant. Although the author realizes the motivation of these communities, he also acknowledges that the identity of the indigenous is at risk. Some Ecuadorian indigenous communities become politically active while rediscovering their roots in order to protect their cultural heritage, while others are inspired to modernize and break ties with the past. Therefore, solidarity under national organizations like CONAIE can be threatened by the importance of the community structure. Ultimately, in the case of Ecuador, the convergence of communities have made the political arena more accessible and will continue to do so in the future.

DeShazo, Peter. 2009. "Outlook for Indigenous Politics in the Andean Region: A Report of the CSIS Americas Program." Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies.

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

Dunbar-Ortiz, Roxanne. 2007. "Indigenous Peoples and the Left in Latin America." *Monthly Review: An Independent Socialist Magazine* 59 (3):85-94.

Annotation: Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz gives an overall generalization of the effect of the political left on the indigenous, especially on their right to self-determination. She spends more time on the history of state formation in the Americas and quoting other authors than on describing her own conclusions. The most valuable idea from the article is that indigenous or "Indian" movements in Latin America rely on their historical roots (being in the Americas before the Europeans) and uniting all indigenous groups under one movement to lend them legitimacy. The right to self-determination is the "Indian" movement's main

goal, especially in regards to political and land rights. Dunbar-Ortiz's article leaves much to be desired in the way of a conclusion and would be more helpful to the audience if the overly broad generalizations were supported by specific cases.

Eaton, Kent. 2007. "Backlash in Bolivia: Regional Autonomy as a Reaction against Indigenous Mobilization." *Politics & Society* 35 (1):71-102.

Annotation: Eaton makes an interesting and lengthy observation on the "backlash" that has occurred in Bolivia due to indigenous political mobilization. It seems that having a politically active indigenous population would improve the democratic status of Bolivia's government, but not without repercussions. The economic elite have found indigenous mobilization threatening and, to protect their status, have called for regional autonomy, specifically in the Santa Cruz area. This is interesting in light of the fact that history has shown elites demanding authoritarianism in response to minority uprisings. Eaton makes an interesting case, though for those who are not necessarily economically inclined this may not prove to be an enticing read.

"Election Guide: Bolivia." 2010. In *Democracy Assistance & Election News for the Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening*. Washington: International Foundation for Electoral Systems. Available online: <http://www.electionguide.org/country.php?ID=27>.

Annotation: The International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) offers an extremely useful and user-friendly resource for election results in countries all over the world. The data presented is thorough, accurate, and reliable. It allows you to search by election type, country, and year. It is especially helpful for data from Latin American countries, as political parties change frequently and often without warning. The IFES also offers a translation of political party names into English.

"Election Guide: Ecuador." 2008. In *Democracy Assistance & Election News for the Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening*. Washington: International Foundation for Electoral Systems. Available online: <http://electionguide.org/country.php?ID=64>

Annotation: The International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) offers an extremely useful and user-friendly resource for election results in countries all over the world. The data presented is thorough, accurate, and reliable. It is especially helpful for data from Latin American countries, as political parties change frequently and often without warning. The IFES also offers a translation of political party names into English.

Fischer, Edward F. 2007. "Indigenous Peoples, Neo-liberal Regimes, and Varieties of Civil Society in Latin America." *Social Analysis* 51 (2):1-18.

Annotation: Fischer writes an academic article that may not be helpful to most audiences. For my purposes, his article draws many interesting parallels between civil society participation and neo-liberalism. Although neo-liberalism often undermines the success of marginalized and impoverished groups such as indigenous communities, he argues that it simultaneously engenders the successful political participation of these groups. He draws

upon examples in Latin America to illustrate the delicate balance neo-liberalism creates between allowing for more civic participation, while also disenfranchising vulnerable populations. Fischer argues that this participation is positive, but only in regards to incremental changes as opposed to revolutionary ones. He presents a well-structured argument which draws support from both historical and current events.

Giulino, Meghan E. 2005. "At the Polls and in the Streets: This Rise of Indigenous Participation in Latin America." *Conference Papers -- American Political Science Association*, 2005 Annual Meeting, Washington DC, 1-38.

