

AFRO-COLOMBIAN AND INDIGENOUS SOCIAL MOVEMENTS: INTERNATIONAL  
INFLUENCES, FRAMING TACTICS, AND STATE CONSTRUCTED IDENTITY

By

Stacy Terrell

Submitted to the

Faculty of the School of International Service

of American University

in Partial Fulfillment of

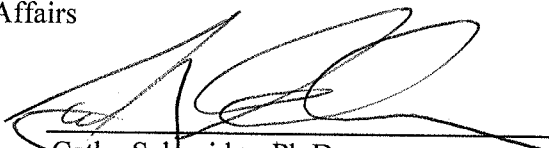
the Requirements for the Degree of

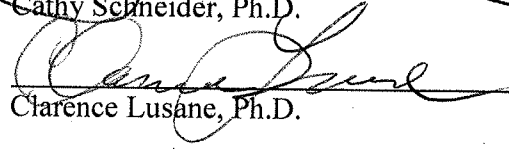
Master of Arts

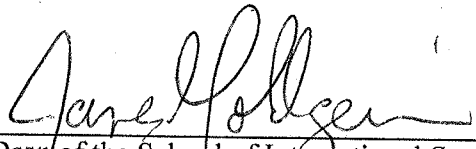
In

International Affairs

Chair:

  
Cathy Schneider, Ph.D.

  
Clarence Lusane, Ph.D.

  
Dean of the School of International Service

  
Date

June 27, 2012

2012

American University

Washington, D.C. 20016

© COPYRIGHT

by

Stacy Terrell

2012

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

AFRO-COLOMBIAN AND INDIGENOUS SOCIAL MOVEMENTS: INTERNATIONAL  
INFLUENCES, FRAMING TACTICS, AND STATE CONSTRUCTED IDENTITY

BY

Stacy Terrell

ABSTRACT

This thesis is a comparative analysis of Afro-Colombian and Indigenous social movements. It examines the divergent outcomes between Afro-Colombian and Indigenous movements following the closure of the political opening of the National Constituent Assembly of 1991. It argues that ethnic and racial minority movements will be successful to the extent that they can tap into an organized International ethnic movement community to gain access to transnational linkages, can consolidate their frames to be consistent with the discursive opportunity structure of the state, and are small enough in size that their access to cultural and territorial rights does not threaten economic elites or place demands upon state resources.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am very grateful to those in my life who pushed me out of the comforts of my complacency. This writing and editing process would not have been successful without my advisor, Dr. Cathy Schneider, pushing me through slowly but surely. I am also thankful for friends as far away as Hong Kong and Afghanistan and those as close as the cubicle beside me or the gchat screen in front of me for always reminding me to focus and write. To my family: I will never devalue the importance of education with a mother who integrated public schools, a grandfather who attended and drove the school bus for segregated schools, and a great grandfather, son of slaves, who still managed to attend college. This is for all who came before and all who will follow. Thank you.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iii
Chapter	
1. INTRODUCTION .....	1
2. HISTORICAL CONSTRUCTION OF RACIAL IDENTITY IN COLOMBIA...	25
3. INDIGENOUS AND AFRO-COLOMBIAN MOBILIZATION STRUCTURES PRIOR TO THE ANC.....	38
4. POST-ANC AFRO-COLOMBIAN AND INDIGENOUS MOBILIZATION STRUCTURES.....	54
5. RESEARCH ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION.....	72
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	79

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Following the end of the Latin American Debt Crisis of the late 1980's several countries in Latin America began the process of creating new constitutions. Many of these new constitutions emphasized multicultural forms of citizenship and a pluri-ethnic national identity. These constitutions provided an opportunity for Indigenous and Afro-Latino citizens to gain official recognition by the national government and petition for certain collective rights, particularly regarding land autonomy. In the case of Colombia, the constitutional reforms took place in the midst of a violent internal conflict that has affected all of Colombia's various ethnic groups. Initially, Afro-Colombian and Indigenous groups worked in tandem to demand these rights but the outcomes for the two groups have been dissimilar.

Afro-Colombians live in a particularly precarious situation where they make up an estimated 25% of the total population and 72% live in the country's lower economic strata (CONPES, 2004). They also make up 30% of the country's displaced persons. Indigenous populations of Colombia, on the other hand, make up only 3.3% of the total population yet through the 1991 Constitution were allotted two members in the National Congress, while there wasn't a black congressperson until 1994 (DANE, 2005). The constitution also granted indigenous territories the right to be autonomous in their territories, the right to preserve their natural way of life among other items. Black Communities are mentioned only once in the document in Provisional Article 55 where it states that the government will, after a commission has concluded, create a law to recognize the right to "collective property of the Black communities which occupy uncultivated lands in the rural zones adjoining the rivers of the

Pacific Basin, in accordance with their traditional cultivation practices.” (Asher, 2009: 191), Following this vague mention, Law 70 was passed in 1993 which helped to define black communities and their rights in ethnic and regional as opposed to racial terms. In effect, Law 70 defined for all Colombians “black communities” as a specific group of rural Afro-Colombians of the Pacific coast who partook in “traditional production practices (192). This excluded any Afro-Colombians in other parts of the country, including urban Afro-Colombians who had been organizing for their rights since the 1970s, and other Afro-Colombians outside of the Pacific region suffering from discrimination.

Most recently the United States and Colombia signed the U.S.-Colombia Action Plan on Racial and Ethnic Equality with the goal of addressing barriers in Afro-Colombian and Indigenous communities including “lack of continuity, quality, access, and participation in education; low participation and representation in democratic institutions; limited opportunities in the labor market; structural racism; and multiple forms of discrimination” (U.S. Department of State, 2010). The acknowledgement of structural racism as a social barrier by the Colombian government is a monumental step in a different direction. This is an indication of a new space for Afro-Colombians to organize and petition for rights from a non-indigenized perspective. Whereas in previous times, notably in 2007 both the Colombian Ambassador to the U.S. and former President Uribe himself argued that the problem in Colombia is not racism but poverty (Rodríguez Garavito et al., 2008) this particular time period and international climate could create an environment in which the question of racism will become part of the broader Afro-descendent message to the state.

Although, the current trend is framed with anti-discrimination language, displacement of Afro-Colombians has been constant. The displacement implications of the U.S.-Colombia Free

Trade Agreement have caused considerable outcry from the Afro-Colombian diaspora, international human rights advocates, and environmental advocates alike. While the black communities defined by Law 70 represented only a subset of a vast Afro-Colombian population, the effects of the Free Trade Agreements, opponents have argued, will impact Afro-Colombians throughout the country. The impending Free Trade Agreement has incited an Afro-Colombian response whose presence has been felt in international media outlets. The nascent international afro-descendent rights movement and mounting international pressure, particularly in the case of human rights and displacement activism in support of Afro-Colombians, still has yet to construct a solitary, internationalized concept of Afro-descendent identity that has manifested itself across various states.

The present day struggles of the Afro-Colombian community are indeed a reflection of the gaps of Law 70. In examining the initial creation and intention of Law 70, we can better understand how those rights are miniscule at best when viewed in tandem with those granted to the Indigenous Colombian population. We can also understand how the laws do not address the central concerns of the Afro-Colombian populations. All of this begs the question, why when Colombia has the second largest Afro-descendent population in all of Latin America have Afro-Colombian rights been largely ignored especially given the gains in rights among the smaller Indigenous populations? If Afro-Colombians have been organizing collectively since at least the early 1970's what has made certain movement "moments" less successful than others? What role has the state played in placating Afro-Colombian organizer's claims while simultaneously marginalizing and silencing the population? What has made Indigenous claims to autonomy, cultural and land rights a more immediate concern for the state than those of Afro-Colombians?

## Hypothesis

I argue that three factors gave indigenous groups in Colombia an advantage over Afro-Colombians in the National Constituent Assembly in 1991 and led them to be more successful than Afro-Colombians in achieving their stated goals. A focus on political opportunity structures alone is not sufficient to explain the disparity between Afro-Colombian and Indigenous Colombian mobilizations. The following variables explain the drastically different results:

- 1) The emergence of an International Indigenous rights movement produced transnational linkages between indigenous groups mobilizing throughout Latin America. These transnational linkages provided a basis for cultural rights which groups solicited from the state. The broader community support for Indigenous rights produced a political environment in the ANC that was supportive of Indigenous claims to cultural and territorial autonomy.
- 2) The framing processes of Indigenous Colombians produced a construction of ethnic identity that was acceptable to the state because their claims to territorial and cultural rights were viewed as non-threatening, and this frame resonated with the state's previous definition of ethnic identity, and with views of the majority of the Indigenous population. That is the discursive opportunity structure was more open to indigenous rights claims. Afro-Colombian framing processes were fragmented, did not resonate with the majority of Afro-Colombians, and did not fit in with the discourse already in use concerning black ethnic identity.

3) Finally, the relatively small size of the Indigenous Colombian population and the small amount of land in which they occupied did not constitute a threat to economic or political elites in Colombia. To the contrary, granting territorial rights to the much larger Afro-Colombian population would have been a tremendous burden on state resources. Many Afro-Colombians had traditionally occupied territories which contained stores of natural resources and would have been economic assets to the state.

#### Political Process Theory approaches to Afro-Colombian movements

In order to begin to answer several important questions about the disparity between Indigenous and Afro-Colombian activism, as well as the state's reactions to activism I will need to pull from a large body of social movement theorists. While political process theory would seem the obvious choice, there are several debates about the effectiveness of its use.

Traditionally, Political Process Theory focuses on the impact of political openings as an impetus for collective action. Sidney Tarrow states that political opportunity structures are “consistent but not necessarily formal or permanent dimensions of the political environment that provide incentives for people to undertake collective action by affecting their expectations for success or failure” (Tarrow, 2011: 85). Mobilizing structures and framing have also been added to the political process model to account for less structural variables in the formation of social movements. “mediating between the structural requirements of opportunity and organization are the emergent meanings and definitions – or frames- shared by adherents of the burgeoning movement (McAdam, McCarthy, & Zald, 1996: 17) . However, critics question whether the concept of political opportunity structure has been stretched too thin (Goodwin & Jasper, 2004) to the point that the theory is used to explain all sorts of social movements.

Hanspeter Kriese's (Jenkins & Klandermans, 1995) interpretation of political opportunity structure states that when analyzing social movements and their effects on the state, measuring the degree of openness or closure of formal political access and the degree of stability of political alignments is paramount. Formal political access is a function of the state's centralization. The creation of the new constitution of 1991 moved the country towards greater decentralization and created greater points of political access. The Colombian constitutional assembly thus created an opportune moment for both Indigenous and Afro-Colombian groups to agitate for their political rights as the opening up of the state through decentralization provided them with new points of entry. This view of political process approach states that it is the state alone that creates a political opening, not the pressure of movement actors themselves. For Colombia, the opportunity to create a political opening (in this case the constituent assembly) came to fruition through a nationwide student and youth led movement known as "We can still save Colombia" (Todavía, podemos salvar a Colombia). During this period of widespread political turmoil, unrest, and violence, if the coalition of non-state actors hadn't demanded a vote for the creation of a Constituent Assembly, it would not have happened. (Pardo Rueda, 1996).

Van Cott (D L Van Cott, 2001; Donna Lee Van Cott, 2000) applies political process approach to her analysis of Indigenous organizing in Colombia and contrasts that to her perceptions of Afro-Colombian organizing. Afro-Colombians were not as organized and lacked financing to have adequate representation in the ANC. Indigenous Colombians gained both access to decision-making power through their representation and active participation in the ANC and maintained an influential ally in the form of a favorable President and a center left assembly alliance. She insinuates that the only reason that Afro-Colombians achieved mention in Article 55 of the 1991 constitution was due to pressure by the ANC's Chocó representative.

Although a member of an Indigenous group, he pushed for collective land rights for black communities due to the fact that the department he represented was overwhelmingly Afro-Colombian.

Her main source of information on Afro-Colombian movement structure and resources are interviews from the Counselor for Constitutional affairs, Manuel Jose Cepeda and Minister of the Interior Humberto de la Calle, neither representing Indigenous nor Afro-Colombian populations (331). This work greatly overemphasizes the impact of direct representation in the ANC, and moreover negates the ability of an Indigenous constituent representative to advocate on behalf of Afro-Colombians in that assembly. She also glosses over the relative size of Indigenous population of Colombia in proportion to overall population inferring that perhaps the smaller size of the Indigenous population was less of a political bargain. The huge size disparity between Indigenous and Afro-Colombians is not a fact that should go unrecognized, as it is unique in nature among the other Latin American countries. The relatively larger size of Afro-Colombians in comparison to the smaller Indigenous population was not a political bargain Colombia wanted to take. Consequently, the broader international climate which was particularly supportive of Indigenous actors, did not force the state to take such a risk.

#### International Network Influences and Afro-Colombian Organizing

Political opportunity approaches can also take into account the additional factors that can explain one social movement group's success over another. Sidney Tarrow (S. G. Tarrow, 2005) makes an important claim for the international influences that can affect a movement's success or failure. In Van Cott's later work (Donna Lee Van Cott, 2006) she discusses the impact of the international community on the inclusion of indigenous rights at the state level.

She states “the global diffusion of policy norms from the advanced and industrialized countries brought with it international norms of cultural recognition and human rights upon which indigenous movements have based their rights claims” (p.287). Afro-Colombians of course, were not included in the “cultural recognition” framework of many of the international organization’s norms.

Kwame Dixon argues that Afro-Latin Americans have been able to successfully mobilize by tapping into international networks utilizing a human rights framework. He cites the work of Smith et al. to define when social movements become transnational. “Through regular communication and organization, activists are able to share technical and strategic information, coordinate parallel activities, or even mount truly transnational collectives” (Stahler-Sholk, Kuecker, & Vanden, 2008: 183). Colombia is the perfect example of the leveraging of such a framework with a successful outcome. He deems the outcome as successful because despite the perception of “racial hegemony” in Latin America, Afro-Colombians were able to organize and mobilize around racial identity. He does concede that the legislative outcomes of those mobilizations were not necessarily a success. His specific idea of a transnational Afro-Colombian movement did not come into fruition until well after Law 70 was passed if it exists today at all. Afro-Colombian mobilization did occur around a specified ethnic construction of black identity. This ethnic construction and the mobilization around it did not necessarily counter “racial hegemony” in Latin America.

The work of Alison Brysk (Brysk, 1996) succinctly describes the Internationalization of Indian Rights. She argues that the utter marginalization, language barriers, and lack of resources challenge any resource-mobilization theory of social movement analysis since Indigenous populations should present an unlikely case for mobilization. She states that “because

indigenous social movements were weak domestically; some of their domestic weaknesses actually facilitated transnational alliance building and effectiveness” (39). She instead utilizes new social movement theories to emphasize the mobilization of identity rather than resources. The international movement was successful because of Indigenous population’s ability to use images, media, and information to project a certain identity. This construction and projection, of a certain identity, which she does not expound upon, is important for this study because it provides a useful point of comparison and analysis between indigenous and Afro-Colombian groups. Identity construction is at the heart of the Indigenous movement’s perceived success, and the Afro-Colombian movement’s perceived failure. This constructed identity as well as its projection did not counter the prevailing “racial hegemony” in Colombia and it did not challenge state power.

