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Indigenous versus Indigenous

The rupture of the Unity Pact

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ABSTRACT

In 2004, forged through struggle and hungry for change, the indigenous confederations CSUTCB, FNMCB-BS, CONAMAQ, CIDOB and CSCB decided to enter a Pact of Unity. Even though they all represented different indigenous organisations with different historical backgrounds, following their cooperation, a new political concept was created: the indigenous native peasant. The mutual consent on this new concept, meant to cover all indigenous peoples in Bolivia, reflected a shared understanding of the Bolivian indigenous identity. However, from 2004 until 2011, the political salience of the inter-indigenous boundary between the CSUTCB, CSCB, FNMCB-BS, and the CONAMAQ and CIDOB has increased significantly. Consequentially, their cooperation ended. According to the CONAMAQ and CIDOB, the Unity Pact no longer represented the indigenous peoples of Bolivia. For this thesis, a single qualitative case study has been executed, using a theory-testing process tracing design to test the process theory of Andreas Wimmer (2008) in its ability to explain the increased political salience of the inter-indigenous boundary that has led to the rupture of the Unity Pact.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Even though Indigenous people make up for more than 60 percent of Bolivia's population, until the 1960s, ethnicity played no role in Bolivian politics. Instead, since the ethnic division coincided almost perfectly with the class line, ethnicity was a class-based struggle in which the Indigenous were seen as 'inferior, ignorant and poor' (Flesken, 2018, p.7; Loayza Bueno & Datta, 2011, p.iv). For several decades, indigenous movements had been rising, demanding recognition and equality. In 2004, five indigenous confederations, the CSUTCB[1], CSCB[2], FNMCB-BS[3], CONAMAQ[4] and CIDOB[5], together representing almost all indigenous organisations in Bolivia, bundled their powers in what was known as 'El Pacto de Unidad' (the Unity Pact) (Valdivia Rivera, 2019, p.100-101). Having a shared history with marginalisation and oppression, the Unity Pact was meant to join forces of all indigenous movements. Together, they would attempt to achieve a sovereign constitutional assembly to rewrite the constitution in a way that would formally recognize all indigenous peoples (Delgado, 2017, p.380).

The Unity Pact appeared successful, when on the 18th of December 2005, Bolivia elected its first ever self-identifying indigenous president, Evo Morales. Morales was an indigenous cocalero (coca farmer), and the first indigenous to lead the country ever since the Spaniards had arrived more than 500 years ago (Postero, 2006, p.1). After his appointment, Morales convened the constitutional assembly, beginning an indigenous revolution he called 'the process of change' (Postero, 2017, p.1). Between May 2006 and May 2007, the Unity Pact was meant to write a constitutional proposal in de name of all indigenous peoples of Bolivia. Accordingly, the pact introduced a new political subject known as 'naciones y pueblos indígena originario campesinos' (indigenous native peasant nations and people) (Postero, 2017 p.1-2; p.57-58). This new political subject has its origin in the differing histories of each confederation, but similarly reflected their aim to create a political coalition in their attempt to improve the indigenous position in Bolivia (Garcés 2011, p.49-52). After five years of debate among the Unity pact, and later also among the government and its opposition, in 2009, the new Bolivian constitution was implemented.

However, over time, internal conflict seemed to rise. Following the plan of the Bolivian government to build a highway straight through an indigenous reserve, known as el Territorio Indígena y Parque Nacional Isiboro Secure (TIPNIS), an indigenous opposition rose against the arguably indigenous

[1] Confederación de Trabajadores Rurales de Bolivia (CSUTCB, Unique Confederation of Rural Laborers of Bolivia)
[2] Confederación Nacional de Mujeres Originarias Indígenas Campesinas de Bolivia - Bartolina Sisa (FNMCB-BS, National Confederation of Peasant Indigenous Originary Women of Bolivia)
[3]Confederación Sindical de Colonizadores de Bolivia (CSCB, Syndicalist Confederation of Colonizer Communities of Bolivia)
[4] Confederación de Pueblos Indígenas de Bolivia (CIDOB, Confederation of Indigenous Peoples of Bolivia)
[5] Consejo Nacional de Ayllus y Markas del Qullasuyu (CONAMAQ, National Council of Ayllus and Markas of Qullasuyu).

government. Residents of the TIPNIS reserve were afraid of what the road would do to their land, since they subsist on foraging, hunting, and fishing and, therefore, the road could harm their way of living (Hope, 2016, p.925). However, this indigenous opposition did not include all members of the Unity Pact. While the CONAMAQ and CIDOB were organizing a march opposing the highway, the MAS affiliated confederations, CSUTCB, CSCB and FNMCB-BS (together often referred to as 'las trillizas', the triplets), sided with the Bolivian government and started to organize a counter March walking from the opposite part of the road towards the march of the CONAMAQ and CIDOB (Valdivia Rivera, 2019, p.149-150). Finally, December 2011, the CONAMAQ and CIDOB announced their departure from the Unity Pact (Rojas, December 22nd 2011). In a formal announcement that became public almost a year later, the CIDOB and CONAMAQ argued the Unity Pact no longer represented the indigenous peoples of Bolivia (Resolution 01, 18th of January 2013). With both parts of the ruptured Unity Pact literally running into each other, a new ethnic boundary appears to have emerged.

There are numerous theories on what could have caused the emergence of such an ethnic conflict, however a comprehensive answer has not yet been reached. It appears there are various examples that fit, and contradict, different theoretical positions and their perception of ethnicity (Chandra, 2006; Hale, 2014, Wimmer, 2008). In an attempt to explain this variation, Andreas Wimmer has made a process theory trying to explain the transformative ability of ethnic boundaries. In doing so, instead of attempting to proof others wrong, Wimmer attempts to show that the best understanding of ethnic identities includes multiple theories. According to Wimmer, ethnicity is 'a mode of drawing boundaries between individuals and thus creating social groups' (Weber, 1985, p.237 in Wimmer, 2008, p.985). However, whether such boundaries will become politically salient, depends upon the characteristics of the social field, the boundary making strategies of other actors, and the ability of these actors to reach a consensus (970). In an attempt to create a general understanding of how and when ethnic boundaries become politically salient, and when they do not, Wimmer (2008) has created a model, linking these various factors together in what he refers to as 'a multilevel process theory' (p.970).

Looking at the indigenous case in Bolivia, it appears that somewhere between 2004 and 2011 an increase in the political salience of the inter-indigenous boundary has occurred. While initially, there appeared to be an agreement on the location and meaning of the indigenous boundary, from 2011 onwards this seemed to no longer be the case. Instead, as can be observed from the TIPNIS conflict described above, the inter-indigenous boundary between the Triplets and the CONAMAQ and CIDOB, whether it initially existed or not, appears to have become politically salient to a degree in which it has ruptured the Unity Pact. Accordingly, conducting a typical case study using a process tracing research design, this thesis attempts to answer: What has caused the increase in the political salience of the inter-indigenous ethnic boundary between the Triplets, and the CONAMAQ and CIDOB.

