

STRATEGIC CITIZENSHIP:
DUAL MARGINALIZATION AND ORGANIZED
TRANSNATIONAL POLITICAL MOBILIZATION
AMONG ECUADORIAN AND DOMINICAN MIGRANTS

BY

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Abstract

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What factors define transnational political participation and citizenship for contemporary migrants? This dissertation focused on how and why migrant activists from Ecuador and the Dominican Republic pursued political engagement, how their home country governments influenced migrants' political activities, and how migrant organizations shaped their transnational activities. The study found that transnational political participation among these two populations was driven by a dual marginalization narrative, where migrants draw from their personal experiences to conclude that they are marginalized in both the U.S. and in their countries of origin based on their status as migrants. Ecuadorian and Dominican political organization leaders use this dual marginalization to create a political identity to demand minority-group rights in both home and host countries. Migrant activists make calculated decisions on where to focus their claims for rights, which I refer to as strategic citizenship

Strategic citizenship is shaped by nation-state actions and local organizations. The Ecuadorian and Dominican governments influence strategic citizenship through: 1) public discourse that defines migrants' status in society; 2) the rule of law; and 3) policies that shape the state-migrant relationship. While the Ecuadorian governments' actions encouraged greater migrant participation, the Dominican government's approach was more contentious, creating skepticism among migrants towards engagement. In both cases government policy, reinforced feelings of dual marginalization. Strategic citizenship was also influenced by the different

organizations in which migrant activists were involved. Migrants active in home country political parties had considerable advantages in resources and government connections, but were stifled by national party demands, member attrition and unstable leadership. Social movement and civic organizations struggled to harness resources, but had more stable leadership, more ideological autonomy and cohesive membership.

I conclude that migrant political transnationalism, when examined through a contentious politics framework, originates from shared experiences engendered by the migration experience, which is reinforced by nation-state and used by organized actors frame migrant collective action. Migrants' claims for minority rights in both sending and receiving countries reflect how these actors perceive their condition to be a consequence of ruling elite actions in each country, as well as their perceived contributions as subjects of two nation-states.

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CHAPTER 1: STATEMENT OF RESEARCH PROBLEM: LOCATING ORGANIZATION IN TRANSNATIONAL POLITICAL SCHOLARSHIP

Statement of Research Problem

As immigration has once again become a major political issue in the United States, immigrant civil society organizations are growing. These newer waves of immigrants are creating and joining organizations to demand greater rights and protections from the U.S. government. At the same time, however, these immigrants also remain more intensely invested in their countries of origin than past immigrant populations, as communication and transportation technology make sustainable long distance ties possible. Newer immigrants in the U.S. annually send billions of dollars to their home countries via remittances; actively seek to become dual citizens of their home countries and the U.S., vote in their country's elections, and even participate in political affinity groups. These forms of bi-national political participation are now often characterized as the *transnationalization* of migrant¹ politics (Smith 2006). Many policy makers and scholars alike question what political goals migrants have and whether the transnationalization of their political participation will allow migrants to become full-fledged members of either American society or that of their home countries, or if migrants are increasingly relegated to the margins in both countries.

In *Strategic Citizenship* I study political mobilization by Ecuadorian and Dominican migrant organizations in New York City, in order to understand how and why migrants remain politically involved in two different countries at the same time, along with the conditions that affect these bi-national political activities. Specifically, this dissertation draws upon the

¹ For purposes of this project the terms immigrant and migrant will be used interchangeably. However throughout the dissertation the term migrant will be used to refer to the populations that are studied. I deliberately use the term migrant in order to emphasize the fact that human migration includes social processes that are associated with the country of origin as well as with the destination country.

theoretical model of contentious politics laid out by scholars such as Sidney Tarrow (1998), Tarrow, Tilly and McAdam (2001) and later iterations by Keck and Sikkink (1996) and Tarrow (2005) to analyze how and why migrants mobilize for political engagement in both home and host countries. Furthermore, while people's decision whether or not to participate in political activity is generally driven by personal experiences, a number of scholars including Tocqueville (2000), Weber (1958), Michels (1962), Lipset (1960), McAdam (1985) and Putnam (1996 and 2000) have noted that in order to understand political participation, we must also consider how organizations influence political participation given that active political engagement, including but not limited to voting, emerges from active involvement in different organizations that bring like-minded individuals together. The dissertation therefore not only examines organizations as a whole, but also the members of these organizations, in order to understand how organizations influence individual behavior and how individuals shape the dynamics of these organizations.

This dissertation explores three central questions: (1) what role do organizations play in Ecuadorian and Dominican migrants' political participation? (2) Does participation in organizations enable their voices to be heard by host and home country governments? (3) How do these forms of political participation inform our understanding of what it means for Ecuadorian and Dominican migrants to be citizens?

The transnationalization of migrants' cultural, economic and political practices has received increasing attention from scholars in the social sciences since the mid-1990s (Glick-Schiller et al. 1994; Smith and Guarnizo 1998; Portes et al 1999). This body of scholarship has yielded important findings about how different aspects of migrants' lives unfold across both migrant-sending and migrant-receiving countries with greater intensity than during previous periods of large-scale migration. This literature also notes that these social practices reflect an

effort by migrants to respond to the dynamics of contemporary global capitalism, where a substantial part of economic activity is dependent on the movement of labor from low-income countries to high-income regions of the world such as North America. For scholars in the U.S., much of the research on migrant transnationalism has focused on migration from Mexico and other parts of Latin America, and on how Latin American migrants have expanded their transnational activities (Landolt et al 1999; Goldring 1998; Levitt 2001; Itzighsohn 2001; Smith 2006), given that Latin American migrants represent the largest share of the immigrant population in the U.S. at 53.1 percent, according to 2009 Census American Community Survey (ACS) data (Migration Policy Institute 2009).

One burgeoning area of interest for scholars studying contemporary patterns of international migration is the transnationalization of migrants' political engagement. Much of this work has focused on how migrants living in the U.S. become involved in the political life of their home countries (Goldring 1998; Levitt 2001; Fitzgerald 2002; Orozco 2002; DeSipio et al. 2003; Smith 2006; Itzigsohn and Villacrés 2008; Waldinger 2009). These studies explore the motivations for participating in home country politics and the impact that migrants have on governance in these countries.

For some scholars in the U.S. the transnationalization of migrants' lives poses a threat to the cultural and social integrity of the country. Samuel Huntington (2004), for instance, lamented the rapid growth in Latin American immigration to the U.S., denouncing this phenomenon as a threat to the Anglo-Protestant cultural fabric that, he insisted, had historically defined the country. Huntington specifically noted the apparent unwillingness of today's Latin American immigrants to integrate into U.S. society, to learn English, and to renounce their allegiance to their home countries as a major reason why immigration, in his view, now constitutes a major social

problem for the country. Though not driven by the same ideological motives as Huntington, Jones-Correa (1998) also argues that migrants' involvement in organizations that foster ties to their home countries and in home country politics is ultimately problematic. For Jones-Correa, remaining tied to the home country is simply an attempt by migrants to regain social status lost after they arrive in the U.S., and offers no real opportunities for migrants to empower themselves. Furthermore, according to Jones-Correa, these transnational practices also reduce incentives for migrants to participate in the U.S. political process.

While it is certainly true that many of today's migrants remain intensely connected to their home countries, it is these same immigrants who in recent years have also carried out massive mobilizations across the U.S. each year on May 1 for citizenship and recognition as contributing members of American society. Leaders of these mobilizations have consistently asked the U.S. Congress to pass comprehensive immigration reform legislation, which includes a pathway to citizenship for all migrants. Collective action such as this, far from demonstrating a lack of commitment to incorporating into the American political system, seems instead to reflect migrants' strong desire to become members of American society. Yet even as they mobilize for rights in the U.S., migrants also demand citizenship rights in their home countries, in much the same way that they do in the U.S.

Thus, when migrants make demands for membership and recognition of their rights, they do so with the belief that they are also fulfilling obligations to the states of which they seek to be members. The push to obtain citizenship rights from the state in exchange for their contributions as subjects of the state reflects a response by migrants to changing economic and political realities associated with contemporary capitalism and specifically the oft-used concept of globalization. In his classic theory on citizenship, T.H. Marshall (1950) argues that citizenship is

the institutionalization of class conflicts, first between aristocracy and bourgeoisie, and later between the bourgeoisie and the working class. Michael Mann (1987) expands on this view of citizenship in his comparative historical analysis of that institution in various countries. By comparing the historical development of citizenship in Britain with that of countries such as the U.S., France, Germany, Russia and Japan, Mann argues that citizenship regimes are a product of responses by ruling elites in each country to challenges by different rising social actors, be it the bourgeoisie, working class or other social groups. Mann also contends, however that the emergence of any citizenship regime is also shaped by the geopolitical realities that impact nation states, citing the outbreak of the First World War as a key contributing factor to the fall of the authoritarian monarchies in Germany where landed elites had up to that point enacted a viable citizenship modeled that offered basic civil rights but relied on divide-and-conquer strategies to provide limited political rights to moderate excluded groups and to repress the working class.

While contemporary scholarship has sought to reframe citizenship as a phenomenon that is not strictly political but rather also includes cultural dimensions of incorporation into a society (Appadurai 1996; Ong 1999), I focus on the more conventional notion of citizenship as the set of legal rights and obligations associated with membership in a nation-state or polity. I avoid discussing cultural interpretations of citizenship not because they are unimportant- indeed, equally important to having legal rights is the possibility for individuals to be able to have sense of belonging to a society in their everyday lives- a point articulated by Kymlicka (1996) in assessing the importance of claims for rights made by racial and ethnic minorities. Inclusion in the legal relationship associated with formal citizenship is important in that it provides migrants a series of resources and opportunities for them to advance their interests as subjects of each state.

This is particularly important for migrants given that many of them, particularly those in this study, not only face hurdles in becoming members of the host country, but often find themselves feeling or actually being disenfranchised by their home countries as a result of making the difficult decision to leave their home countries to improve their life chances. Thus, when we talk about immigrants' political activities and the transnationalization of immigrant politics, it is essentially a discussion of how migration and migrant agency have reshaped state-society relations in the contemporary global economy. It is therefore important to understand how migrants' political organization influences the conflicts between them and their home and host-country states that are encapsulated in contemporary forms of citizenship.

An important fact that emerges when examining political engagement among Latin American migrants is that when they participate in both U.S. and home-country politics, they do so in order to demand membership and recognition of rights that they believe are available to them as contributing members of both societies. Their claims for recognition and rights in both countries are rooted in concrete facts. For instance, Latin American migrants collectively send US\$58 billion annually to countries in the region in the form of cash remittances (World Bank 2010), which for many of the low-income countries in the region constitutes one of the main sources of "foreign" investment. At the same time, migrants also make up a significant proportion of the of the U.S. labor force, as they account for approximately 16 percent of the total civilian workforce as of 2009 (Terrazas 2011.) The fact that Latin American migrants have a tangible impact on economic activity in both the U.S. and their home countries acts as a backdrop for them to demand governments in each country to admit them as members of each country with all the rights afforded to legal citizens.

This dissertation, therefore, explores the connections between organized political activity and citizenship by studying how a number of Ecuadorian and Dominican migrant organizations in New York attempt to advocate on behalf of their respective communities in both the U.S. and their home countries. Specifically, it examines how these migrant activists and the groups to which they belong seek to mobilize other migrants to empower themselves against the marginalization they face in both home and host countries. Scholars such as Jones-Correa (1998) have problematized bi-national political engagement, especially migrant organization around home country issues. Using the case of Colombian and Ecuadorian migrants in New York, Jones-Correa has argued that such efforts are mainly strategies employed by migrants to deal with status loss as migrants, and that ultimately these forms of engagement curtail their political incorporation in the U.S., where they are more likely to empower themselves. Yet as migrant-sending country governments and households have increasingly relied on remittances and material resources provided by migrants living abroad to stimulate economic activity and development projects, these migrants have developed a tangible vested interest in how their investments in their home countries are utilized and protected, making them an important constituency in these countries. In many cases, however, migrant-sending governments have often been slow to enact legal reforms that recognize migrants as subjects of the state who are an integral part of the state and thus worthy of having the same rights as non-migrant subjects. Thus migrants' involvement in organizations that participate in home-country politics or policy issues has very real consequences for their own as well as their families and communities' quality of life. Moreover, scholars as Escobar (2004) have noted that for some migrant populations in the U.S., the quest for citizenship rights in their home countries has actually helped stimulate migrants to also seek political incorporation into the U.S. While the scope and intensity of this

sort of collective action varies and is not widespread among migrants, it nevertheless represents an important site for empowerment.

Consequently, based on interviews and 18 months of participant observation research, I argue that first-generation Ecuadorian and Dominican migrants in New York City join different civic and political organizations in order to help overcome the marginalization they experience as migrants. The leaders of these organizations feel that in spite of their contributions in both the U.S. and their home countries, migrants are victims of prejudice, discrimination and exclusion in both countries. As a result, Ecuadorian and Dominican migrant organizations attempt to mobilize migrants by arguing that migrants are victims of what I refer to as *dual marginalization* – their relative subordination not just in their new countries, but in their countries of origin -- and make demands upon governments in both countries for membership and recognition of rights on the basis of the idea that migrants are a minority group in both countries. John Skrentny (2002) has argued that the expansion of minority rights in the U.S. after 1965-which includes the Latino rights and immigrant rights, are in large part a consequence of what government leaders, as opposed to grassroots actors did to enable these movements to gain legitimacy as disadvantaged groups. Skrentny points to Washington politicians' desire to appeal to new minority constituencies as a major motivating factor behind the enacting of policies for Latinos, immigrants, women and the disabled, and thus legitimizing these groups' claims for minority rights. Government activism for minority groups, according to Skrentny, has been curtailed by growing opposition from European-American constituents, as elected officials have sought to reclaim whites as a constituency, which has fueled the political backlash against minority rights. Skrentny's research emphasizes the role that governments play in constructing identities, which I also observe to a degree in my study. It is not simply government activism, however, that helps

create a minority identity for the migrants in this study, but also the real-life conditions migrants must cope with and the lack of attention by each country to these needs.

Finally, I argue that how and to what degree these organizations make demands on each state depends on the perceived opportunities that exist for these migrant organizations to best make their demands. I refer to this entire complex of issues as *strategic citizenship*. In making this argument I rely partially on the idea of opportunity structures present in social movement scholarship (McAdam 1980, Tarrow 1998, Tilly, Tarrow and McAdam 2001) where mobilization and collective action are predicated on the extent to which actors identify and can take advantage of openings to successfully articulate and make demands on the state.

The notion that migrants are agents who actively negotiate their existence and well-being across multiple countries is not novel in and of itself, and the concept of strategic citizenship bears some similarity to Ong's (1999) concept of flexible citizenship. In her research on Chinese middle-class migrants from Hong Kong, Ong argues that the logics of accumulation, movement and displacement associated with global capitalism induces subjects to respond fluidly and opportunistically to changing political-economic conditions. According to Ong, in their quest to accumulate capital and prestige in the global arena, subjects emphasize and are regulated by practices favoring flexibility, mobility and repositioning in relation to markets, governments and cultural regimes. For Ong, flexible citizenship strategies, such as multiple passport holdings and multi-national family enterprises reflect efforts to circumvent different forms of disciplining by governments and other power-holders. Such strategies aim to maximize opportunities for upward mobility in an economy that relies on mobility of commodities and labor for accumulation.

The notion of strategic citizenship shares with Ong's concept the idea that migrant actors employ adaptive strategies to advance their interests in response to the logics of contemporary

capitalism. Ong's study, however, focuses mainly on the strategies employed by Hong Kong's entrepreneurial class, and in particular how individual households or families negotiate the landscape of global capitalism. Furthermore, Ong emphasizes how the subjects in her study employ transnational practices as a means to insert themselves into the process of capitalist accumulation, largely bypassing the matter of how migrants approach the question of organizing and making demands as a transnational political constituency. While such an approach provides valuable insight on how migrants seek to empower themselves as individuals, it offers a one-sided picture of how political constituencies and political identities are forged within the context of transnationalized lives. Ong's analysis also largely overlooks the role that organizations play in influencing migrants' flexibility and positioning. This is a particularly important issue when attempting to understand migrant political engagement and mobilization, given that organizations turn out to be central to the way in which political participation occurs. While individuals may have significant latitude in employing adaptive strategies to reposition themselves within global capitalism, organizations often create specific opportunities and constraints that guide the actions of those within that organization. Finally, Ong's theory of strategic citizenship is based on the idea that migrants' attempts to adapt and reposition themselves favorably within the process of capitalist accumulation do so in order to subvert or dodge discipline, including that from the state. Yet this measure would appear harder to sustain in dealing with questions of political participation, mainly because for many migrants, including those in my study, the objective of political engagement is not to escape government discipline, but rather to gain political incorporation. While migrant subjects in my study may have strong criticisms of migrant policies in both the U.S. and their respective home countries, they are ultimately driven to act because they believe that membership in both polities empowers

migrants on the whole. As Brubaker (1990) has argued, citizenship is an institutionalized form of social closure: citizens are included within the social organization that is the state, and non-citizens are excluded. Inclusion involves recognition by the state, and offers citizens the “right to have rights²” and obligations. The migrants in this study deal with differing levels of social exclusion by virtue of their situation as migrants.

The concept of strategic citizenship thus aims to bring into focus not only the process of political mobilization and collective action as a whole, but also to incorporate organizations as a unit of analysis in understanding migrant agency, and more specifically the capacity to maneuver across international boundaries in response to the dynamics of contemporary global capitalism. Strategic citizenship does involve migrants seeking political engagement and ultimately full membership in both home and host countries, which reflect the sort of flexibility that Ong’s theory describes. However my concept of strategic citizenship also includes an understanding of how such practices arise from discourses or narratives employed by migrants to frame their political motivations, as well as by the nature of the organizations themselves.

As noted earlier, I argue that migrants’ lived experiences of xenophobic discrimination in the U.S. and varying levels of exclusion in their respective home countries have led to a situation of dual marginalization among Ecuadorian and Dominican migrants in New York that compels them to seek out political engagement in both home and host countries. This dissertation further contends that the organizations in which Ecuadorians and Dominican migrant activists participate have a significant impact on the way they make demands for rights. In addition to the material and human resources these organizations have at their disposal to mobilize support for their objectives, these organizations also play an important role in strategic citizenship practices by articulating discourses or narratives that they use not only to frame their activities, but also to

² Cf. Somers, Margaret 2008

recruit and mobilize among potential migrant constituents. These organizations also develop and/or have access to networks with other influential political actors (both state and non-state actors) that often steer them towards greater participation in U.S. or home country politics. Finally the internal dynamics of these civic and political organizations, including leadership hierarchies, ideological commitments between members, and organization size have multiple and varied effects on their capacity to effectively participate in a transnational context. Organizational dynamics may allow for strong leaders to set the tone and mandate for organizations; foster internal power struggles based on ideological rifts and/or resource control; promote innovation or constrain activities based on isomorphic tendencies (Dimaggio and Powell 1984).

Finally, this dissertation argues that state policies, and in particular those of the Ecuadorian and Dominican governments, play a central role in how these migrant actors mobilize to demand greater rights. These states not only adopt laws and enact policies that facilitate or limit migrants' ability to make demands for greater citizenship rights, but also utilize rhetoric and establish relationships with different migrant organizations to secure their support. Government policies, in this instance, either provide incentives for these organizations to make demands on their home countries, or else push them to focus more intensely on political incorporation in the United States. Ecuadorian and Dominican government policies towards migrants also alter the nature of the demands that the migrant actors make when seeking rights as migrants, not only by creating expectations about what migrants believe is owed to them for their contributions to the state and society, but in some cases- as I observed with Ecuador's migrant outreach program- by attempting to alter the very structure of organizations with which the state works in New York and New Jersey.

