

**The University and Social Change:
University Education for Indigenous Students in Ecuador**

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I. Introduction

The “decada ganada” of the 1990s for the indigenous movement in Ecuador has directly translated into increased opportunities for indigenous students at the university level during the current decade. Now more than ever, indigenous students attend universities in Ecuador. First, I will describe the social and political context that makes university education for indigenous students more relevant and accessible today. Second, I will compare the specific opportunities for indigenous students in Ecuadorian universities. From personal interviews, university documents and student theses I will show how university programs for indigenous students often reflect the specific historical trajectories and political objectives of each institution.

II. Theoretical Considerations

The following paper investigates the relationships between the state, indigenous peoples and the university. In *Politics in the Vernacular: Nationalism, Multiculturalism and Citizenship*, Will Kymlicka discusses the challenges that ethnic minorities face in liberal democratic states. Historically, the state has engaged in a nation-building project that privileges one hegemonic culture over those of indigenous peoples. However, as liberal democracies promise rights of individual freedom to choose one’s own conception of the good life, then indigenous peoples should have the means to ensure that their cultures be secured through multicultural citizenship. While indigenous collective rights may lead to national disunity and threats of secession and, they also can lead to greater inclusion of a plurality of cultures into a functioning nation. Since “multi-nation” states have been founded on difference and diversity, they should promote cultural diversity and foster these cultural identities within the political community. These ideas reflect Joanne

Rappaport's notion of interculturality as a utopian political philosophy of interethnic dialogue based on relations of equality and constructing a particular type of indigenous citizenship in a plural nation.¹

I define universities as institutions of higher education and research devoted to granting academic degrees. Latin America universities have historically promoted very political agendas that reflect hegemonic state ideas of nation and citizenship. Historically, Latin American universities have served as tightly controlled institutions of the state involved in the promotion of nation-state ideologies.² Like the states that fund them, universities have both excluded indigenous students from their institutions and excluded indigenous ways of knowing from their disciplinary constructions of Western knowledge. Furthermore, universities have produced intellectual elites who serve as the nation's ruling class and maintain unequal power relations with indigenous peoples. At the same time, Latin American universities have actively assumed responsibility to solve these social problems of underdevelopment and unequal access to wealth. Emphasis on the social sciences in university curricula underscores the preoccupation with creating social change through the academy.³ Ironically, as university intellectuals attempt to solve social problems, they often challenge the received hegemonic state ideologies of "nation" and "citizenship".

Recently, decentralization of the state in the context of neoliberal reforms has both allowed indigenous peoples to negotiate multicultural citizenship and also given universities greater ideological freedoms from states. As negotiations between indigenous

¹ Joanne Rappaport. *Intercultural Utopias*. (Duke University Press, 2005).

² James Scout. *Seeing like a State: how certain schemes to improve the human condition have failed*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).

³ Darcy Ribeiro. *La Universidad Latinoamericana*. (Montevideo: Universidad de la Republica, 1968).

peoples and states have proposed multicultural citizenship in plural nations, universities have responded to these ongoing political transformations. In *Education and Society in Latin America*, Orlando Albornoz stresses the complexities of Latin American universities as he distinguishes different university types: 1) public vs. private, 2) traditional vs. modern, 3) elite vs. mass, 4) metropolitan vs. provincial, and 5) denominational vs. non-denominational.⁴ Many universities now accept indigenous students into their institutions and claim to promote intercultural learning in the context of a plural nation. However, as complex institutions with divergent political objectives, some universities actively engage intercultural learning while other universities systematically reject it. In addition to the state, transnational donors with diverse political agendas significantly influence university programs and policy.

III. Context for Indigenous University Education

University education for indigenous students is not a new phenomenon in Ecuador. During the 1970s improved primary and secondary education in the countryside allowed the first generation of indigenous students to attend the university. For this first generation university opportunities came almost exclusively within the academic departments of Education and Anthropology. In “*Intelectuales Indígenas en Ecuador y su Paso por la Escuela y la Universidad*”, Alejandra Flores discusses interviews with indigenous university graduates of this first generation. Of the 28 interviewed intellectuals, 11 graduated with a degree in the Social Sciences including Law, Sociology and Anthropology, 4 with an initial formation in Education and later the Social Sciences,

⁴ Orlando Albornoz. *Education and Society in Latin America*. (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1993).

12 with a degree in Education and one in Economics.⁵ Many of the highland students attended the Universidad Católica's Centro de Investigaciones de Educación Indígena (CIEI) including Luis Macas, Luis Monteluisa, and Ariruma Kowii.⁶ In the Amazon the Federation Shuar, with the collaboration of Salesian priests, created a Leadership Training Center which produced academic studies for the publication *El Mundo Shuar*.⁷ Today these intellectuals work in non-governmental organizations (8), secondary or superior education (6), state organizations with indigenous direction such as DINEIB or CODENPE (5), general government positions (4) and local government (1).⁸ In almost all interviews, Flores describes how indigenous students suffered difficulties in gaining access to the university, racism in the classroom and mistreatment by teachers and fellow students.⁹ Interestingly, Flores found that these difficult experiences, coupled with gains in the cultural impact of the indigenous movement, often led students to "reindianize" as many began to wear indigenous clothes and change their names.

Recently, social and political changes have made university education more accessible to the current generation of indigenous students. Today, indigenous students have better access to scholarships, university programs and possible career choices. As Alejandra Flores notes, "En las nuevas generaciones de indígenas letrados encontramos que logran acceder a nuevas profesiones como Sociología, Antropología, Medicina,

⁵ Of the study 22 are men and 6 are women. In terms of ethnicity, 19 pertain to the Quichua pueblo, 1 Amazon Quichua, 7 Shuar and 1 Huaorani. Alejandra Flores Carlos. *Intelectuales Indígenas del Ecuador y su Paso por la Escuela y la Universidad*. Postgraduate Thesis. (Quito: Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales, 2005), p. 55

⁶ Specifically beginning in the 1970s there has been a generation of Otavaleno intellectuals who have studied inside and outside of the country (Cuba) and specialized in the production and commercialization of artisan goods.

