

Terminal Report

I conducted research on indigenous university education in Ecuador over a span of two months. My research began with interviews with representatives of NGOs, government agencies, and indigenous movements. From these interviews, representatives described the extensive, complicated networks that universities have developed between various actors. Afterwards, I conducted interviews with directors, professors and students of the universities under comparison. Additionally, I read graduate theses of indigenous students in university libraries and purchased books in Abya Yala. My research found that university education for indigenous students is a highly political process; each program reflects the interests and influences of the university and its various sponsors. Therefore, university programs for indigenous students vary in vision and structure according to the specific history and mission of each university.

First, my research found the existence of complicated networks between NGOs, state development agencies, indigenous organization and university programs. For example, German NGOs such as the Hans Seidel Foundation and GTZ sponsor annual scholarships for indigenous students. Their scholarship students may attend a variety of universities, centered in Quito, but are then required to participate in INDESIC (Instituto para el Desarrollo Social y de las Investigaciones Cientificas). INDESIC functions as an academic and social network of indigenous intellectuals in Ecuador. INDESIC regularly sponsors *convenios* and publishes books and pamphlets which bring together indigenous movement representatives, university professors, NGOs and state development and education officials.

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Second, my research discovered how each university program for indigenous students serves as a product of its specific history and mission. The Salesiana University, a Catholic school opened in 1994, seeks to provide education to excluded classes especially indigenous peoples. Therefore, the Salesiana University maintains a strong emphasis on supporting indigenous university education most specifically by developing the notion of “intercultural” especially within anthropology and education departments. Here “intercultural” refers to a process of cultural exchange in a democratic setting. Furthermore, central to the mission of Salesiana University is the further development of Intercultural Bilingual Education at the primary and secondary levels. The Salesiana graduates certified teachers, directors and even anthropologists who are dedicated to developing Intercultural Bilingual education. Finally, the Salesiana University operates semipresential university centers in Latacunga, Otavalo, Cayambe, Riobamba and Bolivar.

FLACSO, a graduate school which specializes in the social sciences, has recently offered a special academic program for indigenous leaders. With the assistance of *Fondo Indigena* and a Belgian NGO, FLACSO offered a master’s degree program for indigenous leaders from 1998 to 2005. This program has produced influential indigenous intellectuals who participate in indigenous movements, NGOs, government organizations and international institutions. Finally the Anthropology department maintains a long tradition of investigating and supporting indigenous development.

Finally, the University of Cuenca offers a counter to the core of university power in Quito. Located far south, the University of Cuenca has developed indigenous university education in ways very different than universities in Quito. Although it

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maintains weak relationships with universities such as the Salesiana, the University of Cuenca has thoroughly focused on the development of bilingual intercultural education with local indigenous groups such as the Saraguro and the Shuar. The University of Cuenca was the first to integrate the Quichua instruction into the university catalogue. Most recently, the University of Cuenca established ties with DINEIB, the national directorate of bilingual intercultural education.

However, while each university has specifically tailored programs to indigenous students, there is a substantial lack of indigenous professors in these programs. Indigenous intellectuals are abundant at university workshops and *convenios* but relatively few are contracted as university professors. Second, few universities design academic careers which directly address indigenous rural problems such as agricultural development, community water use, architecture and tourism. Finally, most indigenous students have limited access to traditional universities as the majority resides in the capital of Quito.

Amawtay Wasi, the proposed intercultural university that is exclusively run by indigenous professors and directors, challenges the hegemony of traditional universities in Quito. The project of Amawtay Wasi differs from traditional universities by developing a unique organizational and pedagogical approach. The proposal claims to be a university interested in holistic learning in a variety of rural settings outside of Quito. The proposal offers long distance education programs as well as weekend seminars. However, after over ten years of planning Amawtay Wasi still has not begun operations. The indigenous university must overcome both educational and political obstacle before it can open its doors.

Interviews

Fernando Yanez (EIB Amazon)
Julio Yuiquelema (CONAIE, Education Representative)
Carmen Martinez (Anthropology Professor, FLACSO)
Victor Bunay (Director, INDESIC)
Ampam Kurakas (Intellectual Shuar)
Jorge Leon (Intellectual, Consultant)
Vicente Pujapat (Representative, CODENPE)
Binder (Director, Hans Seidel)
Alexandra Martinez (Anthropology Professor, Salesiana)
Fernando Garcia (Anthropology Professors, FLACSO)
Luis Monteluisa (Former DINEIB director, EIBAmaz)
Ana Tasiguano (Representive, CODENPE)
Fernando Sarango (Director, Amawtay Wasi)
Jorge Garcia (UNICEF, coordinator Amawtay Wasi)
Anita Krainer (Linguist, DINEIB)
Arirumi Kowii (Director Intercultural Comm, MEC)
Sebastián Granda (Salesiana)
Julio Oliviero (Amawtay Wasi)
David Romo (Professor, San Francisco)

Selected Resources

Amawtay Wasi. Aprender en la Sabiduría y el Buen Vivir

Carlos, Alejandra Flores. Intelectuales indígenas del Ecuador y su paso por la escuela y universidad

García, Fernando. Escuela e Indianidad en las Urbes Ecuatorianas

Merchán, Sebastián Granda. Textos escolares e interculturalidad en Ecuador, Büttner, Thomas. Uso de Quichua y del Castellano en la Sierra Ecuatoriana

Parga, José Sánchez. Educación Indígena en Cotopaxi

Universidad Politécnica Salesiana. Historias desde el Aula: Educación Intercultural Bilingüe y Etnoeducación en Ecuador