While this dissertation focuses on the role of collective action in shaping citizenship for the Ecuadorian and Dominican migrants in New York City, it also explores how their demands for political inclusion and rights are shaped by the personal experiences of the members of these organizations. As these Ecuadorian and Dominican migrants take part in cultural, economic, familial and political practices in both the U.S. and their home countries, they also see themselves as political subjects of two countries. From their perspective they actively contribute to the welfare of the U.S. and their home countries through their remittances, labor power and investments in economic production and development projects. Consequently, the migrants in this study feel that governments in both countries are bear responsibility for their present condition in each place, and therefore have an obligation not only to formally include them as members of the state, but also to extend and protect the rights they should enjoy as citizens. Furthermore, this dissertation examines how transnational political practices by Ecuadorian and Dominican organizations in New York City are best understood through the notion of strategic citizenship. By invoking this term, this study aims to reemphasize the fact that migrants position themselves to make demands across multiple nation-states precisely because despite their standing (in many cases) as non-citizens, or what Joppke and Morawska (2003) refer to as “denizenship” (where citizens’ rights are inflated relative to non-citizens), migrants occupy an important social position in each society through their economic activities and contributions. However these adaptive strategies used by Ecuadorian and Dominican migrant activists are in response to the political realities of contemporary capitalism, where both migrant-sending and migrant-receiving countries increasingly rely on mobile labor to address economic imperatives and craft policies that reinforce labor mobility as a principal feature of capitalist accumulation. Migrants’ transnational political engagement is in this sense a strategy to seek political inclusion

and the rights associated with citizenship in democratic states, in order to resolve the social conflicts between transnational workers and ruling elites in each state attempting to secure their capacity to accumulate capital. However these strategies are not anti-statist or post-national (Soysal 1995; Jacobson 1996), but rather seek to redefine citizenship to reflect the new relationship between the migrant working class and the multiple state elites who seek to exploit migrant labor. Strategic citizenship is also defined by the structure of opportunities provided by both state policies to control migrants as well as the organizational capacity that migrant collective actors have to successfully articulate demands for citizenship rights in one or multiple sites.

This dissertation is based on my observations and analysis of the experiences and narratives of 20 first-generation immigrant activists in the Ecuadorian and Dominican communities in the New York City metropolitan area. From March 2009 until August 2010 I met with eight different civic and political organizations in both communities, observed their political activities by acting as a participant-observer, and interviewed leaders of these organizations. The study presented here attempts to bring the work of these organizations into focus, in order to illustrate how the actions of a small group of actors can better our understanding of how political identities are formed, and how a broad concept such as citizenship is reflected in the day-to-day experiences of this particular group of migrants.

Justification for Research

My dissertation aims to address three major issues that emerge from the recent research on migrant transnationalism. First is the role that organizations play in migrant' transnational political engagement. While the spread of dual citizenship and external voting for migrants living

abroad has been emphasized in more recent studies on political transnationalism (Escobar 2004; Waldinger 2009; Itzighsohn and Villacrés 2008), these studies tend to emphasize voting behavior. Their studies ultimately offer a limited perspective on political participation. These scholars also do not take into consideration how civic organizations shape migrants' political engagement. These studies show how migrants' social ties to their local communities provide opportunities to exercise some political power. However, looking at political engagement only through these hometown associations overlooks participation in other types of organizations, including political parties, social movement organizations, labor unions and NGOs/non-profit organizations, each of which likely provide a different context for migrants to become politically engaged. These are the types of organizations that I explore with the participants in my dissertation.

The third justification for this research concerns these scholars' heavy reliance on the Mexican migration experience. There are valid reasons for this, since Mexicans not only represent the largest immigrant population in the U.S., but also the fastest-growing. Their geographic presence across various parts of the country also makes scholarship on Mexican migration both accessible and relevant to many people in the U.S. Yet this also creates the potential for a distorted understanding of the Latino American migrant experience, since it fails to capture the diversity of the Latin American migrant population and whatever differences come with the ethnic groups that make up this population. In this respect my research is in agreement with G. Christina Mora's (2009) take on Hispanic/Latino pan-ethnicity. Mora argues that a Hispanic/Latino collective identity is a historically contingent phenomenon driven by strategic decisions by leading Chicano organizations to expand their profile; by the U.S. Census's policy to create a distinct Latino data category, and by marketing strategies employed by Spanish

language media to target the various Spanish-speaking population groups in the U.S. Mora's findings support the idea that a Hispanic collective identity, while relevant to many Latinos' experiences, is not a natural or static form that renders national identity moot. Similarly, my findings show that while Ecuadorian and Dominican migrant organizations identify with a Hispanic pan-ethnicity to contextualize their political goals in the U.S., their national identities and the opportunities afforded to them within their home countries are equally important in shaping their political identities and in formulating political strategies to address their dual marginalization.

This dissertation seeks to address all three of these issues in an attempt to re-shape our thinking about migrant transnationalism. Examining newer immigrant groups, such as Ecuadorians, not only brings attention to a rapidly growing yet understudied segment of the Latino immigrant population, but also identifies differences and similarities that may exist with regard, for example, to Mexicans. In addition, studying Dominican migrants provides a point of comparison. While there is some scholarship on Dominican migration and transnational practices (Levitt 2001; Aparicio 2006; González-Acosta 2008; Itzighsohn and Villacrés 2008), there are also opportunities to learn more about their experiences as it pertains to transnational political practices. Finally, I chose to examine different types of organizations who are involved in some sort of political activity, whether in electoral politics or other forms of political engagement. I thus hope to bring into focus how the organizations that migrants belong to directly impact their political participation in both home and host countries. Looking at different organizations also allows me to explore how migrants stay politically active in both home and host countries, since each organization has different goals, objectives and networks that may allow them to participate in U.S. politics and the politics in their home countries.

Organization of the Dissertation

The dissertation is divided into six chapters. The first chapter includes a statement of the research problem, the justification for the research, and a discussion of the literature on Latin American transnational politics and on the two populations studied. The first chapter also discusses the research goals and the expected contributions.

Chapter Two provides a detailed discussion of the population sample and methodology used to conduct the research. In this chapter I present different approaches to studying migrant transnational political participation, including both quantitative and qualitative approaches and the population groups that have been studied in the existing body of research on transnational politics among Latin American migrants. I highlight the strengths and limitations of these approaches and provide a justification for my own methodological approach. I follow with a discussion on the two population groups studied, including an explanation of specific factors taken into consideration in my decision to conduct a comparative analysis of these two population groups. I then discuss my sampling procedures and data collection methods, including the steps taken to ensure informed consent and subject confidentiality. I end the chapter by addressing the limitations of my research methodology, and how those limitations are reflected in my findings.

Chapter Three presents the first set of findings, focusing on the factors that lead the migrant activists in my study to become engaged in the transnational politics that inform the notion of strategic citizenship presented in this study. Based on my research, I argue that for this particular set of actors, their political participation is driven by perceived marginalization they have witnessed and/or personally experienced in both the U.S. and their respective countries of origin, which I refer to as “dual marginalization.” This dual marginalization is used by migrant

organization leaders to articulate a discourse or narrative in which migrants view themselves as a minority or vulnerable population group in both countries by virtue of their condition as migrants, and create a political identity around the idea of being a migrant minority. This migrant minority political identity is used by migrant civic organizations to mobilize support to make claims for full citizenship rights in the U.S. and their home countries, though organization leaders also mobilize in this fashion based on their perception of how viable it is for migrants to successfully assert their demands and empower themselves as a minority group.

Chapter Four discusses the role that government elites in Ecuador and the Dominican Republic, play not only in creating opportunities for migrants' participation and full inclusion into the state, but also in shaping the kinds of demands migrants make. In addition to enacting laws and policies that dictate migrants' political participation, governments also use particular types of rhetoric that both outline the way migrants fit into the national polity and inform the way in which migrants formulate their demands for rights. This chapter also notes how government actors establish relationships with particular organizations in order to generate support among migrants, which in turn influences the way in which different organizations interact with government actors.

In Chapter Five I examine the role that different civic and political organizations play in shaping transnational political engagement among the Ecuadorian and Dominican migrants in my study. I follow migrants' political participation in a variety of different organizations, including two major political parties from each country, two left-oriented movement organizations, two non-profit organizations, two community based organizations and a government-sponsored organization. In this chapter, I find that the structure of these organizations, including leadership, material and human resources provide opportunities and

place limits on how and where migrants make their claims. Some organizations, like electoral movements, have access to material resources, larger numbers of supporters and networks with ruling elites that help establish their presence, but at the same time are held back by national party leaders as well as isomorphic forms that make it harder to adapt to migrant-specific issues. Conversely, non-electoral organizations such as civic and social movement organizations have greater room to adopt new tactics and are less constrained by hierarchies, but cope with limitations that stem from limited human and material resources, which lead to difficult decisions on how to ensure their survival without compromising their mission and/or objectives.

Chapter Six offers a number of concluding thoughts. I summarize the major findings from each of the chapters and bring these findings together to discuss how strategic citizenship works for both Ecuadorian and Dominican migrants in New York City. I also discuss the larger implications of my study, including how fostering civic participation can ensure incorporation into U.S. society, but also how these organized actors can play an important foreign policy role by helping to foster more democratic governance in their respective countries. I end this chapter with a discussion of how my findings point to future areas of research and new approaches to studying migrant transnational politics.

Expected Contributions

Even though a dissertation focusing on a small sample of two large populations may not be representative of the experiences of all Ecuadorian and Dominican migrants, it nevertheless provides some insight into the civic and political participation of a fast-growing Latino immigrant population, which has now become the second-largest minority group in the U.S. This study seeks to evaluate arguments and concepts that have emerged in previous literature on

migrant transnational politics, or to identify new patterns or dimensions of migrant transnational practices that have yet to be addressed in existing scholarship.

While all of the actors in this study share the common trait of being immigrants and being involved in transnational practices, the dissertation seeks to show that not all migrant political activities are the same; rather, their scope, intensity and impact are conditioned by a variety of structural and ideological factors. Given that migration is a defining feature of contemporary global capitalism, by exploring how different organizations and governments influence migrants' transnational political practices I seek to provide a better understanding of how migrants seek to empower themselves in a situation where both migrant-sending and receiving countries rely on human mobility to as sources of external revenue and lower cost labor power, respectively. . For the migrant activists and organizations in this study transnational political engagement is an attempt to empower themselves in the polities that have a direct impact on their social condition as migrants, which for them means demanding citizenship rights in two countries from their specific context as a minority group.

This dissertation also hopes to contribute to our understanding of how citizenship and the nation-state are affected by these practices. Contrary to some prominent commentators (Soysal 1995 and Jacobson 1997), I do not argue that migrant transnationalism is the harbinger of a post-national system, since nation-states still ultimately retain both the power to decide membership and the power to shape international law. If anything, the discourses, goals and tactics employed by the actors in this study suggest that there are a significant number of migrants who engage in transnational practices not to avoid discipline or control by the state, but to assert their right to be included within the states of which they understand themselves to be subjects, particularly as the U.S. and migrant-receiving countries in Europe have responded to the current wave of migration

from the Global South by either liberalizing their citizenship policies or widening the gap in rights between citizens and non-citizens. These responses by migrant-receiving countries have actually prompted many migrants to intensify their efforts to obtain citizenship, which effectively dispels the idea that migration is leading the world down the path to a post-national, transnational or other form of de-territorialized set of rights, (Joppke and Morawska 2003). In this respect I share the same view that more recent scholars (Joppke 1998; Bauböck 2003; Smith 2003; Waldinger 2009) have on migrant transnationalism's impact on the nation-state.

My dissertation therefore aims to contribute to discussions on citizenship and the contemporary nation-state by arguing that migrant transnational political actors are seeking to redefine the terms of social inclusion within states by pointing to the fact that political subjects are no longer exclusive to one country. Both home and host country elites seek to exercise control over migrants, since migrants play an important economic role in both sending and receiving countries through their economic contributions as laborers and /or remitters. Migrants, particularly those in this study, recognize that despite their economic, cultural and political relevance for sending and receiving countries they often remain relegated as contributing members of each society. Thus, for international migrants citizenship cannot, by virtue of their lived experiences, be exclusive in character. Citizenship thus embodies a social conflict that is more a political relationship than a territorial one, and is a site of contestation mediated by multiple governments and civil society organizations, which is an essential feature of political engagement in democratic political systems.

This dissertation also seeks to expand our understanding about the diversity of the Latino immigrant population in the U.S. by comparing the political engagement of two newer Latino populations. The Mexican population in the U.S. is often used as a point of reference for

understanding the Latino immigrant experience. This is reflected in much of the scholarship on migrant transnationalism in the U.S. (Goldring 1998; Fitzgerald 2003; Rivera-Salgado 2002; Smith 2006). Scholarship on Mexican migration is timely and relevant given that they are the single largest Latino national group in the U.S. and continue to grow in numbers. By comparing Ecuadorians and Dominicans, however, I hope to show the variation that exists within the Latino immigrant population in terms of their incorporation as well as how they become politically engaged. Ecuadorians in particular are a population group that has received limited attention from scholars, and given the rapid growth of this immigrant group over the last 15 years it is important to bring attention to their experiences in the U.S.

CHAPTER 2: SAMPLE POPULATION AND METHODOLOGY

The primary objective of this study is to understand how participation in civil society organizations empowers Ecuadorian and Dominican migrants to become politically engaged in the United States and in their countries of origin. My interest is in exploring political participation through these migrants' lived experiences. To understand that experience, I use a qualitative methodological approach, which is based on participant observation and in-depth interviews with leaders of various civic and political organizations in the Ecuadorian and Dominican migrant communities in New York City.

This chapter begins with an overview of the comparative and ethnographic approaches used. I then focus on three key works on transnationalism and political organization that inform this study. I follow with a discussion of the two sample populations and the sampling procedures used to obtain the participants for my study. I then provide a detailed description of the qualitative methods I utilized for data collection: participant observation, in-depth interviews and content analysis. Finally, the chapter concludes with a discussion of limitations to these methodological approaches.

Approaches to Investigating Transnational Political Engagement

There is a growing body of both quantitative and qualitative scholarship on this subject. Quantitative studies in this field have concentrated mainly on individual voting behavior by Latin American migrants (DeSipio, Pachón and Lee 2003; Suro and Escobar 2006; Itzigsohn and Villacrés 2008). These studies provide a more generalized account of migrants' voting behavior in both the U.S. and their countries of origin, and factors that influence their voting behavior such as access to information and time available for political engagement. Voting data analysis

also provide valuable insight into how different demographic and attitudinal variables contribute to individual voting tendencies, thereby showing the role that larger structural factors play in the decision to vote. By focusing only on voting behavior, however, these studies overlook less conventional forms of political engagement that do not include voting or do not deal with electoral politics directly, such as collaborations with governments, lobbying and social movement activism. By focusing only on voting data we also lose sight of how these other forms of political participation, which may not be reflected in voting figures, but which nevertheless play an important role in mobilizing migrants to address issues of a political nature. Examples of this include such migrants negotiating with government officials to establish community or economic development projects, or mobilizing to press for democratic reforms. More important to this study though, voting-focused studies are also unable to account for the way in which organizations mobilize migrants to become politically active, whether through the articulation of discourses which resonate with migrant constituents, or through the dynamics within different organizations that make it possible to mobilize migrants for different forms of political activity.

A significant amount of the scholarship on Latin American migrant transnational politics has been qualitative and/or ethnographic in nature (Goldring 1998, Landolt et al. 1999, Levitt 2001, Fitzgerald 2002, Escobar 2004, Smith 2006, Landolt 2008.) These works have been effective in illustrating how migrants' lived experiences inform the manner in which their transnational political activities take place. They are also helpful in demonstrating how politics can take various forms besides voting, including through community development projects by migrant associations, labor activism and lobbying. However, most of the qualitative research on this subject is based on single case studies, which often makes them idiosyncratic and non-

generalizable. Particular migrants' experiences are documented and examined, but seldom placed side by side with those of different sets of actors within the same study.

This study primarily follows a qualitative methodological approach because this is the most effective way to capture the diverse forms of political engagement observed among migrant, as well as how actors' lived experiences influence their political participation. It also takes a comparative approach that is often missing within qualitative research on migrant transnationalism. It does so by comparing not only the process of transnational political engagement among two different Latino immigrant populations in the same place, but also how different types of organizations shape transnational political participation by migrant activists.

Comparative Frameworks in the study of Transnationalism

Though Glick-Schiller, Basch and Szanton-Blanc's (1996) seminal work on migrant transnationalism compared the experience of Haitian and Filipino migrants, since then much of the work in the field of transnationalism has moved away from comparative approaches. It has only been in recent years where that scholarship on migrant transnational politics has once again turned to comparative approaches to different aspects of how transnational political engagement occurs. DeSipio, Lee and Pachon (2003)'s survey study on transnational engagement examined responses from both Mexican and Dominican migrants. Østergaard-Nielsen (2003; 2009) examined Turkish migrant communities in Germany and the Netherlands to compare transnational responses to their incorporation in each country. Landolt (2008) recently studied multiple Salvadorian migrant community-based organizations in Toronto to study how linkages to larger organized actors influenced transnational activities. These studies highlight the importance of comparing experiences between migrant populations, in order to both identify trends and differences in migrant transnational practices.

My dissertation is based on a two-way comparative analysis, where I not only examined two different migrant populations- Ecuadorians and Dominicans in New York City- but I also studied different types of migrant organizations in each community. By taking this approach I aim to identify both similarities and differences both between migrant populations as well as among different actors within each population in terms of how migrants' transnational political mobilization occurs.

Populations Sampled

The study focuses on political organizations among Ecuadorian and Dominican migrants in the U.S. and more specifically, those who reside in the New York City metropolitan area. I focus on these two groups for several reasons. First, I hope to address a trend observed in previous studies on Latin American migrant transnationalism. Much of the existing scholarship on the subject has been focused mostly on the transnational practices of Mexican migrants (Goldring 1998; De La Garza and Lowell 2000; Fitzgerald 2002; Rivera-Saldago 2002; Smith 2006 and 2008; Waldinger 2008 and 2009; Orozco and García-Zanello 2009; Moctezuma 2005; Bakker and Fox 2006). These works have yielded critical findings that have enhanced our basic understanding of how these two groups engage in transnational practices, including bi-national political engagement. Yet these works also tend to be idiosyncratic, in that they focus on one very small segment of these populations, or on one specific form of political engagement. This study seeks to fill the gap in the existing body of literature on migrant transnational politics not only by focusing on a newer, less studied Latino immigrant population group, but also by comparing experiences both between different ethnic groups and between different types of actors within each of these two ethnic groups. This makes it possible both to observe the

diversity of actors involved in transnational politics and to identify possible trends between different ethnic groups in terms of how transnational political engagement unfolds.

Despite the presence of significant concentrations of Ecuadorians in Florida and Illinois, and of Dominicans in Massachusetts and Rhode Island, I focus on these populations in the New York City metropolitan area because the greater New York City area has become a central settlement hub for both Ecuadorian and Dominican migrants. Both groups now have a significant presence within the New York City metropolitan area, as they represent the second and fourth largest Latino population groups, respectively, in the city. Furthermore, both groups have continued to experience significant population growth in New York City over the last two decades (See Table 1).