#### Identity institutionalized by the state

Black identity, in Colombia and elsewhere, has been and continues to be transformed by a number of factors. Stuart Hall states, “If the black subject and black experience are not stabilized by Nature or by some other essential guarantee, then it must be the case that they are constructed historically, culturally, politically” (Hall, Morley, & Chen, 1996: 446). Indigenous identity construction has always had a tendency to be focused on a connection to territory, ancestral or otherwise. For Afro-Colombians, this historical construction has been shaped in large part by the state.

Peter Wade ( Peter Wade, 1993, 1997, 2002, 2009, 2010) approaches the issue from the perspective of different institutionalization processes by the state between Indigenous and Afro-Colombians. He argues that Indians have been institutionalized differently which has made it

easier for them to claim collective rights, although he posits that is not the only reason they have been able to do so . This different institutionalization of indigenous peoples in Latin America not only helped them to organize around a territorial and conceptual identity, but it also helped them to gain international support.

He does cite that as early as 2004 there was a renewed interest among the most prominent Afro-Colombian organizations, including Proceso de Comunidades Negras (Process of Black Communities), to reorient the debate towards an anti-discrimination framing of their struggle. This could be, upon further analysis, a response to and a rejection of the categorization of blacks by the state. He sees the state as both “interlocutor and mediator of ethnic social movements” (2010; 16). The state has most certainly played a role in this new definition of blackness and in turn it has shaped the method of black organizing. However, “the decision to include an ethnic question in the census undermines the *comunidad negra* [black community] category that has arguably been a useful one for the state in its dealings in the Pacific coastal region” (2009, 178). In this way the state placates Afro-Colombians while simultaneously marginalizing them.

Juliet Hooker (Hooker, 2005) echoes Wade’s argument about different institutionalization processes between Indigenous and Afro-descendents but adds that states are less apt to provide those rights to groups whose claims stem from perceived racism. She argues that elites in Latin America in general perceive Indians as culturally different in a way they can’t perceive blacks. In the case of Colombia this has not necessarily been the case. The constitutional reform process leveled the playing field for political actors, in that its representation included groups outside of the traditional political party system. Many of these political actors did have differing perceptions of ethnicity than the political elites of their time period. Moreover, following the reform process, there has been recognition of several distinct

cultural groups within Afro-Colombian communities (*raizales, palenqueros, comunidades negras*, etc.) and their cultural rights are still not at the same level as Indigenous groups.

Kiran Asher (Asher, 2007, 2009) argues that black organizations involved in the movement had differing desires due to geographical and cultural differences during the ANC and this created three distinct camps within the Afro-Colombian community. Ultimately the outcome was an Afro-Colombian movement oriented towards an ethnic definition of blackness which focused on collective land rights in the Pacific region. The indigenous Chocó representative served as the main Afro-Colombian outlet, since they had no official representation in the ANC. This is not unlike the variety of linguistic, geographical and cultural barriers present among the Indigenous groups which there were more of. Social Movement groups always contain a variety of opinions, identities, etc. Since neither Afro-Colombian nor indigenous groups have contained a homogenous makeup or leadership, there must be a different explanation for the differential treatment and differential success of these groups.

Deborah Yashar's work (Yashar 1998, 2005) has focused extensively on Indigenous movements throughout Latin America. She states that "the incentive to organize as Indians lay in state reforms that left Indians politically marginalized as individual citizens, disempowered as corporatist peasant actors, and confronted with a challenge to local, political, and material autonomy. The capacity to organize as Indians, however, has depended on transcommunity networks previously constructed by the state and other social actors" (1998, 31). She also makes the claim that Latin America's corporatist regimes "institutionalized autonomous spaces for indigenous peoples" (2005: 60). This space allowed indigenous identity to grow outside the reach of the state. In most isolated rural areas indigenous populations were able to maintain autonomy. This begs the question as to whether similar spaces of local autonomy were

previously available for Afro-Colombian groups.

Finally, the work of Betty Ng'Weno (Ng'weno, 2007a, 2007b) is also helpful in understanding the role of state power in relation to changing ideas in property and authority in the lives of Afro-Colombians. The history of the ways in which Afro-Colombians as subjects of the state have been categorized allows us to understand the state's recent attempts to let groups self-categorize racially and ethnically have emerged. Recent claims for territory by black communities in Colombia "represent a more general and unified attempt at self-definition as communities (ethnically, ideologically, and territorially) on the one hand and at political opening (as citizens and constituencies) on the other hand" (8). She also uses the work of Charles Hale (Hale R., 2004) to assert that because of neoliberal politics Latin American governments have been more apt to give cultural rights to ethnic groups rather than economic and land rights but Colombia represents a special example in that by granting territories to ethnic groups they are reincorporating them into the national fabric.

Afro-Colombians who cannot or do not self-identify as a distinct cultural group are continually left out of this national fabric, as is evident by their continued exclusion from mainstream Colombian politics and their perceived second-class status among Colombian elites. Afro-Colombian mobilization for rights and political participation are both a "stimulus and symptom of a changing state" (Asher, 2009: 96). The most recent Afro-Colombian mobilizations are a symptom of a changing state definition of blackness from ethnic to racial terms. Each counter response from Afro-Colombian groups represents a stimulus for the state to change their policies of naming and categorizing these groups as well as public perception of these groups. Public perception of these groups is undoubtedly affected by International influences. Contrary to the positive media attention given to Indigenous Colombians during the

ANC period, the lack of adequate media coverage for Afro-Colombians had a profound impact on their ability to mobilize support around Afro-Colombian rights. Indigenous Colombians had access to International networks which enabled them to better utilize the media and frame their message in way that could garner widespread Colombian support.

### Afro-Colombians and Identity Framing

It is paramount to incorporate framing into the discussion of movement tactics and their effects on movement success. Framing allows us to compare and contrast identity construction between Afro-Colombians and Indigenous populations over time. Framing “provides a useful link between macrolevel concepts such as political opportunity structures, microlevel mobilization processes, and the long-term evolution of political and ethnic identities” (Schneider, 1997: 228). In order to understand the transformation of black identity in Colombia from the 1970’s to the present day it is important to understand the framing processes that shaped that transformation. Collective action-frames encompass the beliefs and meanings that legitimate the work of a social movement organization (Benford & Snow, 2000). Benford and Snow’s analysis of the wide array of framing process and social movement literature stresses the importance of understanding collective identity production in order to understand the inner workings of social movements. Identity construction is inherent in any framing process. Their exploration of studies on a Canadian movement for religious schools explores the relationship between culture and movement frames stating “mindful of the changing political culture supporting ‘multiculturalism,’ activists reframed religion as a culture in need of protection” (630). The groups were able to draw on perceived traditional cultural values and create a new frame based on the multiculturalism trend. This concept is useful in understanding the creation

or re-creation of Indigenous and Afro-Colombian identities as well as new framing processes that emerged within the context of Colombia's new multicultural and pluralistic constitution.

Restrepo (Restrepo, 2007) argues that it was actually Black movements' initial tendencies towards anti-racism frames which prohibited them from gaining recognition. This set the stage for a movement towards an indigenization of Afro-Colombian identity, which privileges ethnicity over race. The success of an ethnic based indigenous rights movement frame for Indigenous Colombians undoubtedly affected the switch to an ethnic identity frame for Afro-Colombians during the ANC. Since the indigenous groups had multiple representatives in the ANC, they were able to distinguish themselves verbally, as culturally distinct and worthy of special treatment as an ethnic group. However, the sophisticated legal language with which they were able to do this, is clearly rooted in International network influence.

Restrepo also argues that what many scholars have deemed the "ethnicization" of blackness in Colombia, has to be interpreted as "an ongoing process of the articulation of blackness in Colombia that has established a specific relationship between territory, identity, cultural tradition, nature and otherness" (2004: 699). This ongoing process of the articulation of blackness is evident not only in the self-identification mobilizations for 2005 Colombian census but also through the resurgence in anti-racism and anti-discrimination frames of recent years. As Afro-Colombians navigate the process of cultural creation and identification, the lived experience is translated to the movement's discourse at the national level.

The Afro-Colombian ethnic identity frame was a reflection of the state's construction of ethnic identity and involved the "configuration of an ethnic black political subject (black community as an ethnic group) and the re-articulation of subjectivities (the interpellation of individuals from a novel imagined and distinctive collectivity)" (Restrepo, 2004:706). The

participation of Afro-Colombians in the creation of the laws which pertained to ethnic rights of Afro-Colombians then served to reify an ethnic black identity for the state and the national imaginary of Colombia.

Tiana Paschel (Paschel, 2010; Paschel & Sawyer, 2008) uses political process theory and frame analysis to suggest that changes in global policy norms around multiculturalism and the Colombian state's disequilibrium gave way for black movements to mobilize for ethnically framed rights. She posits that they did this successfully despite weak collective identity, political fragmentation, lack of resources, and opposition from policy makers and academics. She emphasizes that discursive tactics in the form of ethnic identity framing instead of racial identity framing, provided the real opening to movement success. She states that "specific ways that black movement organizations and the state construct blackness in these political struggles is very much about domestic factors, including how blacks have been discursively included or excluded from the nation and the discursive strategies used by social movements in key periods of political opening." (p. 743).

Although discursive framing tactics were clearly paramount in Black social movement activism, I do not share Paschel's view that the discursive tactics of Afro-Colombians garnered a successful movement outcome. The decision to utilize an ethnic identity frame for black movement mobilization led to a marginalization of a large contingent of black movement actors. The marginalization of those voices, coupled with a continuation of state interactions with Afro-Colombians more or less as they had existed previously, does not constitute a movement success.

Marya Marx Ferree (Ferree, 2003) provides a more thorough critique of framing, particularly the cultural resonance aspect of framing. Her comparative study of feminist framing of the abortion debates in Germany and the U.S. elucidates the concept of discursive opportunity

structures. She sees these as “institutionally anchored ways of thinking that provide a gradient of relative political acceptability to specific packages of ideas” (p.309). She has found the concept of cultural resonance in framing particularly troubling because it does not fully take into account the ways in which power relations affect a dominant discourse in a movement. She views cultural resonance not as an inevitable outcome of all movement frames, but as the “interaction of a certain package of ideas with the variable structure of an institutionally anchored discourse” (p.310). A movement actor is not forced to accept the dominant discourse and can in fact choose a more radical frame. She defines radicalism as the contradiction of the frame and the discursive opportunity structure. Radical frames actually counter the hegemonic discourse that has been perpetuated and institutionalized by the state.

The most recent inundations of the Afro-Colombian movement which have been framed in anti-discrimination and anti-racist terms are in part a reflection of a coordinated International Afro-Descendent movement effort that has created a welcoming and sympathetic political environment. The increased International Afro-Descendent movement coordination efforts combined with the United Nations declaration that 2011 will be the International Year for People of African descent, has the potential to create an environment in which the state will be forced to acknowledge Afro-Colombian demands for political and human rights, rather than strictly territorial ones. This environment is similar to that of the International Indigenous movements of the early 1990’s but much less widespread and impactful, as organizations in support of International Afro-descendent rights are relatively nascent.

The discrepancy between Indigenous and Afro-Colombian political gains can be explained in part by this movement, as during the 1990’s almost all the countries who took part in the International Labor Organizations Conventions 107 and 169 were Latin American. This

time period of successful region-wide Indigenous movements was also guided and supported by the Five Hundred Years of Resistance Campaign. A political environment fomented in which political elites were coalesced into giving into at least some of the demands of Indigenous groups. This supportive indigenous international community was cautious enough to not counter state power and for the most part gave into cultural demands instead of political ones. For Afro-Colombians on the other hand, this recent departure from the ethnic identity framing which was which was institutionally anchored through the new constitution and Law 70 is evidence of more radical voices coming to the forefront of Afro-Colombian movement discourse.

The early 1990's were marked by an Afro-Colombian movement that was not radical at all. In adopting the ethnic frame to be resonant within the discursive opportunity structure, the movement limited the concept of blackness to a particular region. Movement actors left behind a framing of their movement and identity as anti-racist, and focused on a more rural Pacific coast driven identity due to multiple factors guided by the environment of the ANC. As Stuart Hall states, "There can, therefore, be no simple 'return' or 'recovery' of the ancestral past which is not re-experienced through the categories of the present: no base for creative enunciation in a simple reproduction of traditional forms which are not transformed by technologies and the identities of the present" (Hall et al., 1996: 448). Thus, the creation of an indigenized black identity was undoubtedly shaped by the indigenous favor at the time, even as it reached back to notions of a traditional way of living rooted in African traditions. This shift in framing led to a particular construction of black identity that would be rural, Pacific coast driven, and focused on a "traditional" way of life.

Many of the authors previously mentioned would consider the outcome of this frame (Law 70) a success, as it is viewed as the end of the "invisibility" of blacks in state discourse.

More accurately, this frame led to an exclusionary construction of black identity, and was merely a band-aid placed by the state on the burgeoning Afro-Colombian movement. The absence from state discourse does not constitute an absence of state interaction. Blacks were not invisible, but were actively participating since even before the 1970s in state matters and in various governmental positions. Afro-Colombian's had other frames at their disposal but most the visible actors chose to take the less radical frames available. They chose to utilize frames already in use by Indigenous Colombians. In doing so, it made it more convenient for the state as well as the representatives of the ANC to handle the issue of indigenous and black social movements in like manner.

Other authors have failed to fully analyze the marginalized voices within the Afro-Colombian movement and have only evaluated those voices which fit within the national discursive opportunity structure. My research will analyze the discursive opportunities and frames which were available to both Afro-Colombian and Indigenous Colombian movements. The volatile political state of Colombia prior to the constituent assembly, the hierarchical racial structure and history of *mestizaje*, have created a national discursive opportunity structure which activists have worked within. The power relations which have shaped that discursive opportunity have made it difficult for movement actors to pose frames that would challenge the dominant structure, but not impossible. As Ferree states "seeking to be successful in terms used by institutional power holders will always carry costs in marginalizing certain frames and the real needs they express" ( p. 341). In this case, the true needs of the Afro-Colombian community have suffered because of the marginalization of radical frames.

## Research Design

This study is a qualitative comparative analysis. It analyzes three important variables to explain Indigenous movement success: transnational linkages, framing processes, and size of population. I examine Afro-Colombian mobilization structures, organizing tactics, framing, and formal political access before and after the ANC. I also examine the mobilizing structures, organizing tactics, framing and formal political access of Indigenous Colombian groups during those same time periods as a comparison. After a brief historical analysis of Colombian racial identity construction, I analyze the time period from 1970-1990 to capture the events leading up to the election of the ANC, followed by an analysis of the time period including and after the ANC 1990-1991, leading up to the present day. Examining these factors among Afro-Colombian in contrast to Indigenous groups during the same time periods allows me to make a coherent comparative analysis between the groups and test the given hypothesis.