⁷ Important Shuar academics include Ampam Kurakas and Celestino Wisum.

⁸ Alejandra Flores Carlos. Ibid, p. 55

⁹ For better treatment on the matter, see Carlos de la Torres "Racism in Education and the Construction of Citizenship in Ecuador." *Race & Class* 42:2 (2000), 33-45. and *El Racismo en el Ecuador: Experiencias de los Indios de la clase media*. (Quito: Ediciones Abya-Yala, 1996).

Derecho, Ingenierías muchas de ellas incentivadas por organismos de cooperación y agencias internacionales.”¹⁰ To their credit, some universities have responded to social changes by providing new programs and opportunities for indigenous students. Most specifically, the development of bilingual intercultural education, the rise of ethno-development projects, and increasing indigenous political opportunities have allowed indigenous students better access to university education.

A. Bilingual Intercultural Education

The creation of the *Directorio Nacional de Educación Intercultural Bilingüe* (DINEIB) within the Ministry of Education has created a strong demand for EIB teachers and administrators with a bilingual intercultural formation (training and orientation). Until the present day, many teachers in DINEIB schools, both mestizo and indigenous, were not bilingual and did not employ an intercultural pedagogy in their schools. Furthermore, national and international critics have attacked bilingual intercultural education for its many shortcomings. For example, Jose Sanchez Parga’s *Educación Indígena en Cotopaxi: Avances Politicos y Deudas Pedagógicas* questions the parallel educational subsystem of DINEIB which he claims only produces unnecessary conflict and complexity. More significantly, he criticizes the pedagogical and administrative bankruptcy of most EIB schools. Critics question the academic efficiency of EIB schools as students do not score as high on APREND0 tests in areas of Spanish and Mathematics.¹¹ They have proposed further decentralization as a reaction to the inefficient bureaucracy of indigenous organization management within the DINEIB and its weak relationships with NGOs and local communities.

¹⁰ Alejandra Flores Carlos. Ibid, p. 95

¹¹ APREND0 tests are standardized tests given to students in both Hispanic and Bilingual schools during grades 3, 7 and 10. These tests measure mathematical and Spanish language abilities.

With the financial support of international organizations, certain universities have responded to the many needs of bilingual intercultural education. Agreements between indigenous organizations, international sponsors and university programs have created both bachelors (*licenciado*) and masters (*maestría*) degrees in bilingual intercultural education. Distance learning programs allow teachers and administrators to provide continued education on weekends and intensive course work during the summer. Full-time scholarships enable indigenous students to travel to the larger cities of Quito and Cuenca to earn university degrees. For example, the *Instituto de Desarrollo Social y Investigación Científica* (INDESIC), with the financial support of the German NGO Hanns Siedel Institute, administers scholarships to indigenous students. Victor Bunay, president of INDESIC, describes how the scholarship program exclusively graduated teachers for EIB schools during the initial decade of the 1990s.¹² However, when INDESIC, a newly formed institute of ex-alumni indigenous professionals, took control of the scholarship program in 1998, it extended scholarships to include study in Business Administration and Community Development. Currently, most INDESIC scholarship students choose degrees in law while others graduate in business administration or engineering.¹³

B. Indigenous Development

A continuing increase in the number and variety of ethno-development projects has brought about a greater need for indigenous professionals. World Bank anthropologist Jorge Urquillas defines “ethno-development” as development programs that reflect a new

¹² In 1990 Salesian priest Juan Botasso signed an agreement with the German NGO Hanns Siedel to create a scholarship program for EIB education at the Universidad Politécnica Salesiana. Interview, Victor Bunay.

¹³ Alejandra Flores Carlos. Ibid.

multicultural citizenship by promoting group rights and collective identity.¹⁴ Responding to both indigenous protest and international decrees (International Labor Organization 169), the World Bank and other international donor organizations have sponsored a variety of ethnodevelopment projects for indigenous peoples.¹⁵ These projects have included the direct participation of indigenous peoples through participatory planning and self-management strategies. One of the biggest examples of “ethnodevelopment” projects in Ecuador has been the *Proyecto de Desarrollo de Personas Indígenas y Negras de Ecuador* (PRODEPINE), a fifty million dollar project sponsored by the World Bank.¹⁶ The PRODEPINE goals included: 1) institutional strengthening of local membership organizations and communities, 2) institutional strengthening of CODENPE, 3) support of land and water rights, 4) rural investments, organization and process.¹⁷ The development ministry *Consejo de Desarrollo para los Negros y Pueblos Indígenas* (CODENPE) was created within the government and comprised of indigenous experts. Under the administration of CODENPE, the project worked with second-tier organizations and local communities. Although the PRODEPINE project ended in 2002, CODENPE still operates ethnodevelopment projects under various sources of international aid. A PRODEPINE II project is in the planning stage.

Imperative in PRODEPINE’s ethno-development is the concept of improving capital, conceived as social (organizational strengthening), human (education, training), environmental (land, water), and financial and physical (investments, assets). While

¹⁴ Jorge Urquillas. “Applied Anthropology in Ecuador.” *NAPA Bulletin* 25 (2005), 23. The tenets of this perspective include building interculturalism, political autonomy, redefinition of identity, coordinated state policies and proposal on a national scope.

¹⁵ These organizations include the Ford Foundation, GTZ and Fundación Hanns Siedel.

¹⁶ The World Bank contributed \$25 million with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) with the Ecuadorian government providing the other half.

¹⁷ Tindell, Ashley & Jeannie Wilkinson. *The Bitter Taste of Sugar: A Case Study of a World Bank Funded Project in Chinimpi, Ecuador*. Public Policy Thesis (UCLA, 2003).