	1990		2000		2008		Change since 1990
	Total Population	% of Latino Population	Total Population	% of Latino Population	Total Population	% of Latino Population	
Dominicans	338,961	20.0%	547,379	24.6%	585,429	25.1%	72.8%
Puerto Ricans	848,374	50.0%	816,827	36.7%	783,911	33.6%	-7.5%
Mexicans	55,587	3.3%	187,259	8.4%	294,238	12.6%	429%
Ecuadorians	80,862	4.8%	149,897	6.7%	202,591	8.7%	150.5%
Colombians	88,259	5.2%	109,710	4.9%	98,558	4.2%	11.7%
Total Latino Population	1,697,379		2,226,907		2,335,341		37.6%

(Source: Caro-López and Limonic 2010)

I elected to study Ecuadorians because they represent a newer Latin American immigrant population in the United States. They are also a fast growing population, particularly in the New York City metropolitan area. Furthermore, Ecuadorian migration to the U.S. has been largely overlooked by social science scholarship, with only a few studies that have examined the Ecuadorian migrant experience (Jones-Correa 1998; Pribilsky 2002). The growth of this

population abroad, and in particular in New York provides an opportunity to add to scholarship on how this new wave of migrants integrate into U.S. society and change the social, economic and political landscape of New York City as well as Ecuador, which has undergone significant political transformations since 2006.

Examining Ecuadorians also provides access to a population group that serves as a point of comparison with other Latin American migrant groups in the U.S. that have already been examined by other scholars in greater detail, which includes Dominicans. While Dominican migrant political transnationalism has been studied by a small group of scholars (Levitt 2001; Itzighsohn et al. 1999; Aparicio 2006; González-Acosta 2008; Itzighson and Villacrés 2009), I selected Dominicans as one of the groups for my comparative study in order to compare the more recently arrived Ecuadorians with one of the Latin American migrant groups whose transnational practices have been studied by scholars to some extent. At the same time, because they have not received the same level of attention by scholars as Mexican migrants in the U.S., there remains an opportunity to expand our understanding of how organizations in the Dominican community contribute to shaping transnational political practices among first generation migrants and in particular comparing how different organizations influence the process of transnational political engagement.

In the pages that follow I discuss the most important aspects of each of the two groups from which I have selected my sample. I focus on five factors that were important in drawing similarities as well as differences that allow for a comparative analysis of political engagement in each group:

- Growth and Geographic Concentration: The growth and geographic concentration of these two populations in New York City plays an important role not just in creating a

critical mass of migrants to mobilize, but also in fostering civic engagement and social networks that are preconditions to political mobilization. It also provided access to a considerable number of different organized actors

- Foreign-born majorities: The fact that both populations are majority foreign-born increases the likelihood that these groups take part in transnational practices, including transnational politics. This is often due to structural barriers including lack of U.S. citizenship and language barriers that limit their capacity to integrate into U.S. political activities. Jones-Correa (1998), for instance, found that Colombians and Ecuadorians in New York, which at the time of his study were mostly foreign-born, frequently turned their attention to political activities in their respective home countries because of their disenfranchisement due to low U.S. citizenship rates. Furthermore, a number of studies (DeSipio, Lee and Pachon 2003; Itzigsohn and Villacres 2009) have noted a substantial generational decline in transnational political participation, where second generation immigrants are significantly less likely to take part in home country issues. Hence, by focusing on these two population groups, I am more likely to obtain a critical mass of individuals and groups who are committed to transnational political issues.
- Dual citizenship: Dual citizenship is important because, as Bauböck (2003) has argued, it represents the process by which migrant political transnationalism is formalized, as it grants migrants the capacity to carry out political engagement across overlapping governments. Furthermore, it provided an opportunity to examine how being a dual citizen affects the way in which migrants make demands for rights to governments. While a large number of Dominican and Ecuadorian migrants are not yet citizens, citizenship rates are increasing in both populations. This represents a dynamic in which

members of both ethnic groups will potentially be able to formally participate in both home and host country politics, or at a minimum make claims for membership in both countries.

- History and context of migration: The different migration histories and trajectories between Ecuadorians and Dominicans provided the opportunity to explore how differences in the history of migration and the “push factors” behind that migration influence political participation. In particular, I attempted to apply these differences to examine how migrants frame their political relationship to the home country, their level of social and political incorporation into the U.S. political process, and the types of networks and/or linkages that migrant political activists create for political engagement in both the U.S. and their countries of origin.
- Home state regime context: The differences in home country regimes allowed me to explore not only how Ecuadorian and Dominican activists respond to the political context in their respective home countries, but also to explore differences in how the governments in each country currently opt to engage with their migrant populations in light of their overall national policy objectives.

Ecuadorians

(1) Growth and Geographic Concentration

Despite having a presence as a migrant population in the U.S. since the 1950s, Ecuadorians are largely a newer Latin American immigrant group in this country. Over the last 30 years the Ecuadorian population in the U.S. has increased substantially, with the majority of this population growth the product of migration from Ecuador. The Ecuadorian population in the U.S.

grew from around 110,000 in 1980 to about 610,000 by 2008, according to American Community Survey (ACS) data (Bergad 2010). As such, they represent one of the faster-growing Latin American migrant groups in the U.S.

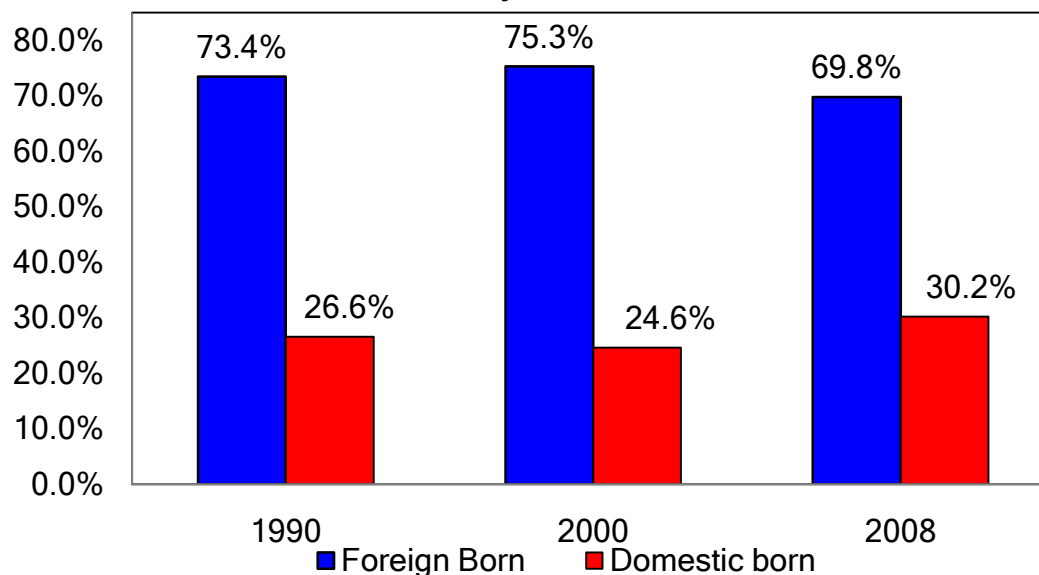
Ecuadorians have been one of the fastest growing Latino ethnic groups in New York City for approximately the last 20 years, being surpassed only by the city's Mexican population. Ecuadorians have more than doubled in population since 1990, and have increased by over one-third in the last decade (Caro-López 2011). Census figures also note significant Ecuadorian population growth in the city's suburbs. As of 2008, there are approximately 76,000 Ecuadorians residing in New Jersey's Essex, Bergen and Hudson counties, and an estimated 29,000 more in New York's Nassau and Suffolk counties (Caicedo 2011.) The New York City metro area has the greatest concentration of Ecuadorians in the U.S. In 1980, 43 percent of the total Ecuadorian population lived in New York City alone, and although this fell to 33 percent in 2008, New York City was still a place of heavy Ecuadorian population concentration. Furthermore, Ecuadorians living in the states of New York and New Jersey accounted for approximately 60 percent of the total Ecuadorian population in the U.S., 55 percent of whom lived in New York City or the nearby suburban counties in New York and New Jersey (Bergad 2010). Meanwhile, Dominicans are even more concentrated in New York City proper than Ecuadorians; approximately 53 percent of all Dominicans in the U.S reside in the city, based on 2007 ACS figures (Marceli, Holmes et al. 2009).

(2) Foreign-born majority

Ecuadorians in the U.S. and New York are mostly first generation immigrants. Foreign-born residents make up 68 percent of the total Ecuadorian population in the U.S. (Bergad 2010). Ecuadorians in New York mirror the national population in that nearly seven in ten Ecuadorians

are foreign-born (See Figure 1, Caro-López 2011)

Figure 1: Ecuadorian Population by Nativity in New York City, 1990-2008



These figures do not necessarily account for persons who arrived as undocumented or unauthorized migrants to the U.S. Census figures also do not include persons who have overstayed temporary visas and now live as unauthorized or undocumented migrants in the U.S. While exact figures on the number of Ecuadorian and Dominican unauthorized migrants are not currently available, Hall (2005) provides information that allows us to draw an estimate of the number of unauthorized Ecuadorians arriving in the U.S. Hall states that according to estimates provided by Ecuadorian authorities, *coyoters* earn approximately \$60 million through human trafficking from Ecuador to the US, as a single passage from Ecuador to the United States may cost as much as \$15,000 per person. At the aforementioned per person cost, one can conservatively estimate that at a minimum, some 4,000 Ecuadorians arrive in the U.S. with unauthorized or undocumented status annually.

Total Ecuadorian Population	609,762
Foreign Born	418,117
Domestic Born	191,645
Undocumented from Ecuador	170,000
Undocumented as a % of total population	27.9%
Undocumented as a % of foreign-born	40.7%

(Sources: Bergad 2010; U.S. Department of Homeland Security, February 2011)

(3) *Dual Citizenship*

Ecuadorians are currently able to exercise dual citizenship, meaning that migrants who move abroad and opt to become citizens in migrant-receiving countries can retain their citizenship in Ecuador. Ecuadorians were granted dual citizenship in 1995, which has since allowed them to vote in presidential elections despite living abroad permanently. More recently, Ecuadorian dual citizens are now able to directly elect representatives to the Ecuadorian National Assembly, since migrants abroad have been organized into legislative constituencies under the 2008 Constitution.

(4) *History and Context of Migration*

While Ecuadorians have been migrating to the U.S. in observable numbers since the mid-twentieth century, significant emigration from Ecuador to the U.S. is largely a recent phenomenon. The relatively new character of Ecuadorian migration also leads to most migrants arriving under the same set of circumstances, which in this instance was economic migration. Ecuadorian immigration to the U.S. can be broken down into two waves. The first wave occurred during the 1950s. Ecuadorian emigration abroad at the time was prompted by an economic crisis due to the decline in Panama hat exports, which were the lifeline of the Azuay and Cañar Provinces in Ecuador. Many of these migrants settled in Chicago, which still retains a sizeable Ecuadorian enclave (IOM 2008).

The second wave of Ecuadorian migration has been driven in large measure by political and economic instability in Ecuador that took place from the mid-1990s until the middle part of the past decade. Shrinking economic opportunities and growing income inequality sent many Ecuadorians overseas to seek work in the mid-1990s. Then, from 1999 to 2001, a national banking crisis, the freezing of consumer bank accounts (also referred to as the *Feriado Bancario* or Bank Holiday) and the dollarization of the economy aggravated economic conditions, driving the country's poverty rate to 45 percent and pushing many middle income groups into poverty for the first time. This was further exacerbated by major political instability, as the country went through six different presidential administrations between 1992 and 2006, and had a national congress fragmented along nine different political parties (Jokisch and Pribilsky 2002; Hall 2005). The resulting instability led to a huge exodus of Ecuadorians abroad, such that by 2004 almost two and a half million Ecuadorians lived and worked overseas, with approximately 550,000 Ecuadorians migrating to the U.S. since 1999 (Acosta, Olivares and Villamar 2006).

(5) *Home State Regime*

After nearly a decade of political instability, Ecuador has recently undergone a major political transition under the leadership of President Rafael Correa, who is linked with the new wave of left populist leaders in South America such as Luis Ignacio "Lula" Da Silva, of Brazil, Evo Morales in Bolivia, and Fernando Lugo of Paraguay. Under Correa's leadership Ecuador has embarked on a populist political program that includes redistributive policies and expanded civil rights for racial and gender minorities, as well as migrants. In contrast to the Dominican Republic, which has experienced a pattern of relative stability in its electoral system, Ecuador's political system is largely transitioning out of a period of severe instability, as noted earlier.

Dominicans

(1) Growth and Geographic Concentration

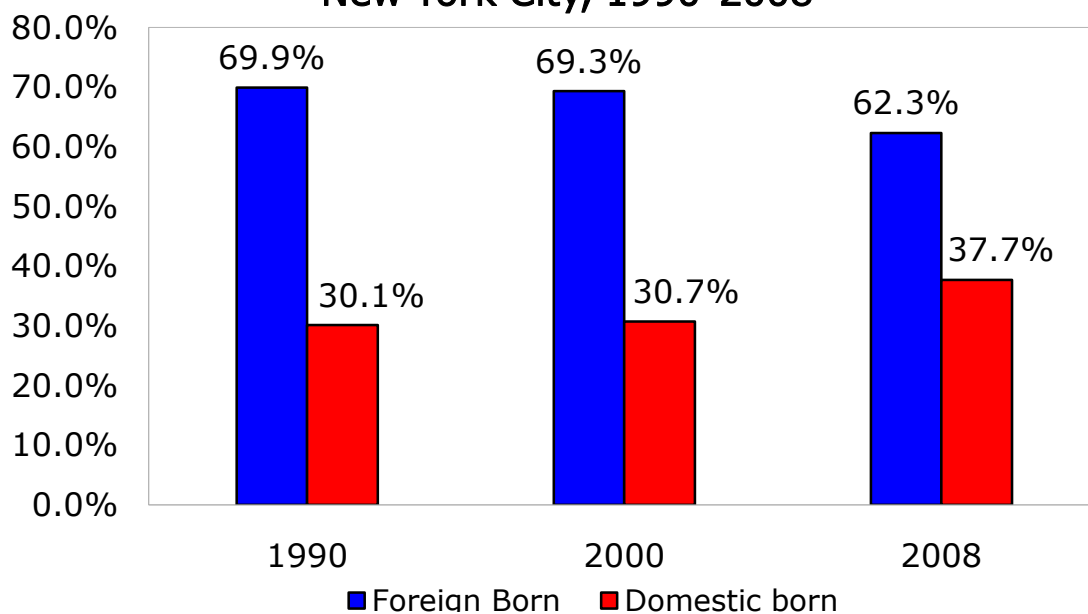
Between 1990 and 2008, Dominicans increased their demographic presence in New York City and have become the second largest Latino national sub-group behind Puerto Ricans. According to Census ACS³ data, the Dominican population in the city grew by nearly 73 percent between 1990 and 2008 and about 7 percent from 2000 to 2008. The city's Dominicans increased at approximately twice the rate of the city's overall Latino population, but have been substantially outpaced by Mexican and Ecuadorian population growth rates during this period (Caro-López and Limonic 2010). Thus, while the Dominican population growth rate has ebbed in the past decade, there is still steady growth, some of which is still fueled by migration from the Dominican Republic.

(2) Foreign-born population prevalence

Like Ecuadorians, Dominicans in the U.S. and in New York are mostly foreign-born and largely non-citizens. According to the Pew Hispanic Center's research (2008), 57 percent of the U.S. Dominican population was born outside the U.S. In New York City, nearly two thirds of Dominicans were born outside of the United States.

³ American Community Survey figures based on a 5 percent sample of the actual population count derived from the Census Bureau's Public Use Microdata Area (PUMA). These population figures do not necessarily account for total population counts for either Dominican or Ecuadorians, due to the presence of undocumented migrants who opt to not participate in Census surveys. For additional information on the American Community Survey methodology and data collection methods visit <http://www.census.gov/acs>

Figure 2: Dominican Population by Nativity in New York City, 1990-2008



(Source: Caro-Lopez and Limonic 2010)

Undocumented migration is also observed among Dominicans, though again exact figures are difficult to discern. In 1996 the then Immigration and Naturalization Service (now Immigrations and Customs Enforcement) estimated that there were approximately 75,000 undocumented Dominican migrants residing in the entire U.S. (Duany 2005). A 2000 report from the Migration Policy Institute, as indicated in the following table, calculates that approximately one out of every seven foreign-born Dominicans in the U.S. are unauthorized immigrants.

Table 3: Estimated Number of Unauthorized Immigrants from the Dominican Republic: 2004	
Total Dominican Population	1,111,142
Foreign Born	710,921
Domestic Born	400,221
Unauthorized from Dominican Republic	100,000
Unauthorized as a % of total population	8.9%
Unauthorized as a % of foreign-born population	14.1%

(Source: Migration Policy Institute 2004)

(3) Dual Citizenship

Like Ecuadorians, Dominicans are also able to hold dual citizenship. Dominican migrants received dual citizenship from the Dominican government in 2000. As dual citizens they are eligible to vote in Dominican Presidential elections while living abroad. They do not, however, have direct representation in the Dominican legislature, though dual citizens are allowed to run for public office in the Dominican Republic, provided they establish residency in the country. Chapter Four discusses in detail both Ecuadorian and Dominican government migrant policy, including a discussion on the factors that account for the difference in policies between the two countries.

(4) History and Context of migration

Dominican migration to the U.S., in contrast to that of the Ecuadorian population, has a longer and more varied historical trajectory. Not only have Dominicans had a major presence in the U.S. and in particular New York City for nearly a half a century, but the factors that have prompted people to depart the Dominican Republic for the U.S. have been more complex. Currently, there are slightly more than 1.3 million Dominicans living in the U.S (Pew Hispanic Center 2008). Significant Dominican immigration to the U.S. dates back as early as the 1940s, but grew exponentially during the 1960s and 1970s, and has continually grown since the 1980s. The first major wave of Dominican migration consisted of refugees fleeing political repression and violence. This began with political dissidents fleeing repression from then-dictator Rafael Trujillo until his death in 1961. After a brief period of political stability under the social-democratic government of Juan Bosch, Dominicans began to flee the country en masse after the bloody 1965 Civil War that was precipitated by Bosch's ouster by the Dominican military. This first wave of Dominican immigration culminated with a period of harsh political repression

under President Joaquin Balaguer that ran from the late 1960s until 1978, when Balaguer negotiated a partial democratic transition with the rival *Partido Revolucionario Dominicano* (PRD) that put an end to major violence in the Dominican Republic (González-Acosta 2009). The second wave of Dominican immigration began in the late 1980s that has largely continued up until the present. In this wave Dominicans have come to the U.S. mainly as economic migrants, due to a series of economic crises that emerged in the 1980s and the economic dislocation of many working class Dominicans due to trade liberalization policies in the 1990s.

(5) *Home Country Political Regime/Context:*

The Dominican Republic is currently governed by the *Partido de la Liberacion Dominicana* (PLD), under the leadership of President Leonel Fernández. The PLD has established itself as one of the two dominant political parties in the country, and is largely committed to a more center-right, neoliberal social and economic political model. The Dominican political system has also been characterized by scholars as intensely clientelistic, where politicians rely on political patronage in the form of direct material benefits to garner electoral support (González-Acosta, 2009.) Furthermore, the Dominican political process in its current manifestation, while clientelistic and criticized as corrupt, has remained stable for the past 20 plus years.

Selecting my Sample

In addition to comparing across different ethnic groups, one of my main objectives for this study was to compare different types of organizations that migrants join to become politically active. It is important to acknowledge that the term *politics* is a term with a broad understanding within the social sciences. Marable and Mullings (2000), for instance, have argued that politics is the process where any group recognizes its own objective interests and seeks agency to secure their interests. This view of politics focuses on the political nature of everyday life, where

individuals mobilize to gain greater control over their lives. This conception of politics is also present in some scholarship on migrant transnational practices (Appadurai 1996; Ong 1999). For purposes of this study, however, I rely on Weber's (1958) definition of politics in my analysis of Ecuadorian and Dominican political participation. Politics, according to Weber, is best understood as the exercise of leadership, or influencing of the leadership of the state or entities that precede or operate as a state. While I acknowledge the relevance of Marable and Mulling's notion of politics, my study is more interested in the practical matter of how migrants can or cannot mobilize in order to make demands upon nation-states for recognition as legitimate members of the state, and the rights and/or protections that come with being a citizen of said state. States play a fundamental role in migrants' experiences, since as the source of legitimate domination, states remain the final arbiter of membership in a political community that offer enforceable rights and protections.