My research is fulfilled through an analysis of ANC session minutes, Special Commission on Black Communities minutes and correspondence, texts of the Colombian constitution of 1991 and Law 70 of 1993, state documents regarding Afro-Colombian populations, state census records, Colombian national media outlets *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, and various Afro-Colombian and Indigenous organizational materials. I draw upon the array of international donor organization materials and national Indigenous and Afro-Colombian organization materials to analyze the number of and impact of various international organizations and coalitions available for both groups. Secondly, I utilize the wealth of ethnographies on indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities which cover the time period of 1970 to the present day. Lastly, I utilize the scores of newspaper archives from Colombia in the given time period. Even with access to all of these sources, my research is still limited. A more

thorough study would require multiple site visits to Colombia and in depth interviews with Indigenous and Afro-Colombian leaders from 1980 onward. Despite these limitations, I not only answered my research questions but, also provided a prediction for future prospects for Afro-Colombian mobilization success.

## CHAPTER 2

### HISTORICAL CONSTRUCTION OF RACIAL IDENTITY IN COLOMBIA

Blackness as a concept has been ever present in Colombia since the Spanish arrival in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Early colonial writings of La Nueva Granada make mention of *negros esclavos* and *indios* in various parts of the territory (Uribe, 1968). The journey from *negro* to *libre* to *comunidad negra* to *afrodescendiente* followed a very complex history of racial identity construction in Colombia. The state, the church, academics, and Afro-Colombians themselves have all played a role in this construction.

The earliest mention of blackness in Colombia is within the context of the black slave population in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. For many early historians black was synonymous with slave. Nationalities of slaves were rarely mentioned and are found only occasionally in documents of manumission for slaves or in the wills of their owners (16). Nevertheless, blackness became an all-encompassing category for people (slaves) with varying degrees of unknown (sometimes known) African origin.

Cartagena became an influential city in the shaping of black identity, as it was one of only two authorized ports in Latin America for the importation of black slaves. Reports of thefts and other illicit activities caused the City Council of Cartagena in 1592 to ban blacks from being out past their given nightly curfew (8). The presence of black slave labor for the production of goods and in the mines of the country had a profound impact on the economy of the colony of Nueva Granada. Laws emerged during this time prohibiting any interaction with blacks, *negros cimarrones* (runaway slaves living together), slaves, *mulatos*, or captives. A distinction is made during this time between slave and categories of “other” blackness.

The state also made a clear distinction between black slaves and indigenous. This was highly evident in court cases following the passage of the New Laws for the protection of Indians in 1542. One 1617 ruling sentenced an *encomendero* to be tied up to a bar as punishment for mistreating an Indian as if he were a black (Uribe, 1968). This duality characterized by Jaramillo-Urbe as “*mientras el estado colonial se comportaba con el indigena como un estado paternalista, con el negro esclavo solo se manifestaba como estado represor y policiaco.*” [while the colonial state treated the indigenous in a paternalistic manner, for the black slave it manifested itself as a repressive police state (31). Laws emerged during this time period to prohibiting the interaction with *negros*, *cimarrones*, *mulatas*, and *esclavos* and establishing marked differentiation between all four categories.

By the 18<sup>th</sup> century, efforts were made to try and enumerate the growing number of blacks. In 18<sup>th</sup> century documents terminology such as *mestiza*, *pardo*, *india*, *mulato*, and *berberiscos* also appear. This need for the state to quantify and categorize blacks stemmed from a threat to colonists, since in some cities, such as Cali in 1771, the black population was greater than the white population.

Due to this perceived threat of blacks and mestizos intermixing with whites, maintaining purity of blood was paramount for colonists. One “had to demonstrate that neither his father nor his grandfather had had a stain on the ground or of a mulatto, .... that his grandparents were clean of any bad race of Moors, Indian converts, Jewish converts....” (Dijk, Barquin, & Hibbett, 2009: 133). Whites went to great extremes in order to prove their whiteness, through legal means. Certificates of whiteness were created to prove there had been no intermixing in one’s ancestry (Peter Wade, 1993). Legal documents also indicate that there were grave social and

economic consequences for intermarriage, including disinheriting and ostracizing the offenders (Dijk et al., 2009).

The Catholic Church utilized education as a form of keeping the “inferior” races in their place by maintaining a hierarchical system based on the purity of blood. Blacks and first-degree mulattos were not given access to education (N. E. Mosquera, 2003). Many former slaves and indigenous people who converted to Catholicism were indoctrinated in this system of racial hierarchy in which their position remained at the bottom. Catechism books expressed the supremacy of the white race and continued to do so well into the next century.

### Independence Movement

Historians such as Lasso suggest that once the Spanish crown realized that blacks could play an important role in the independence movement, in exchange for manumission and social and political improvements for blacks, slave could no longer equated with blackness. In 1815 reference is made to the incorporation of soldiers of color in the Spanish army and the “situation of blacks and *pardos* in the colonies” (translation author's own Uribe, 1968: 37) The word *pardo* (free people of African descent regardless of color) was utilized frequently as an alternative racial category for Colombians of African origin. In cities such as Cartagena where the freed black population was estimated to be near 60%, many blacks and mulattoes referred to themselves as *libres* or freedmen, while non-blacks referred to them as *pardos*. Spanish authorities, in light of the sheer size of the *pardo* population, understood the importance of appeasing them even if it was at the expense of upsetting the Creole elite.

The strict distinction between whites and Indians and blacks however, was forced to be blurred during the independence period itself. When the Spanish Crown did not extend full

citizenship rights to *pardos*, Creoles used this to emphasize Spain's despotism in order to sway *pardos* towards the independence movement (Lasso, 2007: 51). The discourse changed to an "us", which included Indians and creoles, vs. "them" being Spaniards. Creoles painted themselves as also suffering against European oppression and utilized the image of an Indigenous woman on the coins and other symbols of the country, following its independence. Racial difference became equated with Spanish oppression and the idea of racial harmony in the Spanish colonies became equated with a Creole bred republicanism. This discourse not only "relieved creoles of all blame for current racial conditions, making whites and blacks joint victims of Spanish tyranny, but also associated the very notion of 'Americanness' with racial harmony, a nationalist concept that would survive throughout the republican era" (56). This legacy of nationalist racial harmony was so deeply entrenched in Colombian identity that even though in practice a racial harmony did not exist, it wasn't until the 1991 constitution that the nation acknowledged its multi-ethnic identity.

### Racial Identity in the New Republic

Gran Colombia, the area which occupies present day Colombia, Venezuela, Panama, and Ecuador was one of the first regions with an official policy on racial equality. The official policy however, was based on elite dominance. Cristina Rojas notes, "on the one hand, the process of unification of the republic sought a sense of shared identity for its fellow citizens. But on the other hand, basing hegemony on the civilizing desire invited a distancing between the Creole elite and the ignorant masses" (Rojas, 2002: 16). Elites used racial differences to legitimize their authority. They also used the law to manipulate notions of equality. For creoles equality was constructed as a system which did not acknowledge difference. For Indians the lack of

recognition of difference was not their nation of equality. They were concerned with the several outcomes of the Congress of Cúcuta in 1821. The most important one being the elimination of indian *resguardos* or communal lands. Not only did this have a profound impact on the indian territorial rights, but it had a major effect on who the state viewed as “indian”. When the land began to be divided up, the state had to determine whether mestizo children of Indians were eligible to have access to that land, which called into question notions indigeneity (Safford, 1991). Law 89 of 1889, however, reinstated the *resguardos* and the *cabildos* which governed them. This allowed indigenous communities to have limited autonomy and collective land titles (Warren & Jackson, 2003: 72).

This same congress of 1821 created a manumission law which gave freedom to any child born of slave mothers (after they reached the age of 18). Congressional leaders had no problem with allowing slave born children freedom because their assumption was that these offspring would make up the future low wage workforce. There was no concern with integrating them in any way shape or form into society in the same manner as indigenous Colombians. Gran Colombia at the time was not a slave plantation society like other nations in the region. Blacks, instead of being doctrinally integrated into the Colombian nation like their indigenous counterparts, were instead constructed as a post-independence problem. The sharp contrast in the manner in which elite viewed the “problem” of blacks with that of the “problem” of Indians is evident in discourse of the time. In 1843 the Governor of the province of Buenaventura expressed the overall fear of free blacks felt by the Colombian elite by saying:

“We must seriously consider the growing number of blacks that have left the power of their master and become members of society, bringing with them the seed of all kind of vices, indolence, and African wildness. Very soon there will be almost no trace of the

white race; instead of the virtues proper to the Republic we will observe barbarism, the habits of slavery or ignorance, and the savagery of the black race... a race that must be separated from us.” (Rojas, 2002: 17)

He continues on to demand that congress create a law mandating all emancipated blacks should begin new populations in uninhabited land dividing Colombia from Venezuela or in Central America. Naturally, the law was eventually changed in 1842, extending the age “free” children had to serve their mother’s masters to 25, with later laws even permitting slave owners to sell their slaves to other countries.

The Creoles however, were intent on producing a civilized society which privileged whiteness. Therefore a construction of racial identity was paramount to the success of this “civilizing project”. The increasing fear of free blacks, particularly after the disappearance of slavery, produced great fear among white elites. This fear was reflected in a variety of laws aimed at regulating the free black population and at elevating whiteness. These strict laws concerning *pardos* and all blacks produced a culture in which going against the perceived “racial democracy” produced violent results. The earliest years of the Colombian nation are paramount in understanding the absence of race in state spaces even as racism persisted. Blacks learned that they could not discuss race or racism without it leading to repression from the elites. Elites maintained a myth of racial democracy by ensuring blacks did not have the political or legal space with which to express any racial grievance, thus maintaining the myth of a racial democracy.

Prominent politicians noted the reprehensible qualities of blacks and indigenous that they sought to root out through *mestizaje*. Jose Maria Samper, a 19<sup>th</sup> century politician, described a

black person as “primitive, coarse, brutal, indolent, semi-savage and dark brown” (Dijk et al., 2009: 136) *Mestizaje* became the answer the construction of a suitable Colombian national identity.

### *Blanquiamiento* and environmental determinism

Although racial categories were removed from the census in 1918, race was still present in state practices in areas such as education through textbooks. Colombian schoolbooks continued to reference Colombia’s period of slavery, and existence of blacks within the country, mostly in passing. Colombian press also referenced blacks and indigenous Colombians in the time period after racial categories were removed from the census.

As Wade puts it, “there was a fundamental ambiguity involved in the constant denial and simultaneously the constant reiteration of blackness as a category, both in everyday and state practices. One might want to argue that the state was imposing visions of homogeneous mestizo national identities. While there is a strong element of truth in this, the state also reproduced blackness (and indigenusness)” (Peter Wade, 2009: 168). The reproductions of blackness and indigenusness however, were all negative. Blackness and Indigenous identities were produced as backwards, isolated, and at the bottom of the racial hierarchy of Colombian national identity.

Post –independence, prominent Colombian leaders encouraged a process of *blanquiamiento* to improve the state of the country. Elites of the country encouraged white European immigration in order to create a national identity that was mestizo. Although *mestizaje* as a nation-building project began in the early 1800’s, views based on the environmental determinism echoed by Samper in the nineteenth century continued well into the 1920s, through the 1950s.

During the 1930's and 40's, a leftist liberal political movement *Gaitanismo* emerged which catapulted the often conflicting racial constructions and notions of nationhood to the forefront of Colombian political life. The contested concept of a mestizo nation became a source of conflict for both white elites and mestizos alike. "For the elite, race was a question of aspiration, of their desire to 'whiten' Colombia. For the mestizo and mulatto pueblo, race and especially race mixture (the possession of 'Indian blood'), were essential to being Colombian, though there was no monolithic popular attitude toward race" (Green, 2000: 98). *Gaitanismo* created a powerful political culture outside of the state which utilized historical notions of race and class to create a popular Colombian identity. Even though Afro-Colombians didn't necessarily possess an Indigenous heritage that was so revered among *Gaitanistas*, they were still "accepted as part of the pueblo by virtue of their dark skin, their obvious non-elite status, and their undeniable contributions to the mobilizations on the Liberal left" (123).

Some slight glimpses of other arenas of black acceptance appeared in the rise in the widespread popularity of music influenced by the Afro-descendent populations of the region; in this case *cumbia* and *porro* (Peter Wade, 2002). The fact that the incorporation of African ancestral forms of music and dance were incorporated into the national fabric had an impact of nations of self worth and identity for Afro-Colombians even if these didn't manifest into actual gains in political or cultural rights (Mosquera Rosero-Labbé, León Díaz, & Rodríguez Morales, 2009).

In the midst of manipulations of broad based black populations of the 1930's and 40's and co-optation of musical styles, there emerged prominent black leadership. From 1933-1947 Dr. Diego Luis Cordoba served as a congressional representative from the Pacific region of Colombia (Antioquia and later Chocó). Aside from his political duties he became a de-facto

leader for the black rights. He spoke regularly about the need for human rights and dignity to be restored to the black community and delivered an hours long speech in the National Capital entitled “Praise to the black race” (J. de D. Mosquera, 1999). He referred to himself as negro and took pride in being a member of what he referred to as “*su raza negra* [his black race]” even when mainstream society denigrated them.

### 1970’s and 1980’s Contentious notions of blackness

Out of the legacy of Cordoba’s assertion of blackness, there emerged a push for self-identification of blackness. Amir Smith Cordoba, Afro-Colombian sociologist and journalist, founded the Center for the Investigation and Development of Black Culture which produced the journal *Presencia Negra* [Black Presence]. He was known to shout *Hola Negro* at anyone who he deemed to be black and he often received negative reactions to it since blackness even amongst Afro-Colombians still had a pejorative connotation. Many Afro-Colombians self-identified as *libres* [free people], *morenos* [brown people], or *gente negra* [black people], especially those in the Pacific region of the country (Peter Wade, 1995). This organization also focused on creating “teachers of black culture” which shows that as early as the 1970’s a sense of a distinct black culture was fomenting.

This organization was part of a movement during the 1970’s, which borrowed heavily from U.S. based perceptions of black identity. Black intellectuals in urban universities were influenced by the black power movement of the United States, anti-apartheid movements, *negritude*, African independence movements, and images of *cimarronaje* and *palenque* communities of the colonial period in Colombia. These influences are evident in even the naming of the groups such as *Cimarrón* (National Movement for the Human Rights of Black

Communities in Colombia) which grew out of a student study group known as SOWETO (Peter Wade, 1995). These student groups were organized around the idea of fighting against racism and discrimination within the country, and saw the possibility of race relations similar to those in the U.S. They were concerned with both the weakness of black identity and the failure of people to identify as black (Peter Wade, 2009: 168). Their concept of blackness was all inclusive, and often included people who may not have actually self-identified as blacks.

On the contrary popular academic discourse produced a concept of blackness that was focused on the idea of *huellas africanas* or footprints of Africa. Anthropologists began to write about Afro-Colombian culture as having imprints of Africaness in daily practices. The concept of blackness produced in this academic setting was also concerned with the “invisibility” of blackness in Colombia and the dominance of a mestizo national identity which they felt gave way for indigenous inclusion and African exclusion. The focus was on a cultural past of Africa, not necessarily phenotypical appearance. The majority of research on *huellas africanas* was focused on the Pacific rural areas of Colombia. This discourse, which became the dominant discourse on blackness in Colombia in the academic world until recently, had a profound impact on the construction of blackness shaped during both the constitutional assembly process and the process of creating Law 70.