PRODEPINE organizers praise indigenous peoples for having strong social capital in the form of community organizations and kinship networks, they seek to improve the human, financial and environmental capital which may be lacking. The human capital component has included training indigenous experts through internships, informal training seminars and formal education. In regard to university education, Jorge Urquillas writes that,

To increase the available pool of indigenous professionals in the long run, both in quantitative and qualitative terms, the project entered into agreements with 27 universities and colleges to provide complementary financial support and design an appropriate course of studies for indigenous students supported by the project. The project also supports students in disciplines that are particularly relevant for the modus operandi of the second-tier organizations, including community development, anthropology, and communications. Potential candidates for project support are proposed by second-tier organizations and subsequently selected by the project based on previous educational achievements. To increase the probability that students remain in their communities and organizations after they have completed their education, the formal education program puts a heavy emphasis on distance learning.¹⁸

Therefore, these development projects require a variety of indigenous professionals including anthropologists, public policy experts, economists, communication specialists, and community developers.

C. Indigenous Political Participation

Throughout the last decade indigenous organizations have risen to political power at both the national and local levels. During the 1990s indigenous social movements, most specifically *Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas de Ecuador* (CONAIE), staged national protests against government.¹⁹ In 1996 CONAIE formed the Pachacutik political party. In 2000 various Pachacutik members in congress helped rewrite the constitution to define Ecuador as a “pluricultural” nation and secure bilingual intercultural education within the Ministry of Education. In 2002 Pachacutik formed a coalition government with Lucio Gutierrez’ *Partido de Sociedad Patriótica* (PSP) which seated two indigenous

¹⁸ Urquillas, Jorge and Martin Van Nieuwkoop. “Defining Ethnodevelopment in Operational Terms: Lessons from the Ecuador Indigenous and Afro-Ecuadorian Peoples Project.” LCR Sustainable Development Working Papers No. 6. World Bank (January 2000) p. 23

¹⁹ Other indigenous social movements in Ecuador include Federación Evangélica de Indígenas y Negros de Ecuador (FEINE) and FENOCIN. For more information of indigenous protest, see Susana Sawyer *Crude Chronicles*. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004).

politicians as Minister of Agriculture (Luis Macas) and Foreign Relations (Nina Pacari). However, due to corruption charges and the reorganization of the Supreme Court, a massive protest forced President Gutierrez to flee the country while congress voted to remove him from office. Since the departure of Lucio Gutierrez, many indigenous peoples have blamed the Pachacutik party for their continuing cooperation with and participation in national politics.

While the national movement has recently faced difficult problems, indigenous politicians have found more success on a local level. Indigenous mayors include Auki Tituana of Cotacachi, Mario Conejo of Otavalo, and Clemente Taday of Aluasi. Many of these mayors have used flexible policies and personal charisma to consolidate their support by both indigenous and mestizo voters. For example, while Auki Tituana won the 1996 elections with a slim percentage of the vote, he was re-elected both in 2000 and 2004 with a large majority. Many supporters claim that his superior education, an economics degree in Cuba, has helped win the respect of mestizos. His continued success in Cotacachi recently won Tituana the Dubai-Habitat prize as the world's most transparent mayor. Similarly, Otavalo mayor Mario Conejo, who holds a university sociology degree, garners both indigenous and mestizo support.

Currently, the national indigenous movement finds itself in a crisis situation. During the 2006 elections, Pachacutik candidate Luis Macas, with degrees in anthropology, linguistics and jurisprudence, came in seventh place with just over 2 percent of the vote. In a 2005 interview, Macas admitted that the indigenous movement has been in limbo since its active entry into electoral politics. He recommended that, "We need to return to

the central themes that brought together the indigenous movement, which are education and territory. And we need to leave behind the issues that have created division, including participating in politics.”²⁰ Donna Lee Van Cott argues that the resurgence of the left has caused a variety of political configurations between leftist parties and indigenous movements.²¹ However, Pachacutik’s refusal to form a coalition with Rafael Correa’s Alianza PAIS during the elections resulted in little current indigenous representation in the government. Indigenous leaders like Luis Macas hope to develop future qualified leaders with university degrees in public policy, administration and law. In addition, they seek to provide greater focus on the fundamental issues of the movement, education and territory, which would require development of more qualified indigenous teachers and lawyers.

D. Conclusion

Certainly there are other reasons why university education has become more accessible to indigenous peoples in Ecuador. The continued interactions between indigenous peoples and oil companies in the Amazon have created demand and employment opportunities for qualified indigenous engineers and bio-technicians. Water shortages and the destruction of the environment by corporations, including the same oil companies, created demand for public policy experts and engineers to help indigenous communities best utilize and protect natural resources. However, the developments in bilingual intercultural education, ethno-development, and indigenous political participation have most directly caused university education to become more accessible

²⁰ Maturana, Elisa. “Luis Macas: Unifying the Indigenous Movement in Ecuador.” www.oxfamamerica.org/whatwedo/where_we_work/south_america/news_publications/feature_story.2005-07-25.9696877816

²¹ Van Cott, Donna Lee. “Indigenous Peoples and the Left in Latin America: Diverse Forms of Linkages, Diverse Implications” Memorandum prepared for the workshop on “Left Turn in Latin America,” May 25-27, 2007, University of British Colombia/ Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, British Colombia.

and relevant to indigenous students. These social and political changes also have directly challenged a majority non-indigenous concept of uniform citizenship, and empowered indigenous peoples to tentatively negotiate a multicultural citizenship as a model for the state.

IV. University Comparisons

While other Ecuadorian universities devoted to indigenous student education do exist, the following have most successfully developed special programs for indigenous students. These other universities include the Universidad Andina Simon Bolivar and the Universidad Estatal de Bolívar.²² The Catholic University's CIEI program closed in 1986 at a time when the state de-prioritized indigenous education. To their credit, often with the financial aid of international sponsors, the following universities have responded to the social and political changes for indigenous peoples during the last two decades:

Universidad Politecnica Salesiana, FLACSO, Universidad de Cuenca, and Universidad San Francisco de Quito. Nevertheless, there are clear differences among these university programs in the types of program, the diversity of opportunities, and the level of access for indigenous learners. I will argue that each university provides very different programs and opportunities according to its own specific history and political objectives.