Opting for a broader scope of organizations also allowed my research to consider how civic participation more generally influenced political engagement among Ecuadorian and Dominican migrants, following the work of previous qualitative studies that examine the relationship between civic participation and political engagement (Susser 1981, Putnam 1996, Aparicio 2006.) I therefore purposely attempted to include representatives from a political party, a social movement organization, a civic or community-based organization, a labor organization and a non-profit or non-governmental organization from each group, in order to include different types of organizations that become involved in politics.

To obtain participants from different organizations for my study I relied on a combination of non-random convenience sampling and random snowball sampling. This permitted me to focus on accessible research participants, which was necessary due to both financial and time

constraints. It also proved to be a helpful approach in that it enriched my study by permitting me to observe the networks that influence the manner in which the various migrant organizations mobilize migrant supporters and/or successfully engage with other actors to become engaged in both U.S. and home country politics. It is important to note, however, that this approach presents a limitation in terms of the generalizability of this study's findings. Convenience samples must also contend with the possibility of systematic bias.

I make no attempt to argue that the experiences of these organizations are necessarily reflective of all migrant organizations, or for that matter all of the organizations within the respective migrant communities of which they are part. As respondents in my student themselves have indicated, there are a wide range of civil society organizations in both the Ecuadorian and Dominican communities that vary in size, scope and organizational capacity, which makes a proper mapping of all possible organizations time consuming and difficult. The goal of this approach is to document and analyze how a small segment of the larger population of migrant civil society organizations mobilizes transnationally and the factors that shape their mobilization.

I employed two approaches to recruit organizational representatives to participate in my study. The first involved soliciting different civic and political organizations through a flier, which was distributed through electronic mailing lists, to professional contacts that work with migrants in each community, and through Ecuadorian and Dominican government officials. This approach yielded modest results, with only five Ecuadorian organizations responding to the solicitation, and only one that ultimately qualified for my study based on their active involvement in civic and political activities.

The remaining participants that comprise my sample were obtained through snowballing procedures. After I made initial contacts with representatives of both a major Ecuadorian and

Dominican political party I was referred to representatives of other organizations. I also directly solicited participants from other organizations that participated in public events that I attended as part of my research, which helped to ensure that I had a more random sample. As a result my final sample is based on data collected from 20 participants from nine different organizations. This included two major political parties, two social movement organizations, two non-profit organizations, and two community-based organizations. Five of the eight organizations are from the Ecuadorian migrant community, and the remaining three are Dominican-based migrant organizations. The two major political parties have a broad presence across all the entire Ecuadorian and Dominican populations. Two of the social movement organizations- the FUIE and Alianza País from the Dominican Republic, also have an organizational presence that extends beyond New York. The remaining community and civic organizations are all located in New York City or in northern New Jersey, which I will refer to as the New York Metropolitan area. I attempt to compensate for the uneven representation in my sample at various points during the dissertation. I include other primary source data (such as news articles), about other Dominican organizations that take part in transnational activities, such as the Committee for Ecuadorians Abroad (CONDEX) Furthermore, Chapter Five provides an in-depth analysis of organizational dynamics, in which I compare three Ecuadorian organizations and three Dominican organizations. In this way I offer a more balanced analysis of how organizational processes influence transnational political engagement for both Ecuadorian and Dominican migrants who lead these organizations.

Data Collection Procedures

Participant Observation

I gathered qualitative data in three ways. The first was ethnographic, based on participant observation of organizational activities conducted over the course of approximately 18 months. This method was used to document Ecuadorian and Dominican's experiences in political engagement. Participant observation provided the opportunity to examine important aspects of political organization that quantitative research and even interviews may overlook, including organizational dynamics, the strategies and tactics used by organizations to meet their objectives, and their interactions with other political actors. Finally, participant observation research also permitted me to evaluate statements made by organizational leaders whom I interviewed, in order to see if their claims were contradicted by facts, or if they neglected to address other aspects of their political engagement that were central to understanding that engagement for activists in each community.

Participant observation work included attending political rallies, election campaign events, public meetings with elected officials, and social events that took place in the Ecuadorian and Dominican communities of New York City and northern New Jersey. I also attended exclusive organization events such as planning meetings and private social functions for organization members at the invitation of some organizational leaders in both communities. I also went to events and activities organized by the Ecuadorian government, generally at the invitation of representatives of the *Casa Ecuatoriana*, a migrant outreach and service office operated by Ecuador's National Migrant Secretariat; or the Ecuadorian Consulate, some of which included other Ecuadorian civic and political organizations that became part of the study. I was invited to similar events by representatives of the Dominican government, but which were less frequent and sometimes cancelled for reasons beyond my control.

I limited my role at private Ecuadorian and Dominican organizational events to that of an impartial observer, and informed my contacts and other people in attendance that I was not a part of the organization whose event I was attending. In these private activities I was often introduced to other organizational members by the person who had invited me to attend as a sociologist conducting a study on Ecuadorian or Dominican political organizations. These introductions often permitted me to speak with other members about their experiences and their attitudes on the organization and/or relevant policy issues. As I attended multiple events for a number of the Ecuadorian organizations, my presence created a familiarity with members that made them more willing to discuss different aspects of the organization, though I constantly asserted my impartial observer status when pressed for opinions on what I had observed. As such, comments provided by research subjects in the course of the participant observation work are presented as anonymous responses, in order to protect the identity of these individuals and in accordance with human subject research protocols.

In-depth Interviews

My research is also based on in-depth, semi-structured interviews with representatives of the organizations that agreed to take part in my study. In total I interviewed approximately 20 individuals (14 Ecuadorian, 6 Dominican), most of whom held leadership positions in each organization. In some cases I interviewed multiple individuals in larger organizations, while smaller organizations only required interviewing one or two members. Interviews were approximately an hour in duration on average, with a few interviews being slightly shorter at around 45 minutes, and a number of interviews were about one and one half hours. I utilized an interview protocol that asked basic questions about each organization's structure, resources and objectives, as well as the respondent's history in the organization, their motivations for becoming

part of the organization and their assessment of the organization's ability to meet its stated goals or to address the concerns of constituents⁴. However interviews also took on a dynamic character in that I would explore themes that emerged from my initial questions that were not initially included in the interview protocol, or that were specific to the respondent's experiences. As my field work progressed I often addressed other specific issues that emerged during my field work that related to either the respondent's organization or to general policy issues affecting the migrant community that the organization was working on at the time.

Once interviewees agreed to meet for an interview they were informed of their rights as a research participant⁵, including the right to confidentiality, anonymity, the right to audio record their responses, and to provide responses when they felt comfortable to do so. Informed consent documents were provided to respondents in Spanish and English based on which language they were most comfortable conducting the interview. In most cases interview subjects consented to being identified in the study, even after being informed that they had the right to be cited anonymously. All but one of my interview respondents granted permission to record their responses. Interviews were for the most part conducted in Spanish, since most of the interviewees were either not fully proficient in English or were more comfortable articulating their ideas in their native language. I personally conducted all of the interviews, which I was able to do as a native Spanish speaker. Interviews were transcribed by a professional transcriber. All of the direct quotes from respondents that appear in throughout the dissertation study were translated from Spanish to English by me verbatim, in order to present respondents' own ideas and opinions as accurately as possible. My interest was to ensure that the voices of the

⁴ See Appendix A for sample interview protocol

⁵ See Appendix B for sample consent form

participants in my study would be highlighted, since my goal is to examine the phenomenon of political engagement through the lived experiences of the actors whom I met and studied.

Content Analysis

Another qualitative method employed in this study includes content analysis. This entailed analyzing fliers, informational pamphlets, email messages and newsletters provided by organizations that discuss their mission, goals and activities to members and to the general public. I analyzed organization documents that were publicly disseminated materials. I also examined Ecuadorian and Dominican government propaganda used to appeal to migrant constituencies, in order to compare the government's discourse with the experiences migrant activists had with their home country governments. Finally, I examined articles from local community press and national newspapers in Ecuador and the Dominican Republic. In particular I focused on news articles that reported on the activities carried out by the organizations in my study, and actions carried out by Ecuadorian and Dominican government officials that affected migrant constituencies in New York and/or the U.S. Examining organizational documents and propaganda provided the opportunity to see how organization leaders reach out to members and other constituents, as well as to compare the discourse used to appeal to potential support with the actual manner in which they interact with constituents.

Post-Collection Analysis

Coding

Once interviews were transcribed and field notes were written out, I relied on line-by-line coding to develop my code lists. I found that using a traditional line-by-line approach provided the best opportunity for identify themes and note similarities and differences among organizations and ethnic groups. I relied on codes that came from hi-frequency words, from

commonly described processes or from the meaning that respondents placed on particular experiences, based on my own understanding of the conversations. The codes that I used were helpful in documenting how my participants mobilize bi-nationally to challenge the marginalization migrants in both home and host countries. It is important to note that when discussing the notion of marginalization is based on what the subjects in this study describe experiencing through their own personal experiences, which includes issues such as xenophobic discrimination and violence, denial of rights as non-citizens and challenges to normalizing their legal status in the U.S on the one hand; and prejudice towards migrants by non-migrants in their home countries, as well as denial of full citizenship rights and/or protections by home country governments despite their contributions from abroad. Furthermore, not all Ecuadorian or Dominican migrants necessarily identify with the idea of marginalization, nor may have experiences that could be properly considered marginalizing: by virtue of their socio-economic position, citizenship status or access to political power, they may occupy positions of relative privilege in both home and host countries. The fact that many organization leaders repeatedly raised this topic, however, became an important focal point for understanding the process of political engagement and mobilization by the subjects in this study.

Themes

Once I developed the code list, I identified themes from the list. Using this approach I was able to develop the framework for my discussion on strategic citizenship. I had, for instance, a code on “ideological framing” which permitted me to consider how migrants frame their bi-national political participation, which in turn helped me to consider the relationship between experiences and ideological framing. This, in turn, allowed me to review some of the collective action/contentious politics literature to better understand the relationship between experiences,

discourses and political engagement. As a result, I was able to gear a research project that was initially prompted by my interest in transnationalism into a study that examines political mobilization/collective action in light of how migrants live their lives transnationally. In addition, codes such as “state migrant relations” and “state-organization relations” allowed me to develop a separate chapter on how government entities, particularly those from migrant-sending states, elaborate discourses, policies, laws and relationship with migrants and migrant political organizations to both create and limit opportunities for migrant activists to engage in strategic citizenship. My codes also allowed me to see how the participants in my study interpret the relationship that state representatives make towards migrants and how they evaluate policies enacted by the state with respect to migrants and alter their expectations based on how relations between migrants and the state unfold. In short, by coding I was able to carry out a systematic analysis of both my field notes and my interview transcripts to identify themes or issues that were observable both in my participant observation work as well as when I spoke directly with participants.

Limitations

Non-Generalizability

As with any qualitative research approach, one of the major limitations that emerged from my study is the generalizability of my research. While the goal of my dissertation is to understand how organizations, discourses, state policies and structural conditions shape migrant political transnationalism, the final study is specifically about how the experiences of my participants inform the manner in which they see themselves as political actors and in turn, how they opt to organize and make demands for rights as marginalized actors. These findings are therefore useful in understanding how a specific group of migrants engage in strategic

citizenship and thus cannot be used as a model or framework to understand how all migrants become involved in transnational politics. Still, I believe that the concept of strategic citizenship has much wider applicability to migrants elsewhere who also find themselves living in two different worlds, politically speaking. This study was also carried out with the hope of providing a starting point for designing macro-level studies that attempt to identify whether the observations regarding political engagement by these organizations is reflective of larger trends among a large number of migrant organizations, both within the two populations studied as well as among other migrant populations in the U.S. and in other migrant-receiving countries.

Time-Sensitivity

The time-sensitive nature of qualitative research is another limitation of the methodology used for this study. This project can only make assessments of these migrants' experiences based on the circumstances that existed during the time of my fieldwork, which was from early 2009 to the fall of 2010. During that time the subjects in my study were responding to a particular set of events that unfolded during that period. As is often the case with politics, issues and policies can change quickly, as can the actors involved. For example, at the time of concluding my fieldwork, a once popular elected official from the Ecuadorian migrant community was now facing the threat of a recall election after only one year in office. Similarly, a Dominican political party that was part of my research is now in facing internal divisions after a contentious primary election in February, 2011. While these developments will certainly affect what many of the organizations in my study may do moving forward, my research cannot possibly keep pace with the ever changing nature of politics. As a result it is important to acknowledge future circumstances that may lead to different outcomes than those emerging from my research project.

Accessibility Issues

Despite my intent to have a balanced representation of organizations and actors from each community, I was unable to obtain the level of access to Dominican political organizations and activists that I initially sought. The exact reasons for these access issues are difficult to discern. In some instances, potential contacts to which I was referred to by professional networks simply failed to respond to multiple requests for participation. In other instances, I was informed by participants in my study that it was possible I would be met with disinterest, suspicion or resistance by some Dominican political activists by virtue of being an outsider to the Dominican social and political milieu, as I am neither Dominican nor have worked in any extensive manner with Dominican community or political leaders in New York. Such was the case when I was introduced to a prominent New York State Assemblyman of Dominican descent, whom I was told would be an asset in reaching out to other political organizations in the Dominican community; in that instance, my efforts to make contact with this elected official were met with disinterest.

I also experienced overt hostility and suspicion first-hand during an attempt to network with other leaders of the *Partido Revolucionario Dominicano*⁶ (PRD) in New York City at a party event during the Dominican municipal and legislative election in May, 2010. Despite having received an invitation to this event and being referred to a particular individual by one of the local party leaders who participated as an interviewee in my dissertation, I was largely made to feel unwelcome at the event. When I arrived I was immediately singled out by a PRD militant who instantly knew that I was an outsider to this event. While I was able to justify my presence at the event by referencing the leader whom I had previously interviewed, I was told in no uncertain terms that PRD activists go to great lengths to ensure that only individuals authorized

⁶ Translation: Dominican Revolutionary Party.

by the PRD leadership are allowed to attend official party functions. When I attempted to speak with the contact person to whom I was referred, I was rebuffed. The leader, who I was told would be willing to participate in my project, gave me little more than a passing look and walked away, after having introduced myself and explaining my research agenda to him. While it may very well be that my initial contact lacked the clout to validate my presence among other party leaders, it is equally possible that the response I received indicated that even those leaders who initially accepted my invitation to participate in the study remained suspicious of my presence and made limited efforts to facilitate my ethnographic research. To be sure, the activists and organizations with whom I ultimately was able to collaborate were quite receptive to my research and open in our interviews, these proved to be in the minority during my field work in the Dominican political community and largely represented voices that rejected the political *status quo* within the Dominican diaspora. These experiences of rejection by Dominican political activists validated points made by various other Dominican contacts and scholars such as Gonzalez-Acosta (2009), that the Dominican political landscape is characterized by high levels of distrust and suspicion, largely because of the contentious and often violent history of Dominican politics.

I did not, however, observe these sorts of barriers to access in my research with Ecuadorian civic and political leaders, though of course some actors were initially reluctant to discuss their political activities to a third party. Most Ecuadorian organizations were open to allowing me to observe their activities and/or to participate in interviews for my research. Some activists even expressed their gratitude that they had met a scholar who was interested in providing greater exposure and understanding to the Ecuadorian experience in the U.S. In the Ecuadorian political

community my status as a non-Ecuadorian arguably aided me with Ecuadorian organizations and activists, because I was regarded as an impartial observer.

Ultimately, because of the access issues I faced while seeking out Dominican participants for my research, the study places greater emphasis on how Ecuadorian migrants mobilize around their personal and collective experiences. Dominican organizations I studied and activists with whom I spoke are still featured, and their activities are compared to their Ecuadorian counterparts. In some instances, however, I rely on existing scholarship on Dominican political transnationalism to supplement my own research as well as to draw comparisons with Ecuadorians on different aspects of political organization. As a result, the Dominican experience serves as more of a point of comparison for Ecuadorian migrant political engagement, as the Ecuadorian experience is not only a more recent process, but also one that has received considerably less attention from social scientists.

The decision to use qualitative methods ultimately allowed me to explore various facets of how political organization and participation takes place in the Ecuadorian and Dominican communities in New York. Participant observation work allowed me to study the dynamics of the organizations that my participants belonged to, and how these organizations shaped participants' political engagement. Interviews in turn allowed participants themselves to discuss their reasons for becoming politically active, and to provide their own perspective on how they and other migrants are affected by being involved in transnational politics.

CHAPTER 3: DUAL MARGINALIZATION AND STRATEGIC CITIZENSHIP AMONG ECUADORIAN AND DOMINICAN MIGRANTS IN NEW YORK CITY

The spring of 2009 was something of a political turning point for the people of Ecuador.

Less than six months earlier, in a national referendum, the people of Ecuador ratified a new Constitution. The new constitution provides for a wide range of guarantee rights for disadvantaged groups including Afro Ecuadorians, indigenous nations, women, LGBT and Ecuadorian migrants living abroad. Among the rights extended to migrants is direct representation in the Ecuadorian National Assembly.

That April, a volunteer from Alianza PAIS⁷, the governing political movement in Ecuador, invited me to attend a debate in Brooklyn for candidates seeking to be the first migrant representatives to Ecuadorian National Assembly from the U.S. I expected the debate to focus on policy issues back in Ecuador, including policies towards migrants. As expected, each of the nine candidates discussed issues such as remittance fees, consular services and domestic policy issues in Ecuador. However, as the debate progressed candidates began to discuss issues I did not expect to be addressed in that forum. Marcel Feraud, a candidate for the *Partido Sociedad Patriótica*⁸, began his opening speech with a revealing comment, stating that:

Migrants have been forced to live clandestinely and in fear, and slapped with the stigma of being labeled “illegals”...Migrants cannot continue to live with less rights than others; our goal is, through the national assembly, to secure greater rights for immigrants in the United States, by negotiating with representatives of the U.S. government.

Assembly candidate Antonio Arízaga of the *Frente Unido de Inmigrantes Ecuatorianos* (FUIE)⁹, a migrant-based social movement organization, echoed similar sentiments during the debate about what the Ecuadorian government needed to address:

⁷ PAIS is an acronym for *Patria Altiva y Soberana*, which translates to High and Sovereign Country Alliance.

⁸ Translation: Patriotic Society Party

⁹ Translation: United Ecuadorian Immigrants Front

We have been advocating for immigrants' rights for many years, and this past January worked with Rep. Luis Gutierrez¹⁰ to introduce immigration reform legislation. The deaths of Marcelo Lucero and Jose Sucuzanhay¹¹ reflect the lack of commitment the Ecuadorian government has towards defending immigrants' rights in the U.S.

The issues raised by these and other candidates appear to reflect Ecuadorians' aspirations for greater integration into U.S. society. Yet if they are committed to U.S. citizenship, why do Ecuadorian migrants participate in their home country's political process to seek representation in Ecuador? Arízaga explained why many Ecuadorian migrants sought greater dual citizenship and greater rights in their homeland:

There are so many Ecuadorians living abroad that we account for approximately half of the economic resources through remittances we send. So there has to be some sort of recognition for these communities abroad through university opportunities, recognizing their rights, providing legal aid for human rights violations when people are assaulted here... We're not asking for money or public assistance. We're asking that Ecuadorians living abroad be given proper respect and above all attention to our demands.