#### 1990 ANC period and beyond

During the ANC process, new articulations of black identity were heavily debated. These identity constructions drew from the academic perspective of the 70’s and also of previous constructions about cultural difference, regional emphases, and notions of ethnicity. In the end,

the ANC favored a concept of blackness that was ruralized and indigenized. The ANC defined *comunidades negras* as those living in rural riverine communities which participate in traditional cultural practices. Unlike the historical overarching categories such as *negro*, *pardo*, *libre*, or even *indio* this term was isolating to those who may have defined themselves as blacks in non-rural parts of the country.

The state's reification of the concept of *comunidades negras* was a major outcome of the ANC which shaped racial discourse at both the state and local community level. Colombians had a new way of talking about racial identity which essentially placed the Afro-Colombian and Indigenous Colombian within the same context. Peter Wade, in discussing the lasting effects of the creation of the concept of *comunidades negras* states that it "has implied 'the abandonment of the socio-political specificities' (Peter Wade, 2009: 171) of actual black communities there, which are very diverse, in the name of a more singular and homogeneous black ethnic identity. The state discourse of black community, allied to real resources (land titles) attached to that category, and to the social movement discourse of black community ethnicity have all worked together to make *comunidad negra* into dominant concept even in zones outside the Pacific coastal region" (171).

This was coupled with massive black migration to urban centers of Colombia which traditionally had not been heavily populated by blacks. Many white and mestizo Colombians were for the first time forced to grapple with their preconceived notions that blacks only lived in the Pacific region of the country. This complicated the gains of the 1993 Law of 70 which had specifically outlined black communities as those residing in the Pacific rural area. Afro-Colombians in the midst of massive internal violence were thrust from various regions of the country and those who resided in those urban centers were forced to grapple with black identity.

Those who were members of perceived “black communities” were no residing far outside the specified rural Pacific region.

In more recent years, there has been push back from academics and Afro-Colombians themselves concerning the terminology in use to discuss race. Specifically the issue of self-definition of race re-emerged in the Colombian National Census in 2005 with very detailed categories and definitions for those Colombians of Afro-descent which differed greatly from those that existed in the 1993 Census. The 1993 Census, which only asked if the person belonged to an ethnic group, indigenous group, or black community, was directly influenced by the decisions made during the ANC which created Law 70. According to Colombia’s Department of Statistics, the self-recognition aspect became the key component of the 2005 Census process as it dealt with the Afro-Colombian population. They grappled with conceptions of ethnicity or a phenotype and how different forms of self-reference amongst Afro-Colombians differed on various levels.

Although race and discussions of race have evolved from the colonial period to the present, the power structure from the colonial period and into the period of the constituent assembly has operated with blackness on the lower rung. The ANC was indeed a catalyst for state definitions of blackness as it provided a political opening. However, we are still seeing an evolution in racial terminology for Colombians today. The recent influence of Afro-descendent International networks has provided an array of terms for Colombian self-definition. The Colombian state is now utilizing more inclusive racial terms as is evidenced by their inclusion of new terminology for Afro-Colombians in the census, even as that terminology would seem to negate the state created concept of *comunidad negra*. The latest Colombian census gave as one of several racial and ethnic options *afrodescendiente* the more inclusive term which is term of

choice for many International networks. This is evidence that it is possible to permeate the state's established racial definitions through more radical framing. In the chapters that follow, I will delve upon the specific organizations and actions that have influenced the state's racial nomenclature and continue to impact racial discourse today. I will pay particular attention to the ways in which international network influences and the state have influenced the frames which Indigenous and Afro-Colombian movements have used to shape racial discourse and garner movement success.

## CHAPTER 3

### INDIGENOUS AND AFRO-COLOMBIAN MOBILIZATION STRUCTURES PRIOR TO THE NATIONAL CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY (ANC)

Prior to the Constituent Assembly's creation, Afro-Colombian and Indigenous individuals were engaged in collective action in some form or another that was most often a response to state actions or inactions. The state's issuance of Law 89 of 1890 which granted indigenous Colombians collective title to their lands and recognized the "traditional authority of indigenous councils (*cabildos*) to govern and manage affairs within such territories (*resguardos*)" (Asher, 2009) produced a reaction by many indigenous populations that erupted in the 1960s. This law was an extension of state policies to keep whites and indigenous persons separate. These collectively owned Indigenous lands were reserves that became a labor source for the state. Although, this law was not the result of Indigenous collective organizing, indigenous activists drew upon that law as well as agrarian reform law 135 which followed it in 1961, to galvanize Indigenous support.

During the 1960's and 70's both Indigenous and Afro-Colombian individuals were organizing around peasant identities and agrarian reform. The organizing infrastructure had been facilitated by the Catholic Church, labor unions, worker's groups, and other non-ethnically identified organizations. During this time, "anti-indigenist discourse, which viewed class as the organizing principle, prevailed" (A. Escobar, 1992: 117). In the early 1970s several regional Indigenous organizations were taking shape. These organizations were primarily focused on agrarian reform and had not yet articulated a strong ethnic Indigenous Mobilization message. In fact, many of these organizations were (and continue to be) ethnically diverse including

representation of Afro-Colombians within membership (Rappaport, 2007). As noted in Chapter 1, many writers casually profess that Indigenous organizations were able to obtain more rights even though they were smaller in numbers than Afro-Colombian organizations, simply because they were better organized. In order to delve into this notion it is important to note the historical context in which both Indigenous and Afro-Colombians were organizing in.

To fully understand the framing tactics, mobilization structures, resources, and political impact of what we now deem the Indigenous Movement in Colombia during the 1980's, it is important to discuss the origins of the first ethnically focused grassroots organization *Consejo Regional Indígena de la Cauca* (CRIC). This organization emerged in a time period which marked a shift in discourse and framing amongst indigenous organizing at the local level in Colombia from class struggles to ethnic rights.

### Emergence of CRIC

CRIC was founded in 1971 in the presence of 2,000 indigenous peasants from the department of Cauca who were composed mainly of Guambianos and Nasa, the largest indigenous groups in the department (Trojan, 2008). Representatives from the Colombian Institute for Agrarian Reform (INCORA) which had been established in 1961 to facilitate the state's agrarian reform plans were in attendance along with non-indigenous peasants, leftist activists, Afro-Colombians, and mestizos. The initial meeting was also centered mainly on agrarian reform and unequal distribution of land, with some persons present advocating for a revolutionary approach. This founding meeting was a clear indication of three things. The organization itself upon its founding did not intend to focus on a preservation of an indigenous way of life or identity, the organization was not strictly made up of indigenous persons and the

presence of representatives from INCORA indicates that it had the government's attention from the beginning. As Troyan states "the ethnic nature of the claims made by the Colombian indigenous movement were not a given. The subsequent twenty years would involve constructing a discourse and policies that would naturalize the ethnic nature of indigenous politics" (176).

The two CRIC meetings which followed marked a profound shift in the organization's discourse and frame. These later meetings were influenced by several non-indigenous activists who had had prior experiences with indigenous history and ethnicity and incorporated the importance of ethnicity, apart from class, as a component of CRIC's principles. Troyan describes the process as "Outsiders who had traveled from one community to another and who came from distinct political traditions seized an existent discourse and articulated it in the first two conferences. A synergy between the nonindigenous activists, the indigenous leaders and rank and file, and finally the leftist's grassroots organizations took place during this time" (178). The Colombian state had a legal framework in place (Law 89 of 1890, *resguardos*) pertaining to indigenous populations and the group's members could either work within it or against it. Ultimately after the third meeting and much internal debate, CRIC proposed to work within the existing legal framework, which meant the reclamation of an indigenous identity.

By 1972 the Colombian government's Department of Statistics decided to entrust CRIC to conduct a census of indigenous communities in the department of Cauca. Through the Census taking process the Colombian government essentially provided a platform for CRIC to spread their newly constructed Indigenous ethnic identity frame, at no expense to CRIC, bringing into contact Indigenous groups from the various parts of the department that had not had much contact prior. As a future president of CRIC noted prior to his political activism he had no

understanding of the other indigenous communities within his own department (178). It is interesting that one of the CRIC members undertaking this mission was Afro-Colombian, Luis Angel Monroy. In any case from 1971 to 1974 CRIC staged twenty-eight peaceful demonstrations, successfully reclaimed a number of *resguardos* within the existing legal framework, and created indigenous councils within the region.

The Colombian press also fed the country with stories sympathetic to the indigenous cause; “indigenous communities appeared in the imagined nation as emerging unified and untainted by the bonds of partisan affiliation” (182). The National Association of Peasant Farmers (ANUC) dedicated in 1974 held several meetings with delegates from CRIC who wanted to express the role of Indigenous in the Peasant movement. The outcomes of these meetings marked the differentiation of CRIC from the peasant movement. CRIC pledged to support the peasant movement but expressed they had conflicting ideas concerning the role of land, the emphasis on the diversity of various tribes within Colombia, and the exploitation of nature. The outcomes document entitled *The place of Indians in the peasant movement: A manifesto* stated “Our desire is to contribute to the liberation of the Colombian people struggling shoulder-to-shoulder with peasants, workers and other exploited people with their legitimate class organizations” (Materne, 1980: 40). ANUC in turn expanded the role of their Indigenous Commission and Indian Secretariat to facilitate better relations with Indigenous Movement organizations with the understanding that the movements were separate but mutually reinforcing.

Following this successful campaign several organizations sprouted. In fact between 1971 and 1986 sixteen indigenous organizations were formed, most regional in nature (Avirama & Marquez, 1994: 84). Many of those no doubt encouraged by the success of CRIC, others had a different frame in mind for their organizing. The two other organizations on which my analysis

will focus are the National Indigenous Organization of Colombia (ONIC) and the Indigenous Authorities Movement of Southwest Colombia (AISO, later AICO).

### Establishing a National Indigenous Organization

After the successful organizing efforts of CRIC, the regional organizations and councils from various areas of the country, decided to come together to host the first National Encuentro of the Indigenous. It was attended by Regional Indian Council of Cauca (CRIC), the Regional Indian Council of Tolima (CRIT), the Regional Organization of Emberá Indians (BREWA), an organization of Sikuane Indians of the Llanos Orientales (UNUMA), the Union of Indians of Acaricuana (UNKAC), the Regional Indian Council of Western Colombia (CRIDOC), Regional Indian Council of Vaupés (CRIVA), the Indian Cabildos of San Andrés de Satavento, the Union of Cubeo Indians (UDIC), the Regional Indian Organization of Orteguzza Medio (ORIOM), the Tayrona Confederation of Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, the Indian Organization of Antioquia (OICA), the Union of Indians of the Papurí (UNIP), the Regional Indian Council of Guainía (CRIGUA) and the Union of Indians of Chocó (UNDICH) (Campos Zornosa, 1984).

According to ONIC's official history fifteen hundred delegates were present at this meeting which took place in Lomals de Ilarco. The delegates present agreed to the first National Indigenous Congress, as well as the constitution of the ONIC. The first National Indigenous Congress took place in Bosa in 1982 and had representatives of 90% of the indigenous peoples of Colombia and was attended by 12 international indigenous delegations. Their slogan was "Unity, Land, Culture, and Autonomy" (ONIC, n.d.). Their goal was to bring together the various regional indigenous organizations to create a national representative body.

The current slogan of ONIC is actually “Unity, Territory, Culture, and Autonomy”. The change in slogan from land to territory represents a shift in the discourse used in the Indigenous movement. Whereas, the peasant organizing had framed their movement as one for land and agrarian reform, ethnic identity organizing has framed their movement as one focused on reclaiming territory. ONIC’s official history also notes the influence of international networks on the success of the organization. It states that in 1982 the first Working Group on Indigenous Peoples was formed following a study presented by the Special Rapporteur of the UN Commission on Human Rights on the freedoms and rights of indigenous populations worldwide (ONIC, n.d.). Even from ONIC’s founding moment they understood themselves as part of a larger international movement in support of the rights of indigenous peoples for land and autonomy. The presence of indigenous delegates outside of Colombia at ONIC’s first Indigenous Congress is also indicative of this sentiment.

#### An alternative Indigenous Frame – Indigenous Authorities Movement

In 1980 the Colombian President urged the congress to construct an Indian Statue without soliciting input from the actual Indigenous community members. The existing Indigenous organizations simply rejected the notion of an Indian statute since they had not been consulted. They instead continued to work within the existing legal framework to defend indigenous land rights. Three existing *cabildos*, however, the Páez, Guambiano, and Nariño felt that this was instead an opportunity to publicly defend the rights of the indigenous populations against the national government. That same year they conducted a march of the governors of these *cabildos* which lasted three weeks. The group which became known as the Marching Governors marched from the Ecuadorian border to Bogota, demanding “authority, community, and future” (A.

Escobar, 1992: 126). They did not receive much attention from the Colombian government but they did manage to articulate a new indigenous rights frame.

Following the march they continued to meet regularly as a group in a non-hierarchical manner. The group during their third union invited the President who arrived at the meeting and proclaimed to the indigenous authorities that the Indian statute would not be pursued further (126). The shift in relations between Indigenous groups and the state was altered after this juncture. Findji noted that CRIC and ONIC tended to make demands upon the state in the form of services and benefits while the Indigenous Authorities Movement tended to focus on a recognition of difference. As she states,

“In that political milieu, permeated by the Marxism of the 1960’s, rights were perceived as inherently ‘bourgeois,’ and to ‘fight for one’s rights’ consequently made no sense. The eruption of the struggle was...an atypical inconvenience; it had no place in the system of representation that generally prevailed. However, it was this ‘fight for rights,’ not only for land, that from that moment on and more visibly than ever during the 1980s developed into one of the axes for the redefinition of the political in Colombia” (125).

In 1987 this group became formally known as the Movement of Indigenous Authorities (AICO). This group continued to set themselves apart from CRIC and ONIC and often had a contentious relationship well into the beginning of the constituent assembly process.

Within the broader Indigenous Organizing Movement, AICO’s presence marked a shift in movement framing. As early as 1981 their organizational materials stated “We are certain that the recognition of our rights will help the Colombian people to understand better, and fight for, their own rights; this realization will bring with it their support for our struggle (127). Notions of cultural rights, authority, and reciprocity henceforth were folded into the movement’s narrative.

### An armed indigenous alternative?

Another such split from CRIC were who insisted on an armed struggle with an indigenous identity. Amidst widespread violence in Colombia, particularly in the rural areas in which many indigenous groups resided, a self-defense army was formed in 1977 whose membership included former CRIC members or advisors. It was called Movimiento Armada Quintin Lame (MAQL) a nod to the early 1900's Indigenous leader Quintin Lame, whose list of demands from was used to form many of CRIC's founding principles. It was initially a counter response to the assassinations and widespread violence against many of CRIC's members and supporters and did not officially publicize its existence until 1985 (Trojan, 184). This armed movement is notable, because it fits into the broadly defined indigenous movement mobilization structure, but also because it is important to note the organization's makeup. It was viewed publicly, as well as by the state, as an indigenous organization yet its leadership included Luis Angel Monroy, the Afro-Colombian who had helped CRIC carry out the 1972 census.