²² The Universidad Estatal de Bolívar have created an Escuela de Estudios Andinos directed to providing indigenous students teaching degrees. Students earn a *licenciado* in Education and Intercultural Studies with mentions in Humanistic Sciences, Natural and Environmental Sciences, Social Education and Citizenship. They can also earn a degree in Community Development. Most students take courses in pedagogy, history, anthropology, sociology, and community development. According to sociologist Milton Caceres, director of the program, interculturality and intereducation are fundamental elements to the Schools vision. Recently, the program extended its coverage to semi-presencial centers in Cuenca which offer distance learning programs in Education and Intercultural Studies. The Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar, a postgraduate university, offers courses in interculturality, human rights and development management.

A. Universidad Politecnica Salesiana

The Salesians have maintained a long tradition of supporting indigenous peoples throughout the last half century. Throughout the last forty years, Salesian priests have helped create indigenous primary school networks with Quichuas in the highland Cotopaxi province as well as with the Shuar nationality of the Amazon. In 1994 the Universidad Politécnica Salesiana opened a central university in Quito with additional universities in Cuenca and Guayaquil. Initially a private university, the UPS became co-financed with state funds as it increasingly developed academic programs to address problems of national development.²³ However, the majority of indigenous academic programs are financed with funds from GTZ and CODENPE. The UPS in Quito houses faculties of Engineering, Administrative and Economic Sciences, Agro-Industrial Sciences and Human and Education Sciences. According to its mission statement, UPS seeks to create honorable citizens and good Christians. The challenge is to create social and political agents who possess a critical vision of reality and a moral ideal of social justice. The UPS professes a preferential policy for the poor as tuition rates rank significantly lower than most universities.

In relation to indigenous peoples, the UPS has developed multiple academic programs designed to improve bilingual indigenous education and ethnodevelopment in Ecuador. The university offers *licenciado* and *maestría* degree programs in Bilingual Intercultural Education for both indigenous and non-indigenous students while Applied Anthropology and Local Sustainable Development degrees promise to create leaders in local

²³ The UPS receives 19% of its budget from the state, while 76% is covered on tuition. “38 universidades privadas y publicas reciben la renta estatal.” El Comercio. 11/27/2007.

development and social movements.²⁴ The UPS coordinates numerous EIB conferences (*convenios*) throughout the year. These *convenios* bring national and international authorities and activists together to discuss experiences and propose models for indigenous education. The university's *Historias desde el Aula: Educación Intercultural Bilingüe y Etnoeducación en Ecuador* (2006) chronicles the best experiences of intercultural and ethnoeducation in Ecuador during a 2005 nation-wide contest at the University.²⁵ The contest brought together teachers and administrators from throughout Ecuador and served as a forum for discussing EIB methods and challenges. On a more international scope, the university recently hosted a conference entitled *Educación Intercultural, Ciudadanía y Asamblea Constituyente*.²⁶ Invited academics discussed the prospects for interculturality and education in the context of the upcoming constituent assembly.

For Sebastian Granda, UPS professor of intercultural education, improved access to university programs for indigenous students serves as an important component of interculturality at the UPS.²⁷ In order to provide increased access to the university, a large percentage of UPS teacher training courses have been organized away from central universities in Quito, Cuenca and Guayaquil. Distance learning networks throughout Ecuador are essential in the UPS vision. The UPS upholds the tenets of Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, promoting a liberating education through which students become conscious of their abilities and limitations in relation to the world around them.

²⁴ Within the faculty of Education Sciences, the UPS offers degrees in Psycho-Pedagogy, Bilingual Intercultural Education and Educative Technology. Additionally, they offer an applied Anthropology degree which works with EIB education.

²⁵ Ethnoeducation refers to self-governing education for Afro-Ecuadorians.

²⁶ The July conference included Luis Enrique Lopez of the PROEIB Andes, Ariruma Kowii, Juan Ansión, Principal Profesor of Anthropology at the Pontificia Universidad de Peru, Fidel Tubito, Decan of Facultad de Estudios Generales de Letras.

²⁷ Interview, Sebastian Granda.

EIB teachers usually attend the semi-presential classes on the weekends and take accelerated courses during the summer. These programs emphasize learning in action as teachers apply their studies to the classroom. While semi-presential programs may not offer the same degree of theoretical and academic rigor offered by the central university programs, they offer access to a greater number of indigenous learners, especially in rural areas.

Influenced by the Salesian's long involvement in the Cotopaxi province, the *Programa Academico Cotopaxi* (PAC) provides the most extensive coverage of semi-presential programs for indigenous students.²⁸ The PAC, centered in Latacunga, offers EIB bachelors degrees to prepare qualified teachers and administrators for the *Sistema de Escuelas Indigenas de Cotopaxi* (SEIC) and the *Colegio Jatun Unancha*. Sebastian Granda claims that although the university served more of a political role during the 1990s, officials recently have concentrated programs on improving bilingual intercultural education.²⁹ Lately, the PAC added a *Licenciatura en Ciencias de la Producción Agropecuaria* that works with community agricultural production. Not only does the *Programa Académico Cotopaxi* provide the academic center in Latacunga (86 students), but in 2003 it extended its educational opportunities outside the province of Cotopaxi to create centers in Otavalo (169), Cayambe (104), Simiatag (119), and Wakasentska (8) with a future site in the highland city of Riobamba.³⁰

²⁸ In 1995 from conversations between the Cotopaxi indigenous schools and the Instituto Superior Salesiano de Quito, the UPS created the Universidad en el Paramo en Zumbahua. In 2002 the University moved to the nearby city of Latacunga to extend the programs' coverage and became the Programa Academica Cotopaxi (PAC). Martínez Flores, Alexandra and Sebastián Granda. *Curso de Formación de Ciudadanía Intercultural en el Programa de Educación Intercultural Bilingüe*. (Quito: UPS, 2007).