Annotation: Meghan Giulino writes a lengthy but thorough essay documenting the rise of indigenous political participation in Latin America. She concentrates specifically on Bolivia and Ecuador as their indigenous political movements are one of the strongest in South America. She argues that elections are the most effective way to have indigenous concerns addressed, and that political leaders play a crucial role as "democracy stabilizers or underminers" since they determine the "rules of the game." The indigenous were excluded in the past from voting because of literacy tests, election information available only in Spanish, and geographic inaccessibility. This has changed in Bolivia--especially because of the 1994 Law of Popular Participation, which decentralized the government and split the country into 314 municipalities. Finally, Giulino argues that although the indigenous are able to participate more actively, the electoral systems in Latin America still fail to strike an appropriate balance between "fostering representativeness and creating strong governments." Anyone interested in indigenous political participation in Latin America would enjoy this article.

Greene, Shane. 2006. "Getting over the Andes: The Geo-Eco-Politics of Indigenous Movements in Peru's Twenty-First Century Inca Empire." *Journal of Latin American Studies* 38 (2):327-354.

Annotation: Shane Greene writes a thorough and academically thought-provoking article about the popular notion of the "nonexistence" of indigenous political participation in Peru, which is such because the Andean region has been equated with Peru as a whole. Such a view of Peru completely disregards the very active Amazonian region of Peru and its accomplishments. This can be explained partially by the fact that, historically, "indigena" refers to Andean peoples while "nativo" refers to those groups in the Amazon. He explains the recent silence from indigenous groups as an effect of the relatively recent violence by the Maoist insurgency group known as "Sendero Luminoso," as this group was not partial to indigenous ideologies. Greene ends his well-written and persuasive article with the optimistic prediction that the indigenous groups in Peru will continue to mobilize and that the Andean region will break its silence now that Amazonian groups have set the stage for them to do so.

Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, Organization of American States. 2000." Second Report on the Situation of Human Rights in Peru." Available online: <http://www.cidh.oas.org/countryrep/Peru2000en/TOC.htm>.

Annotation: The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) issued an accessible and informative report on the human rights situation in Peru. Chapter X is of particular significance to this paper, as it illustrates the major obstacles to the indigenous communities fully enjoying their political, social, economic, and cultural rights, namely: discrimination; lack of enforcement and/or implementation of rights outlined in treaties and the Peruvian constitution; intense poverty; and deplorable levels of education and healthcare. Though the article more thoroughly examines land rights, or the lack thereof, the political implications are clear: How are indigenous citizens expected to participate in the political arena when the majority is illiterate, in poor health, malnourished, and unable to physically access state institutions? The IACHR recommends realizing the rights set forth in the International Labour Organization's Convention[ED: I AM NOT SURE WHICH CONVENTION SHE IS REFERRING TO HERE AS THERE ARE SEVERAL. IT MIGHT BE 187?] that Peru signed more than a decade ago, including consulting with indigenous groups in regards to environmental projects and also "promulgat[ing] an indigenous law that develops the individual rights of indigenous peoples."

_____. 2009. "Captive Communities: Situation of the Guarani Indigenous People and Contemporary Forms of Slavery in the Bolivian Chaco." Available online: <http://www.cidh.oas.org/pdf%20files/BOLIVIA-CAPTIVE-COMMUNITIES.eng.pdf>

Annotation: The status of the indigenous Guarani people in the Bolivian Chaco region is examined in this report by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. Specifically, information on the "captive communities," or indentured servants, and their lack of land, social, cultural, and political rights is documented in Chapter IV. Although agrarian reforms in the 1950s helped secure land for indigenous communities in the Andean region, they did little for the Guarani in Chaco. The overall findings were that most Guarani do not have any--or have inadequate-- access to healthcare, education, or the political and justice systems. Furthermore, the lack of labor and judicial institutions in the Chaco region have left a vacuum which has been filled by abusive estate owners. The IACHR makes helpful recommendations and pledges to assist the Bolivian government with the implementation of these recommendations; however, the extent and substance of this support is not outlined in this report.

_____. 2009. "Follow Up Report: Access to Justice and Social Inclusion: The Road Towards Strengthening Democracy in Bolivia." In *Annual Report 2009*. Available online: <http://www.cidh.oas.org/pdf%20files/CAP%20V%20BOLIVIA.Seguimiento.eng.pdf>.