The high variety in theories attempting to explain the meaning and dynamics of ethnicity and ethnic groups could be argued to reflect the high transformability of its boundary characteristics. A better understanding of the dynamics of these boundaries, will give new insights on the mechanisms causing the arguably 'thick' boundaries observed during ethnic conflict. Additionally, this research could be a first of many comparable researches in an attempt to find regularities among the changing mechanisms of ethnicity. Understanding the mechanisms that cause ethnic boundaries to change, can be a first step towards a better, more generally applicable understanding of ethnic conflict, and perhaps of its possible solutions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Since the protest march against the TIPNIS highway in 2011, an increasing amount of research has been done on the conflicting views of the indigenous identity in Bolivia. Several researchers have framed the conflict being between state and indigenous as opposed to inter-indigenous. In her book 'The indigenous state', Nancy Postero (2017) argues the TIPNIS conflict is a repetition of the past in which indigenous peoples' territories were exploited in the name of progress. According to Postero, the Bolivian government has used the discourse of decolonization, a broadly shared goal for Bolivian indigenous groups, to form a consensus about what indigeneity means and who gets to represent it (p.88). Subsequently she argues, even though the MAS claims to represent the indigenous peoples of Bolivia, 'its entanglement with global capitalism appears to enable, if not justify, a renewed sacrifice of indigenous communities, along with a renewed racist discourse' (p.132).

Similarly arguing the conflict to be between the state and the indigenous peoples of Bolivia, Hope (2016) accuses the Bolivian government of promoting distinctions between indigeneity and the demand for conservation, while initially having 'mobilised and articulated indigeneity as an identity tied to alternative views and practices towards nature' (p.924). Hope argues, in an attempt from the Bolivian government to exclude indigenous groups opposing the TIPNIS highway, the opposition of the road has been attributed to the meddling and 'pseudo-environmentalist' ideologies of international NGOs. Consequentially, the Bolivian government frames the opposition as 'traders', conspiring with the neo-liberal west (p.927). Both Postero and Hope appear to observe a changed strategy of the government, leaving behind the initial interpretation of the indigenous identity that gave rise to their power and, consequentially, creating a top down created conflict. Postero names this 'the paradox of the MAS state: it is at once an indigenous state and a liberal state' (2017, p.88). Consequentially, who counts as indigenous has become a political question, 'emerging from struggles over particular social, cultural, environmental, and economic matters during particular moments (García 2008; Friedlander 1975 in Postero, 2017, p.183).

Considering the origins of Bolivia's current government, the framing of the TIPNIS conflict being between the state and its indigenous peoples, instead of inter-indigenous, is not surprising. The MAS emerged in 1995 as an extension of an indigenous social movement led by the CSUTCB, FNMCB-BS and CSCB peasant union confederations (Schilling-Vacaflor, 2008 p.6-7). As argued by Dioncio Núñez, one of MAS's founding members, with the strong influence of these social movements upon 'the political instrument' it became "hard to visualize a divorce between the social movements and the political instrument" (in Anria, 2019, p.68). However, according to McNeish (2013), research should be careful with oversimplifying the conflict, since 'these reductive narratives have dangerous unintended consequences in terms of being easily co-opted as part of the basis for the political right to argue its case in opposition of the 'process of change'. (p.233-234). McNeish argues instead of focussing only on the

differences between the state and the indigenous peoples, more research should be done on the differences between the indigenous peoples themselves. Accordingly, McNeish highlights the differences in relationships he has observed between indigenous groups and extractive policies, keeping in mind the national economic and political transformations that have 'squeezed ethnic and class identities together' (p.234). Because of different histories, indigenous groups would have different interests and, therefore, diverging stands towards extractive policies. While some groups have been historically shaped to find their position in the class hierarchy more important than their ethnic identity, and therefore argue in favour of extractive politics to improve Bolivia's economy, others privilege their ethnic identity over class and would therefore rather see their land conserved (p.235).

Similarly, Canessa (2014) attempts to develop key distinctions between differing indigenous groups in Bolivia. Just like Postero (2017), Canessa argues 'discourses of indigeneity have been deployed as central elements of statecraft and governance'. Canessa argues, it was indigeneity that provided Morales with the legitimacy to rule. Therefore, the Bolivian government has been working on creating a homogeneous national indigenous culture for the majority (p.156-158), making indigeneity itself, 'the foundations of new nationalism' (Canessa, 2012, p.17-18). However, underlying these foundations, Canessa argues there to be a strong historical distinction within the Bolivian indigenous population between 'territorialised' and 'deterritorialised' indigenous groups. For territorialized indigenous groups, indigeneity would be closely related to the autonomy over land. They seek respect for cultural differences and want protection against the majority from the state in order to preserve their own minority culture. However, for deterritorialised indigenous groups, indigeneity is much more about national identity. Arguing indigeneity is at the centre of this national identity, they find that the nation's resources should be exploited for their benefit in particular (p.168). Contrarily to the work of Postero (2017) and Hope (2016), both McNeish (2013) and Canessa (2014) appear to analyse the indigenous conflict emerging from the bottom up.

Additionally, in a more recent book, Valdivia Rivera (2019) similarly highlights the way a variety of movements has co-opted the indigenous narrative in an attempt to oppose the Bolivian government. According to her observations, the TIPNIS conflict has evolved into a much broader discourse than that between state and indigenous, or between different movements within the indigenous population itself, bringing together a large number of youngsters, ecologists, feminists, Indianists, cultural activists and anarchists (p.143). Consequentially, the TIPNIS conflict turned into a conflict "between 'political networks' of socio-political actors that were articulated according to their position vis-à-vis a specific matter: the road's construction" (p.145). She refers to Lucero (2008) arguing 'the weakness of literature on the indigenous movement is precisely it tendency to speak of the movement as one' (in Valdivia Rivera, 2019, p.154).

DEFINING ETHNICITY

Following the advice of McNeish (2013), this thesis will attempt to carefully dissect the inter-indigenous conflict which has led to the rupturing of the Unity Pact in December 2011. Looking past the political networks observed by Valdivia Rivera (2019), it appears the TIPNIS conflict reflects a clear disagreement with the Triplets on one side, and the CONAMAQ and CIDOB on the other. The amount of literature written in an attempt to explain the rise of such ethnic conflict is immense, however still very diverse and contradicting. Within these theories, the strongest divide can be found between Primordialism, Constructivism.

WHAT CAUSES ETHNIC CONFLICT?

According to the primordial understanding of ethnicity, ethnic identities are ascriptive. They are assigned at birth and therefore historically determined (Williams, 2015, p.147). Donald Horowitz, a frequently cited primordialists, argues ethnic groups are based on 'a myth of collective ancestry', which most of the time entails 'traits believed to be innate'. Therefore, 'most people are born into the ethnic group in which they will die, and ethnic groups consist mostly of those who have been born into them' (1985, p.55). According to Primordialism, ethnic affiliations are 'deeply rooted' and, therefore, any conflict resulting from ethnic differences is the consequence of 'ancient hatred' (Chandra, 2012, p.132). However, even though the primordial approach would be suitable to explain the conflict that has ruptured the Unity Pact, applying this theory to the Bolivian case would cause difficulties in explaining the emergence of the Unity Pact to begin with.