To be certain, there are a number of immigrant populations across the world that has organized to demand citizenship rights in both home and host countries. Extensive research (Goldring 1998; Fitzgerald 2003; Smith 2006; Waldinger 2009) has documented this phenomenon among Mexican migrants in the U.S. Furthermore, Ecuadorians the only migrant population in New York where activists have organized to demand greater citizenship rights in both the United States and their country of origin. Dominican migrants in New York City, for example, also see political engagement in both home and host countries as an important and necessary step that they must take in order to fully advocate for their needs as a community. Marino Mejía, a lead organizer for Alianza País- a newly created political movement, noted as much:

¹⁰ Democratic Congress member from Illinois

¹¹ Two Ecuadorian immigrants murdered in Suffolk County, NY in separate incidents later prosecuted by local authorities as bias crimes.

One thinks about things over there [in the Dominican Republic] when there are natural disasters. One always makes the effort to collect money...to send it over there with the frustration that sometimes you send it and it never gets to where it has to go. So it's important for us to think about our political organization to deal with problems over there, as well as the community organizations we're involved with here [in the U.S.], so that when we rise up as a community the things we propose and do for over there fall into the hands of those who will do what's needed for the benefit of people over there. It's two paths, from the point of view of helping our community here in order to help a community over there, and that's the essence of the effort we make.

Yet despite being part of a political movement based in the Dominican Republic, Alianza País New York Section activists devote much of their collective efforts to promoting greater Dominican political representation in various U.S. elected offices. New York Section Director Radhamés Pérez, for instance, has publicly spoken on the need for Dominicans political representation as a means to demand greater rights in the U.S. on issues such as immigration reform, deportation raids, and the discrimination towards Dominican migrants (*En Movimiento* 23:6).

While transnationalism has often been discussed by many scholars as a series of social processes that link migrants to their countries origin, the preceding comments reveal that the transnationalization of migrants' political activities is largely a contextual matter. Thus, in this chapter I contend that Ecuadorian and Dominican migrant activists in New York are driven to political engagement in both the U.S. and their home countries based on a dual marginalization they experience in both countries. Migrant organization leaders and supporters alike in this study connect their marginalization with experiences of exploitation, prejudice and discrimination they associate with being migrants, which occur both in the U.S. as well as back in their respective home countries. .

The chapter further argues that Ecuadorian and Dominican migrant organization leaders in New York respond to this dual marginalization by articulating a discourse or narrative in which they identify themselves as a minority or vulnerable population in both the U.S. and their home countries. This marginalized political identity allows Ecuadorian and Dominican migrant organizations in this study to mobilize in order to demand citizenship rights in both the U.S. and their respective countries or origin. Lastly the chapter contends that while these groups of migrants demand full citizenship rights in each country, the extent to which organization leaders commit organization resources to press claims for greater migrants' rights is predicated by how these groups identify opportunities to not only make such demands, but also how each nation-state can protect migrants' rights and interests as a constituency.

Ultimately the goal of this chapter is to show that by articulating a political discourse rooted in dual marginalization and using this as a framework by which to demand citizenship rights in both the U.S. and their home country, the migrant organizations are part of a phenomenon that I refer to as strategic citizenship. As migrants, these organizations not only recognize that they are political subjects in multiple nation-states, but also that their status as migrants has engendered a particular of social, economic and political inequality specific to their experience. This inequality leads migrant organizations to develop strategies to obtain full inclusion in both states, which in this instance includes employing the dual marginalization discourse to frame their demands; identifying opportunities provided by each nation-state to make demands; and harnessing resources available to each organization to become politically engaged to make these demands. All of these elements, which occur across multiple nation-state boundaries, are what constitute strategic citizenship. In proposing the concept of strategic citizenship I draw on the contentious politics theoretical model presented by Tarrow (1998), in

which political actors rely on the structure of opportunities, mobilizing resources, identity framing and networks to make claims upon the state, which are also dictated by structural, historical and ideological factors.

The concept of strategic citizenship is partially influenced by the idea of flexible citizenship as articulated by Ong (1999), in which she contends that the logics of accumulation, movement and displacement associated with global capitalism induces subjects to respond fluidly and opportunistically to changing political-economic conditions. According to Ong, in their quest to accumulate capital and prestige in global arena, subjects emphasize and are regulated by practices favoring flexibility, mobility and repositioning in relation to markets, governments and cultural regimes. For Ong, flexible citizenship strategies, such as multiple passport holdings and multi-national family enterprises reflect actions by subjects to circumvent different forms of disciplining by governments and other power regimes. Such strategies have as a goal to maximize opportunities for upward mobility within contemporary capitalism, which relies on mobility of commodities and labor for accumulation.

The notion of strategic citizenship articulated here shares with Ong's theory that human subjects actively adapt and exploit opportunities in response to the logics of contemporary capitalism. Where strategic citizenship differs from flexible citizenship is that transnational political engagement, while adaptive and responsive to opportunities, operates within a structured field of activities shaped by the organizations in which migrant activists operate. Most political activities (with the exception of voting) occur and are shaped by organized actors. Organizations are what permit social actors to draw upon collective resources and networks, and employ discursive tactics to mobilize individuals to exert political power and challenge the state, to which the state must respond. The migrant activists in my study have adapted to the changing

social, economic and political landscape by seeking dual engagement in home and host countries. However because these activists necessarily rely on organizations to be able to confront governments, this forces migrant actors to act within a setting defined in large part by organizational dynamics. Migrant transnational action thus requires actors to consider strategies for mobilization based on the constraints created by the organizational nature of politics. This has led to the actors in this study to develop mobilization strategies for their organizations around the notion of citizenship rights, which includes not only exploiting the resources and opportunities available to their organizations, but also the narrative or discourse of dual marginalization that gives direction to political engagement.

Strategic citizenship also differs from flexible citizenship in terms of its direct engagement with the political concept of citizenship. Ong's work views citizenship in cultural terms, focusing on daily practices that reinforce belonging-ness across various nation-states. Strategic citizenship, however, addresses the more traditional notion of citizenship as formal membership in a nation-state, and how migrant actors organize to make demands for greater political, civil and social rights. Seen from this perspective, strategic citizenship focuses on how migrant activists mobilize in such a way as to maximize their opportunities to obtain citizenship rights that will end their marginalization. Finally, strategic citizenship differs from flexible citizenship in its view of how subjects relate to states. While Ong employs the concept to explain how subjects subvert and avoid controls by states; strategic citizenship specifically looks at how migrants actually seek to become legitimate subjects of states, in a bi-national context.

By examining strategic citizenship practices, this study aims to show that Ecuadorian and Dominican migrant activists seek to challenge what Jones-Correa (1998) has referred to as a "liminal" political space, where Latino immigrants they lack full membership in the U.S as well

as in their countries of origin. The actions by migrant actors in this study challenges the idea that Latin American migrants live in a political limbo, since they use their participation in home-country politics to challenge the marginalization to which they believe they are subjected to as a consequence of migration.

Existing Scholarship on Political Transnationalism

As migration from low-income economies to advanced capitalist countries such as U.S and European Union countries has increased in recent decades, there has been a concurrent growth in social scientific research that has focused on migrant transnationalism. Broadly speaking, this term has been used to refer to processes that deal with migrants' social, economic and political engagement in both migrant-sending and migrant-receiving countries (Glick-Schiller, Basch and Szanton-Blanc. 1994; Guarnizo and Smith 1998; Portes, Guarnizo and Landolt 1999). These same scholars who pioneered theoretical discussions of transnationalism generally describe it as the process by which migrants create social fields that link sending and receiving countries, in response to the economic dislocations associated with globalization. These dislocations include market liberalization and privatization policies that have driven wages downward for working class persons in developing countries, which make international migration a survival strategy for working class and poor individuals in these countries.

While the study of transnationalism has focused largely on how cross-border economic and cultural practices, such as trade (Landolt 2001) and religion (Levitt 2001), help foster transnational spaces, there has also been increasing emphasis on the emergence of political transnationalism by migrants. Early transnational scholarship focuses on the capacity for migrant transnationalism to become a space for migrants to contest and fundamentally transform the nation-state. Vertovec (1999), for instance, argues that migrant transnationalism also can be a

consciousness, a site of cultural reproduction, a site of political engagement or a reconstruction of a space or locality. Other scholars (Glick-Schiller, et al 1994; Smith 1994; Goldring 1999; Rivera-Salgado 2002) contend that migrant transnational political activity is about migrants constructing discourses that challenge established power hierarchies in home countries, which often lack democratic transparency, making claims for legitimate recognition by the home state. Other early scholars (Soysal 1994, Jacobson 1996) have argued that migrants' cross-border political participation is paving the way towards a post-national form of citizenship where state control over subjects will wane. Transnationalism thus represents a new phenomenon that will alter the nation-state system in favor of deterritorialized political communities (Glick-Schiller et al 1994).

Yet more recent scholarship on transnationalism, and in particular transnational political engagement by migrants, has cast doubt on the novelty and/or the transformative significance of migrant transnationalism. Foner (2000) notes that historically, migrants have kept strong political ties with their home countries as far back as the early 20th century, and failed to fundamentally alter the nation-state system. Robert Smith (2003) also expresses skepticism about the "strong" transnationalist perspective, which views migrants' transnational practices as undermining nation-state sovereignty or creating deterritorialized communities. Bauböck (2003) argues that the strong transnationalist view overstates the scope of transnational political practices as well as clouds our understanding of what migrants actually do when they engage in cross-border or bi-national political practices. Various scholars (Landolt, Aulter and Baires, 1999; Faist 2002; Smith 2003; Bauböck 2005; Gamlen 2008) have noted that nation-states, particularly those in migrant-sending countries, play an important role in shaping transnational practices by attempting to maintain relations with migrants living abroad, and/or by controlling their

transnational political practices, such as shaping the conditions for dual citizenship and providing varying levels of voting rights and/or political representation. Baübock (2003) suggests that political transnationalism should be viewed in narrow terms, as political practices that deal with overlapping memberships in two independent states. Thus newer scholarship sees migrants' transnational practices as rooted within and, indeed, a product of the nation-state system.

There is a fundamental issue related to transnationalism that emerges from existing scholarship (and in particular the work on Latin American political transnationalism), that this chapter seeks to address. Roger Waldinger (2009) has noted that research on migrant political transnationalism has sought to shift the focus of migration from political incorporation in receiving states to participation in home states, as a result of which less attention has been paid to how both conditions in sending and receiving states shape migrant political participation. Waldinger examines the development of expatriate voting in Mexico to argue that migrants' political participation is limited by the bureaucratic hurdles faced by the Mexican government in its attempts to create a voting system, as well as by the social processes associated with migration that limit migrants' political engagement. Itzigsohn and Villacrés (2009) note that the social and political contexts of both migrant-sending and -receiving countries place limits upon migrant political participation for Dominican and Salvadoran migrants. Similarly, Aparicio (2006) and Escobar (2004) have sought to focus more attention on how migrants negotiate their political engagement between the U.S. (and local level) political process and political processes back in Latin American countries. However there remains a need to elaborate a more comprehensive framework for understanding how structural conditions, migrants' personal experiences and state policies converge to create opportunities for engagement in both polities,

particularly if the goal of understanding transnationalism is to determine how migrants simultaneously engage politically in both home and host countries.

In this chapter I seek to build on the work of recent scholars examining Latin American political transnationalism by adopting Tarrow's (1998) contentious politics model in order to understand how Ecuadorian and Dominican migrants participate in both the U.S. political process as well as those in their home countries. In this way I identify how geographic and structural factors that shape migrants' experiences converge not only to provide an ideological framework for migrant leaders' political engagement, but also to create opportunities for these migrant actors to make claims for rights in each state based on their specific interests as migrants. While the emphasis is on the experiences of Ecuadorian migrants, I also discuss the experiences of Dominican migrants in order to compare differences between a more established and well-studied population with a newer and less well-understood set of experiences.

I begin the rest of this chapter by identifying the structural factors that facilitate organization among Dominican and Ecuadorian migrants in the New York City metropolitan area. I then address how two key issues -- remittances to the home country and victimization and exploitation in the U.S. -- create incentives for Dominican and Ecuadorian migrants to mobilize. I continue with a discussion on how these issues have led to the emergence of a political discourse where both groups label themselves as minority or marginalized groups in both home and host countries, which I refer to as *dual marginalization*. Leaders of the Ecuadorian and Dominican organization in my study employ this dual marginalization to justify their participation in both U.S. and home countries, in order to make claims for citizenship rights in both countries that have thus far been denied to those who migrated abroad. The last portion of this chapter provides examples of how different the Dominican and Ecuadorian organizations

examined in New York City attempt to mobilize migrants to make claims in each state, and how the decision to participate in U.S. and/or home-country political affairs is driven by perceived opportunities to successfully address their claims.

Geography and Political Engagement by Ecuadorian and Dominican Migrants

The geographic growth and concentration of both populations plays a critical role in allowing Ecuadorian and Dominican migrants to mobilize for political action. The high geographic concentration has, for example, prompted major political parties from both countries to establish local chapters in the New York City metropolitan area. Ecuador's governing Alianza PAIS party has also established its U.S. political bureau in New York City, while the Ecuadorian government under Alianza PAIS has opened three consular locations in the New York City metropolitan area (Queens, Manhattan and Newark, New Jersey), where in addition to providing various government services, migrants can also register to vote in Ecuadorian elections. The Ecuadorian government also opened its first *Casa Ecuatoriana*, which acts as the public outreach arm of the government's National Migrant Secretariat (SENAMI, Spanish abbreviation), in Queens. New York Meanwhile the *Partido de la Liberacion Dominicana* (PLD) and the *Partido Revolucionario Dominicano* (PRD), the two largest political parties in the Dominican Republic, have established not only a regional office in Manhattan, but also various precinct offices throughout the city to recruit and mobilize potential voters. Other smaller incipient Dominican political movements, such as Alianza País¹² which participated in my study, have followed suit.

The geographic concentration of both populations is also an important catalyst for civic engagement in both communities. For example, according to informational data provided by

¹² Not to be confused with Alianza PAIS, the current ruling party in Ecuador. For clarification purposes, Alianza PAIS (Patria Altiva y Soberana) from Ecuador will be in all caps, while Alianza Pais () will be in lowercase letters and referred to as A.P. throughout the study.

Ecuador's SENAMI representatives in the U.S., out of approximately 200 Ecuadorian organizations or groups in the U.S., approximately 45 are based in the New York City tri-state area or approximately one-quarter of all known organizations. Within the Dominican community, the exact number of organizations is not exactly known, but by way of the example the Latino Institute, a Dominican non-profit organization in New Jersey, lists 40 different active Dominican organizations in northern New Jersey alone¹³.

The presence of such a substantial number of civic organizations has impacted political participation as well, mainly through the growth of social networks between community members and organizations that allow politically active groups to recruit potential members and supporters. While observing Aliaza PAIS activists conducting voter outreach during the 2009 Ecuadorian election, I spoke with Henry, a 30-year-old Ecuadorian musical promoter who was volunteering with Francisco Hagó's campaign for the U.S-Canada seat in the Ecuadorian National Assembly. I asked Henry what prompted him to become involved with PAIS. He replied that he was always active in community service work since he was a youth in Ecuador, mainly through his local Catholic congregation. After arriving in New York, Henry said he was put in touch with a group called Juventud Ecuatoriana¹⁴, which helped organize cultural events and support efforts for Ecuadorians in the tri-state area. It was through Juventud Ecuatoriana that he met Luis Ortiz-PAIS's main campaign coordinator in the U.S. - who convinced him to volunteer for the PAIS campaign. Similarly, Alex¹⁵, now one of the main PAIS coordinators in New York City, explained in our interview how arriving in New York City provided him access

¹³ Source: <http://thelatinoinstitute.org/about/affiliates/>

¹⁴ Translation: Ecuadorian Youth. Throughout the rest of this chapter and proceeding chapters I will refer to the organization by its Spanish name or by the initials J.E.

¹⁵ Alex is a pseudonym used at the request of this participant to maintain anonymity. Unless specified, all named persons have consented to being identified in this study, per CUNY Graduate Center IRB-approved protocols for research with human subjects.

to a network of organizations that ultimately led to his political engagement

In December of 2007 and early 2008 I started trying to get involved with community organizations. Before this I was helping out a Colombian friend who was organizing an annual event every December to support the immigrant cause. .. Once I moved to the city I began to get more involved... in the process I meet another person who collaborated with my friend... who invited me to a party o festival at the consulate in New York. As it turns out, it was a meeting for an organization called *Juventud Ecuatoriana*...where the Minister of Migrant Affairs was also present.

Alex went on to explain how the meeting led to an opportunity to become politically involved in

Ecuadorian migrant politics:

After a few days I received an email from *Juventud Ecuatoriana*, inviting me to one of their meetings...I got this email and said let me see what this is all about.' There were about 20 to 25 people there, and everyone, including me, introduced themselves and talked about their story in the U.S. At the end of the meeting a person named Walter Sinche congratulated me for not hesitating to publicly discuss my experiences. He invited me to a meeting the next day for his organization, called *Alianza Ecuatoriana Internacional*.

Alex and Henry's trajectories to political engagement are not unique within the Ecuadorian community. Former FUIE President Vicente Mayorga explained how the presence of organizations in and outside of the Ecuadorian community allowed him to eventually become part of the FUIE:

I started here by creating a club called *Libertad* with my friends, play sports and to maintain ties to Ecuador, and with the city I'm from, Ambato. At the time the immigration issue made it necessary for us to speak out. We joined forces with some other organizations and presented this law [to protect undocumented migrants]. From there we created the *Frente Unido de Inmigrantes Ecuatorianos*. During that time I...had a workplace accident that confined me to a wheelchair. I couldn't walk, was undocumented and didn't know how the law worked here...It's a desperate situation but I asked around until I met some community organizations that showed me that we all had rights... That led me to become even more involved. I was an organizer for the New York Civic Participation Project and an organizer of the Freedom Caravan in 2003 for immigration reform.

These narratives indicate that migrant hubs like New York City play a central role in civic and political engagement for the migrants with whom I interviewed. As migrants continued to arrived, civic organization emerged in relatively short order, often driven initially by a desire

to foster community. Once linked up to the various civic organizations and other civic-minded migrants operating in New York City, political activity becomes a logical next step for those migrants who are committed to the betterment of their communities or to address the issues that affect them both individually and as a community. This sort of political participation is done with a clear understanding that as migrants, they have vested interests in becoming politically engaged in the U.S. as well as in Ecuador.

Current and former Dominican activists in New York also emphasized the existence of civic organizations in galvanizing transnational political engagement. Esteban, a former Dominican political activist turned historian, explained that when he arrived in New York City in the 1980s, he quickly connected with community leaders who took part in both various organizations within the Dominican community. Esteban said that while staying active in a number political organizations politically engaged in the Dominican Republic, he frequently interacted with individuals who participated in both Dominican political parties and advocacy groups in New York City, such as the National Dominican Congress, the ACDP (*Asociacion Comunal de Dominicanos*¹⁶) and *Alianza Dominicana*¹⁷. Similarly, Manuel Félix, a citywide coordinator for the Dominican Revolutionary Party's (PRD) New York Section, said that the party has community leaders from local civic organizations such as the Audobon Partnership and the Washington-Inwood Coalition among its members. Radhamés Pérez, New York Director of *Alianza País*¹⁸, recalled how his experiences over the years exposed him to a rich history of Dominican diasporic civic and political engagement in New York

The thing is that you will find the following phenomenon... the political parties that existed over there [in the D.R.] were created here. And as a result, you already had the PRD, the *Partido Revolucionario Dominicano*, you had the

¹⁶ Dominican Community Association

¹⁷ Dominican Alliance

¹⁸ Country Alliance

*Partido Reformista*¹⁹, and afterwards the *Partido Quisqueyano Democrata*²⁰. You also had representation from the *Movimiento 14 de Junio*²¹, which was the main left revolutionary organization in the country at that time... everyone in their own little church. You also saw Dominicans start to create cultural organizations, which were *clubes culturales y deportivos*²².