### International Network Influences

The first international NGO conference which had a focus on indigenous issues took place in 1977. Other international work followed which focused on issues of discrimination and land rights among indigenous groups. As mentioned previously in 1982 a Working Group was established through the United Nations which focused on Indigenous human rights globally. The working group wanted to create a UN declaration on Indigenous peoples and overall was dominated by Western discourse of self-determination. During the 1980's Indigenous groups within Latin America were not as focused on international indigenous advocacy taking place on their behalf but on attaining cultural rights within their own states. There was low representation

of indigenous groups in Latin America in Working Group discussions due to lack of resources to travel for the meetings, thus the perspective was dominated by International Advocates rather than the indigenous themselves. (Engle, 2010: 69). The 1981 conference in Geneva which focused on Indigenous populations and their relationship to land did boast 150 indigenous representatives from the Americas in attendance (Dunbar-Ortiz, 2006). In 1983 the Working Group developed the following definition for indigenous in a draft of their UN Declaration:

“Indigenous communities, peoples and nations are those which, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing in those territories, or parts of them. They form at present non-dominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve, develop and transmit future generations their ancestral territories, and their ethnic identity, as the basis of their continued existence as peoples, in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions and legal systems” (UN High Commission on Human Rights Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, n.d: Chapters XXI, XXII-Conclusions, proposals and recommendations, paragraph 379.)

This displays a focus from the International perspective on territory as opposed to land and an emphasis on a distinct identity.

Overall the Indigenous Mobilization structure leading into the ANC election process included a variety of actors, frames, and direct actions. The reclamation of Indian *resguardos* was achieved not only by Indigenous actors but also, Afro-colombian and mestizo peasants. International actors also played a role in increasing the coordination amongst local indigenous councils. “Throughout the country, between 1982 and 1989, the national Government...handed over to them lands comprising 18,949,405 hectares, and forming a total of 157 new *resguardo* units... during the same period, in order to attend to the demands of small farming, indigenous populations in the Andean region, the national Government purchased a total of 57,336 hectares of private property” (Warren & Jackson, 2003: 89). Eventually the combination of these multiple actors led to a differentiation between a *campesino* mobilization and an indigenous

mobilization frame. The organizational infrastructure of the *cabildos* and national umbrella organization ONIC, organization victories such as the *resguardo* reclamations, and international network support placed the Indigenous mobilization in a very different position during the ANC electoral process than their Afro-Colombian counterpart.

### Afro-Colombian Peasant Organizing

The differentiation of a peasant movement from an ethnic based movement took shape differently in the Afro-Colombian communities. Similar to indigenous groups throughout rural Colombia, Afro-Colombians were already organizing as a peasant movement during the broader push for agrarian reform in the 1970's. The Catholic Church also played a role in the organizing of both Indigenous and Afro-Colombians in the Chocó region. The United Peasant Association of the Atrato River (ACIA) formed in the Chocó region of Colombia organized themselves with the help of missionaries and other grassroots organizations to combat large logging and forestry industry expansion in the region. According to Wade, the Indigenous Pastoral Program of the Catholic Church had helped set up OREWA (Regional Organization of Emberas and Waunanas) in 1986, while the Afro-American Pastoral Program facilitated the creation of ACIA in 1984.

During a 1987 ACIA led meeting representatives from INCORA, and the Colombian National Department of Planning were present. This indicates that the state was aware and interested in the rural organizing of Afro-Colombians in the late 80's. In 1989 the "First meeting for the Unity and Defense of Indigenous and Black Communities took place and a joint organization, ACADESAN, the Peasant Association of the San Juan River, was born (Peter Wade, 1995: 345) Although blackness is not mentioned in the name of ACADESAN or ACIA,

the organizational makeup definitely included Afro-Colombians. This bi-ethnic organizing had an ethnic discourse as well as an environmental focus. These groups noted International Labor Organization accords concerning ethnic minorities as a source for their demands for ethnic and environmental rights. This indicates an influence of the international networks on their frame articulation. Unfortunately, during the late 1980's their demands to protect territories against corporate environmental degradation were not met (Asher, 2009).

### Afro-Colombian Urban Movements

In urban centers Afro-Colombians were organizing from a different perspective. Afro-Colombian students in Pereira had formed the Soweto Study Group in 1976 under the leadership of Juan de Dios Mosquera. As noted in chapter two these students were very much influenced by the black movements going on around the world. They expressed solidarity with those movements and also articulated notions of blackness that were similar to those of the U.S. Black Power movement, African independence movements, and *négritude* of the Caribbean. In 1982 the Soweto Study Group founded the National Cimarrón Movement in Buenaventura. The group listed its goals as:

- Draw attention to the discrimination and oppression of marginalized groups, especially blacks
- Struggle for equality and universal human rights of subordinated groups all over the world, including blacks, workers, and women.
- Be in solidarity and form alliances with other black struggles, such as the antiapartheid movement in South Africa, civil rights efforts in North America, and *négritude* movements in the Caribbean and Francophone Africa (Asher, 2009: 42)

These goals clearly show that the discourse from Cimarrón was markedly different from its rural counterparts. As Asher states, "Cimarrón's discourse of international black solidarity and universal human rights had little resonance" in rural areas that had been accustomed for the

most part, to organizing around specific labor activities such as cooperatives. In 1988 another group emerged Fundación Litoral Siglo XXI, composed of students and intellectuals who had been involved in Cimarrón but were now living in Buenaventura, which sought to engage the rural communities in the Pacific around black ethnicity. It utilized funds from another NGO Fundación Habla/Scribe which had provided training among youth and peasants in low cost media and communication techniques. (Asher, 2009). Siglo XXI inspired by ACIA's efforts in rural peasant organizing, used the resources provided by this NGO to enhance their organizing efforts among rural Pacific black communities. These students of Siglo XXI joined with organizing efforts in Bogotá, areas of the Atlantic coasts, and several other areas in the Pacific. They began calling themselves the Organization of Black Communities (OCN).

Meanwhile, Afro-Colombians in Tumaco launched massive protests in 1988 against the government for lack of adequate basic resources gave rise to what became known as *El Tumacazo*. The protesters set fire to government agencies leaving many injured and three dead. In the "Proclamation of Tumaco" read in the town square during the protests they stated "Today we blacks of African descent, with heart in hand, hoisted the flag at half mast for which our ancestors gave their lives, in order to express our deep sorrow of feeling as orphans of the country" (Hoffman, 2007: 240) This protest definitely gained the attention of the state and emphasized the need to address the needs of blacks throughout the region. News articles in popular Colombian newspapers, however, indicate that five years later those basic needs were still lacking (Valencia, 1993). The organizing efforts in Tumaco also hinted at a source of shared identity for blacks in organizing. Although they were launching an attack of a lack of adequate resources they felt it important to note that they had a shared past, one of slavery, and

one of a continued feeling of disownership by their country. Similar but nonviolent civil takeovers took place in the Pacific region's government centers.

In the midst of this total lack of state control and massive calls for constitutional reform, Pacific groups began organizing in record numbers. Afro-Colombians supported Cimarron, ACIA, ACADESAN, OCN, and Quibdó's Organization of People's Neighborhoods and Black Communities in Chocó (OBAPO) although these organizations did not have consensus over their demands to the state for Afro-Colombians nationwide. Among Afro-Colombian groups in the Pacific region three factions emerged. The urban black groups pushed for anti-discriminatory policies to combat racism and inequality. The groups in Chocó, an area with a majority black population, pushed for land ownership and resources but did also emphasize ethnic identity. Newly formed OCN focused on the following key points a respect for black difference, emphasis on practices of production which were culturally rooted, and "territorial control over their Pacific homeland" (Asher, 2009:44).

In August of 1990 a diverse set of organizations and actors involved in black community organizing came together to host the Preconstituent Conference of Black Communities in the city of Cali. The *Coordinadora Nacional de Comunidades Negras* (CNCN) emerged from this conference to "coordinate and implement the actions agreed upon at the conference. However, the profound divisions and the wide range of perspectives represented at the CNCN – from peasant, urban, popular, and traditional party-oriented groups to leftists and ethno-cultural movements – ensured that the CNCN was to be s a short-lived experience"(Gutmann, Matos Rodriguez, Stephen, & Zavella, 2003: 432) . These conflicting frames led to multiple candidate submissions for the ANC elections which reflected those viewpoints.

### ANC Election process

The ANC election process was a crucial moment in the mobilization outcomes of both Indigenous and Afro-Colombian groups. Groups were competing at a national level for only seventy which made up the assembly. ONIC submitted Francisco Rojas Birry a member of the Embera ethnic group from Chocó as a candidate for the ANC. Antonio Jacanamijoy, General Coordinator of the Indigenous Organizations of the Amazon Basin COICA, Governor of Putumayo in 1988, Vice President of ONIC, 1992-1994, and Area Coordinator of COICA, 1992-1996 stated, “As ethnic minorities, we wanted direct participation in the National Constitutional Assembly, just as we stated in the Third National Indigenous Congress in Bosa, in June of 1990. Nonetheless, the government and different sectors of traditional parties did not support this demand. With this opposition, it was a difficult task to struggle for a seat in the Constitutional Assembly while the different professional politicians, or *politiqueros*, of the country were actively participating due to their longtime political careers” (Ramirez de Jara, 1997). In acknowledgment that the groups they represented made up a tiny portion of Colombia’s population they chose the slogan “From our roots and for our dreams, for everyone” (Leger, 1994: 64) in the hopes of gaining votes from outside of their ethnic group. As Peter Wade states “Many people from the Pacific region voted for him because his platform was regional rather than ‘racial’ in orientation and because the greater solidity of indigenous organizations made his candidacy a safer bet” (Wade, 1995: 347). AISO meanwhile selected their own candidate for election Lorenzo Muelas a Guambiano from Cauca. Essentially two distinct frames within the indigenous movement were represented in ANC. Both of these candidates were elected. After a demobilization process of several armed groups another indigenous assembly member was added, Alfonso Pena Chepe, a former member of the Quintin Lame Armed Movement.

The Afro-Colombian movement submitted two candidates for the ANC election as well, OCN's Carlos Rosero and Cimarrón's Juan de Dios Mosquera. Both of these candidates emphasized blackness as part of their election campaign (Wade, 1995). There were other black candidate submissions to the ANC but they represented the Liberal political party and were not involved in Afro-Colombian ethnic identity organizing (Asher, 2009). Neither of these two candidates was elected thus no Afro-Colombian movement frame was represented in this political space.

### Conclusion

Afro-Colombian and Indigenous Colombian movement's included in-group intellectuals (former students of Cimarrón, indigenous elites leadership in CRIC and ONIC) as well as non-group allies (anthropologists, lawyers, international activists) who aided them in their frame articulation. Both groups place emphasis on a shared but forgotten past. CRIC's founding moment points to the influence of Quintin Lame, who at the time had been forgotten by most Colombians indigenous and non-indigenous. His ideas were reformed as though they had never been forgotten. In the case of Cimarrón, Afro-Colombians clung to these historical claims of *palenques* and *cimmaronaje* as they strengthened the idea of a collective black community and a shared ethnic identity, particularly in the Pacific region. Indigenous and Afro-Colombian groups were making historical claims about identity, in the hopes that these would be validated by the state, in the form of rights to particular territories along with autonomy within those territories. The state however, was hesitant to view Afro-Colombians in this manner. The problem with the Afro-Colombian claims to this shared ethnic identity was that those claims did not resonate with the majority of Afro-Colombians. Indigenous identity had always been constructed as belong to

a particular territory, and had always had certain forms of autonomy within those territories. This was not the case for Afro-Colombian identity, and accepting this new ethnic construction would have required a rethinking on the part of Colombian political and economic elites, along with Afro-Colombians themselves.

The portion of the Afro-Colombian population who did identify with the ethnic identity frame came to dominate the political debate leading up to the ANC elections and much of the movement years which followed. In the end, the political opening of the ANC was filled with indigenous candidates rather than Afro-Colombian candidates with fragmented frames. When that political opening closed, the Indigenous movement had more or less solidified their collective movement frame, while the outcome of the ANC elections gave the Pacific region focused Afro-Colombian movement frame dominance. The closure of the political opening of the ANC also effectively shut out the possibilities of radical movement frames for Afro-Colombians gaining any prominence.

## CHAPTER 4

### INDIGENOUS AND AFRO-COLOMBIAN MOBILIZATION STRUCTURES AFTER THE NATIONAL CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY (ANC) ELECTIONS

The 1991 National Constituent Assembly (ANC) was a turning point in the recognition of Afro-Colombians and Indigenous Colombians alike. The ANC created a political opening for Colombians who were accustomed to clientelistic electoral politics at local and state levels. For the first time Colombians from all walks of life had the opportunity to elect representatives to transform the Colombian constitution which had been in effect since 1886. Indigenous Colombians unlike their Afro-Colombian counterparts had direct representation within the ANC representing a variety of Indigenous movement frames. This political space allowed Indigenous Colombians, although only representing a small percentage of the Colombian population, to present items for discussion and inclusion into the new constitution which pertained to their constituency that otherwise may never have made it to such a prominent forum. Afro-Colombians, lacking direct representation in the ANC utilized lobbying to insert the demands of their constituency into the discussion. The absence of Afro-Colombian's during the constituent assembly Jaime Arocha argues "is related to the imperfect leveling of the system of socio-racial castes that predominated during the colonial era. Its racial nomenclature may have disappeared, but not the discriminatory behavior associated with it" (Arocha, 1996:40). Afro-Colombian groups' blockage from this particular political opening set the stage for the movement's outcomes for the next twenty years. It also limited framing possibilities for years to come.

Although the ability of Afro-Colombian groups to reach consensus prior to the ANC had failed, the lack of direct representation in the ANC led to a very concerted lobbying effort led by many of the same organizations who had been involved in the Pre-constituent Conference of

Black Communities. These lobbying efforts took the form of traditional mobilization actions. Members of various organizations in Chocó peacefully occupied the city hall, the cathedral and a local INCORA building. Simultaneously they sent protestors to the capital to make public denunciations of their absence from the ANC. Lastly these organizations began the “black telegram” campaign which sent telegrams to members of the ANC demanding inclusion of blacks in the new constitution.

At the same time that the ANC was in session creating proposals for the new constitution black organizing and community education was increasing although a multiplicity of discourses still existed. The Afro-American Pastoral group of the Catholic Church which had been instrumental in rural black organizing some twenty years prior, held their 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting in June of 1991 in Chocó with over 200 in attendance. The minutes from this meeting show that not only were representatives present from Cimarron, CNCN, ACIA, OREWA and other groups who had been involved in black organizing, but they also had representation from black organizations in Ecuador, Panama, and Venezuela. This indicates the fomentation of a transnational black movement post-ANC. During that meeting, leaders explicitly stated that Afro-Americans recognize themselves as an ethnic group, demanded justice for 470 years of marginalization, and stated that the ANC should frame the article concerning ethnic territories as “indigenous and afro-american territories” (“AFROAMÉRICA EN EL CHOCÓ,” 1991).