Contrarily to Primordialism, Constructivism argues ethnic identities are socially constructed, fluid and 'endogenous to a set of social, economic and political processes' (Chandra, 2001, p.7). According to constructivists, an individual's ethnic identity is not determined at birth, 'because it is not genes but the internal logic of social discourses that drives identity construction' (Williams, 2015, p.149 referring to Ferejohn, 1991, p.285). Instead, they argue all ethnic identities are constructed in dialogue, meaning an individual's identity is not shaped by its own identification alone, but also by the categorization of others (Taylor, 1994, p.25). Ethnic conflict would therefore be the product of historical processes that have affected the relations between ethnic groups, and, consequentially, has caused hostility between them.[6]

[6] It has to be emphasized that this is a rather simplified summary of the two main theoretical approaches on ethnic identities. Following a detailed analysis of all theoretical variations marked as either 'primordialist' or 'constructivist' theories, Hale (2014) argues that, due to all the nuance applied over time, the two theories do not appear to be opposing each other as much as they used to. The main difference, according to Hale, is to be found in theorists positions in relation to change. While some theorists hold on to the argument that 'individuals can change identities relatively easily, even once identities appear 'crystallized' in society', others claim that 'this is […] impossible because people think about ethnicity in primordial terms' (Hale, 2004, p.462). Going into detail upon these more nuanced theoretical approaches on the ethnic identity, however, is not in the scope of this thesis.

So far, however, the constructivist approach leaves us with no clear reasoning on the timing of the emergence of ethnic conflict.

Analysing a variety of case studies on ethnic identities, Wimmer argues there to be various examples that fit, and contradict, different theoretical positions and their perception of ethnicity (p.972). Hence, he suggests instead of focusing what ethnicity 'really is', research should focus on explaining the entire range of empirically documented variation. Following his own advice, Wimmer introduces a new constructivist perspective on ethnicity, presented in what he calls 'a multi-level process theory' (p.970). According to his theory, ethnicity is 'a subjectively felt sense of belonging based on the belief in shared culture and common ancestry' (p.973). As could be deduced from this definition, Wimmer sees ethnicity as an interpretation rather than a thing that 'is'. Accordingly, he builds upon Weber's perception of ethnicity, arguing it to be 'a mode of drawing boundaries between individuals and thus creating social groups' (Weber, 1985, p.237 in Wimmer, 2008, p.985). Wimmer combines this view with Barth's (1969) approach on ethnicity, looking at the transformative capacity of the characteristics of the boundaries between ethnic groups, rather than all cultures in a separate ethnography (in Wimmer, 2008, p.971).

According to Wimmer, the varying features of ethnic boundaries observed by existing literature, whether they are thick and unchangeable like primordialists would argue or fluid and thus changeable like constructivists would argue, are 'the result of the negotiations between actors whose strategies are shaped by the characteristics of the social field' (p.973). Accordingly, Wimmer argues increased political salience of a boundary between ethnic groups, is the consequence of disagreement on its location, reflecting who is one of 'us' and who is 'the other', and / or the political implications of the boundary. However, if actors are able to reach consensus, political salience will be low. "When the location, meaning, and implications of a boundary are widely accepted, it will be taken for granted on an everyday basis and impossible to challenge in the political arena" (p.1001). With the establishment of the 'indigenous native peasant' in the new Bolivian constitution as a result of the cooperation of the Unity Pact, the degree of political salience of the boundary between them appeared to be low, if not non-existent[7]. However, with the emergence of the TIPNIS conflict resulting in the Triplets and CONAMAQ and CIDOB, organising marches that oppose each other, it appears the political salience of the boundary between them has increased significantly. By applying Wimmer's process theory on the indigenous case in Bolivia, this thesis attempts to answer *what has caused the increased political salience of the ethnic boundary between 'the Triplets', and the CONAMAQ and CIDOB.*

[7] While some research has analyzed the indigenous peoples as a homogenous group until the TIPNIS conflict, others have argued there has always been a significant difference. However, with the analysis of this research being limited to existing literature and documented events, it is not in the scope of this thesis to proof or disproof the pre-existence of these boundaries. The only thing that can be observed with a degree of certainty, is an increase in political salience of the boundary splitting the Unity Pact in two, whether it already existed or not.

Before applying Wimmer's model upon this case in Bolivia, a more detailed elaboration on the several steps within Wimmer's process model are in order. However, firstly it is important to elaborate on Wimmer's notion of a boundary. According to Wimmer, a boundary has both a categorical and a behavioural dimension. "The former refers to acts of social classification and collective representation; the latter to everyday networks of relationships that result from individual acts of connecting and distancing". Wimmer argues that only when both dimensions coincide, they can be considered a social boundary (p.975).

THE MULTILEVEL PROCESSUAL MODEL OF ANDREAS WIMMER

Wimmer's model exists out of four successive steps that eventually, are all connected into a cyclic process. In the section below, I will briefly elaborate these steps, before applying them on the indigenous case in Bolivia.

Step 1 – From social field characteristics to boundary making strategy

As has been briefly discussed before, according to Wimmer, ethnicity is 'a mode of drawing boundaries between individuals and thus creating social groups' (Wimmer, 2008, p.985 referring to Weber, 1985, p.237). Wimmer refers to an actor's 'mode of drawing boundaries', as its 'boundary making strategy'. The 'boundary making strategy' an actor will prefer, depends on its interests. However, within Wimmer's model, an actors interests are not independent. Wimmer highlights, that an actors 'interests', are dependent on the institutional environment and the cognitive frames that have already been routinized (p.993). Referring to a theory of Hartmut Esser (2002), he argues prior to any action, actors choose a cognitive scheme[8] 'appropriate to the institutional environment and conducive to their perceived interest'. After having chosen a scheme, actors act in the way most suitable to attain the goals defined by the scheme (p.993-994). Referring to the socio-psychological process of identification, Wimmer points out that if a certain schema is dominant within an actor's institutional environment, chances are high, the actor will choose that similar schema, responding to 'group pressure from their ethnic peers' (p.1003). Nevertheless, he underlines that even in a social fields where a particular ethnic boundary has already been established, individuals are always free to choose their own scheme, meaning they are free to interpret the ethnic boundary their own way. According to Wimmer, most individuals will choose to interpret an ethnic boundary in a way 'that allows them to claim an advantageous position vis-à-vis other individuals of the same ethnic category' (p.994).

[8] These 'schemas' originate from psychological cognitive theories on emotions, which argue behaviour and thought are influenced by a 'scheme' that individuals use in order to organize categories of information and the relationships between them (DiMaggio, 1997, p.269).

Subsequently, Wimmer differentiates between five possible boundary making strategies (p.986). Three of them, however, are not relevant for this research and will therefore not be further elaborated[9]. The two strategies relevant for this research are that of boundary expansion, and boundary contraction. Pursuing expansion, an actor will establish a new boundary in order to expand the range of people included. Contrarily, pursuing contraction, an actor will establish a new boundary in order to reduce the range of people included. Wimmer highlights that actors are not free to choose whatever strategy they prefer (p.990). Elaborating on this assumed restricted freedom, Wimmer names three field characteristics that he argues constrain an actor's choice of strategy.