Annotation: The Inter-American Commission of Human Rights of the Organization of American States released this comprehensive report which is accessible, highly informative, and reliable. Section VI, "Rights of Indigenous Peoples and Peasant Communities," and Section X, "Recommendations," were of special interest as they pertain to the subject of this paper. The IACHR found that the Bolivian government is generally moving in the appropriate direction when it comes to realizing and codifying indigenous political, economic, social, and cultural rights. When it comes to political rights though, there are many discriminatory impediments to the indigenous peoples' access to justice, especially when it comes to land and worker's rights. In addition, the government has yet to implement

the terms of the new Bolivian Constitution when it comes to the autonomy of indigenous justice systems and to their relationship with the national justice system. The recommendations included taking steps to eliminate discrimination, to guarantee participation of indigenous groups in land projects, and to create guidelines for "coordinating official justice with community justice." Though these recommendations are certainly appropriate, not much is offered in the way of their implementation.

Jackson, Jean E., and Kay B. Warren. 2005. "Indigenous Movements in Latin America, 1992-2004: Controversies, Ironies, New Directions." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 34 (1):549-573.

Annotation: Jackson and Warren have compiled a comprehensive article describing the rise of indigenous movements in Latin America and their subsequent challenges and successes. The article is well-written and seems aimed at an academic audience. They examine many complexities that have resulted from these movements, especially when it comes to ethnic identity, anthropological discourse, and the evolution of the depiction of indigenous peoples by states. The lengthy article concludes with suggestions for future research topics that would shed more light on this complex field. Readers with a political and/or anthropological background would be most able to appreciate this article.

Lepri, Isabella. 2006. "Identity and Otherness Among the Ese Ejja of Northern Bolivia." *Ethnos: Journal of Anthropology* 71 (1):67-88.

Annotation: Isabella Lepri describes the Ese Ejja's perception of "identity," especially in regards to Bolivians and other indigenous groups such as the Tacona. She gives valuable ethnographic information about the Ese Ejja and their worldview, juxtaposing their intense fear of being killed by Bolivians with their simultaneous acceptance that "becoming the Other" is their inherent destiny. Lepri uses her field experience to support her argument, lending the article legitimacy and anecdotal evidence that makes for an interesting read for any academic audience.

Morrissey, Laura Fano. 2009. "The Rise of Ethnic Politics: Indigenous Movements in the Andean Region." *Development* 52 (4):495-499.

Annotation: Laura Morrissey succinctly evaluates the rise of indigenous movements in Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, and Colombia and their common goal of striving to change institutions instead of rejecting them outright. Her analysis of each country is complemented by the inclusion of a brief history of the indigenous political struggle and with subsequent comparisons between each of the countries' indigenous groups. Though Peru's indigenous population is the weakest and least organized in the Andean region, she credits them for the great strides they have made in stopping "invasive development projects and defending their own rights"-- despite an unresponsive government, a problem pervasive in Colombia as well. Morrissey wraps up her informative article with mention of the concept of "el buen vivir," (the good life {ED: I THINK?}) which is championed by the indigenous movements and which calls for inclusion, multiculturalism, and respect for the environment.

Oquendo, Ángel R. 2005. "Indigenous Self-Determination In Latin America." *Florida Journal of International Law* 17 (3):625-631.

Annotation: Oquendo evaluates self-determination of indigenous groups in Latin America through their colonial history of "deeds lagging behind words" and "disparity between written law and legal practice" in regards to rights. By mention of other scholars' works he touches upon the struggle of the Mapuche in Chile, a place where the government has accepted the Chilean population to be homogenous, as opposed to a pluralist society of citizens. He recommends a "progressive nationalist" view in which society would be inclusive, respectful of cultural autonomy, and accepting of free movement between cultural communities. His article would benefit from further development of his recommendations. As is, Oquendo's article would be of interest to academics looking for an overview of the subject matter.

Poole, Deborah. 2010. "El Buen Vivir: Peruvian Indigenous Leader Mario Palacios." *NACLA Report on the Americas* 43 (5):30-33.