Ultimately within the ANC Francisco Rojas Birry from ONIC and from the area of Chocó proved to be the black organizers greatest ally. Not only had he run on a multi-ethnic platform but he came from an area heavily populated by Afro-Colombians. Strategically his election was important for indigenous Colombians because he was part of a center-left bloc led by the M-19 delegates. Even though the M-19 was not particularly pro-black organizations,

through this alliance they agree to support all indigenous proposals in exchange for their support of all M-19 proposals. This was particularly crucial because in order for proposals to pass within the ANC 2/3 vote was needed and the center-left bloc which Rojas Birry was a part of represented 1/3 of the ANC (Donna Lee Van Cott, 1996). Although Rojas Birry could have easily abandoned any dedication he may have felt to the Afro-Colombian community he chose to have two black advisors and the rhetoric of his proposals indicates his support of blacks in the constitution. In his proposal “The rights of ethnic groups” he referenced not only the notion of discrimination, economic and territorial disenfranchisement, and violence within the rural areas of Colombia but also cited the constitutions of Ecuador and Nicaragua as well as International accords concerning ethnic groups which had already been ratified by Colombia. He stated “This is not something new, we aren’t making things up here; to the contrary, we are elevating the level of the constitution, so that Colombia can do the same as other countries have in recognizing special titling for indigenous peoples” (Paschel, 2010). His referral to these issues shows that in enfranchising indigenous and other “ethnic groups” within the constitution the nation would be aligning itself with Latin America overall as well as the International bodies such as the ILO and UN.

The minutes from the ANC indicate that original versions of the Rights of Ethnic groups proposals addressed urban areas that had been discriminated against as well. This wording notes an anti-discrimination discourse which would have been consistent with broad frames that had not been successful in the past. The final AT 55 does not include any mention of discrimination. It was specifically framed as the right to exist in a culturally separate manner rather than an affront on the state to not be discriminated against or posing a request on the state to provide resources or legislation to fight discrimination.

Opponents of AT 55 within the ANC argued against it because they felt it would cause a division in a state that was already clearly in crisis in terms of its legitimacy and disunity. Constituents within the ANC acknowledged the existence of black inequality and black ghettos but could not conceive of territorial autonomy for blacks. One conservative constituent member went so far as to state “the black community can’t aim for an apartheid, because we haven’t found any information in the country about deaths that have been committed for the act of being black in order to aim for such a request” (Grueso, 2000: 69) . It is relevant to note the comparison to South Africa, given the international support of the anti-apartheid movement in there which was happening simultaneous to the ANC sessions. Thus, the members of the ANC recognized the disenfranchisement of blacks and indigenous Colombians, but only felt it necessary to codify indigenous rights into the new constitution.

### Constitutional Outcomes

Through this intense lobbying process, Afro-Colombians as a whole received only one mention in the new constitution through Provisional Article 55. This provisional article was achieved at the very last minute within the session. It stated within two years a special commission would be created to create a law to recognize the right to collective property of “black communities” within the rural pacific region of Colombia involved in traditional cultivation practices. The commission will have representatives who are elected by the communities involved. It also emphasized that the law would create mechanisms to protect the cultural identity and rights of the communities and foster their economic and social development. It invites the possibility of applying the law to other zones of the country that have similar conditions through the same procedure.

The archipelago of San Andrés, Providencia, and Santa Catalina which has been traditionally populated by *raizales*, descendants of Afro-Caribbean heritage, did receive special mention within the Constitution. The new constitution affirmed the archipelago's place in Colombian territory, positioned it as its own department, indicated that some matters concerning that department will be determined by the legislature, and states that if a law is approved to limit population density and movement within the archipelago by both houses it could protect the cultural identity of native communities. Historically, the state encouraged mainland Colombian migration to the sparsely populated archipelago and the actual *raizal* population has dwindled since these assimilation efforts, quelling separatist movements on the part of *raizales* to some degree. Although the constitution does not explicitly state its desire to protect the black inhabitants of the archipelago, their use of the phrase "native community" and *raizal* indicate that they see these black inhabitants as distinct from the rest of the Colombian black population. Much of that willingness to recognize *raizales* as distinct is probably due to their distinct language, religion, and geographic location.

On the contrary Indigenous organizations, with direct representation in the ANC were able to achieve over 37 articles in the new constitution (Ramirez de Jara, 1997). These gains included the transformation of *resguardos* into territorial entities with autonomy through Articles 286 and 287. It also mentioned the right of ethnic groups to organize and develop their cultural identity. It should be noted that unlike Provisional Article 55, none of these articles for Indigenous communities had to be submitted directly to the President for approval before they could be codified into law. However, many of the references to indigenous territorial entities are subject to the creation of Organic Law of Territorial Order created by the government with consultation from indigenous communities. At the moment in which the constitution was

approved, it was clear that Afro-Colombians had greater challenges to attainment of cultural rights from the state than Indigenous Colombians.

### Black Ethnic Difference Frame solidification

The Special Commission on Black Communities, appointed by the government, included a variety of well-known academics. This commission ultimately drafted Law 70. Jaime Arocha, a member of the commission, stated that “the new Colombian constitution attempts to build the nation neither by integration nor by segregation but by pursuing unity through the preservation of ethnic diversity. However, this innovation requires a radical change in the way in which Afro-Colombians are perceived; without this, its implementation will be a source of new friction between Indians and Afro-Colombians” (Arocho, 1998:71). The complexity of these new identity constructions was heightened by the lack of a black representative within the actual Constituent Assembly itself. The year immediately following the new constitution, there were more mentions of blackness in *El Tiempo* than during the years prior. (*El Tiempo* archives). It was actually this time period between when AT 55 was included in the new constitution in 1991 and when Law 70 was actually enacted which truly fomented the idea of black ethnic difference. This time period served to elevate the black ethnic difference frame to the forefront and effectively silenced other radical frames.

In the final composition of the Commission there was representation from only 4 out of 32 departments in Colombia. Since AT 55 had a focus on the Pacific region, despite the fact that the majority of Afro-Colombians resided in urban areas, this absence of other black voices set the stage for the definition of black communities in an exclusionary manner. In particular Cimarrón was not invited to participate in the Commission. Paschel (2010) cites that Juan Dios

de Mosquera wrote to the commission requesting the names of the Afro-Colombian representatives and demanding to be kept in the loop of the occurrences of the commission. This is again evidence of a lack of consensus on a national black movement tactic and evidence of the silencing of radical frames that were at the disposal of the movement.

Apart from the Afro-Colombian representatives from the four departments in the Pacific region of Colombia the commission included representatives from INCORA, ICAN, INDERENA, IGAC,<sup>1</sup> and the Deputy Minister of the government. This emphasizes the centrality of land, anthropology, natural resources, and geography for the state in its dealings with the definition of black communities. The state regularly deferred to ICAN as the “experts” on ethnic groups. Afro-Colombians then took their cue from many of these academics and de-racialized their public identity to align with what they viewed as culture and ethnicity. Anthropologists created the “ethnic difference” that was to be performed by indigenous and Afro-Colombians if they wanted access to cultural and territorial rights.

From the start the work of the commission was in question. On various occasions the Special Commission on Black Communities created through AT 55 lacked resources to continue. In the fourth session of the commission the vice minister of the government gave a special speech to the commission, since it was the first time that he had presided over the commission, and attempted to address many of the concerns members had about the work being able to continue. However just days later the black members of the commission representing Nariño, Cauca, Valle and Chocó sent a scathing letter to the Deputy Minister concerning the lack of resources to be able to do the work of the commission. They stated the haphazard manner in which permits to exploit territories of black communities of their natural resources was a threat

---

<sup>1</sup> Colombian Institute of Agrarian Reform, Colombian Institute of Anthropology, National Institute of Natural Resources, Agustín Codazzi Geographic Institute respectively

to those communities and could result not only in the destruction of territory but intra and inter-ethnic conflict surrounding said territories. Of the letters nine demands were “A meeting with the President of the Republic, Minister of Finance, Director of the National Planning Department, Deputy Minister of Government and representatives of black organizations to resolve definitively the real intention of the Government to support this process and review operating mechanisms most suitable for this” (Letter dated Nov 9, 1992).

The process of creating Law 70 solidified the movement of Afro-Colombians which did grassroots organizing to “educate” everyday Colombians about AT 55. Members of the commission pushed for expansion of the laws reach outside of the rural pacific but failed. It was the rural blacks in the Pacific region who “performed” cultural difference for academics in the commission and to outsiders who needed to legitimate those claims. In this case the state, represented through ICAN, helped to create and perpetuated the ethnic difference frame. The state previously had an absence of blackness in legal documents, but when it did “appear” it was performed as rural, regionalized as Pacific, and culturally distinct. This effectively served to silence Cimarrón ideologies and discourse at the state level.

The special commission worked within the framework allotted to the Pacific and rural black identity construction i.e. a focus on traditional cultural practices in the riverine rural communities. They did this even though AT 55 presented the option to explore black communities in other regions. They really only mobilized rural peasantry which had already had a mobilizing past through peasant associations and Afro-American pastoral groups of the Catholic Church. Black groups from various regions met for the first time during the Law 70 process and tried to consolidate a national black identity but ICAN anthropologists and the state felt that a broader approach to the construction of black identity was not feasible. The minutes of

the special commission's sessions show that racism and inequality were discussed but received little mention in the actual law. Article 33 of Law 70 states that the state will sanction and prevent acts of racism and discrimination in social spaces, especially in the media and education system but don't really describes the mechanisms with which it will be done. The word racism itself is only mentioned once within the entire Law. Urban issues were also notably absent from Law 70, despite the fact that the majority of Afro-Colombians reside in urban rather than rural areas.

The most notable outcomes of the law were the establishment of a quota to elect two members to the House of Representatives who represent black communities, the creation of an office for Black community affairs within the government, and the right to collective property of black communities by way of black community councils (similar to the *cabildos* of indigenous *resguardos*). They also promoted the use of ICAN to "carry out research on programs of Afro-Colombian culture, in order to... contribute to the preservation and development of the black communities' cultural identity" (Article 43 Law 70 English translation). These are notable achievements for black organizations and black members of the commission; however, the law explicitly defines its mission as protecting the rights of black communities as an ethnic group. It should be noted, that there has been resistance from black communities to the collective titling of their land as well as the effective reimagining of black identity (see Restrepo in Barbary & Urrea, 2004).

During the third National Assembly of Black communities in 1993 the opportunism of black factions within the prevailing political parties was discussed. Many of those black politicians "who changed three years after the previous position of rejecting the struggle for ethnic rights as a black community, which was described as 'backwardness',

‘abomination’...now in the name of the black community with no other purpose than to take representative spaces allotted through Law 70 (Grueso,71). Thus fear of cooptation by these political parties, further warranted a solidification of the black ethnic identity frame. The organizations who were involved in the process of Law 70 also felt that the differentiation of their movement would distinguish them from those factions, display a separation from other discourses within the national black movement, and unify the organizations who had been actively involved in the process of Law 70 (Grueso, 72).

Eventually what had previously been loosely constructed under the CNCN and the Organization of Black Communities (OCN) became known as the Process of Black Communities (PCN). This group wanted to emphasize the process of organizing as much as the actual outcomes of that organization. They felt that they were “a proposal to the national black community with the hope of establishing a single movement of black communities which would recognize their rights and aspirations” (Grueso, 73). The principles of PCN remained rooted in the right to be black, the right to territory, and autonomy. They also emphasized their alternative life view which was a sentiment echoed in the indigenous movements articulations of their ethnic distinctness.

The solidification of this ethnic identity frame rose to prominence with PCN and not without dissension. As the preceding events have shown, it involved not just PCN but, multiple actors and actions. Restrepo sums it as such:

“The techniques of enacting ethnic black political subjects and subjectivities have been multiple: they range from meetings to workshops, from assemblies to departmental (and national) commissions, from ethnic organizations to the programme or institutional component, from legislation to projects as mechanisms of interaction with the state and NGO’s. They have involved forms of visibilities through maps, censuses, documents and surveys. They have been put in operation by an army of experts, from activists and governmental officers to advisers and academics” (Barbary & Urrea, 2004: 704).

The electoral outcomes of the mid to late 1990's, especially those of the Special Elections of 1994, further elucidate the ethnic identity frame's enactment at the national level. As Law 70 and the new constitution detailed, special elections were to be held to elect indigenous representatives in the House and Senate and Afro-Colombian representatives in the House of Representatives. The Afro-Colombian vacancies were filled by a representative from the head of OBAPO who was a member of the Special Commission on Black Communities and a lawyer/professor from Cali who representing a coalition of civic organizations from Cali and small sectors of Cauca and Nariño (Agudelo, Hoffman, & Rivas, 1999). According to Pardo (Pardo, 2002) much of the momentum of the black movement in political terms was swept up by traditional parties that had always dominated Colombian politics, in many cases in a clientelistic manner. The indigenous vacancies were filled by representatives from AICO, ASI (Indigenous Social Alliance) and MIC (Indigenous Colombian Movement. In an effort to decrease fragmentation within its organization, ONIC did not participate in the formal political party system. In subsequent elections indigenous representatives were re-elected, even outside of the special allotment mandated by the constitution. In 1996, the Colombian Constitutional Court determined that the reserved seats in the House of Representatives for members of the "black communities" were unconstitutional. Agudelo cites the relative absence and participation of the black representatives in congress as a reason that neither PCN nor Cimarrón disagreed with this action (Agudelo et al., 1999). Nonetheless the electoral outcomes of 1998 in which these same leaders ran again for congressional seats (non-reserved ones) showed a decrease in votes achieved. Afro-Colombians had never achieved the numbers comparable to the Indigenous

candidates, whose numbers increased in subsequent elections garnering seats outside of their reserved seats.

The outcomes of these elections also reveal in some cases the disconnection between what was happening on the national level with regard to ethnic groups and the lived reality of Afro-descendent and Indigenous Colombians. The consolidation of indigenous ethnic political parties displays a continuation of the ethnic difference frame for the movement while this was not the case for Afro-Colombians. This was especially the case in election areas with a black majority that had traditionally been involved in clientelistic practices Afro-Colombians for the most part continued to vote along party lines rather than be represented by representatives from the state defined “black communities”. Candidates whose campaign included strong black identity discourse lost or won with the support of a broad based coalition with established political parties.<sup>2</sup> However, there were black candidates elected who ran within the traditional political parties, not expressing any strong black identity discourse.

### Contestations of the state ethnic definitions

In the years immediately following the new constitution, contestation of state delineated ethnic politics emerged not only in the Afro-Colombian community but, also in the Indigenous community. Although on the outset, indigenous Colombians were poised to make major gains through legislation detailed in the 1991 constitution. The lag time in actual implementation of this legislation, and even debate about whether the state would follow through on its promises led to unrest a mere five years later. During the summer of 1996 indigenous organizations engaged in nationwide nonviolent protests against the continued mistreatment and neglect of indigenous communities in Colombia and more concretely it questioned the idea of who spoke

---

<sup>2</sup> See Agudelo 2002

for indigenous groups. In indigenous engagement with the Colombian state did the traditional authorities of the *resguardos* speak for indigenous Colombians or did the leadership of national indigenous organizations such as ONIC or AICO speak for them? Of particular concern for the thousands of indigenous protestors was the fact that the state had failed to act on the reforms outlined in the ANC concerning autonomy within territories and the distribution of resources to indigenous territorial entities.