Firstly, the institutional order would create incentives that makes it more probable for certain ethnic boundaries to be drawn, whether these are ethnic, class, religion, etc. than others (p.990-993).[10] Secondly, he argues 'which level of ethnic differentiation an individual will emphasize, depends on her position in the hierarchies of power that the institutional order establishes' (p.993). According to Wimmer, an actor will prefer the level of ethnic differentiation that furthers her interest, 'given her endowment with economic, political, and symbolic resources' (p.993). Additionally, the effect of an actors preferred level of differentiation also depends upon its relative amount of power. The more power, the more influence an actors boundary making strategy will have upon others (p.994). Finally, Wimmer argues the reach of 'the network of political alliances', influences the topography of the boundary, defining who will be considered as 'one of us' and who will be considered to be 'the other'. The lack of trans-ethnic political networks would create what Wimmer refers to as an 'inner other' (p.995-996). It is important to highlight that due to these limitations of the social field, it is possible for actors with different schemas to adopt similar boundary making strategies. Consequentially, these limitations can influence actors' ability to reach consensus on the location and meaning of ethnic boundaries.

Step 2 – The negotiation process

Because Wimmer argues ethnic boundaries to be open to interpretation, it follows that it is possible for actors to have opposing boundary making strategies. According to Wimmer, if an actor, wants its boundary interpretation, and therefore its view on society, to be respected and applied by others, it will have to convince those 'others' of its legitimacy. However, whether such negotiation results in consensus on the location and meaning of the ethnic boundary, depends upon the power distribution among actors and the pre-existence of inter-ethnic political network alliances. In a social field divided by ethnic boundaries, with no pre-existing inter-ethnic political network alliances, it follows that there will be one ethnic group that has a dominant position over others. In such a case, when opposing boundary making strategies occur, those strategies of the dominant ethnic actors will have a stronger

[9] For the other three boundary making strategies, see Wimmer, 2008, p.988-989

[10] For research on historical trend that would unfold in such ethnic boundary making, Wimmer refers to Balibar (1988), Mamdani (1996), Patterson (2005) and Wimmer and Min (2006).

effect on the general view of society than that of the subordinate actors. However, with actors always free to interpret boundaries in way that suits them (p.994), such imposed boundaries can result in a counter-discourse, reflecting a disagreement on the location and political implications of an ethnic boundary.

Wimmer highlights, however, that consensus between actors endowed with different resources is not impossible. Following his own theory of 'cultural compromise' (2002, chap 2), Wimmer argues consensus between actors and groups bestowed with a different amount of recourses is possible 'if their interests at least partially overlap and strategies of classification can therefore concur on a shared view' (p.998). Simply put, this means consensus is possible if both parties gain something from the agreement. Consequentially, apparent consensus on the location an meaning of ethnic boundaries between actors within a similar social field can imply two things: (1) the actors use similar schemas and have therefore chosen similar boundary making strategies, or (2) actors have chosen different schemas but have become limited by the social field in a way that has resulted in similar boundary making strategies.

Step 3 - The effect of the degree consensus on boundary characteristics

In the third step of his model, Wimmer addresses the effect of the degree of consensus between actors upon the political salience of the boundary between them[11]. According to Wimmer, when the degree of consensus among actors is high, its location and meaning will be 'widely accepted' and therefore 'taken for granted on an everyday basis' (p.1001). Consequentially, the degree of political salience will be low. However, where there is no consensus on the location of ethnic boundaries 'let alone their consequence for the allocation of resources' Wimmer expects an ethnic boundary to have an increased degree of political salience (p.1001).

Step 4 - The mechanisms of change

In the fourth, and last step of Wimmer's processual theory, he argues there are three possible mechanisms of change that can cause the initial degree of political salience of a boundary to change: Firstly, new institutions, actors or power resources entering the social field can cause what Wimmer calls an 'exogenous shift', changing the field characteristics in which an actors is operating. Secondly, actors might decide to adopt new strategies, while strategically fitting them into the repertoire of their environment, resulting in an 'exogenous drift'. Lastly, Wimmer argues strategies pursued by actors can have intended and unintended consequences which in turn can affect the composition of the social field (p.1007-1008).

[11] In his original theory, Wimmer discusses four boundary characteristics which are influenced by the negotiation process among actors: Cultural differentiation, social closure, political salience and stability. However, since this thesis focuses on explaining the increased political salience of the boundary between the Triplets, and the CONAMAQ and CIDOB, the other characteristics have not been addressed in this theoretical framework. For an overview of all characteristics, see Wimmer (2008), p.1001-1004.

Before continuing, since this research will apply Wimmer's theory on the indigenous case in Bolivia, a clear definition of what will be considered 'indigenous' is in order. Following the definition of the indigenous native peasant as documented in the Bolivian Constitution of 2009, this research will define indigenous peoples as

> *"Any human collective that shares a cultural identity, language, historical tradition, insitutions, territoriality and cosmovision, whose existence is prior to the Spanish colonial invasion" (Constitution Bolivia, 2009, article 30).*

Additionally, as can be gathered from what has been discussed so far, this thesis considers the indigenous identity to be an ethnic identity following the definition of Wimmer, as stated above. As argued by Postero (2017, p7), whether Bolivians look at indigeneity as being based upon race or ethnicity or even class, depends upon the region in which you ask. However, as argued by Wimmer "treating race as fundamentally different from ethnicity overlooks the fact that one and the same group of individuals might be treated as a race at one point in history and as another type of ethnic category at another" (p.975). Accordingly, in this thesis, similar to the work of Wimmer, no difference will be made between race and ethnicity.

RESEARCH DESIGN

CASE SELECTION

According to Wimmer, his model is meant to explain how ethnic boundaries are generated and transformed over time (p.973). The case of Bolivia discussed above, is considered to be a representative case of such boundary transformation. Before the TIPNIS conflict, the political salience of the inter-indigenous boundary appeared to be low. However with the opposing marches observed during the TIPNIS conflict, the degree of political salience of the inter-indigenous boundary appeared to be high. As such, this case is suitable for testing the process theory of Andreas Wimmer in its ability to explain the observed boundary transformation.

METHOD AND OPERATIONALISATION

For this thesis, a single qualitative case study has been executed using a theory-testing process tracing design to test the process theory of Wimmer (2008) in its ability to explain the increased political salience of the ethnic boundary between the triplets, and the CONAMAQ and CIDOB, observed during the TIPNIS conflict. The mechanism causing the observed boundary transformation, is initially unobservable. However, by forming hypotheses according to the process theory of Andreas Wimmer, this research has operationalized the mechanisms, generating observable and testable implications.

As has been observed by earlier research of Canessa (2014) and McNeish (2013), the five indigenous confederations that were members of the Unity Pact, were shaped by different historical backgrounds. Nevertheless, despite these differences, the Unity Pact emerged in 2004, reflecting a shared understanding of the Bolivian indigenous identity and a low political salience of the inter indigenous boundary. According to the process theory of Wimmer, low degrees of political salience reflect high degrees of consensus. Accordingly, this thesis will argue that

H1. The limitations of the social field characteristics during the time of the emergence of the Unity pact have caused for similar boundary making strategies of all five confederations, despite initially differing interests. Consequentially these similar strategies have led to a consensus on the location and meaning of the ethnic boundary between indigenous and non-indigenous, making the degree of political salience of the inter-indigenous boundary low.

However, during the TIPNIS conflict an increase in the political salience of the inter-indigenous boundary between the Triplets, and the CONAMAQ and CIDOB has been observed. Accordingly, this thesis will argue:

H1. The increased political salience of the inter-indigenous boundary between the triplets, and the CONAMAQ and CIDOB reflects the breaking of the consensus on the location and meaning of the ethnic boundary between indigenous and non-indigenous.