²⁹ Interview, Sebastián Granda.

³⁰ The ages of PAC students range between 18 and 68. Of all students, 65% are women.

The majority of the students in the PAC program are teachers who attend the program on weekends and during the summer. In Latacunga, most of the thesis work has concentrated on improving indigenous schools in Cotopaxi.³¹ Luis Pumasunta's *Dificultades en aprendizaje de la matemáticas* (1996) seeks to enhance mathematics teaching methods within the classroom. Several recommendations include providing more practical learning experiences, such as counting beans and working in cuy production. Dolores Gavilanes *Estudio Psico-afectivo en la Mujer Indígena entre Edades 15 a 20 de Colegio Indígena Intercultural Bilingüe Jatun Unancha* (2001) analyzes the adolescent phases of indigenous girls in the Colegio Jatun Unancha. Initially she reviews some of the general difficulties for females in the school. Dolores shares the results of a survey given to high school girls that attempted to judge their emotions and feelings.³² She discusses how social roles imposed by the family cause girls high levels of shame, sadness and indifference in their lives. Finally, she proposes that more liberties be given to girls in education at the high school level.

Along with the *Programa Academico Cotopaxi*, the UPS also runs a distance education center in the Amazon Shuar territory. The *Programa Academico Macas* includes both the *Instituto Pedagógico Jose Felix Pintado* program along with a recently designed Biotechnology degree in which mostly Shuar and Achuar students work with

³¹ Carmen Martínez Novo. "Los Misioneros Salesianos y El Movimiento Indígena de Cotopaxi, 1970-2004." *Ecuador Debate* 63 (2004), pp. 235-268. Carmen Martínez investigates the work of Salesian priests in relation to the indigenous movement in Cotopaxi. In relation to education, Martínez finds the Salesian priests respect the agricultural calendar and teach the quichua language and philosophy in the Cotopaxi schools. According to Martínez, the priests consider the language to be contaminated by Spanish and seek to purify and standardize through academic work. Both the *Programa Academico Cotopaxi* and the *Colegio Jatun Unancha* integrate cultural and linguistic knowledge with modern knowledge in their programs.

³² The survey asked questions such as "Siente querido por su familia y comunidad?" and "Cuando alguien te molesta te sientes iras y lloras?" with answers as "mucho", "poco" or "nunca". The survey sought to measure levels of emotions such as hate, jealousy, shame, and fear. It compared responses between girls of different communities and between different age levels.

national resources.³³ These programs include over 150 students and 15 professors in the city of Macas, Morona Santiago. The Biotechnology program integrates cultural knowledge into academic study best realized through university-community interactions. For example, the program recently organized a “I Concurso de Ciencia y Tecnología Morona Santiago” which included science projects from high schools and artisan centers.³⁴ The Pedagogic Center directly works with the SERBISH radiophonic school program in Sucua which delivers radio academic programs to isolated communities throughout the Shuar and Achuar territories.

Finally, the UPS is committed to developing the notion of interculturality both within the university and in Ecuador’s schools. While anthropology professor Alexandra Martínez confessed that this may be difficult in certain disciplines, it has become most important in the departments of social sciences and education.³⁵ Alexandra Martinez and Sebastian Granda’s *Curso de Formación de Ciudadanía Intercultural en el Programa de Educación Intercultural Bilingüe* (2007) follows a two-day intercultural course conducted in the PAC centers of Otavalo and Latacunga.³⁶ UPS designed the course to better achieve intercultural dialogue after a preliminary study found little recognition given to indigenous cultures in the programs. The course focused on collective rights and intercultural citizenship in Ecuador. Student evaluations gave high marks to both the

³³ Officially titled “El Programa de Tecnología en Procesamiento de Recursos Biológicos Amazónicos de la Carrera de Ingeniería en Biotecnología de la Universidad Politécnica Salesiana”

³⁴ UPS Noticias “UPS Participó en Concurso de Ciencia y Tecnología” 14 Noviembre 2007.

³⁵ Interview, Alexandra Martinez.

³⁶ As part of Phase III of the Project Educación ciudadana intercultural para los pueblos indígenas de América Latina en contextos de pobreza, Martinez and Granda tracked the two-day program for PAC students. An initial evaluation by Jose Yanez found the PAC program to be more concerned with pedagogical formation than with the particular cultural traits of the students. Therefore, the course featured three modules: Estado, Ciudadanía y Interculturalidad, then Pueblos Indígenas y Derechos Colectivos and finally, Pueblos Indígenas y Derechos Educativos. In Martínez Flores, Alexandra and Sebastián Granda. *Curso de Formación de Ciudadanía Intercultural en el Programa de Educación Intercultural Bilingüe*. (Quito: UPS, 2007)

course and the instructors. Furthermore, the UPS hopes to promote intercultural education in all schools through Ecuador. In 1992 the Ministry of Education decreed that intercultural education become an “eje transversal” that should be applied to all schools in Ecuador.³⁷ In conjunction with the PROEIB Andes in Cochabamba, Bolivia, the UPS recently investigated the integration of intercultural education in Hispanic schools in Ecuador. Sebastián Granda’s *Logros y Retos para Educación Intercultural para Todos* (2007) concludes that interculturality has not permeated Hispanic school curriculum, textbooks, daily school work and teacher training programs. He recommends dramatic changes in these areas in order for intercultural education to become a national reality.

