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Chapter 8 Reflection

Within this chapter the Author takes an in depth look at the results and findings that were found throughout the book and takes the time to recap and establishes connections to various other scenarios and examples throughout the world. The country has come a long way over the course of the book, from starting in a military controlled government and ultimately ending up with a democracy and a president that supports and wishes to enact socialist values. A few major contributing factors that got the country to this point is, the role of transnational organizations and funding. When the state was weak these organizations would essentially take the reins and guide the governmental decisions towards their own agenda. Another factor that mad Ecuador into the country it is today is the national level environmental organizations that made an impact by carrying out various projects depending on the type of organization that in some way shape or form benefited the environment or the overall surrounding community, or both. One last major factor that effected the movement throughout was the view on development and the role of the environmental policies. The role of development and policies are primarily dictated by the overall goals of the country at the time.

In the Origins of the environmental movement of Ecuador (1978-1987) in this period there were a very small amount of organizations and groups that were trying to make an impact in Ecuador's environmental sector. However, there were a few groups that did take it seriously and truly wanted to make an impact. These groups were identified by funders and given limited funds to carry out smaller scale projects, funders would then build relationship with the national level organizations that they were working with for further interactions. At this time, the two main types of groups that were making an impact on the national level were the ecodependent and the ecoresister groups. The dependents were the ones to receive funding from the internationally based organizations known as transnational funder or ecoimperialists. At this point in history the environmental policies were not strong nor were they enforced by the weak state, Development was all export based and major exports included petroleum and various other extraction based items. This is what attracted the ecoimperialists organizations which ultimately got the ecodependent organizations up and running.

Moving over into the next period explained within the book, the neoliberal boom (1987-2000) the slim amount of organizations and funders did exactly what the title of the time period states: boomed. Multiple transnational funders created large amounts of money for the national level ecodependent groups to carry out operations but now on a larger scale since the amount of funding increased significantly. At this time efforts were mainly focused on conservation, mainly biodiversity conservation. So large projects such as the establishment of national parks and instruction how to effectively manage them is an example of a project that is funded by an ecoimperialist and carried out by an ecodependent. While these issues are important these organizations fail to recognize the "brown issues" the parts of the environment that effect humans and society as a whole. Ecoresister organizations have a strong focus on this. For example These organizations may look to educate a community on the direct impacts and effects of oil drilling and the creation of a pipeline in order to receive support to shut down those projects for the sake of the overall well being of the surrounding people rather than the surrounding environment. As time progressed the government still remained weak but began to identify that the environment and finding ways to conserve and make the

environment better were important issues moving forward. A new position, Environmental Ministry was added to the government and various laws were enacted but again not strongly enforced. The country still depended on the extraction of resources as a means of economic growth.

In the Neoliberal Bust (2000-2006) transnational funding started to decrease substantially and overall resources for organizations to grow and carry out projects slowly began dying away. However limited amounts of organizations stayed alive, those with remaining funds. These organizations now took into consideration the brown issue and incorporated them into their agendas moving forward until the organizations die out at the end of the time frame. Ecoresister organizations rise to the forefront with no dominate environmental organizational presence.

All the turmoil created by the bust was smoothed out in the last era examined, The citizen's revolution. In this period, the government finally rose to power and became strong once again. Rafael Correa was elected in 2006 and had intentions of creating a new Ecuador that took the environment into consideration while also being for the people by pouring money into necessary quality of life infrastructure. The socialist ideals and practices made the administration very popular, however the only groups of people that didn't really support him were the ecoresisters. In order to fund the "citizen's revolution" large amount of money must be generated to support overall operations within the government, and the only way to get enough money to do what they want to do resource extraction must be a main staple. This did not make ecoresisters very happy especially because Correa included the rights to nature in the new constitution and expressed his concern with the environment and how he wants to make it better, yet he still is authorizing state ran petroleum extraction.

Without the existence and efforts of all organizations involved within the environmentalist sector of Ecuador it would be nowhere near where it is in our world today. These organizations created the groundwork for the current administration to build off of and do everything they can to progress toward a non-extraction reliant nation, however, Ecuador cannot operate strongly or make any sort of progress without a direct source of income. Whether it be through funding or heavy resource extraction the only way the country can prosper is if it creates economic growth. This is where the major issue lies because the options are to drill for oil or ask for funding from other countries. When asking for funding from other countries foreign agendas get imposed on national goals which can create overall tension and lack of support from other nations where as resource extraction can be operated internally without any influence on overall agenda while making a ton of money. It is obvious which option is more convenient and fosters an environment of overall independent and self-reliance however it destroys the world we live in in multiple ways, not only from drilling. In essence in order to save this area from total destruction and urbanization is if world leaders come together to make funds available for struggling countries to keep their oil in the ground while still being able to progress as a nation.

Overall, I found this book extremely informative and beneficial to not only my knowledge on Ecuador as a nation but also how the world operates and works in general. At first it was a challenge for me but as I got into it it began to make more sense and I was able to take a large amount of information away from it. I now have a greater understanding of the major political and environmental concerns of the country and of the Global South in general. Many countries such as Venezuela and Bolivia are in the same situation as Ecuador working to find viable alternatives to extractive development to build their countries from the ground up. The only criticism I have of the book is that I feel that it was very repetitive in some cases and also skipped around in terms of time (years) throughout chapter which

made it confusing here and there. But other than that, I gained a large amount of knowledge and feel a lot more confident in knowing the history, major influencers, and why/how the major influencers had such a great impact on the progression and overall change of Ecuador as history progressed.