This leaves us with answering which mechanisms is responsible for this observed boundary transformation. According to Wimmer, there are three possible mechanisms of change: Exogenous shifts, exogenous drifts and endogenous change. While exogenous shifts and endogenous change should be first noticed in changes within the social field characteristics, exogenous drifts, should be first measured in the actor's boundary making strategy. By tracing the process of cooperation of the Unity Pact between its emergence in 2004 and its annulment in 2011, this research has traced the first significant changes within the relationship between the members of the Unity Pact. Subsequently it has looked whether observed changes were caused by new institutions, actors or power resources entering the social field (exogenous shift); new strategies strategically placed in the repertoire of their environment (exogenous drift); or intended and unintended consequences of strategies pursued by actors (endogenous change) (see figure 1).

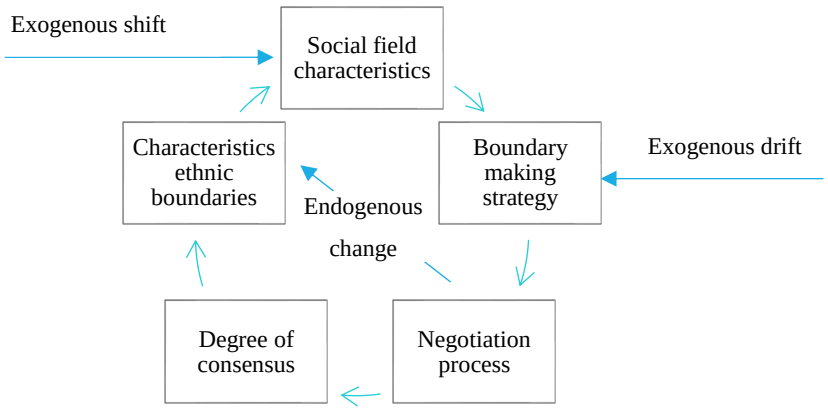

Figure 1 A simplified depiction of Wimmer's process theory

LEVEL OF ANALYSIS

This research analyses the boundary shaping discourse between the five indigenous confederations within the Unity Pact. It is important to highlight that these observations should only be interpreted as reflecting the discourse at the political elite level. Even though the confederations together represent almost all indigenous organisations in Bolivia (Valdivia Rivera, 2019, p.100-101), and the organisations aligned with the indigenous confederations have mostly evolved from the ground up, their leadership at national level has a significant distance from what happens at the grass root level and their behaviour should therefore not be assumed to be the same.

DATA

This research has been built upon content analysis. The content that has been analysed, mostly includes existing scientific literature and data gathered from the confederations' websites, but also includes reports from NGO's, articles from the Bolivian constitution, newspapers and documents of involved movements. Data collection for the analysis has been limited to a time period reaching form the emergence of the confederations that later formed the Unity Pact, beginning around the 1960s, until its annulment in 2011.

ANALYSIS

This chapter will elaborate on the similar boundary making strategies of all five members of the Unity Pact despite their different historical developments, arguing the social field characteristics limited the initially diverging interests in a way that lead to a consensus on the location and meaning of the ethnic boundary between indigenous and non-indigenous.

THE MEMBERS OF THE UNITY PACT: A BRIEF HISTORY

The Triplets

The CSUTCB, CONAMAQ and FNMCB-BS confederations all originate from earlier peasant unions and accordingly are mainly focused on improving the classification of the indigenous peoples at national level, aiming for an indigenous state hegemony (Yashar, 2005, p.187). Following their strong alliances, the CSUTCB, CSCB and FNMCB-BS are frequently referred to as the 'trillizas' (triplets) (Anria, 2018, p.68).

These peasant unions were the remains of the Bolivian national revolution in 1952. The Bolivian government had attempted to control the newly freed peasants by imposing state led unions (Delgado, 2017, p.376). However, they had become so well organised that they enabled themselves to break free from the government. The first confederation to separate itself form the state was the 'Confederación Sindical de Colonizadores de Bolivia' (CSCB, Syndicalist Confederation of Colonizer Communities of Bolivia) (CSCB, 2019). In the 1960s, the Bolivian government had encouraged peasants living in the densely populated Andean regions to migrate to the Amazon region. With the Colonization law of 1966 Andean farmers and landholders were told to migrate east and colonise untitled areas (Yashar, 2005, p.158). However, after their imposed migration, colonizers felt abandoned by the government (Delgado, 376).

> *"Despite promises of food and infrastructure, once in the lowlands we were abandoned to our fate. More than fifty percent of our people died from diseases such as lesmaniasis, malaria and espundia" (Personal translation website CSCB, consulted on the 9th of May, 2019).*

Additionally, in 1986, the coca ban, forced upon the Bolivian government by the Breton Woods institutions, took away the main source of income from a big part of the newly migrated colonizers. Over the years, coca had become more lucrative than local crops due to the growing international demand for cocaine (Delgado, 376). Consequentially, colonized coca growers all over Bolivia started to unite. Combining their labour struggle with ethnicity, they claimed to defend 'a traditional cultural practice that has come to symbolize indigenous resistance to the Bolivian state and Bolivian resistance to the U.S. imperialism' (van Cott, 2009, p.58). By making the struggle a cultural struggle, the

movement did not only speak to fellow coca growers, but also to other campesinos (farmers) (Gustafson 2003, p.49 in van Cott, p59).

As the power of the coca movement started to grow, their people also took over the leadership at the Confederación de Trabajadores Rurales de Bolivia (CSUTCB, the National Union of Rural Labourers Bolivia) (van Cott p.57-59). Today, led mainly by the coca movement, the CSUTCB is the largest indigenous organization in the country (Van Cott, p.59), characterised by 'combining ethnical and economic aims, fighting against neoliberalism and ethnic discrimination at the same time' (Schilling-Vacaflor, 2008, p.5).

Additionally, in the early 1980s the CSUTCB also gained a women's branch: The Federación Nacional de Mujeres Campesinas de Bolivia Bartolina (FNMCB-BS, National Confederation of Peasant Indigenous Originary Women of Bolivia), popularly called Las Bartolinas. It owes its name to the Aymara heroine Bartolina Sisa, wife of Tupac Katari (Rousseau, 2011, p.16-17). Similar to the CSUTCB, the movement aims to improve the position of the indigenous on a national level, however, has a special focus on the position of women (FNMCB-BS, 2019).

A couple years before the emergence of the Unity Pact, in 1995, an alliance of the CSUTCB, FNMCB-BS and CSCB founded a political party named 'Asamblea por la Soberanía de los Pueblos' (ASP, the Assembly for the Sovereignty of the Peoples). Two years later, in 1997, this party became known as Movimiento al Socialismo – Instrumento Político por la Soberanía de los Pueblos (MAS-IPSP, Movement for Socialism–Political Instrument for the Sovereignty of the Peoples), led by Evo Morales (Schilling-Vacaflor, p.6-7).