Annotation: Deborah Poole eloquently transcribes her interview with Peruvian indigenous leader Mario Palacios for the North American Congress on Latin America's (NACLA) Report on the Americas. Palacios summarizes the Peruvian indigenous struggle, especially concerning access to natural resources. He describes mining as the main source of contention between Amazonian indigenous groups and the Peruvian government. Because mining accounts for 64 percent of Peru's exports, President Alan Garcia is more than reluctant to engage in dialogue with indigenous communities and continues to use the media to criminalize them as violent savages. This is interesting considering Peru ratified the International Labor Organization's Convention [ED: STILL DON'T KNOW WHAT CONVENTION] 15 years ago and has yet to heed its recommendations of consulting with the indigenous before using their land. Finally, Palacios mentions the indigenous goal of "el buen vivir," that is, a political proposal for honesty, egalitarianism, and respect for the environment. Poole's article allows non-Spanish speakers access to the very significant ideals of the Peruvian indigenous groups.

Radcliffe, Sarah A. 2007. "Latin America Indigenous Geographies of Fear: Living in the Shadow of Racism, Lack of Development, and Antiterror Measures." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 97 (2): 385-397.

Annotation: Sarah Radcliffe critically examines the effects of neo-liberalism as a post-development approach to the indigenous community in Latin America. She makes a strong case against neo-liberalism, in that it "dismantles corporatist state systems which granted Indians some recognition and representation in decisions over rights" and contributes to the vast economic, political and social inequalities prompting indigenous groups to respond via social mobilization. The article was uplifting and optimistic about the indigenous cause, though very general, which is interesting considering the differences between the political climates of South American states. Radcliffe's article would be of great interest to those in the development field.

_____, Nina Laurie, and Robert Andolina. 2002. "Reterritorialized Space and Ethnic Political Participation: Indigenous Municipalities in Ecuador." *Space & Polity* 6 (3):289-305.

Annotation: The various authors of this article produce a compelling and optimistic account of the political participation of indigenous groups in Ecuador. The "re-territorializing" of the area into various municipalities has further enabled indigenous groups to successfully enter the political arena. Some municipalities have indigenous mayors and council representatives, which has led to increased indigenous political participation and the creation of an indigenous political party. Despite these developments, the authors point out that Ecuadorian indigenous peoples still have obstacles to contend with in regards to ethnic and gender discrimination, especially when in contact with the historically-elite white-*mestizo* class.

Reyes-García, Victoria, Vincent Vadez, Jorge Aragón, Tomas Huanca, and Pamela Jagger. 2010. "The Uneven Reach of Decentralization: A Case Study among Indigenous Peoples in the Bolivian Amazon." *International Political Science Review* 31 (2):229-243.

Annotation: The multiple authors of this article report on their findings from a case study of the Tsimane indigenous group in the Amazon region of Bolivia. They examine the dissemination of political knowledge in an attempt to find out how much rural indigenous groups know of the decentralization reform expressed in the 1994 Law of Popular Participation. Although it is six years later, they still find that only a small number of Tsimane people knew about the reforms, which municipality they were located in, who their local municipality officials were, and about their options for political participation. The Tsimane live in the lowlands and are less informed than their organized, highland counterparts. They attribute the reason for this to the high "private costs" of the lowland indigenous for obtaining information, geographically inaccessible areas, unavailable broadcasts or broadcasts not in the local language, lower education levels, and low numbers of people involved in the market economy. The article was insightful, though not all audiences may appreciate the statistical overview.

Schaefer, Timo. 2009. "Engaging Modernity: the Political Making of Indigenous Movements in Bolivia and Ecuador, 1900-2008." *Third World Quarterly* 30 (2):397-413.

Annotation: Schaefer gives a thorough and helpful background on the rise of political indigenous movements in Ecuador and Bolivia in order to give an appropriate context in which to understand their current status. He argues that these groups are undergoing a historical process of political modernization that began decades ago, as opposed to the view that these groups have mobilized due to recent events. He supports his argument by pointing out that many of these indigenous groups have a culture that values and survives through communal politics and that these norms have finally been translated to a national level. Schaefer also makes an appropriately clear distinction between the values and aims of the Amazonian indigenous versus the Andean indigenous. His arguments are thorough and well-presented, though his tendency towards run-on sentences causes the reader to question at times what he is really trying to convey.