Pérez also noted how the network of Dominican organizations offered him the opportunity to work with a variety of civic and political organizations since coming to New York, both within and outside of the Dominican community:

I was mainly part of the Dominican Worker's Party (PTD)... Aside from my representation in that party I always had an inclination towards social work, community work. And in some way I had the chance to be a part of many community institutions, , a sort of coalition that worked on issues that were not exclusive to the Dominican community or with issues that were tied to minority communities...

The experiences here illustrate that the presence of a large community brought about opportunities for the respondents in my study to become civically engaged through social networks established among migrant community leaders and activists. Furthermore, Dominicans respondents' civic and political engagement took on a dual character. The civic organizations that emerged out of these two communities allowed migrants to adjust to their new context in New York while staying tied to affairs in their home countries, according to my respondents. These forms of organization discussed by participants highlight the duality of the migrant experiences: the social ties to their home countries, and their collective struggle to adapt and incorporate into U.S. society. This duality becomes the starting point for a number of migrant groups to search for forms of political engagement in both home and host countries.

Framing Migrant Political Participation

While the presence of a large community stimulated civic organization permitted many of

¹⁹ Translation: Reformist Party

²⁰ Translation: Quisqueyan Democratic Party; Quisqueya refers to the original indigenous name given to the island of Hispaniola

²¹ Translation: June 14th Movement

²² Translation: Sports and cultural clubs

the migrant activists in my study to take part in civic and political activities, their decision to join transnational political organizations was shaped by larger structural factors specific to their experience as migrants. Migrants in my study generally emphasized two issues justified their need to become politically active in both U.S. and home country politics. One was the remittances, or the economic resources that migrants send back to their home countries, and the impact these have on sustaining local and national economies. The second was the immigrant discrimination and disenfranchisement in the U.S. These two issues were central not only in shaping participants' political consciousness, but also helped forge a distinct political identity that is rooted in migrants' experiences marginalization in both home and host country by virtue of being migrants.

Ecuadorian and Dominican migrants in my study frequently evoked the issue of remittances when asked what prompted them to participate in home country politics. From their perspective, their capacity and willingness to send remittances back to the Dominican Republic and Ecuador constitutes a major contribution they make as nationals living abroad. These migrant organization leaders view the act of sending remittances not just as a means by which to address the economic needs of their families and kin, but as a political act that represents migrants' commitment to the strengthening of their home countries. This is reflected in the following comment made by Ecuadorian National Assembly²³ candidate Elsa Santos during a public debate held in Brooklyn for the U.S.-Canada seat in the Assembly :

Ecuador is in social, political and economic crisis, and yet we are here because we left our country to help our homeland, separating ourselves from our loved ones. We are the silent patriots. Our hearts and minds are still tied to Ecuador, and as such we need to make our presence felt in Ecuador

²³ The Ecuadorian National Assembly

I also observed Ecuadorian migrant constituents raise this issue. During a voter outreach effort carried out by National Assembly candidate Francisco Hagó in April, 2009, a small group of older Ecuadorian men openly expressed skepticism about President Correa and his Alianza PAIS movement, and dismissed the current administration as just another member of the *partidocracia*, or partyocracy²⁴. However, Hagó's commitment to easing restrictions and fees for remitted goods seemed to resonate with these potential voters, who expressed concerns to about how their remittances and their assets in Ecuador would be protected. At a another meeting with constituents later that year to discuss a proposed sports and recreation law, many of those in attendance vehemently rejected a proposal to levy a tax on remittances to fund an athletic commission office for Ecuadorian sports clubs in the U.S., arguing that migrants already contribute more than enough in remittances to have to be taxed on top of that.

The centrality of remittances also justified the need to mobilize migrants to take part in home country politics, according to many organizational leaders with whom I spoke. FUIE President Antonio Arízaga promptly raised the topic of remittances when asked why the FUIE and many other Ecuadorians migrant leaders continued to press the Ecuadorian government for a migrant policy agenda:

We have so many Ecuadorians living abroad that we're the ones who provide almost 50 percent of the economic resources through the remittances we send. So there needs to be some sort of recognition for communities living abroad in terms of providing opportunities, such as the issue of [Ecuadorian] universities abroad, recognizing their rights, providing legal aid for human rights violations for people who are attacked here. They definitely must provide the necessary protections, which is the state's obligation. To have transparent institutions, clean ones, to provide security to Ecuadorians living abroad. That's what we demand. We're not demanding money; we're demanding the respect due to Ecuadorians living abroad. The FUIE also emphasizes remittances in its criticism of the current Ecuadorian government. At one of their general body meetings in 2009, then President Vicente Mayorga denounced the lack

²⁴ The Translation of this term was taken from Escobar (2007). Partyocracy is a shorthand term used for political corruption and refers to a form of patronage politics for official party members.

of oversight and transparency for consular services in the U.S. Among the complaints the FUIE had of consular services were the high cost of sending goods home, which are subject to high customs fees. Mayorga added that the Alianza PAIS leaders in the U.S. were unresponsive to growing concerns from the community on this and other issues affecting the migrant community.

Yet even for Alianza PAIS leaders in the tri-state area remittances were still a point of contention between migrants and the Ecuadorian government. New York Alianza PAIS coordinator Ximena Peña said as much when asked what she hoped to accomplish by participating in Ecuadorian politics:

If we can get cooperation from our government here in a foreign country, if there is that opening from the government, we have to take advantage of it, because as migrants we are still collaborating with the country's economic activity. We are sending remittances. Therefore, I think it's only fair that the government over there, even if they can't address all our needs, should at least remember that there's a group of people over here and acknowledge us in some way.

Dominican political organization leaders in New York also discussed the importance of remittances as a rationale for taking part in home country politics. PRD-New York Section coordinator Manuel Félix discussed remittances as a key factor for the party's continued presence in New York:

We Dominicans ...contribute with our remittances. We are the primary real estate investors in the country. The Dominican community living abroad, and specifically New York, makes large contributions to the national economy. There are Dominicans here that help sustain households in the Dominican Republic, finance children's, brother's and families' education. So the PRD pays a lot of attention to this community, because we are an essential part of the country's development.

Marino Mejía of A.P. in New York also discussed remittances when asked why he and other migrants joined Alianza País:

The Dominican community abroad, and in particular those who live in the U.S., is reflected in all aspects of Dominicans' lives here and there Especially there, since in terms of sending remittances, we're close to 20 percent of the country's gross domestic product and approximately 30 percent of the national budget. So when a person who lives here calls the Dominican Republic and that person is the one

who sends money to pay for school, to pay rent, etc., and says to them ‘look mom, dad or brother, vote for Alianza País, which is a serious organization’, mom or dad will think thrice about it.

Radhamés Pérez, for his part, discussed the potential remittances have for improving Dominican society, and how that can be used as a way for Dominicans living abroad to advance their collective interests as a constituency:

I think that Dominican political parties need to legislate to make remittances more productive. We have to see how these remittances can do more than just serve to help people that are waiting for it at the end of each month to eat. It’s about combining remittances with the power, with the state, to turn it into something much more productive... Why don’t we say, for example, for each dollar that you send back to the people of San Francisco de Macorís, the state puts up three. And then we can start ...community projects.

Remittances were even brought up as an issue relevant to Dominicans’ political aspirations in the United States. Zenaida Méndez of the National Dominican Women’s Caucus explained how access to political power and representation in the U.S can potentially help Dominicans to lobby the Dominican government on remittance issue:

It helps. Every time we take a step further also helps Dominicans in the Dominican Republic. It’s open in remittances; because there’s a lot of regulation in remittances. We understand the needs for our community.

The emphasis that Ecuadorian and Dominican organization leaders placed on remittances as a political issue is based on factual evidence that notes the importance of remittances in low income countries. World Bank estimates indicate that migrants living abroad send approximately \$440 billion in remittances to their home countries annually (World Bank 2010). Economist Dilip Ratha (2005) found that remittances account for 3.3 percent of GDP and over 18 percent of imports in low income countries. Ratha also notes that remittances on the whole more than offset the loss of labor and taxable income from migration. Remittances are particularly important for immigrants from Latin America. A recent Pew Hispanic Center Report (López, Livingston and Kochhar 2009) found that approximately 54 percent of all foreign-born Latinos in the U.S. sent

remittances abroad, even in spite of the recent economic downturn. Adams, Jr. and Page's (2005) research suggests that remittances have a noticeable, albeit modest, impact on poverty reduction in migrant sending countries in Latin America.

Remittances are a vital economic resource in Ecuador. The World Bank (2010) indicates that by 2010, \$2.5 million in remittances went to Ecuador. Nieto-Cuevas (2005) conducted a random-sample survey of 200 Ecuadorian migrants in the New York City area, and found that 74 percent of migrants reported sending remittances to Ecuador. Most respondents sent money to family in Ecuador on a bi-weekly or monthly bases, with nearly half the respondents saying they sent anywhere from \$100 to \$1,000 each time, depending on financial circumstances and need. While most remittances are devoted to family consumption as opposed to wealth building, the volume of remittances is high and has outpaced both total banana exports (Ecuador's second largest export market) and total direct foreign investment when remittances are excluded.

Remittances are also critical to the Dominican Republic's economy. According to the World Bank (2010) total remittances to the Dominican Republic reached an estimated \$3.3 billion by 2010, which ranked third among all remittance receiving countries. Dominicans in New York account for 85 percent of all remittances to the Dominican Republic. As in Ecuador, most remittances are used for family consumption, though as Levitt (2002) has noted, some Dominican hometown associations (HTAs) have take part in collective remittances to fund small-scale community infrastructure projects, much in the same way that a number of Mexican HTAs have done so (Goldring 2003, De La Garza and Lowell 2000, Orozco and García-Zanello 2009).

Remittances were not the only aspect of their experience that migrants in my study identified as a catalyst for political mobilization. The hardships associated with irregular

immigration status and anti-immigrant discrimination also fostered transnational political engagement by migrant organization leaders in my study. Former Ecuadorian National Assembly candidate for the *Pachakutik* Indigenous Movement and Ecuadorian International Alliance Director Walter Sinche stressed the importance of immigrant rights as the impetus for his and other migrants' participation in both U.S. and Ecuadorian politics:

If you don't take part in causes, for rights, how can you serve the individual, or a community? In this country... if you don't vote you don't count. And that's why this government is afraid of giving 12 million papers to people who they know won't vote for them afterwards, right? If Congress gives papers to Perez, Gonzalez and Sinche, migrants won't vote for Schumer or won't vote for anyone without a Hispanic surname. That is the fear that current politicians, Republicans and Democrats have, because legalization doesn't benefit them; Immigration reform doesn't benefit them. They would rather deal with health care reform or financial reform- there has to be a major event for them to do something major.

The experience of arriving as an undocumented migrant was a reality that a number of the participants in my study had and in some case, still confront. Consider Alex from Alianza PAIS, who unexpectedly wound up living as an undocumented migrant, which fueled his political consciousness:

I arrived in February of 2000. And for A or B reasons I ended up undocumented. I graduated as a computer engineer in Ecuador and like everyone else came to try and find a job in my field. I was unable to do so and as a result wound up undocumented. And once I ended up in this situation I noticed, during all those years, all of the injustices that affected our people. Not just Ecuadorians, but people of other nationalities who come with the goal of improving their living conditions. But once they arrive here, they are subjected to this system. I have no hesitation in saying it, a system of exploitation. I was part of that experience for nearly seven years.

Alex added that his situation was exacerbated by the fact that he worked in upstate New York as an ironmonger for less than minimum wage, under the threat of being reported to I.C.E. officials. Similarly, Vicente Mayorga described the hardship he faced when he decided to come in the U.S. as an undocumented migrant:

[Political] persecution, not finding a job, and even attempts against my life in Ecuador, led me to come to the U.S. When my sons were growing up, there were

no resources for their education... And that's when we decided to come to the U.S., initially undocumented. It was then that I had the chance to discover up close the drama of living undocumented. I lived undocumented in the U.S. for 13 years, separated from my family. My two sons stayed in Ecuador. I came with my wife. I came to know discrimination, exploitation and everything else that comes with being Hispanic, with being a migrant, with not having papers. It's a life that fills you with persecution madness. You can't have a peaceful life.

Vicente explained how undocumented migrants' experiences required migrants to become politically active, explaining to me that "the undocumented are being criminalized more and more and do not have access to any sort of benefits, yet they work, pay their taxes and all the rest. These politics of fear affects all workers, regardless of their immigration status.

FUIE President Antonio Arízaga also noted how discrimination was a key motivating factor towards his political participation in the U.S.:

I think what gave me the greatest incentive to engage these issues were the racial attacks that took place at that time. I remember there was a man, Auca Pishter, an Ecuadorian who at the time was beaten to death with a bat. That seemed to awaken people's outrage a bit more, and also the solidarity of some people who have remained in solidarity with these issues, and who have been against these injustices and all of those sorts of incidents.

Jorge Vivanco, founder and President of *Nuevas Raices*²⁵, an Ecuadorian community-based organization in Newark, New Jersey, stated how the problems and hardships faced by undocumented migrants in his community and in the U.S. motivated him and other members of *Nuevas Raices* to advocate for Ecuadorian migrants, who are a critical resource for the U.S moving forward:

We're talking about serious, serious issues... An immigrant who doesn't have a steady job, has no papers, is marginalized when it comes to health care services. We live in the most developed country in the world, but that person has no health care... Another serious problem that's affecting the immigrant community in general is when kids get to college and have no papers. Then they are shut out of the educational system. What is the U.S., going to do if all of these children end up on the margins of college? If they can't rejuvenate the population with these youth... we'll be lacking professionals on all levels. That will create a serious

²⁵ Translation: New Roots. Through the remainder of the study I will refer to the organization by its Spanish name

social chaos in the U.S. Local and national politicians need to prevent that now, because rejuvenating the population is necessary... If those youths aren't in the university and starting new careers to promote national development, the question becomes, what will the U.S. do then? And far from expelling us from the country, they should instead be opening the gates to the universities...

For the migrant leaders in my study, the hardships associated with being an immigrant in the U.S. are important catalysts for political engagement. The FUIE, example, boldly advocates for Immigration reform now on the cover of its organizational brochure. The brochure also notes the FUIE was founded "to work for rights of all Ecuadorians abroad." They add that their work "centers on the struggle for civil human and labor rights; against discrimination, racism xenophobia, raids and deportations; against anti-immigrant laws; against racial hate crimes; and in defense of life." During FUIE meetings leaders and rank and file members alike noted that the rise of racist and xenophobic mobilizations against immigrants, including incident against Ecuadorians in New Haven, CT, made FUIE's efforts to push for immigration reform all the more crucial.

The FUIE also frequently mobilized its supporters to rallies and protests for immigration reform. In October, 2009 the FUIE took part with a coalition of organizations in a lobbying session and rally in Washington, D.C. for immigration reform.. Throughout the march and the rally The FUIE made patriotic gestures, presumably as a means by which to legitimize their cause. This included displaying U.S. flags, emphasizing their commitment to serving in the military and paying their taxes, and proclaiming their support for President Obama.

Immigrant discrimination is also an important call to action to groups in my study that are not explicitly seen as political organizations. Edward Miranda and Ronald Bautista, President

and Vice-President of *Juventud Ecuatoriana*²⁶ respectively, explained how as an organization they strive to mobilize Ecuadorians around issues of discrimination and immigrant rights, despite being a non-profit civic organization:

(Edward): Bottom line, what do we seek? To create individual leaders, [to be] an incubator, as they say, so that in the future through their ideals they give and receive, become part of an integrated community and be a leader, and why not also, a political leader?

(Ronald): To contribute to public policy

(Edward): And also to contribute to areas outside of public policy, by creating policies towards everyone...that are just. To do things without discriminating, without being racist, to not segregate, right?

Dominican organizations in New York also viewed immigrant discrimination and undocumented migration as a reason for political engagement. Radhamés Pérez explained how he made the decision to advocate for Dominican migrants' rights in the U.S. both with his former organization, the Dominican Worker's Party, which he has carried over to his current organization, Alianza País:

We have to mobilize around Dominican issues here, because the Dominican is subjected to exploitation and marginalization, because he is excluded, because he lives in rat and roach-infested dwelling, because he's repressed by the police, because he's chased by immigration. So we had to find that balance. And we found that balance through a more generic definition [of the mission]...which we perceived as being more in line... with reality. From that point forward that group... began to intervene in the political debate and struggle on both sides.

Radhamés's current organization, Alianza País, also works to advocate for Dominican migrants' rights and improve Dominican migrants' quality of life in the U.S. Alianza País also stresses the need for increased Dominican representation in U.S. elected office, as a means to improve community organization in the U.S. (*En Movimiento*, 28:4).

Manuel Félix of the PRD also noted Dominican migrant's experiences in the U.S. as

²⁶ Translation: Ecuadorian Youth

cause for mobilization in talking about the party's objectives with the New York City Dominican community during our interview:

And every Dominican, every *PRD-ista* participates in city affairs. [The party] worries about agency, worries about Dominicans on immigration issues. We participate in the North American internal political process. We have a course, as you already know, for Dominicans, elected officials who are close friends of the PRD. And we help organized election campaigns for these candidates.

A Minority Here and There: the Dual Marginalization Discourse

The contributions made through remittances and immigrant discrimination are issues that loom large in individual and collective experiences of the in my study. These two issues converge and lead migrants to frame their political participation in a particular way. For the migrant organization leaders in this study the combination of these two sets of experiences represent a migrant-specific political reality where the common denominator is their marginalization. This has led these migrant organizations to articulate a political discourse in which they view themselves as marginalized political subjects in both the U.S and their respective home countries. This discourse is rooted in the idea that as marginalized subjects of the state, migrants occupy a status as second class citizens or a minority group in each country. As such, both the U.S. and their respective home countries are obligated to provide full citizenship rights, in order to meet their responsibility to protect their subjects. By adopting this discourse or narrative, the organizations in this study are able to frame their political activities in both the U.S. and their respective home countries as a campaign to end migrant marginalization. The decision to demand rights in each country is driven not just by their personal ties to each country, but also on the fact that they make substantive contributions as subjects of both states, and as such meet the obligations required of for full membership in each

state where they are subjects.

Furthermore, by viewing their political engagement as a response to dual marginalization, migrant organizations in this study give themselves the opportunity to pursue full citizenship rights based on where they are more likely to be able to make effective claims to the state for greater migrant rights. The dual marginalization discourse and the collective action carried out by organizations based on this discourse thus becomes the basis for strategic citizenship. This is because these social actors recognize their ability to make legitimate demands for inclusion in two nation-states and look to exploit these opportunities by linking these two sites of collective action through the dual marginalization narrative. This strategic citizenship exercise also represents a challenge to the idea that contemporary migrants are political subjects that are mutually excluded from home and host country political processes, that Jones-Correa (1998) argues hinders immigrant political engagement. Rather than having limited opportunities for political participation, or living in a state of what Jones-Correa calls liminality, migrants in this study are not only cognizant of their capacity to become legitimate political actors in both the U.S. and their home countries, but also attempt to make their presence felt in both states as a way to empower.

Many of the Ecuadorian organization leaders in this study, for example, often referred to dual marginalization in order to rationalize their political engagement. Respondents generally expressed the opinion that migrants live as a minority group both in the U.S. and Ecuador. While they understood that their minority status in each country was dictated by specific factors in the U.S. and Ecuador, the common denominator was their marginalized status as migrants, which was central their belief that transnational political engagement was a necessity.