CONAMAQ

Because the Triplets focused on improving the indigenous position on a national level, some indigenous communities in the highlands felt the CSUTCB had become too distanced from the local indigenous communities in order to be able to deliver concrete goods (van Cott, p.67). Consequentially, from the early 1980s onwards, local indigenous communities started to actively organise around local 'Ayllus', the traditional form of indigenous communities (Fuentes, 2014, p.16). Several 'Ayllus' started to rise which, instead of aiming to achieve change at national level, focussed on the local level, defending, nurturing and celebrating traditional indigenous authority structures (Yashar, 2005, p.187-189). In 1997, an initiative to unite different regional federations of Ayllus resulted in the emergence of the National Council of Ayllus and Markas of Qullasuyu (CONAMAQ). Contrarily to the triplets, CONAMAQ strives for the states recognition for the right of Ayllu self-government within defined local areas (APCBolivia, 2019).

CIDOB

The last of the five members of the Unity Pact, originates from the Bolivian Amazon. The Indian population living in the amazon mostly lived in nomadic communities that periodically move depending on the season (World Bank, 1996: vol. I, 37). Most of these communities lived of hunting, gathering and subsistence farming and therefore have maintained mostly autonomous both cultural, and political, especially compared to Indians in the Andes (Yashar, 2005, p.192). This changed, however, with the state driven migration of the Andes Indians to the lowlands in the 1960s as discussed earlier. The invasion of colonizers challenged the local autonomy of the amazon Indians. Consequentially, indigenous peoples from the eastern lowlands started to mobilize demanding recognition of communal land; territorial autonomy and respect for cultural diversity. In 1982, The Central Indigena de Pueblos y Comunidades Indigenas del Oriente Boliviano (CIDOB, Confederation of Indigenous Peoples of Bolivia) was founded and by 1990, the organisation became a confederation, including all the newly risen indigenous organisations in the Amazon (Yashar, 2005, p.191-198).

Consensus, a cultural compromise

From what can be observed from the analysis of the historical development of all five confederations, their initial demands appeared to be of significant difference. While 'the triplets', appeared to be striving for an indigenous state hegemony by strengthening their representation at national level, the organisations affiliated with the CONAMAQ focussed on the local level, demanding indigenous autonomy (Yashar, 2005, p.187). Their aim was to achieve the reconstruction of the ancestral territory, and more freedom to organize along the traditional indigenous Ayllu structures that had been taken away from them by the colonial period and the imposed unions that had followed (Pannain, 2013, p.9). The CIDOB similarly demanded indigenous autonomy, however, as has been highlighted by Pannain (2013, p.9), their reasons to do so were different. The indigenous organisations in the eastern lowlands that were affiliated to the CIDOB linked indigenous autonomy to a land issue, demanding protection of their territories and natural resources from the invading colonizers.

Despite the differences established above, there appears to have been a shared central objective to cooperate. According to Garcés, this incentive was caused by the shared 'call for a sovereign Constitutional Assembly which would be both 'participatory' and 'foundational'' (Garcés, 2011, p.48). All organisations appeared to agree that the constitution had to be rewritten 'with the broad participation of those who had hitherto been excluded' (Articulo Primero, 2005, in Vacaflor, p.8). This shared goal could be attributed to the limitations they experienced in the social field, caused by the unequal distribution of power among indigenous and non-indigenous and the lack of pre-existing inter-ethnic network alliances. Until the 1960s, indigenous peoples lived in rural areas and were documented as peasants, "while creoles lived in the towns and cities and dominated the ruling classes" (Loayza Bueno and Datta, 2011, p.6). Consequentially, there was barely any interaction between them. Additionally,

since the political landscape was initially shaped by a class cleavage, the indigenous peoples did not feel the need to demand their own representation. They felt represented by the political parties representing their class interest, despite the fact that those parties were led by white creole leaders (Loayza Buenno and Datta, 2011, p.6). After the ethnic cleavage had emerged during the 1960s, several indigenous movements also organized in small political movements, however, none of them has ever been able to gather the constituency they needed to influence national politics (Madrid, 2012, p.41-42). Accordingly, throughout the 1990s, adopting 'a common strategy against agribusiness and the local elites', the confederations started to combine forces joining each other in several marches against the elite (Delgado, 2017, p.378). It could be argued that these marches have been the first steps toward their later cooperation within the Unity Pact. Quoting a personal interview with the leader of the CIDOB, Valdivia Rivera (2019) wrote,

> *"When they marched, they asked for an article of the law to be modified, then that of another law. Everyone said it couldn't be done. So they said: We're tired of marching for just one article. Why don't we call for a national mobilisation with everything, to make a constitutional reform?" (Taco 2010, interview in Valdivia Rivera, 2019, p.120)*

Despite their different histories and different motives to oppose the political elite, in 2004, forged through struggle and hungry for change, the CSUTCB, FNMCB-BS, CONAMAQ, CIDOB and CSCB decided to enter a Pact of Unity (Garcés, 2011, p.49-50). As argued by Delgado,

> *"In that period, then , the differences among natives, peasants, coca farmers, and colonisers were negotiated in parallel, sustained by an alliance in support of change and against the offensives of the old elite" (2017, p.380).*

With the victory of Morales in 2005, the long demanded constitutional assembly became reality. However, even though Morales had manage to win the presidential elections in 2005, his party, MAS, won only twelve out of twenty-seven seats in the senate and, governorship of only four of the nine departments, resulting in a highly divided government (Madrid, 2012, p.51). By making the appointment of the constitutional assembly into elections, the MAS strategically managed to make it impossible for indigenous-campesino groups to nominate candidates without allying with the political party (Schilling-Vacaflor, p.8).

> *"The pact of Unity represented a way of ensuring the constant mobilization of support for the new government and the refounding of the Bolivian state via the Constitutional Assembly" (Delgado, p.380).*

With the Unity Pact behind them, the MAS was able to win 50.3 per cent of the valid vote leaving only 15.3 percent for the former established elite, now opposition, PODEMOS (Madrid, 2012, p.51). Consequentially, 137 of the 255 delegates elected to rewrite the constitution would be affiliated with

MAS. Many of these delegates came from its founder organizations CSUTCB FNMCB-BS and CSCB. It is important to highlight that even though the pact of unity organisations all supported the MAS government, this did not imply that all parties joined the MAS. Unlike the indigenous peasant, cocalero and colonizer organisations, SCUTCB, FNMCB-BS and CSCB, the indigenous organisations CIDOB and CONAMAQ did not join the MAS and kept their independence (Delgado, 380). It could be argued that this is where the first friction within the Unity Pact can be observed. Because of the more distant relations with the government, the CIDOB and CONAMAQ had far fewer representatives in the assembly (Vacaflor, p.8). "Consequently, they were not able to introduce their demands to the same extent as the organizations closer to MAS had done" (Vacaflor, p.8). In an interview with Painnain, an advisor of the CONAMAQ explains:

> *"The CONAMAQ received no support from the government. It was also a move: To leave everything to after the Constitutional Assembly. First, let's defeat the right. First let's defeat… Everything was to defeat the Right. So the CONAMAQ, not to lead the Constitutional Assembly to failure, often had to step back" (Painnain, p.4).*