Indigenous groups representing almost all of the various cultural groups at the time participated in the protests, despite any internal strife that may have been occurring at the regional, national, or local level. They presented a unified front against the state. The then President of ONIC at the time of the protests, Abadio Green stated, “We spoke with a single voice. The advantage we have is that we speak of our culture, our language, and our mother Earth” (Warren & Jackson, 2003: 85). Clearly the discourse in this given time was one of a unified indigenous identity. Although indigenous Colombians constituted a variety of language groups as well as various tribes which had traditionally been enemies, the indigenous identity presented to both the media and the state was a unified one emphasizing a distinct culture and protection of their environment.

Whereas prior to the ANC, ONIC and AICO had the luxury of outwardly expressing their differences since both organizations had direct representation in the ANC, five years later they were forced to present a solid front. The lack of political will on the part of the state to execute indigenous legal tools of the constitution was national news.<sup>3</sup> As Antonio Jacanamijoy, indigenous leader from the Amazon, stated “The congress does not want to pass the Law of Territorial Regulation. Six years after the new constitution, there is no political will by the

---

<sup>3</sup> See *El Tiempo* articles 5/4/95 Ramirez, Yaned “Suspenden creación de resguardos” and 7/21/96 Navia, José “Protestan sin señales de humo”

representatives of traditional parties to carry out these reforms that would really benefit not just the indigenous people, but other social sectors of Colombia."(Ramirez de Jara, 1997). Clearly discontent persisted long after the massive indigenous protests.

The sentiment is also expressed by members of the Afro-Colombian groups that the state lacks the political will to act on the laws achieved through the new constitution and Law 70. News articles reveal discontent amongst all organizations representing the black movement concerning the delay with which Law 70 was enacted and disdain with the manner in which it has been implemented. According to one such article a network of black organizations cite “the lack of political will and state indifference and opportunism of afrocolombianism” as the main obstacles in the implementation of Law 70 (“Frustraciones ha dejado ley 70, dice Zulia Mena,” 1996).

#### Human Rights discourse shift

From the indigenous perspective, the shift in a human rights discourse seemed to occur earlier than for Afro-Colombians. International organizations which supported a transnational indigenous movement had a profound impact on that early shift. In 1999, organizations such as the American Anthropological Association stated “The acceptance and advocacy of the human rights legal framework by anthropologists [is] an important means of protecting indigenous cultures and interests” (Engle, 2010: 105). Validation from anthropologists was paramount since the state’s validation mechanism of indigenous identity rested in the hands of ICAN. Even earlier than this date, the ILO convention 169 which Francisco Birry utilized during his sessions in the ANC debates was a clear shift from the assimilationist discourse of the prior convention ILO 107. To this day, ILO 169 is the only international legal instrument that specifically focuses

on the rights of indigenous people. This convention explicitly states that the rights of indigenous to be free of discrimination are human rights. It is not therefore an accident, that the wording of the constitutional mentions concerning indigenous communities as well as Law 70 closely mirrors that of ILO 169. When Afro-Colombians ethnicized their identity in Law 70 they did so with a reference to the indigenous legal framework which already existed.

In the midst of widespread discontent among indigenous and Afro-Colombian movements with the state, a shift took place in much of the discourse amongst both groups. This shift was reflective of a larger international regime of human rights in addition to environmental rights.<sup>4</sup> Even though prior to the ANC, movement leadership had mentioned human rights in their discourse, an actual human rights frame wasn't solidified until levels of massive violence made it so the issue couldn't be ignored. It was literally a matter of life and death for indigenous and Afro-Colombian citizens. The issue of displacement rose to prominence at the international level, as levels of displacement in Colombia far exceeded other countries in the region and many others in the world. Asher (2009) states that this led to increased access and proliferation of human rights networks, solidarity groups, and church support which elevated the situation of Afro-Colombians to the global stage.<sup>5</sup>

The issue of widespread violence perpetuated in indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities is grave enough that it should warrant its own thesis. I make mention of the issue of violence in an effort to explain how the discourse shift was catapulted in part by global attention on such a high level of violence, but I in no means can truly delve into the various

---

<sup>4</sup> Although many point to a "black environmentalism movement" I believe that there is an interrelatedness of environmental issues, displacement, and human rights and the distinction is more of a frame differentiation than an actual difference in the demands of the organizations or movement participants. In 1994 one of the founders of PCN, Libia Grueso (also cited in this work) won the Goldman Environmental Prize for her work in the Pacific communities of Colombia <http://www.goldmanprize.org/node/106>

<sup>5</sup> See UN Human Rights guide for Afro-Colombians

factions which perpetuate that violence. Suffice it to say that access to this international human rights regime has been advantageous for both indigenous and Afro-Colombian groups as it has meant access to resources and legal assistance as well as increasing influence of the U.S.

The recent PBS documentary *The war we are living* (Damon et al., 2011) which focuses on women's leadership in a movement to combat land snatching within constant fear of violence showcases the power of US lobbying in support of Afro-Colombian communities.<sup>6</sup> The film reveals that groups such as WOLA noted the issue in the congressional record, garnered attention of the Congressional Black Caucus, and other committees which focus specifically on human rights. The large flow of US funds to Colombia for anti-trafficking activities demands that special attention must be paid to human rights issues within the country. Thus, an extremely local incident received assistance to the point that the constitutional court of Colombia halted the titling of the contested land. This is one of many cases which showcase the now transnational indigenous and afro-descendent movements. For the most part these movements are still working within a human rights framework.

### Self-Identification mobilization

The notion of self-identification also became important and showcased the decreased influence in institutions like ICAN in defining blackness. Massive mobilization occurred during the process of the DANE's inclusion of race and ethnicity in the census of 2005. These mobilizations on the part of Afro-Colombian movements had tangible outcomes in that racial classifications were changed in the latest Colombian census. The efforts of the movement in support of self-identification are noted in the official National Administrative Department of

---

<sup>6</sup> See <http://www.eltiempo.com/archivo/documento/MAM-421702> regarding transnational linkages to black communities in the US as early as 1996

Statistics (DANE) documents concerning racial classifications. Aware of the exclusionary nature of asking citizens if they pertained to an ethnic group and limiting the choices of those ethnic groups, the 2005 census changed the question to state “With respect to your culture, people, or physical features, are you or do you consider yourself indigenous, roma, *raizal*, *palenquero*, black mulatto, afro-colombian, afro-descendent or none of the above” (DANE, 2005). It also asks the citizen to indicate what tribe they are from if they are indigenous and if they speak the language of their people. Similarly AICO, ONIC, CRIC and other indigenous organizations took part in the creation of and dissemination of information on the Census of 2005. This shows a shift from a dogmatic ICAN era designation of what constitutes an ethnicity or race, to a self-determined definition. The hope is that the proper enumeration of ethnic and racial groups within the country will help to leverage their issues, and better channel resources to those groups in need.

### Anti-Racism Frames

Lastly, although some organizations within Afro-Colombian and indigenous sectors had articulated anti-discrimination and anti-racism discourses it hasn't been until recently that they have risen to the national level. “As displaced Afro-Colombians face new forms of discrimination and invisibility, there is resurgence in activism against racial discrimination, as well as for socioeconomic and political equality” (Asher, 2009:155). Especially amongst youth organizations which include representation from Afro-descendent and indigenous Colombians, anti-racism frames have been expressed in the form of social media campaigns. The Foundation for the Development of the Black Race (FEDEPRAN) was founded in 1997 with the mission of working “in all areas, in the framework of the law to ensure that we cease to be: a consciously

exclusionary society consciously that is in turn unconsciously racist” (FEDEPRAN website).

This organization has recently begun a campaign entitled *Chao Racismo* (Bye racism) which due to its social media presence has gained international attention.

The most recent framing tactics of Afro-Colombian organizations show a new salience in the anti-racism and anti-discrimination rhetoric which received little attention some twenty years prior. This chapter effectively shows the shift which has taken place from an ethnicization and ruralization of black identity to a human rights focus on black population mobilizations. Lastly we see a clear shift towards self-identification, as groups are pushing back against state definitions of identity and in that push for self-identification we see a return to the anti-racism and anti-discrimination rhetoric of previous years. This particular frame resonates with not only a broad base of the Afro-Colombian population but it is also well received at the international organization level with efforts such as the UN Declaration of the International Year of the People of African descent. As the declaration states, this “offers a unique opportunity to redouble our efforts to fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance that affect people of African descent everywhere” (Pillay, 2010). Thus Afro-Colombians are poised to fully reclaim and execute this particular movement frame in the context of a supportive international climate. It will be important to discern whether or not any victories under this frame achieve actual tangible resources from the state as a victory against racism in name could be just as passive as a victory for cultural autonomy.

## CHAPTER 5

### RESEARCH ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION

As the preceding chapters illustrate, the National Constituent Assembly represented a political opening for Indigenous and Afro-Colombian movement actors. After the assembly's elections, indigenous movement actors had three representatives within this political space while Afro-Colombians had no direct representation. The three indigenous representatives represented the leading indigenous movement groups of the time, and these groups were relatively unified. Although their frames varied slightly their message was still the same. This was not the case for Afro-Colombians whose only means of influence within the ANC was an indigenous leader.

After the closure of this political opening a certain sector of Afro-Colombian activists, and their academic allies, began an ethnic identity and right to be different frame rather than an anti-racism or anti-discrimination frame as they had in the past. The inclusion in the new constitution of AT 55 which focused exclusively on Pacific coast rural Afro-Colombians facilitated this shift in movement framing and Afro-Colombian identity construction by the state and Afro-Colombian movement actors. The Afro-Colombian movement actors representing the Pacific region focused their organizing efforts on the construction of a rural Pacific region oriented identity. This was partially due to the lack of direct access to the ANC and an articulation of an Afro-Colombian ethnic identity presented by an indigenous leader from a black majority department. This ANC representative presented the cause of Afro-Colombians in ethnic terms, mirroring the ethnic identity construction of indigenous Colombians which he was directly representing. This led to an ethnic identity frame consolidation amongst a particular contingent of the Afro-Colombian movement which grew to prominence following the inclusion of AT 55 in the constitution.

Not only was an indigenous ethnic identity supported in international networks and organizations including the International Labor Organization and the United Nations but, the Colombian state was cognizant of indigenous support at the international level. The direct representation of Indigenous groups in the ANC facilitated the formality of making Colombia match up with other nations and align with the ILO provisions ratified in 1989. Through International Networks indigenous organizers were well aware of these international laws. Afro-Colombians did not have an equivalent transnational network.

The Colombian state, prior to the ANC, was experiencing a legitimacy crisis which culminated in the state's acknowledgement of citizens desire for a constituent assembly. Although many international working groups early on had considered definitions of indigenous advocacy which included a right statehood, in an effort to quell fears from states of indigenous groups usurping state power, they instead switched to terms of territory as opposed to land, and multiculturalism as opposed to anti-discrimination/anti-racism.

For the Colombian state the framework already existed for treatment of indigenous populations as separate semi-autonomous territories. *Resguardos* and the *cabildos* which governed them already existed. On the other hand, a counterpart for Afro-Colombians had to be created. The discursive opportunity structure was more favorable for Indigenous Colombians than to Afro-Colombians. The lack of governmental structures in place for Afro-Colombians also had an influence on the state's disparate treatment of both groups. Similarly, since the majority of indigenous Colombians lived on *resguardos* (82% according to Van Cott, 2005) or had familial ties to a *resguardo*, the movement's focus on those governmental structures made sense and the movement was able to achieve the frame resonance necessary for the movement to mobilize successfully. On the other hand with a population size of roughly 25% of the

Colombian population and a majority of those residing in urban areas, an ethnic identity frame for Afro-Colombians rooted in rurality and regionally bounded to only 4 out of 32 departments of the country achieved frame resonance upon a significantly smaller population. The fact that Afro-Colombian self-identification as well as state identity constructions even in racial terms have been tenuous historically also problematizes this ethnic identity frame. Thus the state had more to lose in granting territorial rights to Afro-Colombians who made up a much larger population than their indigenous counterparts, and it required the construction of a new infrastructure to deal with those rights.

The ethnic identity frame has been problematic due to the fact that its ascendance marginalized radical Afro-Colombian movement frames. The national discursive opportunity structure was compatible with the ethnic identity frame. It was utilized in this case for both Afro-Colombians and Indigenous Colombians. The international move towards multiculturalism gave way to concepts such as “cultural autonomy” and a “right to difference”, which don’t place demands on state resources or threaten the state’s autonomy.

In interviews more than a decade later with several black activists involved during the ANC time period Paschel (2010) notes that many were surprised that AT 55 was included and felt it was a fluke. The fact that nearly five years passed before black rights were actually codified into law indicates that these sentiments about the ANC time period may not have been far off and that again, black issues were not a priority for the government despite the best lobbying and pressure on the part of black movement organizers. The discursive opportunity structure was not open to discourse on Afro-Colombians as an ethnic group. The discourse shift required to achieve the rights which black granted was a giant leap which took several years to surpass.

There are similarities in the way both black and indigenous groups were forced to perform their cultural identity in order to gain rights. Indigenous “performance” began prior to the ANC political opening. If one compares the language of AT 55 to Law 70 there is a complete discourse shift no doubt influenced by the representatives from the state rather than Afro-Colombians themselves. It is interesting to note that many ethnic focused groups viewed Cimarrón’s frame as a right to (racial) equality but viewed their goal as a right to (territorial) difference. The text of Law 70 though, expresses the goal of helping “black communities...obtain real conditions of equality of opportunities” which indicates that in actuality the overall goal is not as distinct as the movement actors may think (Law 70 Article 1).

Although inside of the indigenous movement contestations of this ethnic difference frame existed, it was too a much lesser degree than the contestations of a similar identity in the inside of the Afro-Colombian movement. Historically indigenous movement actors have been able to publicly mobilize with a unified agenda around the state institutions which have existed to control them, even if internally there has been discord concerning levels of authority of sub regional organizations, national organizations, and those same state institutions. This has not been the case for Afro-Colombian movement actors. Movement actors from the Pacific region dominated the discourse during successful movement moments and actively marginalized the more radical frames of their urban counterparts. Specifically the state of Chocó, which has a black majority, had a much “an older and stronger link to the state and to traditional political parties than the rest of the region” (Gutmann et al., 2003: 443). This served to facilitate their dominance within the Afro-Colombian social movement.

The Afro-Colombian ethnic identity frame was one that was not consolidated by all black social movement actors, thus we see the fragmentation of the movement in various sectors of

Afro-Colombian society. The spike in black movement organizations from 1995-1996 is evidence of this fragmentation as well as the fact that many Afro-Colombians took advantage of the enactment of Law 70 and formed new organizations in contestation and/or support of this legislation. Movement actors following Law 70's actual enactment began expressing more radical frames. Evidence of this can be seen in the later movements towards self-identification in the census, and anti-racism campaigns which are in place currently. These radical frames however, must still wrestle with the national discursive opportunity structure in order to achieve substantial changes to Colombian society which address the social and economic inequality Afro-Colombians actually face.