Stavenhagen, Rodolfo. 2006. "Implementation of General Assembly Resolution 60/251 of 15 March 2006 Entitled 'Human Rights Council.'" Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of Indigenous People: United Nations.

Annotation: Stavenhagen, a U.N. Special Rapporteur, gives an extensive and comprehensive report about the status of the Ecuadorian indigenous. He extensively examines the many aspects of the indigenous people's freedoms, including their access to education, healthcare, land, politics, and justice. Though the indigenous of Ecuador are considered one of the strongest political groups through the Pachakutick movement of the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE), their situation still leaves much to be desired. Stavenhagen found that the Supreme Electoral Court of Ecuador is "promoting discriminatory practices" at the polls and in other facets of the electoral process. When the indigenous protested against a free trade treaty in 2006, they were met with "acts of repression and police brutality in various parts of the country." Overall the Ecuadorian government is moving in the right direction, but there is still much to be achieved in the interests of the indigenous.

U.S. Department of State. 2010. "Background Note: Bolivia." *Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs*. Available online: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/35751.htm>.

Annotation: The U.S. Department of State is a great resource for general information pertaining to other countries. It gives a comprehensive breakdown of the politics, economy, education, history, and demographics of Bolivia. It is especially helpful when trying to find current information about political leaders, elections, and the demographic breakdown of the Bolivian population. It is extremely accessible and highly recommended, though it would be wise to be aware of the very real possibility of a biased viewpoint.

Van Cott, Donna Lee. 2003. "From Exclusion to Inclusion: Bolivia's 2002 Elections." *Journal of Latin American Studies* 35 (4):751-775.

Annotation: Van Cott examines the great strides Bolivia's "indigenous-movement-based" political parties have made as highlighted by the 2002 elections. She gives a comprehensive background on the indigenous political parties, which have evolved into two prominent groups called the *Movimiento Indígena Pachakuti* (MIP) and the *Instrumento Político para la Soberanía de los Pueblos* (IPSP), known by its affiliation with the *Movimiento al Socialismo* (MAS). The use of charts helps to exemplify the great feats of these parties who won 27 percent of the vote, thereby increasing indigenous representation in the Chamber of Deputies to unprecedented numbers. Van Cott attributes their success to institutional changes: specifically, the decentralization of the government and the subsequent creation of 314 municipalities each with their own elections, local government, and resources; the weakening of the three strongest political parties; increased organization of indigenous movements backing indigenous political parties; frustration with the "Banzer-Quiroga" government; and anti-U.S. sentiment.

_____. 2005. "Building Inclusive Democracies: Indigenous Peoples and Ethnic Minorities in Latin America." *Democratization* 12 (5):820-837.

Annotation: Donna Lee Van Cott examines democracies in Latin America in regards to the political inclusion of minority groups. Interestingly, she find that states which are least ethnically diverse and have the smallest population, such as Colombia, have the most successful and inclusive democracies and usually afford their indigenous populations with sufficient rights. Economics also plays a role in indigenous political access, in that many Latin American governments lack the appropriate financial resources to fund small political parties of ethnic minorities and cannot afford resources to hold themselves accountable in terms of indigenous public policy. Ultimately, Van Cott calls for more pressure from the international community to aid the political mobilization of indigenous groups and for easy access to credible and efficient judiciary systems by which these minorities may protect their rights. This article is intended for an academic audience and is highly informative.

Vera Delgado, Juana, and Margreet Zwartveen. 2008. "Modernity, Exclusion and Resistance: Water and Indigenous Struggles in Peru." *Development* 51 (1):114-120.

Annotation: The authors of this article give a clear and concise account of the political exclusion of indigenous communities in the Peruvian development process via a case study of the Andean communities' struggle with obtaining necessary access to water. While undertaking the Majes Irrigation Project, the Peruvian government completely disregarded the environmental and cultural affect on these communities. Besides needing water for survival, the communities' cultural traditions centering around water has been documented since the arrival of the Spanish in the region. Even when the indigenous groups attempt to remedy the need for adequate water through legitimate political means, they are met with corruption, favoritism, and misuse of funds by their mayor, which ultimately led to a weakly constructed canal needing frequent repairs. The authors place this case in the wider context of developers viewing anything not modern as the unfavorable "other," backwards, and not worthy of consideration.