Between May 2006 and May 2007, the Unity Pact developed a constitutional proposal. It was in this period that the similar interpretation of the meaning of the indigenous identity became clearly observable. In an attempt to address all indigenous peoples in Bolivia at once, the Unity Pact introduced a new political subject known as 'naciones y pueblos indígena originario campesinos (indigenous native peasant Nations and People) (Postero, 2017 p.1-2; p.57-58). This new political subject has its origin in the differing histories of each confederation. While the indigenous peoples represented by the CONAMAQ used 'originarios' (natives) as a term of mobilisation, referring to their pre-colonial connection to the land they live on, peoples from the Amazon living in nomadic communities, represented by the CIDOB, mobilised around the term 'indigena' (indigenous) (Canessa, 2014, p.159). Similarly, while native peoples referred to their communities as nations, emphasizing their sovereignty, indigenous peoples from the preferred to use the term 'peoples' since they were used to living in very small communities. Accordingly, both sets of terms, native and indigenous as well as nations and peoples, were incorporated in the new constitution (Garcés, 2011, p.51). As highlighted by Garcés (2011, p.51), 'both indigenous and native peoples embraced indigeneity as a central category of self-identification'. The triplet confederations, however, still referred to themselves as being 'campesinos' (peasants). Even though they were criticized for this self-identification by the other two confederations, relating it to the process of 'peasant-ization' by the state, meant to get rid of indigenous structures after the national revolution, the triplets and their aligned organisations argued their communities maintained their indigenous cultural forms and territorial organizations. To cover all different indigenous peoples represented by the confederations that formed the Unity Pact, reflecting a shared effort of political coalition despite having different origins, the new political subject documented in the constitutional proposal of the Unity Pact merged the various terms used by the indigenous organisations into one

(Garcés 2011, p.49-52). In what later became article 30 of the Bolivian constitution, 'indigenous native peasant nations or peoples' were defined as

> *"Any human collective that shares a cultural identity, language, historical tradition, insitutions, territoriality and cosmovision, whose existence is prior to the Spanish colonial invasion" (Constitution Bolivia, 2009, article 30).*

It is important to highlight, however, that this consensus on the indigenous boundary does not reflect a complete overlap in interests. The overlap was only partial. However, as argued by Wimmer, such partial overlap can be sufficient to create what Wimmer refers to as a 'cultural compromise'. The CONAMAQ and CIDOB needed the MAS 'to increase their chances of achieving political, juridical objectives', making any entrance to the political network via the Unity Pact better than nothing. Similarly, the triplets and their party in government needed the Unity Pact to mobilize the constituency in an unstable and divided Bolivia (See Escarzága 2009 p.90 in Vacaflor , p.12).

The cultural compromise made by the triplets in order to sustain the Unity Pact is reflected in their willingness to take on the demand for indigenous autonomy. Even though this demand was not demanded by the peasant and cocalero organizations represented by the Triplets as a goal in itself, it was, however, as a defensive strategy against the neo-liberal opposition. According to Chavez Leon (2008 in Pannain, p.9), the support of both the government and Triplets for the demand of indigenous autonomy had to do with the opposing demands of departmental autonomy presented by the opposition. Even though neither the MAS nor its affiliated organizations had any interest in defending the indigenous autonomy on itself, they used it in order to reduce the power of the neoliberal opposition – if any autonomy, than indigenous autonomy. In addition, fighting for indigenous autonomy would give meaning to the coalition between the MAS government and the Unity Pact against the elite opposition.

While the government and indigenous peasant organisations appeared to have had different interest, the field characteristics of the Bolivian society around the time of the formation of the Unity pact, limited the boundary making strategies available for both actors. While the Triplets needed the support of the Unity Pact in order to mobilise the divided constituency for the MAS, the CONAMAQ and CIDOB in turn needed the Unity Pact to create network alliances that could help them with their goals to achieve indigenous autonomy. Consequentially, despite recognizing each other's different histories, it appears the indigenous confederations all recognized each other's indigenous identity. Accordingly, this pact created an indigenous 'us' including all five member confederations and the affiliated indigenous organisations in order to defeat the non-indigenous political elite, seen as 'the other' (Delgado, 2017, p.379-380). Accordingly, the first hypothesis of this thesis appears to be supported.

THE RUPTURE OF THE UNITY PACT

As discussed above, the first term of Morales was characterized by a strong political divide between the governing party, MAS, and the neo-liberal opposition PODEMOS. After several violent clashes between their constituents, in august 2008 PODEMOS demanded a recall referendum for Morales and his fellow MAS colleagues in government. More than 65 percent of the Bolivian population voted for Evo Morales and his government to stay in office (Pannain, 2013, p.10). This reaffirmation of the MAS legitimized their power, and caused the opposition to yield to their loss. Consequentially, the MAS took a new, more moderate stance towards the opposition, who no longer formed a threat, in an attempt to reach a consensus and implement the proposal for the new constitution (Pannain, 2013, p.10).

According to Flesken (2013), it was this new stance toward the opposition which 'contributed to a decrease in the politization of indigeneity' (p.346). In an attempt to create a consensus with the opposition on the new constitution, the government imposed several significant limitations upon the indigenous autonomies articulated in the initial proposal of the Unity Pact. Following the 'Ley Marco de Autonomías y Descentralizaión', indigenous territorial management would only be allowed 'when it would not harm rights legitimately acquired by third parties'. Similarly, the creation of special indigenous districts would only be applicable to rural areas and in departments with a native Indian minority, making it impossible for highland ayllus, who constituted a majority in their region, to claim indigenous autonomy. Additionally, the LMAD forbid indigenous autonomous communities to also become autonomous peasant communities, resulting in the obstruction of the economic development of indigenous communities (Carlos Böhrt, 2009 in Pannain, 2013, p.12).

It appears that with the opposition in government stabilized, decision-making at national level was recentralised. As argued by Painnain (2013),

> *"the debates on the latest versions of the law occur in a political moment very different from the one of the constituent assembly, with a clear stabilization of the Evo Morales' government" (p.11).*

Nevertheless, the modifications of the constitution in accordance with the demands of the opposition did not take effect until 2010. Before that, in January 2009, Bolivia's new constitution was approved with a national referendum resulting in over 61% of the people voting in its favour. The new constitution 're-founded' Bolivia as a plurinational communitarian state in which the multi-ethnic nature of the state was recognized and indigenous groups were, or at least were supposed to be, no longer excluded (Tockman & Cameron, 2014, p.46). The newly established rights for indigenous peoples included 'free determination, consisting of the right to autonomy, self-government, their culture, recognition of their institutions, and the consolidation of their territorial entities' (Bolivian constitution, 2009, Article 2).