B. Universidad de Cuenca

Located far south from Quito, the Universidad de Cuenca is the second oldest university in Ecuador with a history of over 140 years. During the last thirty years this state university has created a modern education program that addresses the social realities of Ecuador. According to the university’s website, current rector Dr. Jaime Astudillo Romero made significant changes in 2000 that included the creation of new programs and degrees, the accreditation of new faculty, and the readjustment of the student admission system.³⁸ In relation to indigenous education, the mission of the University includes, “la vinculación estrecha con los pueblos indígenas, mediante este proyecto rescatar las lenguas e identidades culturales, trabajar en comunidades indígenas mas alejadas y marginadas para poder apoyar la demanda de estos pueblos marginados.”³⁹

³⁷ “Uno de los elementos novedosos de la reforma fue la propuesta de incorporar la *interculturalidad* como uno de los ejes transversales de la educación nacional. La intención manifiesta era que el sistema educativo ecuatoriano contribuyera a desarrollar en los estudiantes esquemas de pensamiento no discriminatorios y actitudes de respeto hacia la diversidad cultural.” Granda 56

³⁸ Universidad de Cuenca Website. “Historia.” <http://rai.ucuenca.edu.ec/universidad/historia.htm>

³⁹ Patricio Zhingri. “Firman Convenio DINEIB y Universidad de Cuenca.” June 7, 2007 DINEIB Website.

The Universidad de Cuenca began work with indigenous education in 1991 in cooperation with GTZ and the DINEIB. An initial study undertaken in 1989 led to the creation of the Licenciatura en Lingüística Andina y Educación Bilingüe (LAEB).⁴⁰ Initially offered in 1991 to Quichua students, the degree has gradually increased in academic scope and student accessibility as it enters the current promotion. So far the program has graduated over 100 indigenous EIB teachers and administrators. The program has been divided into three basic areas which include Pedagogy, Psychology and Andean Culture. Director Alejandro Mendoza Orellana claims the uniqueness of the Universidad de Cuenca program has been in its direct relationship with the DINEIB in creating and executing academic programs.⁴¹

Academic work by indigenous students not only seeks to improve bilingual intercultural education but also to rescue and reestablish cultural traditions of indigenous pueblos. *Canciones Indígenas en los Andes Ecuatorianos: El Aillu y El Ciclo Agrícola* (1996) investigates traditional songs and their cultural relationships to family life and the agricultural cycle in Quichua and Shuar communities.⁴² Based on the thesis work of students during the third cycle of the LAEB program, the study claims to be the first socio-cultural investigation of oral literature conducted exclusively by indigenous students.⁴³ In the preface, director Alejandro Mendoza Orellana promises that the studies

⁴⁰ Programa Andino de Desarrollo de Recursos Humanos para la Educación Bilingüe Intercultural

⁴¹ Interview.

⁴² “Los autores son de Imbabura, Chimborazo, Canar, Azuay, Saraguro, y Morona-Santiago y recogen las canciones de sus comunidades, es decir, esa literatura oral que ellos han cantado muchas veces: las interpretan desde su perspectiva propia; la indígenas como las protagonistas de la cultura a la que pertenecen.” Alejandro Mendoza. *Canciones Indígenas en los Andes Ecuatorianos: El Aillu y el ciclo agrícola*. Supplement to *Pueblos indígenas y educación*, año VIII, no. 35- 36, julio-diciembre, (1996). p. 4.

⁴³ Mendoza writes, “se encuentra amplia información de pensamiento indígena sobre la naturaleza, el desarrollo del niño dentro del hogar, las formas de enamoramiento y las distintas prácticas y ritos que llevan a cabo el matrimonio, el trato de las mujeres, las creencias en torno a la vida y a la muerte, la dedicación a labor agrícola dentro un marco de respeto a la naturaleza; se constatará así mismo, la existencia de un sincretismo andino-cristiano en lo religión.” Alejandro Mendoza, Ibid.

combine a fine cultural analysis with a musical analysis, which studies the importance of song symbols and oral literature to indigenous communities. These works seek to engage in intercultural dialogue as they seek to reach both an indigenous and mestizo audience. The first chapter describes songs of family life that include a courtship ceremony in Otavalo, matrimony in Imbabura, the construction of a new home in Canar, the cutting of young boys' long hair (petacas) in Saraguro and, finally, the songs to the dead in Imbabura. The chapter concludes that each indigenous pueblo has a distinct musical style and song content reflecting its own unique cosmovision. Another study directed by the Andean Culture students under Dra Luz del Moya, director of El Taller de Ethografía Andina, *La Fiesta Religiosa Indígena* (1995) en el Ecuador investigates the cultural syncretism in different festivals of indigenous pueblos.⁴⁴

Similar to the Universidad Politecnica Salesiana (UPS), the Universidad de Cuenca program has created a network of distance learning centers throughout indigenous communities. At the Universidad de Cuenca, distance learning has made education more accessible to remote Amazon nationalities. The university maintains two cooperative teacher training programs with the Instituto Intercultural Bilingüe de Canelos in Morona-Santiago and also with the *Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas de la Amazonía Ecuatoriana* (CONFENIAE) for a development program throughout the Amazon.⁴⁵

Currently, over 300 students participate in the EIB program including those from

⁴⁴ “En estas paginas desfilan los rituales religiosos, las danzas y canciones, las recitaciones, los combates, los baños sagrados de purificación, los enamoramientos, la manifestación de sentido familiar y comunal en la minga, en la pambamesa, en las procesiones, en la elección de las floristas o de las munidoras, en las decisiones de construir una capilla o mandar a tallar un “santo” en el amor de la “Madre Tierra” etc.” Luz del Moya. *La Fiesta Indígena en el Ecuador*. Supplement to *Pueblos Indígenas y Educación*, Enero-Junio no. 33-34 (1995) p. 4.

⁴⁵ García, Fernando. “La Educación Superior Indígena en el Ecuador” *Instituto Internacional de la UNESCO para la Educación Superior en América Latina y el Caribe*. November 2004.

Quichua, Shuar, Achuar, Siona, Secoya, Waorani, Awapit and Chachi nationalities. The university plans to extend coverage to nine semi-presential sites in the Amazon region that include the Awa, Cofan, and Cachi nationalities.