As previously noted, the migrant respondents discussed at different points how the discrimination and exploitation they faced in the U.S., based on their background as non-English speaking and often undocumented migrants, informed their views that migrants were marginalized subjects. These same respondents also spoke of being discriminated or marginalized in their home countries, both by the government and by home country society in general. They discussed how migrants are underrepresented in Ecuadorian government policies, and are often seen as second class citizens by non-migrants in Ecuador. These views were sometimes expressed in very direct language, and respondents appeared to accept this identification as minority. Ximena Pena, an Alianza PAIS coordinator in New York, explained the quandary Ecuadorian that she believes migrants face by being a minority back Ecuador:

It's sad because you're a minority in your own country, but sadly it's true. I will tell you migrants, it's generally the poor who migrate. So that in itself, makes people say that migrants 'ah, those are the ones that aren't very educated, they went to work over there, to serve the *gringos*.' That's it. So yes, there is a certain amount of discrimination by people back there towards those who are here; 'ah the ones who working over there washing dishes, over there cleaning.' There is a certain kind of discrimination towards migrants. Furthermore, I'm not sure how true this is, but [Assemblywoman] Linda Machuca... said that some Catholic schools refused to accept migrants' children in their schools because they were children with family problems; that they were complicated and caused trouble in school. So that is the perception... It's sad, because no one really knows what one goes through as a migrant over here. There is a lack of empathy because we have contributed to the country's economy. After oil, we are the most important good. We help maintain the economy, according the President himself. But that really doesn't matter to people over there. Politicians are indifferent to that.. If you as a migrant- in my mind as a minority- after you have worked here and go through a lot here, on top of being discriminated, you go back and find yourself at a complete disadvantage, because you're a foreigner twice over...you live like a foreigner here and when you go to your homeland, after a few years, you also feel like a foreigner, because everything has changed.. So then that should motivate people. I want to find a country with open doors; that will receive you and support you and help you incorporate.

Vicente Mayorga, in turn, described his group's work as reflective of a migrant-specific political identity and agenda, rooted in a politics of restitution:

I personally delivered a letter to the President of Ecuador at the U.N... in which we summarized all of the aspirations the Ecuadorian community abroad has. There's the need for a civil registry abroad. There's the issue of the university [abroad]. There's the [government] accountability issue. There's the issue of establishing bilateral treaties with different countries to normalize Ecuadorians' legal status abroad. A series of issues, from migrants' perspective. That's our platform. That's not to say that we don't have other things to say. We have already addressed the issue of national sovereignty, the issue of paying foreign debt, and other things as well. But those issues don't really address migrants' demands, but rather come from a migrant perspective, that of restitution.

It was not simply the activists I interviewed who spoke of migrants as a minority in Ecuador. Some constituents also began to define themselves as a minority group when discussing how government policies would impact Ecuadorians living abroad. During a public meeting with constituents in October, 2009, Assemblyman Francisco Hagó discussed the Citizen's Participation Committee (CPC), a new entity created by the Ecuadorian government to act as an oversight body run by independent citizens. A number of constituents in attendance asked Hagó if migrants would be guaranteed a spot in the CPC, to which he replied that he suggested to government officials that the CPC should be required to have at least one migrant representative, since migrants are a vulnerable population within the Ecuadorian state and need to have a voice in government decision making. However, Hagó said he was told by government officials that that the government couldn't impose that sort of mandate, since it would violate the spirit of completely open participation. Constituents expressed resentment toward the government's position. One individual bitterly argued that migrants are absolutely a vulnerable group and must have guaranteed representation the CPC in the way that indigenous groups do, especially since the appointments to the CPC are for six year terms. This individual's comments were met with wide agreement by all in attendance. Another person said that it was time for the community to demand more from its elected officials in Ecuador, arguing that migrants not only needed guaranteed representation on the CPC, but on other government bodies such as the Central Bank

so that migrants are more fully incorporated, which the crowd enthusiastically endorsed.

Dominican participants also spoke about feeling marginalized in their home country. Marino Mejía described the marginalization of Dominicans living abroad back in their home country in a rather pointed criticism of Dominican politicians:

The traditional partyocracy has always opposed voting abroad. Migrants were just a source of income with nothing given in return. It was a long-lasting process in which many politicians made it a political platform of sorts, a conceptual platform where we were seen as lowly piggy banks that would send money. With time we've started to break with that view, and the fact that we send remittances, has provided the government motivation to make the concessions that have been made, which by the way, are relatively minimal because in the Dominican environment there's this whole neoliberal perspective that sets limits on those of us Dominicans on this side to invest and become part of the productive apparatus in the Dominican Republic.

Mejía also described the prejudice and marginalization migrants face from people back in the Dominican Republic:

There's no doubting it [the prejudice]. And that prejudice is manifested through euphemisms. There are some people who talk about "Dominican Yorks" and they see it from a pejorative perspective. When a Dominican goes back there politicians close all the avenues to prevent that person from being a political candidate, because they view us as someone who supposedly abandoned them; that we came here, enjoyed all the benefits and left them behind. But they don't realize that we're the ones who send money over there... We are looked at with disdain, they look at us from over their shoulders, but we are also seen as a dangerous entity. We really have to keep fighting that.

Migrant organization leaders and even constituents ultimately associate these feelings of marginalization with their experiences as migrants. For these actors, being a migrant in the U.S. often means confronting anti-immigrant discrimination, xenophobia and racism, which leads them to view themselves in the same situation as other racial minorities struggling for equal protection. Marginalization and minority status back in their home countries is, in turn, more rooted in class or status differences vis-à-vis non-migrants. The common denominator between

these two forms of marginalization is that migration becomes a marker for “other-ization” by non-migrants in each country, which migrants perceive and ultimately use to justify their bi-national claims for rights.

Strategic Citizenship: A response to dual marginalization

Transnational political engagement, in the form of strategic citizenship, is the solution the actors in this study have found to negotiate the marginalization they experience as migrants. Migrant organizations attempt to press claims for full and equal membership in both the U.S. and their home countries, since they view their marginalization as the product of social and political conditions in both home and host countries. Employing the dual marginalization discourse is the first step in strategic citizenship, in that migrant organization leaders rely on this to frame their involvement in both countries. Beyond this however, strategic citizenship is also driven by how actors themselves view the opportunities within each nation-state to be recognized as legitimate actors and to make claims for rights and resources as citizens of the state. While all of the organizations in this study had some level of political engagement in both the U.S. and their home countries, organization leaders tended to lean towards greater political participation in one country versus another. Ecuadorian and Dominican political organizations in my study favored made specific decisions on whether to pursue political engagement in their home countries or in the U.S. based not only on how receptive governments were to their claims of marginalization, and where they could most effectively gain access to political power. While there is some variance in terms of specific policy items that migrants address in each country, by and large the claims these organizations make all revolve around the central issue of marginalization. Furthermore, in many instances these organizations make the same demands to both home and host countries on issues such as legal protection for undocumented migrants, immigration reform

legislation and access to education.

Ecuadorian migrant organizations in this study appeared to have greater engagement with the Ecuadorian government to make demands as marginalized migrants. For the respondents in my study, the political reforms brought about by President Rafael Correa, coupled with the legal hurdles faced by undocumented migrants (a status many Ecuadorians face), made home country political involvement a more viable option to exercise real political power and make claims on the state to address migrant marginalization. Dominican organization leaders, however, were more inclined to take part in U.S. politics, since they perceived that many hurdles still existed for migrants to have a presence as full-fledged members of the Dominican polity, despite recent measures taken by the Dominican government to facilitate migrants' political incorporation, including dual citizenship, external voting and the possibility of migrant legislative district in the Dominican Congress. Skepticism among many Dominican migrant leaders about the Dominican political process, along with the gains Dominicans have made in U.S. elected offices have led migrant organizations, including those that originated in the Dominican Republic, to invest more in expanding Dominican political power in the U.S. These leaders believe that greater political power in the U.S. will also make it easier for migrants to make claims to the Dominican government to end their marginalization in the Dominican Republic. Thus as these organizations look towards transnational political engagement as a response to dual marginalization, the scope and direction of their political activities in each country are based on the extent to which organization leaders see possibilities for their groups to become effective advocates for migrants in either home or host country, which constitutes the next part of strategic citizenship.

Much of the political debate in the New York Ecuadorian community focused on the Ecuadorian government's role in addressing migrant marginalization both in Ecuador and the

U.S. During the 2009 candidate debate for the Ecuadorian National Assembly, migrants representing various political parties all articulated a migrant-specific to address migrant issues both in the U.S. and Ecuador. Alianza PAIS candidate Francisco Hagó proposed creating an Immigrant Protection Law in Ecuador, guaranteeing migrant eligibility voluntary enrollment in Ecuadorian Social Security, expanding funding credits for migrants to establish their own small businesses, and more efficient consular services. These same issues were endorsed by candidates from the PRIAN, a conservative political party, the Social-Christian Reformist Party (PRSC) and the Democratic Left Party (ID). The FUIE, for its part, mobilizes migrants around issues such voluntary social security for migrants, the creation of a Migrant Savings and Loan Bank to facilitate transactions in the U.S. and Ecuador, affordable distance education in Ecuadorian for migrants abroad, and guaranteed migrant representation throughout government agencies and branches, including the Supreme Court, Consulates and the Casa Ecuatoriana (*Ecuamigrante*, August 2008).

Meanwhile Ecuadorian migrant community and non-profit organizations also seek to press claims in both countries for issues affecting migrants in the both the U.S. and Ecuador. Nuevas Raices, informs community members through a monthly newsletter about their constitutional rights in Ecuador, as well as Ecuadorian policy issues that affect migrants, including the new social security reforms (*Manuelita Sáenz*, July 2010), and civil service reforms that permit migrants to apply for Ecuadorian public sector jobs (*Manuelita Sáenz*, June 2010). Juventud Ecuatoriana (JE), a non-profit organization has worked with Ecuadorian government and officials in Azuay Province to promote local economic development and education program, as a way to reduce economic and social pressures for Azuayans to migrate. JE also works with the Casa Ecuatoriana and other non-profit organizations to provide *pro bono* legal services for

migrants both in the U.S. and Ecuador. Other Ecuadorian migrant leaders made similar claims in their discourse. Ecuadorian Assembly hopeful Francisco Dillon explained to reporters during the 2009 Ecuadorian election that he was committed to working on issues that Ecuadorians in the U.S. contend with on a regular basis, including jobs, college credential recognition by U.S. universities and employers, lobbying for comprehensive immigration reform, and collaborations with both the White House and the U.S. Congress on issues directly affect Ecuador.

On another occasion, during a public meeting between Assemblyman Hagó and his constituents, Alianza Ecuatoriana²⁷ Director Walter Sinche publicly asked what Mr. Hagó and/or the Ecuadorian government was doing on behalf of undocumented migrants in U.S. immigration detention centers, and whether the current administration was doing anything to lobby for either comprehensive immigration reform. The Ecuadorian Consul, who was also in attendance, replied that the Ecuadorian government has tried to take steps to provide some sort of aid to migrants in detention, including opening a consular office in Texas, where many Ecuadorians are being detained. He and the Ambassador to the U.S. also had discussions with U.S. government on immigration reform but said they face an uphill battle, because this is a very tough issue in the US.

At the same time however, Ecuadorian migrant activists whom I observed and spoke with were less engaged with the U.S. political system than with the Ecuadorian government. This is not to say, however, that they have completely opted out of U.S. politics. I learned from both FUIE leaders whom I interviewed as well as from email bulletins I received from the organization that the organization frequently mobilized Ecuadorian migrants against anti-immigrant discrimination, as well as for marches and lobbying sessions with members of

²⁷ Translation: Ecuadorian Alliance

Congress such as Luis Gutierrez (D-Illinois) on behalf of pro-immigrant legislation. Leaders of Juventud Ecuatoriana informed me during our interview that the organization runs a scholarship program as part of their effort to create new civic and political leaders in the Ecuadorian community to run for office in the U.S. During that interview J.E. President Eduard Miranda and others in the organization openly supported Francisco Moya in his campaign to become the first Ecuadorian-American to be elected to public office in New York State, in 2010. Nuevas Raíces President Jorge Vivanco noted in our interview that the group has started to work closely with Newark Mayor Corey Booker to create a local community center for the Ecuadorian community, and to create opportunities for undocumented Ecuadorian workers to legally work as street vendors in the city. However most of the activities I observed among Ecuadorian organizations involved dealings with the Ecuadorian government. Even organizations like J.E. and *Nuevas Raíces*, which are more attuned to enhancing Ecuadorian political engagement in the U.S., often worked with Ecuadorian government officials in collaborative projects such as the capacity building program sponsored by the *Casa Ecuatoriana* and in the case of J.E., local development projects in Ecuador. Furthermore J.E. and *Nuevas Raíces* seemed to be in the minority, with other groups either foregoing political engagement altogether- such as the Ecuadorian Civic Committees in New York and New Jersey- or else working directly with Ecuadorian government entities. For example, approximately 40 groups were taking part in the SENAMI-sponsored organizational capacity-building workshops that I was invited to attend by the *Casa Ecuatoriana* as an observer. During my interview with Alternate Assemblywoman Blanca Ortiz, she noted that many of the Ecuadorian community groups would report to her to address issues affecting the migrant community both back in Ecuador as well as locally in northern New Jersey, where she resided.

This dynamic seems largely due to new avenues for migrants to claim substantive citizenship rights in Ecuador. In addition to dual citizenship and voting rights from abroad²⁸, Ecuadorians living abroad have been granted the opportunity to elect and recall representatives to the National Assembly, the right to directly introduce legislation to the Assembly, and the right to participate in the country's Citizen's Participation Council- a body of seven elected citizens charged with fostering civic participation and oversight of government entities (*Constitución de la Republica del Ecuador*, 2008). Ecuadorian migrants also have access to the *Casa Ecuatoriana*, which acts as the public liaison for the National Migrant Secretariat, the equivalent of a Ministry of Migrant Affairs. The *Casa Ecuatoriana* provides migrants with a wide range of resources and services for migrants, including legal assistance, capacity building programs for civic organizations, and videoconferencing services to allow migrants to communicate with their families in Ecuador. The *Casa Ecuatoriana* also plays an active role in promoting various civic, cultural and educational events carried out by community organizations.

The emphasis on engagement with the Ecuadorian government may also be driven largely by the high number of non-citizens. The high rate of non-citizenship among Ecuadorians limits their access to political power in the U.S. at this point. Many are not eligible to vote in the U.S., and as a result Ecuadorians have limited representation in state and local public office in either New York or New Jersey. In 2010, State Assemblyman Francisco Moya was the first Ecuadorian elected to a statewide office. While some Ecuadorian organizations, including the FUIE, *Alianza Ecuatoriana Internacional*, *Juventud Ecuatoriana* and even *Alianza PAIS*, have made efforts to engage the American political process through community organizing and

²⁸ This is not to be confused with absentee voting, which applies to persons who maintain permanent residence in the voting country. Here migrants are eligible to vote in Ecuadorian elections even when they no longer maintain permanent residence in Ecuador.

lobbying/pressure politics, political engagement in the U.S. has been a more elusive target for these organizations around which to mobilize. Hence, many organizations place significant emphasis on demanding greater rights within the framework of Ecuadorian politics, since these avenues are much more accessible at the present time.

The high number of undocumented migrants also limits U.S political engagement to some degree. Some respondents said that migrants are reluctant to do anything to put them at risk for deportation. This point was expressed by Vicente Mayorga, who said that organizational attendance fluctuated because many migrants felt pressured to work and keep a low profile on account of their legal status. I also observed this at a FUIE meeting in the summer of 2010, when the organization discouraged undocumented members from participating in a civil disobedience action for immigration reform to ensure no one would risk being deported if convicted. Alex of *Alianza PAIS* says that he was also unable to do much of anything politically while he was looking to resolve his undocumented status. Between this dynamic and the avenues now available for migrants in Ecuadorian politics, the focus thus far for migrants has been more towards home country political empowerment.

It should be noted though that while Ecuadorian migrant leaders appear more engaged with home country politics, there are leaders within the community that look at involvement in Ecuadorian politics with skepticism. While observing *Alianza PAIS* volunteers on the campaign trail in 2009, I saw Francisco Hagó struggle to convince some older Ecuadorian migrants to vote in the April election, as they openly expressed skepticism that the current government would be less corrupt or actually do something on behalf of those living abroad. During our interview, Jorge Vivanco of *Nuevas Raíces* noted that many Ecuadorian migrant he works with in his Newark neighborhood have expressed resentment over the failures of past governments in

Ecuador to address the economic problems that led to so many people leaving the country. However Vivanco added that: “there’s resentment, but the damage isn’t permanent. The community isn’t permanently damaged. It’s a circumstantial damage.” He has also found that people in his community have come to *Nuevas Raíces* for help on issues, and want to have an active voice despite their disillusion with past governments.

Dominicans meanwhile, are almost in the opposite situation. There are in fact a good number of migrants engaged in Dominican politics. The phenomenon of Dominican hometown associations and religious groups playing an active role in local community development projects in the Dominican Republic has been well documented (Itzigsohn et al. 1999, Levitt 2001 and 2002). My own research also discovered other forms of home country political participation by Dominican migrants. For example, Máximo Padilla, President of the *Comite de Dominicanos del Exterior*, (CODEX; Committee for Dominicans Living Abroad) recently meet with government officials in the Dominican Republic to denounce legislation that bans imports of appliances and used vehicles into the country, without making distinctions between goods remitted by migrants for personal consumption and goods imported for secondary market sales (*NotiPress*, 9/23/10). Radhamés Pérez noted in our interview that the political discourse in the Dominican community here and in the Dominican Republic has changed with respect to migrant issues, as politicians have started to articulate policies that speak to migrants’ marginalization, which creates incentives for migrants to become active in Dominican politics:

“This has really been changing, and now they [elected officials] try, in their discourse as well, to articulate some sort of proposal that... helps Dominicans. For example, with the return policy, what have we been saying? ‘Listen here, if I’m returning to my country, why do you have to tax me like a foreigner just because I’m living abroad? If I live in Santiago and I’m going to move to San Francisco de Macoris, you don’t tax me.’ So things like that, basic things like these, are now a real part of the political discourse.”

Alianza País (D.R.) has also been active in mobilizing voters in New York for 2012 Dominican Presidential hopeful Miguel Moreno, as I saw not when I was invited to observe the organization participate the 2010 Bronx Dominican Day Parade, where they handed out information about Moreno to potential voters. The PRD events I was invited to observe in 2010, which included a training session and a congressional election rally, were well attended by Dominicans in New York. Even the National Dominican Women's Caucus lobbies around some issues in the Dominican Republic, including deportation of Dominican migrants who have spent their entire lives in the U.S. and have few or no relatives in the D.R. to care for them after they arrive in the country, as Zenaida Méndez noted during our interview.

Most Dominican organizations, however, have increasingly focused on expanding their political engagement at the local and national level in the U.S., particularly as a greater number of first and second generation Dominicans have obtained elected office in New York and New Jersey. As Radhamés Pérez previously noted during our interview, a number of the organizations from the Dominican Republic that set up shop in New York to recruit migrants into Dominican politics, such as the political parties, have over time started to work more closely with Dominican elected officials in the U.S. to focus on migrant-related issues in the U.S. Radhamés also that as an activist with the Dominican Workers Party (PTD) his group took an active role in supporting Guillermo Linares's New York City Council campaign in the 1980s, and the recently mobilized voters in support of newly elected Dominican councilmember Ydanis Rodríguez, a former PTD member himself. Manuel Félix also noted during our interview that that the PRD takes an active role in mobilizing voters to support Dominican candidates for elected office in the U.S. Other organizations, such as ACDP and *Alianza Dominicana*, which originally took a more active role on issues in the Dominican Republic, have over time shifted away from

Dominican politics to focus on U.S.-centric issues affecting the migrant community (Aparicio 2006).