The implementation of the LMAD in 2010, appears to reflect an increase of independent power of the MAS, who no longer needed the Unity Pact in order to fight against the opposition. However, with the MAS being founded by the triplets, the consequences of the establishment of MAS hegemony were mostly felt among the CIDOB and CONAMAQ (Delgado, 2017, p.382). Opposing the limitations of the proposed LMAD upon the indigenous autonomy that was initially promised in their proposal for the new constitution, in 2010, CIDOB organised a 'March for Territory, indigenous autonomy and the indigenous peoples' rights'. The March accused the government of violating the constitutional rights of the indigenous. Nevertheless, according to the government, the march would have been funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in an attempt to force neo-liberal institutions upon them. According to the CIDOB, however, the government ignored the indigenous organizations and created false accusations in an attempt to delegitimize the march (Pannain, 2013, p.13). Despite these accusations, the Unity Pact remained intact. Again reflecting the strong hold of limitations caused by the social field characteristics upon the freedom to choose ethnic boundary making strategies among the CONAMAQ and CIDOB organisations. In that same year, the leader of the CIDOB, Taco, in an interview with Rivera (2019, p.141) argued,

> *"There's been a difference between the government's first term and all we have achieved with the confederations, and the second term of government. There has been a reaction from the CIDOB and the CONAMAQ. Not from others, who, being MAS militants, are obviously not going to revolt against themselves. We as allies are the critics that make the good and the bad visible. It is thus that 2010 was marked by distance and deterioration within the Unity Pact, which divided the social movements into 'militants' and 'affiliates'.*

Contrarily, it appeared the position for the confederations affiliated with the MAS, the Triplets, had improved. All land claimed by indigenous autonomous communities, implied less land for coca farmers, peasants and colonisers. Therefore these limitations where not only in favour of the tempered opposition, but also in favour of the MAS affiliated organisations within the Unity Pact (Delgado, 382), giving them a more powerful position compared to their fellow members, the CIDOB and CONAMAQ.

One year later, the TIPNIS conflict emerged. Even though it appears common in earlier literature to identify the march against the TIPNIS highway as being the breaking point between the once cohesive indigenous movements, the events described above appear to point out that a previous event had already initiated an inter-indigenous power divide two years before it became fatal. Nevertheless, with the triplets and CONAMAQ and CIDOB literally running into each other with their opposing marches, it was during the TIPNIS conflict that these initial 'cracks' became visible for the world to see.

THE MECHANISM OF CHANGE

With the reaffirmation of the MAS in 2009, it appeared the governing party no longer needed the Unity Pact to secure its governmental position. Since the triplets were the initial founders of the MAS, the growing independence of the MAS meant an increasing amount of power for the Triplets compared to the CONAMAQ and CIDOB. With the Unity Pact initially being built upon an equal distribution of power among the indigenous and an unequal distribution of power between indigenous and nonindigenous, this change could be argued to have caused the emergence of the inter-indigenous politically salient boundary that can be observed today.

Following the process theory of Wimmer, an increased level of power inequality should cause an increase in the levels of cultural differentiation among the groups. Such differentiation can be seen in the interview with CIDOB leader TACO quoted above. Making a clear divide between 'millitants' and 'affiliates', the members of the Unity pact clearly did no longer considers each other to be part of the same group. The increased amount of power of the Triplets compared to the CIDOB and CONAMAQ, appears to have changed the limitations within the social field that initially had enabled the emergence of the Unity Pact in 2004. No longer dependent upon their relationship with the CIDOB and CONAMAQ, it appeared that by organizing the opposing March during the TIPNIS conflict in 2011, the triplets had changed their boundary making strategy from an expanding strategy, including all indigenous peoples, to an contracting strategy, clearly differentiating themselves from the march organised by the CIDOB and CONAMAQ. This change in strategy, could be argued to reflect their initial differences with the two other confederations, coming from their peasant union based history that had the aim to improve the indigenous classification on the national level, and initially not to achieve local autonomy.

Additionally, while the triplets had their own political party in government, the CIDOB and CONAMAQ did not, reflecting not only an unequal power distribution, but also an unequal access to the political network. Consequentially, the CIDOB and CONAMAQ no longer appeared to be able to negotiate with the Triplets, and in December 2011, they officially decided to withdraw from the Unity Pact (Rojas, December 22nd 2011). With the triplets and the CONAMAQ and CIDOB now formally opposing each other, it appears the degree of political salience of the inter-indigenous boundary between them has increased. Accordingly, these findings support our second hypotheses, arguing the increased political salience of the inter-indigenous boundary between the triplets, and the CONAMAQ and CIDOB reflects the breaking of the consensus on the location and meaning of the ethnic boundary between indigenous and non-indigenous.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

From the findings discussed above, it can be concluded that the increased political salience of the inter-indigenous boundary between the triplets, and the CONAMAQ and CIDOB, is the result of a changed distribution of power among them caused by the reaffirmation of the MAS in 2009. Analysing the newly emerged boundary in accordance with the processual model of Andreas Wimmer, this change can be conceptualized as an unintended/intended endogenous chance. The unity among its indigenous constituency appears to have been the driving force of the Mas' electoral success. It has been this same success that, subsequently, has caused for the decline in its dependence on the Unity Pact. Whether this was an intended or unintended result of the Unity Pact, will probably depend upon whom you will be asking. While the increase in independence of the MAS has cause a profitable position for the triplets, it simultaneously has resulted in a barrier for the CIDOB and CONAMAQ in their ability to reach the political network and express their needs.

From what can be conducted from this research, it appears the Unity Pact reflected a low degree of political salience of the inter-indigenous ethnic boundary. It should be highlighted however, that this did not make the Unity Pact one homogenous ethnic group. As has been observed while analysing the emergence of the Unity Pact, it appeared their cooperation was mostly caused by the limitations of the social field. Consequentially, it was a change in these limitations that has similarly caused for it to rupture. The initial 'indigenous native peasant nations and peoples', defined as a homogenous group in the Bolivian constitution, in reality existed out of several differing confederations with different histories and interests that, after changes in the characteristics of the social field, have resulted into a rupture. Ironically, the apparent 'controversy' would never have appeared controversial if the constitution had not grouped all indigenous peoples together in the first place. Similarly, even though the Unity Pact has left the triplets grouped at one side of the ethnic boarder, and the CONAMAQ and CIDOB at the other, this does not imply that the organisations on both sides of this new boundary have similar interpretations of what is means to be indigenous. As has been discussed above, the CONAMAQ and CIDOB, have different reasons for pursuing indigenous autonomy. And these differences, I turn, undoubtedly go much further than the level of analysis used in this research can determine. Similarly, chances are significant that there will be more nuanced differences among the triplets, and between the triplets and the MAS than this research has been able to observe. Nevertheless, earlier research has had the tendency to define these groups as new homogenous entities, whether these are 'environmentalists' and developmentalists (Hope, 2014) or 'deterritorialised' en 'territorialised' indigenous (Canessa, 2014).

This research is in no way the perfect depiction of the ethnic variation present in contemporary Bolivia, and it has never intended to make this claim. The differences confirmed by the level of analysis used in this research, as had already been argued in the research design, do not reach further than the mere surface of the political level observable from earlier literature and documented events. For a more

precise overview, field research would be recommended. Nevertheless, even with the analytical distance applied in this research, it appears 'the indigenous state' (Postero 2017), never reflected a homogenous indigenous group. Accordingly, what this research highlights, is the importance of a certain caution when analysing the elusive occurrence of ethnic identities. A different, more suitable approach to ethnic research could similarly apply the model of Andreas Wimmer which, at least for this case, has been successful in explaining the increase of the political salience of the inter-indigenous ethnic boundary between the members of the Unity Pact. Nevertheless, with this research being only focussed on one case, it remains insufficient to make any generalizable claims on the dynamics of ethnicity in general. Rather than attempting to group observed differences into new ethnic groups, future research, similar to this thesis, could focus on testing Wimmer's processual model on other cases, creating a better more generalizable understanding of the dynamics of ethnic identities.

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