Finally, the continued success of the program, coupled with the financial support of the GTZ and European support, has allowed the Universidad de Cuenca to extend the scope of indigenous education. The university developed a Department of Intercultural Studies which includes Human Rights, Environment Studies, and Alternative Medicine programs. New programs will include degrees in Local Development and Leadership, Public Policy and Leadership, and Natural Resource Policy for Sustainable Development. The university also plans a program of Cultural Studies for the Amazon. The program will include 40 students over 3 years and include linguistic, anthropological, literary and scientific training. The goal is to create indigenous academics who will produce cultural studies of Amazonian peoples.

C. FLACSO (Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales) Sede Ecuador

Opened in 1975 by exiled Chilean academics, FLACSO Sede Ecuador has served as an elite social science academic institution. During the 1980s FLACSO became a center for graduate studies offering masters and doctorate degrees. Although FLACSO is an autonomous institution, both academically and administrative, it still receives a large percentage of its budget from the state.⁴⁶ Therefore, FLACSO state funds are constantly negotiated with politicians. FLACSO plays a role in state development but also has

⁴⁶ The size and mission of each FLACSO depends on the staff and determination of each country. While Sedes Ecuador, Chile and Brazil have large graduate institutions, others such as FLACSO Guatemala are smaller NGOs.

criticized the president and various levels of government for their decisions. Many of the current ministers and politicians in government have been FLACSO professors.

With financial support from the Belgian cooperation, FLACSO initiated an Estudios Etnicos program in 1999.⁴⁷ The program consisted of a two year intensive master's degree program that included study in anthropology, sociology, law and political science.⁴⁸ The program educated a total of 125 indigenous professionals from Ecuador, Bolivia, Chile, Guatemala, throughout a period of five years. Each year, groups of 25 students began a two-year program of study. Financial support included full-time tuition plus a living stipend. The goals of the program included contributing to the formation of indigenous professionals of Andean countries who will assume the direction and administration of initiatives for social, economic and political development.⁴⁹ When the program ended in 2005, it became difficult to find additional funding to maintain scholarships.

Much of the thesis material of the Estudios Etnicos students provides sophisticated social science analysis of indigenous peoples. Alejandra Flores Carlos's "Intelectuales Indígenas del Ecuador y su paso por la Escuela y Universidad" offers a fascinating study of indigenous intellectuals in Ecuador. Through interviews, she documents the challenges and successes of indigenous intellectuals arising from their experiences in schools and the

⁴⁷ The program was initially known as *Asuntos Indígenas* but later changed its name to *Estudios Etnicos*.

⁴⁸ Anthropology Professor Fernando García describes key components of the program as, "Es un programa presencial que ha formado tres promociones (50 estudiantes de nueve países latinoamericanos) y los ejes transversales que forman parte de la propuesta tienen que ver con la noción de interculturalidad, entendida como la interrelación entre las diversas culturas basada en el respeto a las diferencias culturales y al logro de la unidad en la diversidad; la concepción integral del desarrollo que incluye la dimensión social, económica y cultural del mismo; la recuperación de los conocimientos tradicionales, la manera cómo sistematizarlos y teorizar sobre ellos, en este caso el conocimiento de los pueblos indígenas, y un final de orden práctico referido al aprendizaje de instrumentos para la gestión de proyectos de desarrollo. Fernando García, *Ibid*, p. 22

⁴⁹

university. Silverio Chisaguano Malliquinga's *La Educación Intercultural Bilingüe: Una Propuesta Educativa de los Pueblos Indígenas del Ecuador; Avances, Limitaciones y Desafíos* (2003) investigates the current state of the DINEIB at the national level. His recommendations include establishment of a self-evaluation process, centres for didactic and pedagogic materials, and improved channels of communication. Raúl Clemente Cevallos Calapi's *Desde "San Juan, San Pedro y Santo Lucia" Hacia la Construcción Social y Política de Inti Raymi en Cotacachi* (2006) constructs the unique political and social elements of the Inti Raymi festival in Cotacachi which greatly differ from the celebrations in other communities.

While the *Estudios Etnicos* program completed its contract, a second FLACSO initiative considered a graduate program with specialization in Indigenous Rights and Hydrocarbon Resources for Amazonian students. An agreement between Fernando Carrion of FLACSO and *Coordinadora de Organizaciones Indígenas de la Cuenca Amazonía* (COICA) director Sebastiao Ají Mancherini designed the graduate program for members of the pueblos and organizations of COICA, including Venezuela, Ecuador, Colombia, Bolivia and Peru.⁵⁰ The program intended to graduate approximately 60 students during two cycles. However, due to internal problems within the COICA, the program has been suspended.

D. Universidad San Francisco de Quito (USFQ)

Founded in 1987, the University of San Francisco is a private liberal arts university legally existing under the umbrella organization "Corporación Promoción Universitario".

⁵⁰ Fondo Indígena. "Formación Superior del Diplomado en Derechos Indígenas y Recursos Hidrocarburíferos—COICA—FLACSO." *Boletín Indígena* (May 2004) p. 5.

The university promotes the quest for knowledge, individual liberties, and the entrepreneurial spirit as a means for the development of Ecuadorian society through excellence in teaching, supported by qualified and committed faculty, comprehensive and rigorous curricula, and adequate resources.⁵¹ The university actively promotes multicultural diversity with its large numbers of international students along with indigenous students.⁵² The first year, “*el año socrático*” consists of general studies which allow the student to develop a humanist perspective. Afterwards, students can choose their specific course of study which includes education in the colleges of Business Administration, Agriculture, Architecture, Biological and Environmental Sciences, Health Sciences, Jurisprudence, Liberal Arts, Communication and Police Sciences. The university accepts over 700 international students and houses an office of International Programs with connections to various universities in the United States.

The Universidad San Francisco has developed a scholarship program for indigenous students. The university offers full scholarships to over 80 indigenous students, the majority from the Quichua highlands.⁵³ These scholarships go to the best students from public high schools throughout Ecuador. In addition, the university’s Tiputini Biodiversity Station (TBS),⁵⁴ located in the southern Amazon, has signed an agreement with the *Unión de Nacionalidades Amazónicas del Ecuador* (UNAE), the Shuar Federation and the *Federación de Comunas Unión de Nativos de la Amazonía Ecuatoriana* (FCUNAE) to provide scholarships for Shuar, Siona and Huaorani students.