### Conclusion

This research aimed to tackle several important questions with regard to Afro-Colombian social movements. Primarily, it aimed to decipher why when Colombia has the second largest Afro-descendent population in all of Latin America have Afro-Colombian rights been largely ignored by the state, especially when compared to the gains of indigenous Colombian groups with a smaller population. My research indicates that from the perspective of the Colombian state, Afro-Colombians lacked a pre-existing legal framework for the state to utilize, similar to the *resguardos* for the indigenous, and they lacked a supportive international regime which the indigenous groups had access too. Rather than create institutions from scratch, after the inclusion of AT 55 in the new constitution the state preferred to utilize the ethnic identity constructs and framework already in use for indigenous populations. In turn, the Afro-Colombian movement actors produced frames which aligned with the national discursive opportunity structure. As such, their frames mirrored those of pre-existing Indigenous

Colombian movement frames. The ethnic frame became the dominant discourse and it actively marginalized more radical anti-racism frames.

My research also aimed to figure out what has made some movement “moments” less successful than others since Afro-Colombians began an organized movement since the early 1970s. I found that successful moments have been achieved through frame resonance and frame consolidation. Those two items led to interactions with the state which supported the cohesive concepts movement actors rallied around. The ethnic identity frame of the Pacific area groups aligned with PCN only resonated with activists in the particular region but, it aligned with state representatives from ICAN who supported this particular frame. Although, the Colombian state has institutionalized an ethnic identity frame of Afro-Colombians through Law 70 and the various institutions used to implement it, it simultaneously seems to silence those Afro-Colombians who reject this particular frame. The rare exception was the inclusion of non-Pacific focused terminology in the 2005 Census due to pressure from Afro-Colombian social movement actors. This movement encompassed a variety of groups who had been actively using differing frames. In this case those frames which were previously marginalized had the upper hand in the debate.

Lastly my research aimed to discern has made Indigenous claims to autonomy, cultural and land rights a more immediate concern for the state than those of Afro-Colombians. The research suggests that the ILO convention 169, pre-existing indigenous institutional framework, greater frame resonance and frame consolidation made it much easier for the state to grant rights to indigenous Colombians following the implementation of the 1991 constitution. In essence, the ANC allowed the state to, at least on paper, confirm its support of the indigenous community’s right to autonomy, culture, and territory since it had been practicing it before the

ANC period within the institutions that already existed to do so. To provide the same rights to Afro-Colombians meant the state had to first define blacks in ethnic terms, create an institutional and legal framework to support their claims, and confirm through movement leadership that this was the most effective approach to take. Ultimately rather than enfranchise some 25% of their population with said rights, they chose to narrowly define a black ethnic community within only four of the 31 departments of the country. The struggle which has continued is for proper implementation of these rights, which has been a concern shared with Afro-Colombian communities that have been defined as black territories by the state.

This research was limited to resources that could be obtained from within the U.S. While I had access to a wealth of media and national document archives from within the U.S., the research could have been furthered by in country access to more original documents. For future research, the addition of interviews with representatives of the Colombian state, indigenous and Afro-Colombian social movement actors, and every day citizens will further elucidate the findings of this work.

## REFERENCES

- A. Escobar, S. E. A. (1992). *The Making of Social Movements in Latin America : Identity, Strategy and Democracy*. Boulder, EUA : Westview.
- AFROAMÉRICA EN EL CHOCÓ. (1991, June 22). *El Tiempo*.
- Agudelo, C., Hoffman, O., & Rivas, N. (1999). Hacer política en el pacífico Sur: Algunas Aproximaciones. Cali, Colombia.
- Asher, K. (2007). Ser y Tener: Black Women's Activism, Development, and Ethnicity in the Pacific Lowlands of Colombia. *Feminist Studies*, 33(1), 11.
- Asher, K. (2009). *Black and green : Afro-Colombians, development, and nature in the Pacific lowlands* (p. xv, 247 p.). Durham: Duke University Press.
- Avirama, J., & Marquez, R. (1994). The Indigenous Movement in Colombia. In Donna Lee Van Cott (Ed.), *Indigenous peoples and democracy in Latin America* (pp. 83-107). New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Barbary, O., & Urrea, F. (Eds.). (2004). *Gente Negra en Colombia: Dinámicas sociopolíticas en Cali y el Pacífico* (p. 478). Medellin, Colombia: Editorial Lealon.
- Benford, R. D., & Snow, D. A. (2000). FRAMING PROCESSES AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS: An overview and Assessment. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 26(1), 611. Annual Reviews Inc.
- Brysk, A. (1996). Turning weakness into strength: The internationalization of Indian rights. *Latin American Perspectives*, 23(2), 38.
- CONPES. (2004). Política de Accion Afirmativa para la poblacion negra o afrocolombiana. (C. N. de P. E. y S. D. N. de P. R. de Colombia, Ed.). Bogota, Colombia.
- Campos Zornosa, Y. (1984). Colombian Indian Organizations. *Cultural Survival Quarterly*, 8.4(Winter 1984).

- DANE. (2005). La Visibilización estadística de los grupos étnicos colombianos. (D. A. N. D. Estadística, Ed.). Bogotá, Colombia: Imprenta Nacional.
- Damon, M., Swinton, T., Davis, G., Woodard, A., Disney, A. E., Hogan, P., Reticker, G., et al. (2011). *Women, war & peace*. United States: PBS Distribution.
- Dijk, T. A. van, Barquin, E., & Hibbett, A. (2009). *Racism and discourse in Latin America*. Lanham: Lexington Books.
- Dunbar-Ortiz, R. (2006). The First Decade of Indigenous Peoples at the United Nations. *Peace & Change*, 31(1), 58-74.
- Engle, K. (2010). *The Elusive Promise of Indigenous Development: Rights, Culture, Strategy*. Duke University Press.
- Ferree, M. M. (2003). Resonance and Radicalism : Feminist Framing in the Abortion Debates of the Uni ... *The American Journal of Sociology*;, 109(2), 304-344.
- Frustraciones ha dejado ley 70, dice Zulia Mena. (1996, August 27). *El Tiempo*. Bogotá, Colombia.
- Goodwin, J., & Jasper, J. M. (2004). *Rethinking social movements: structure, meaning, and emotion*. Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Green, W. (2000). Left liberalism and race in the evolution of Colombian popular national identity. *The Americas*, 57(1), 95-124.
- Grueso, L. (2000). *El proceso organizativo de comunidades negras en el Pacífico sur Colombiano*. Pontificia Universidad Javeriana.
- Gutmann, M., Matos Rodríguez, F. V., Stephen, L., & Zavella, P. (2003). *Perspectives on Las Americas : a reader in culture, history, & representation*. (M. Gutman, Ed.) (Illustrate., p. 461). Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

- Hale R., C. (2004). Rethinking Indigenous Politics in the Era of the “Indio Permitido.” *NACLA Report on the Americas*, 38(2), 16.
- Hall, S., Morley, D., & Chen, K.-H. (1996). *Stuart Hall : critical dialogues in cultural studies*. London; New York: Routledge.
- Hoffman, O. (2007). *Comunidades negras en el Pacífico colombiano: innovaciones y dinámicas étnicas*. (C. de I. y E. S. en A. S. (Mexico), Ed.) (p. 310). Mexico City, Mexico: Editorial Abya Yala.
- Hooker, J. (2005). Indigenous Inclusion/Black Exclusion: Race, Ethnicity and Multicultural Citizenship in Latin America. *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 37(2), 285.
- Jenkins, J. C., & Klandermans, B. (1995). *The politics of social protest: comparative perspectives on states and social movements* (Vol. 3). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Lasso, M. (2007). *Myths of harmony: race and republicanism during the age of revolution, Colombia 1795-1831*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press.
- Leger, M. (1994). *Aboriginal peoples: toward self-government*. New York: Black Rose Books.
- Materne, Y. (1980). *The Indian awakening in Latin America* (p. 127). Friendship Press.
- McAdam, D., McCarthy, J. D., & Zald, M. N. (1996). *Comparative perspectives on social movements: political opportunities, mobilizing structures, and cultural framings*. Cambridge [England]: Cambridge University Press.
- Mosquera Rosero-Labbé, C. P., León Díaz, R. E., & Rodríguez Morales, M. M. (2009). *Escenarios post-Durban : para pueblos y personas negras, afrocolombianas, raizales y palenqueras*. Bogotá: Universidad Nacional de Colombia. Idcarán.

- Mosquera, J. de D. (1999). *La etnoeducación afrocolombiana: Guía para docentes, líderes y comunidades educativas*. Santa Fe de Bogota, Colombia: Docentes.
- Mosquera, N. E. (2003). *Diez tesis afrocolombianas e indígenas* (p. 110). Bogota, Colombia: Uryco.
- Ng'weno, B. (2007a). Can Ethnicity Replace Race? Afro-Colombians, Indigeneity and the Colombian Multicultural State. *The Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Anthropology*, 12(2), 414-440. Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Ng'weno, B. (2007b). *Turf wars: territory and citizenship in the contemporary state*. Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press.
- ONIC. (n.d.). Historia de la ONIC. Retrieved from <http://cms.onic.org.co/sobre-nosotros/historia-de-la-onic/>
- Pardo Rueda, R. (1996). *De primera mano : Colombia 1986-1994, entre conflictos y esperanzas*. Santafé de Bogotá: Cerec : Grupo Editorial Norma.
- Pardo, M. (2002). Entre la autonomía y la institucionalización: Dilemas del movimiento negro colombiano. *Journal of Latin American Anthropology*, 7(2), 60-84. Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing Ltd. doi:10.1525/jlca.2002.7.2.60
- Paschel, T. S. (2010). The Right to Difference: Explaining Colombia's Shift from Color Blindness to the Law of Black Communities. *AMERICAN JOURNAL OF SOCIOLOGY*, 116(3), 729-769. The University of Chicago Press.
- Paschel, T. S., & Sawyer, M. Q. (2008). Contesting Politics as Usual: Black Social Movements, Globalization, and Race Policy in Latin America. *Souls*, 10(3), 197-214. Taylor & Francis. doi:10.1080/10999940802347707

- Pillay, N. (2010). Launching of the International Year for People of African Descent 10 December 2010. UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.
- Ramirez de Jara, M. C. (1997). Indigenous Peoples Six Years After the New Colombian Constitution. *Cultural Survival Quarterly*, 21.2(Summer 1997).
- Rappaport, J. (2007). Civil Society and the Indigenous Movement in Colombia: The Consejo Regional Indígena del Cauca. *Social Analysis*, 51(2), 107-123. doi:10.3167/sa.2007.510206
- Restrepo, E. (2007). El “giro al multiculturalismo” desde un encuadre afro-indígena. *The Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Anthropology*, 12(2), 475.
- Rodríguez Garavito, C. A., Alfonso Sierra, T., Cavelier Adarve, I., Antonio Rosero, E. F., Observatorio de Discriminación, R., Proceso Nacional de Comunidades, N., & Centro de Estudios de Derecho, J. y S. (2008). *Racial discrimination and human rights in Colombia : a report on the situation of the rights of Afro-Colombians*. [Bogotá, D.C., Colombia]: Observatory on Racial Discrimination : Program for Gloabl Justice and Human Rights, University of the Andes : Black Communities Coalition (PCN) ; Center of Law, Justice, and Society (Dejusticia).
- Rojas, C. (2002). *Civilization and violence: regimes of representation in nineteenth-century Colombia* (p. 224). University of Minnesota Press.
- Safford, F. (1991). Race, integration, and progress: elite attitudes and the Indian in Colombia, 1750-1870. *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, 71(1), 1-33.
- Schneider, C. (1997). FRAMING PUERTO RICAN IDENTITY: POLITICAL OPPORTUNITY STRUCTURES AND NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZING IN NEW YORK CITY. *Mobilization: An International Journal*, 2(2), 227-245.

- Stahler-Sholk, R., Kuecker, G. D., & Vanden, H. E. (2008). *Latin American social movements in the twenty-first century: resistance, power, and democracy*. Lanham, Md: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Tarrow, S. (2011). *Power in movement : social movements, collective action and politics*. Cambridge [u.a.]: Cambridge Univ. Press.
- Tarrow, S. G. (2005). *The new transnational activism*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Troyan, B. (2008). ETHNIC CITIZENSHIP IN COLOMBIA : The Experience of the Regional Indigenous Council of the Cauca in Southwestern Colombia from 1970 to 1990. *Latin American research review*, 43(3), 166-191. Latin American Studies Association.
- U.S. Department of State. (2010). *U.S.-Colombia Action Plan on Racial and Ethnic Equality* (p. 1).
- UN High Commission on Human Rights Subcommittee on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. (n.d.). *Study of the Problem of Discrimination against Indigenous Populations Final Report*.
- Uribe, J. J. (1968). *Ensayos sobre historia social colombiana*. Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Direcci{ó}n de Divulgaci{ó}n Cultural.
- Valencia, J. L. (1993, September 26). LAS HUELLAS DEL TUMACAZO. *El Tiempo*. Bogota, Colombia.
- Van Cott, D L. (2001). Explaining ethnic autonomy regimes in Latin America. *STUDIES IN COMPARATIVE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT*, 35(4), 30-58. PISCATAWAY: TRANSACTION PERIOD CONSORTIUM.

- Van Cott, Donna Lee. (1996). Unity through diversity: Ethnic politics and democratic deepening in Colombia. *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, 2(4), 523-549. Routledge.  
doi:10.1080/13537119608428485
- Van Cott, Donna Lee. (2000). *The friendly liquidation of the past: the politics of diversity in Latin America*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.
- Van Cott, Donna Lee. (2006). Multiculturalism versus Neoliberalism in Latin America. In K. Banting & W. Kymlicka (Eds.), *Multi culturalism and the Welfare State: Recognition and Redistribution in Contemporary Democracies* (pp. 272-296). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Wade, P. (2010). The presence and absence of race. *PATTERNS OF PREJUDICE*, 44(1), 43-60.  
ABINGDON: ROUTLEDGE JOURNALS, TAYLOR & FRANCIS LTD.
- Wade, Peter. (1993). *Blackness and race mixture : the dynamics of racial identity in Colombia. Johns Hopkins studies in Atlantic history and culture* (p. xv, 415 p.). Baltimore ; London: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Wade, Peter. (1995). The Cultural Politics of Blackness in Colombia. *American Ethnologist*, 22(2), 341-357. Blackwell Publishing on behalf of the American Anthropological Association.
- Wade, Peter. (1997). *Race and ethnicity in Latin America. Critical studies on Latin America* (2nd ed., p. viii, 152 p.). London ; Chicago, Ill.: Pluto Press.
- Wade, Peter. (2002). Introduction: The Colombian Pacific in Perspective. *Journal of Latin American Anthropology*, 7(2), 2-33. Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Wade, Peter. (2009). Defining blackness in Colombia. *Journal de la Société des Américanistes de Paris*.

- Warren, K. B., & Jackson, J. E. (2003). *Indigenous movements, self-representation, and the state in Latin America*. University of Texas Press.
- Yashar J., D. (1998). Contesting Citizenship: Indigenous Movements and Democracy in Latin America. *Comparative Politics*, 31(1), 23-42. NEW YORK: City University of New York.
- Yashar, D. J. (2005). *Contesting citizenship in Latin America: the rise of indigenous movements and the postliberal challenge*. New York: Cambridge University Press.