Each organization can send two students per year with a maximum of four years per

⁵¹ Universidad San Francisco de Quito. Website. “Información General”
<http://www.usfq.edu.ec/1USFQ/historia.htm>

⁵² Interview, David Romo.

⁵³ Interview, David Romo.

⁵⁴ The USFQ coordinates the Tiputini Research Station in conjunction with Boston University. The Station holds record numbers for biodiversity as they have recorded over 121 species of amphibians.

student. While students actively select their career tracks, all indigenous students must maintain a 3.25 GPA to keep their scholarship. The university considers intercultural relationships important as these indigenous students now participate in becoming part of the academic and intellectual elite of the nation.

According to director David Romo, the students live together near campus in dorm houses and are provided a living stipend. The majority of students enroll in business administration programs, while others choose engineering or medicine. However, students are often discouraged from careers such as business administration because graduates often cannot find adequate jobs due to continuing racial discrimination in business centers where they might find jobs. Furthermore, David Romo discussed how many students, often with a poor primary education, have troubles with mathematics, writing skills and English. Many attend tutoring sessions at the university's learning center. Some successful graduates have moved on to graduate programs in the United States. Romo says that indigenous communities should not expect the students to initially return to Ecuador. In order to become a qualified professional, students should first find good jobs, go abroad for early career experience, and later return to their communities. For example, a recent Shuar student received a graduate degree from the University of Illinois and now works with an oil company in the Amazon.

E. Discussion

In their implementation of indigenous education, the following universities share distinctive several characteristics. Throughout the last twenty years these universities have all created programs in order to bring more indigenous students into the university.

More so than other universities in Ecuador, these universities have responded to social changes, most specifically bilingual intercultural education, ethnodevelopment and the rise of indigenous politics, to accept and integrate indigenous students into the university. Often with financial aid from international donors, indigenous students receive scholarships to study in the university in order to become professionals. These students now graduate into a variety of professions from which indigenous peoples had been largely excluded only ten to twenty years ago. Furthermore, all of these institutions claim to endorse intercultural education. Although these universities share these common characteristics, they differ widely in their academic programs for indigenous students and their conceptions of intercultural education.

In similar ways the Universidad San Francisco de Quito and FLACSO Sede Ecuador hold an elitist perception of superior education. First, both universities admit only the top academic indigenous students into their degree programs in Quito. While the USFQ grants scholarships to the top indigenous graduates of national high schools, FLACSO offers postgraduate degrees to a small cadre of indigenous leaders throughout Latin America. Second, each university contributes to shaping indigenous elites who will work in a variety of urban professional positions. The Universidad San Francisco de Quito offers traditional academic degrees for indigenous students who graduate as businesspersons, doctors, and engineers. Similarly, FLACSO, a social science graduate school, helps create a small group of indigenous professionals who will become future indigenous leaders as politicians, academics, and development experts. Due to its financial relation to the state, FLACSO academic programs seek to address issues of national development that USFQ programs do not. Finally, both universities envision

intercultural education in terms of including indigenous students into pre-existing structures of university education rather than radically changing the scope of the university. In many ways, these universities may be only somewhat refiguring social hierarchies that now include a small group of indigenous elites, more urban and professional in identity, above a majority of poor indigenous campesinos.

In contrast to FLACSO and UPS, the Universidad de Cuenca and UPS have created academic programs that not only graduate indigenous students but more critically address social problems that many communities face. First, both the UPS and the Universidad de Cuenca have been involved with the development of bilingual intercultural education since the early 1990s. While these universities offer degrees specifically for EIB education, the Universidad de Cuenca education program includes cultural studies programs to produce indigenous knowledge. The incorporation of cultural production came as a result of the relationship between the University and the indigenous DINEIB. Second, both universities have formed distance learning programs in order to extend university access to larger numbers of indigenous learners and to meet the needs of rural indigenous populations. Third, both universities have recently widened the scope of indigenous university education to include academic programs of public policy, local development and biotechnology. Finally, both universities envision intercultural education requiring radical change within the university. As indigenous peoples have been traditionally excluded from the university, the UPS and the Universidad de Cuenca now struggle to fashion programs that incorporate a unique indigenous perspective into the university. In the vision statement of the UPS intercultural education should exist for all students, not only indigenous students.

V. Conclusion

During the last twenty years, indigenous peoples have challenged a state-sponsored notion of uniform citizenship. Traditionally this uniform citizenship has discriminated against indigenous identity at the same time that it excluded indigenous peoples from active participation in the state. However, most successfully through bilingual intercultural education, ethno-development and the indigenous political movement, indigenous peoples have tentatively negotiated a multicultural citizenship in Ecuador that respects language, territory and cultural rights for indigenous peoples.

In very different ways universities throughout Ecuador have reacted to these social and political changes. The majority of universities, especially those with state funding, hold a special responsibility to address issues of national development. However, related to their unique political agendas, universities have treated indigenous superior education in different ways. Universities such as FLACSO and the Universidad San Francisco de Quito promote a traditional university education to create a small group of indigenous elites. In contrast, the UPS and the Universidad de Cuenca seek to extend superior education throughout indigenous communities and struggle to address indigenous concerns within the university. These radical changes within the university more accurately reflect the vision of a genuine multicultural citizenship within an intercultural nation. However, even these universities evoke a range of reactions and criticisms from different indigenous social actors that we will explore in the following chapter. Although some universities reinforce or reconfigure unequal social hierarchies in Ecuador through

their academic programs, other universities design programs that more clearly strive to transform the nation into an intercultural reality. Even in these latter cases, university reform must be accompanied by a further political project that actively promotes multicultural citizenship within an intercultural nation.

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