This lean towards U.S. political engagement appears to be driven by the perception, at least among some leaders, that Dominicans can have more successful political engagement through the U.S. political system, and face more obstacles in making claims with the Dominican government. This point is best illustrated by Zenaida Méndez of the National Dominican Women's Caucus (NWDC), when she discussed her organization's focus on U.S political engagement, and why she encourage Dominicans to focus less on Dominican politics:

Here it is easy for you to go to your person and your assemblyman or representative, because you're not going to go to Washington to see the President all the time. So the one serving you is your local official. In our country, the President, everybody is talking to the President, the President you know, it's like, if the President goes 'you're not welcome to the President' it doesn't matter. You don't talk to your senator, anybody. So in the case of the Dominican Republic, I was very troubled when they revised the constitution in the Dominican Republic and they had like a big celebration, all the Dominicans in the U.S. or *extranjeros*, and whatever. I was like, 'oh, my god', because to have people who represent them here or vice versa, I don't see what the Dominican government can do for us.

Zenaida's comments reflect a profound skepticism about what opportunities might exist for Dominicans abroad for effective political engagement in the Dominican Republic, and consequently, the capacity to make greater claims for substantive rights, despite efforts by the Dominican government granting migrants abroad (at least the possibility of such.) Former PRD leader David Williams, who now works with a smaller Dominican political party in New York, while less skeptical about what migrants can get from their political participation, shared during an interview what he has heard from Dominicans in New York about the possibility of having representation:

It [congressional representation from abroad] could help us and it could hurt us...

If we simply go to occupy a space, people will not value- in fact, I have been in debates-and the constitutional reform has not even been approved yet- where there have been a large number of people who have been opposed to having representatives for Dominicans abroad, because they said that all they'll do is go collect [a paycheck]. That they are not going to solve any of the problems that afflict us over here, because we live here, not there.

The division that seems to be expressed within the Dominican migrant community over whether or not to strive for greater political rights and representation seems to be influenced by the perception that migrant's interests will not be adequately represented by anyone in the Dominican government, if at all. This may very well be due to the prevalence of clientelism and corruption in the Dominican Republic, which as González-Acosta (2009) notes, is prevalent in Dominican electoral politics. This would partially explain why Dominican organizations, such as the aforementioned, as well as activists from Dominican political parties, have over time turned their attention towards claiming rights from local and national politicians in the U.S. The option for organizations such as the NWDC and *Alianza Dominicana* to focus less on rights in the Dominican politics is also easier to make given that Dominicans now control four seats in on the New York City council and have three state legislators.

Thus transnational or cross-border political engagement among Ecuadorian and Dominican migrant activists emerges from a confluence of structural and political conditions that compel migrants to elaborate strategies to claim rights in overlapping polities. The social and economic issues associated with migrants' experiences create the opportunity to forge a political identity that defines their political engagement. Once this new political identity, which is rooted in a sense of dual marginalization based on their migrant status, takes hold, migrant actors in these two populations make demands on both states. However the levels and direction of bi-national political engagement varies based on the avenues available to migrants in both countries, which means these actors make deliberate choices on where to direct their demands for greater

inclusion and/or rights. Thus as vested members of two states, yet living at the margins of both polities, the migrant actors in my study must ultimately negotiate between these two contexts to empower themselves sufficiently to escape a marginalization that is specific to their lived experience as migrants.

By relying on a contentious politics/collective action framework, it is possible to see the factors that characterize strategic citizenship by Ecuadorian and Dominican migrant organization leaders in New York City. Strategic citizenship finds its genesis in the discourse of dual marginalization employed by the migrant organization leaders featured in this study. This dual marginalization discourse stems from the organization leaders personal experiences as well as the collective experiences of their countrymen who have migrated abroad. Marginalization in the U.S. stems from overt forms of discrimination and xenophobia, as well as the precarious lifestyle that comes with undocumented or irregular status that many Dominicans and Ecuadorians have. At the same time, marginalization in their home countries is rooted in resentment over limited citizenship rights despite the personal sacrifice and economic contribution migrants make to their home countries, along with social stigma and discrimination directed towards migrants by those who opted not to migrate. These experiences of dual marginalization are employed by organization leaders as a discourse to justify transnational political engagement in order to demand rights that will end this marginalization, which constitutes the first part of strategic action by migrants. Strategic citizenship is further defined by calculated decisions made on the part of organized migrant actors to make demands for rights in either home or host country, based on where migrant actors believe they are most capable of obtaining citizenship rights that will put begin to put an end to their marginalization. Thus discourse helps to both frame actions and mobilize supporters, while actors adopt particular strategies to make claims for citizenship

based on the opportunities available for them to act.

Yet as subsequent chapters will demonstrate, strategic citizenship by Ecuadorian and Dominican migrant organizations is not only defined by the discourse and actions of migrant organizations. Rather, these organization leaders must navigate through various structural factors that either constrain or enable them to effectively claim rights in both countries to end migrants' dual marginalization. Chapter Four, for instance, will illustrate how existing laws and government policies in both Ecuador and the Dominican Republic shape the public discourse and opportunities for migrants' political participation; and whether the migrant organizations in my study ultimately opt to aggressively seek greater rights in their home countries or instead direct their efforts towards U.S. political engagement. Following this, Chapter Five provides an in-depth examination of a number of select Ecuadorian and Dominican migrant organizations to argue that the structure and membership composition of each organization also play an important role in not only creating opportunities for transnational engagement, but also their effectiveness in advocating for citizenship rights to end dual marginalization.

CHAPTER 4: CREATING STRATEGIC CITIZENS: SENDING-STATE POLICIES AND DUAL MARGINALIZATION

This chapter focuses on home country government influence on migrant transnational political mobilization. Specifically, it examines the various approaches used by the Ecuadorian and Dominican governments to engage with and integrate their migrant populations living abroad. The chapter explores how history of migration in each country influences the way in which each government engages with its migrant population, and in turn how the policies that emerge from these attempts at engagement affect migrants' political engagement in these countries and the U.S. Both Ecuador and Dominican Republic, similar to many other migrant-sending countries in Latin America and other parts of the world, have, to varying degrees and through a variety of approaches, embarked on policy programs designed integrate their migrant populations into their polity (Gamlen 2008). In most cases, including the two countries that are examined here, migrant policies are driven largely in response to migrants' economic contributions through remittances, philanthropy and/or community development programs in their home countries. It is the substance of these policies that ultimately determines how migrants participate in home country politics.

I argue that while the Ecuadorian and Dominican governments have expanded its efforts to court migrants as a constituency and integrate them economically and politically, the extent of migrant policies shape the scope and depth of migrants' transnational political engagement in both the U.S. and their home countries. Furthermore, despite differences in official government discourse and citizenship rights offered to migrants abroad, Ecuadorian and Dominican government policies, ultimately reinforce dual marginalization for migrant organization leaders, as rights are either denied or framed as rights given to groups who are seen as visible minorities

by the home country government. Thus these policies not only influence how organizations in my study seek political inclusion, but do so by reinforcing minority group identity that these migrants use to frame their transnational political participation.

Studies of home country efforts to politically incorporate migrants have focused on dual citizenship and external voting rights; often focusing on the effect of these two measures on migrant external voting turnout. (DeSipio, Pachon and Lee 2003; Escobar 2004; Gamlen 2008; Itzighsohn and Villacrés 2009, Waldinger 2009). Assessing the overall impact of policy changes on migrants' engagement, however, is a rather complex endeavor for a number of reasons. These aforementioned studies, while insightful in highlighting electoral participation by the general citizenry in response to enfranchisement, only present one form of engagement, and a very specific one at that. It does not tell us, for instance, how migrant organizations lobby with home country elected officials around policy matters that impact migrants directly. These studies also fail to account for how constituents mobilize in ways other than voting, such as rallies, protests, lobbying or town hall meetings. Furthermore, quantitative studies of external voting cannot, in and of themselves, capture the extent to which home country government rhetoric compels migrants to seek home country engagement. Additionally, these studies often overlook the degree to which migrant organizations interact with home country governments, and how these interactions- whether collaborative or contentious in nature- lead organizations to mobilize migrants

A smaller number of studies have examined political engagement from a different perspective. Some have examined how dual citizenship policies have allowed migrant entrepreneurs to run for elected office in their home countries (Bakker and Fox 2005). Other studies have examined how state and local governments in Mexico have become responsive to

lobbying efforts by migrant hometown associations (Orozco and Lapointe 2004; Smith 2006). These studies are important qualitative analyses of the interplay between home country governments and migrant political actors that demonstrate how migration has impacted governance in migrant-sending countries. Yet these studies often provide a singular perspective on a particular policy initiative or of a single country, leaving only an idiosyncratic analysis for understanding how governments shape migrant political engagement.

The consequences or outcomes of discourse and/or interactions between the state and actors are difficult to quantify. Furthermore, this chapter attempts to provide a comparative analysis of how different migrant sending countries approach the question of migrant political incorporations, and respond to migrants' demands for greater political rights. As such, the findings in this chapter are based on combination of qualitative methods to analyze these aspects of state-migrant relations, including content analysis, participant observation and interviews with government representatives and migrant leaders. While it is important to acknowledge that the data presented in this chapter does not constitute an exhaustive examination of the impact sending-state policies have on migrant participation, it nevertheless provides greater detail on the varied and complex ways in which different home country governments take deliberate steps to foster or to restrict migrants' participation.

Ecuadorian migrant policy

In the last five years the Ecuadorian government has dramatically expanded its involvement in migrant affairs, to the point where Ecuador now has perhaps one of the most comprehensive migrant policy programs of any Latin American country. Where many national governments in Latin America have reluctantly extended limited political rights to migrants

abroad, the Ecuadorian government plays an increasingly visible role in the daily lives of many Ecuadorians living abroad, including those living in the New York City Metropolitan area.

The government's expanded role in migrant affairs is driven largely by ideological orientation and policy objectives of President Rafael Correa's government, which markets itself as the advocate of a "citizen's revolution"²⁹ in Ecuador. The five part "revolutionary program" that the Correa government has pledged to carrying out is designed to create a more inclusive state. These include a political revolution (expanded electoral representation), an economic revolution (based on domestic production, nationalized natural resources and promoting domestic entrepreneurship); an ethical revolution (based on greater government transparency and accountability); a socio-cultural revolution (based on promoting cultural pluralism; universal education, a larger welfare state and expanded rights for racial, ethnic and gender minorities); and a revolution for regional integration in South America³⁰. Migrants are an important part of Correa's political program, given that over the past 15 years nearly 3 million Ecuadorians have migrated abroad, largely because of the economic and political turmoil that emerged from the mid-1990s until Correa's election in 2006. Thus, the government's appeal to migrants also represents a strategy by the Correa administration to distinguish itself from the host of unpopular governments that are often blamed for the current exodus from the country- a point raised by a number of the participants in this study.

The expanded role of the Ecuadorian government in migrant affairs has a significant impact on migrants in New York. There are five specific aspects of Ecuadorian government policy that directly influence migrants' transnational political engagement, both by individual

²⁹ See Appendix C:1 for an example of how this motto is used in government propaganda

³⁰ See Appendix C:2 for pamphlet highlighting these "revolutions"

constituents as well as by organized actors. These include: (1) the state's rhetoric regarding migrants; (2) legal changes that ensure migrants' ability to claim rights from the state; (3) Expanded electoral rights; (4) Government programs and policies targeted at or inclusive of migrants concerns; and (5) direct participation by government actors in the migrant community in New York. Beyond the immediate rights and benefits granted to migrants, these policies also influence political engagement among the migrant organizations I studied in New York, in both direct as well as in more subtle ways. The changes in rhetoric, policies and rule of law create opportunities at the national level for migrants to demand rights and protections, even on issues specific to the U.S. These policies have also allowed the government to cultivate support among a population that is shielded from many domestic-level policies inside Ecuador, and build alliances with particular migrant organizations. At the same time, however, these policies have also reinforced dual marginalization for migrant organization leaders by casting migrants as a vulnerable population, which encourages migrant organizations to adopt a minority group identity to make claims.

State Rhetoric

Like other countries in Latin America with large migrant populations, Ecuadorian government leaders have increasingly incorporated migrant-specific issues into the national political discourse. Migration is not new to Ecuador's national political discourse- migrant issues have been debated since the late 1990s on issues such as dual citizenship and external voting rights for Ecuadorian migrants (Jones-Correa 1998), but have gained importance under the Correa government as migration abroad has peaked. President Correa has repeatedly stated that an estimated three million Ecuadorians now live abroad, which means that migration directly affects a larger number of households in Ecuador (*Ecuador News*, 10/1/2009). The economic impact of

remittances also drives Ecuadorian migrant policy, as migrants collectively sent back over \$USD 2 billion in cash to Ecuador from 2008 to 2009, According to Ecuadorian Central Bank data that is published online (*Banco Central del Ecuador*, 2009). These realities have compelled politicians and government officials to develop a political discourse that addresses migrant-related issues.

Migration is now framed as a critical part of Correa's "citizens' revolution", which rhetorically speaking, makes migration major policy subject in Ecuador. However the content and the tone of government rhetoric have a significant impact on the way in which Ecuadorian migrant organizations in New York City engage in transnational political practices. Through its rhetoric, the government looks to portray migrants as full members of Ecuadorian society to whom the state has an obligation to serve and protect. At the same time, however, government discourse also characterizes migrants as a disadvantaged and victimized group, which reinforces feelings of marginalization among migrant organizations in New York, which they use to mobilize the community and make demands on the Ecuadorian state.

The Correa administration's claims its migrant policy is part of a broader goal of fostering *El Buen Vivir*, or Good Life for all Ecuadorians. *Buen Vivir* is an ideology that seeks to create a more sustainable, culturally diverse and socially equal Ecuadorian society. The state aims to accomplish through redistributive policies, reforming the country's social welfare system, and by expanding civil and political rights to different racial, ethnic and gender minorities. The government also identifies eight major principles that define Ecuador's migrant policy. These include: (1) creating an integral policy that respects human mobility on all levels of government; (2) non-discrimination towards migrants; (3) recognition of the principle of universal citizenship; (4) defending migrants rights in home and host countries; (5) political representation; (6)

recognition of the rights of transnational families; (7) reciprocity in its migratory policy; and (8) state support for migrants (SENAMI, 2009).

Reinforcing patriotic sentiments among migrants is also central to the government's ideological campaign to incorporate migrants. Ecuadorian government officials help to organize events celebrating Ecuadorian independence and other important national holidays in New York (*Noticiero Universo*, 6/1/2009). Consular offices make pocket-sized copies of the new constitution publicly available to help migrants understand their rights along with illustrated pamphlets on the history of progressive politics in Ecuador. This includes accounts about former President Eloy Alfaro (who is described as the architect of the first progressive constitution in Latin America), and the place that migrants have in Correa's citizen's revolution.

Government officials also stage various public events around the world to reach out directly to migrants. President Correa has met with migrant constituents in Belgium to emphasize the state's obligation to defend migrants rights in their current countries of residence, as well as ensuring their right to democratic participation in Ecuador (*El Migrante Ecuatoriano*, 12/3/2009: 2). A similar event was held in Queens in 2009, where President Correa personally met with the New York migrant community and affirmed his administration's commitment to advocating on behalf of Ecuadorians living abroad for greater protections as immigrants. This included addressing issues such as discrimination and comprehensive immigration reform in the U.S. Correa also discussed the numerous policy achievements to help migrants such as the drafting of a new constitution, external voting representation for migrants, improved consular services, and economic reforms facilitating the remittance process.

Alex of *Alianza PAIS* discussed the government's efforts to demonstrate their

commitment to migrants in New York:

It's our obligation, our responsibility to let people know what the government is doing for them, whether in Ecuador or here in the U.S ...Several figures from the Ecuadorian government have been brought here. The Director of the Internal Revenue Service, Carlos Marx Carrasco came a few months ago.... Just a few weeks ago the director of the Ecuadorian Customs Corporation, Santiago León, was also invited to give a talk on what the procedures are for people who want to return to Ecuador... This is the work that we've done so far, to invite figures in the Ecuadorian government, to come and explain to the community and see the work that's being done and how that affects the immigrant community.

Finally, representatives of Ecuador's National Migrant Secretariat (SENAMI) frequently publish statements condemning bias crimes committed against Ecuadorian "compatriots" in the New York area, as well as anti-immigrant legislation adopted by state and local governments in the U.S. ("SENAMI Por el Respeto a los Derechos de los Compatriotas", *Noticiero Universo*, 5/16/2010: 9; "Pronunciamento de la Secretaria Nacional del Migrante Sobre la Aprobación de la Ley S.B. 1070 en El Estado de Arizona, Estados Unidos", *Noticiero Universo*, 5/16/2010: 9; "Secretaria Nacional del Migrante a la Comunidad", *Noticiero Universo*, 11/16/2009: 18; *Comunicado de Prensa, Secretaría Nacional del Migrante*, 6/1/2009).

Ecuador has also made migration a central foreign policy issue, seeking to position itself as an advocate of migrant rights and a supporter of universal citizenship. Ecuadorian Migrant Affairs Minister Lorena Escudero recently stated at international forums that Ecuador views migration as a human right which states must work to guarantee to all persons ("La SENAMI Promueve la Integración Regional, *El Migrante Ecuatoriano*, 10/15/2009: 5). The Migrant Affairs Sub-Secretary echoed these views at an OAS meeting in Mexico, where he defended dual-citizenship, and stressed that migration had to be seen in a positive light. The Sub-Secretary also characterized migration as a process of "growth, breaking down walls and learning about new places", and added that the world is moving towards "universal citizenship", given that the

current global economy is centered on human mobility. (“Ecuador Plantea ante la OEA Retorno Voluntario de Inmigrantes”, *Notimex*, 4/12/2010)

The central component of Ecuador’s migrant discourse, however, is a campaign called *Todos Somos Migrantes*, or We Are All Migrants. According to *Casa Ecuatoriana* Director Pablo Calle, The purpose of the campaign is to educate the public both here as well as in Ecuador about the reality of migration and the reasons why people emigrate, as well as to highlight the discrimination and prejudice that migrants face both in the U.S. and Ecuador

The *Todos Somos Migrantes* campaign explains that the Ecuadorian government’s migrant policy is part of its larger goal of fostering *el Buen Vivir*. Consequently migration needs to be seen as a policy issue that affects all sectors of Ecuadorian society. The campaign adds that its goals are to (1) recognize and vindicate the work that migrants carry out across the world for both home and host countries; (2) Fight against any form of discrimination towards migrants and the denial of humane human mobility; and (3) To show solidarity with migrants who are victims of restrictive or punitive measures taken against them (SENAMI 2009).

The *Todos Somos Migrantes* campaign also directly engages with the public to reinforce the Ecuadorian government’s commitment to fostering greater inclusion of migrants. The campaign frequently recruits people to act as goodwill ambassadors to represent the ideas and the image of the campaign. This often includes famous sports and musical celebrities from Ecuador, as well as well-known celebrities from the countries where Ecuadorians migrate to. The campaign also uses direct outreach. At a SENAMI-sponsored street festival in Queens in the summer of 2010, *Todos Somos Migrantes* representatives introduced various popular Ecuadorian musicians as goodwill ambassadors and discussed the various efforts the Ecuadorian government

was carrying out on behalf of migrants in the U.S. and across the world to those in attendance. SENAMI officials also set up a kiosk to provide information on various government services available to all Ecuadorian citizens. The *Todos Somos Migrantes* campaign also took part in an immigration-rights rally in March, 2010, in which they not only marched alongside other immigration-reform and supporters, but also distributed information to educate people in attendance about the right to human mobility in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights ([http://www.todossomosmigrantes.org-Multitudinaria Marcha en Washington Por Reforma Migratoria](http://www.todossomosmigrantes.org-Multitudinaria_Marcha_en_Washington_Por_Reforma_Migratoria), 3/22/10)

Ecuadorian government discourse therefore attempts to reframe migration in a positive light to secure migrant support. Yet in doing so the government's discourse also reinforces notions of victimization and marginalization victimization. President Correa has stated that the three million Ecuadorians who have left the country to seek better opportunities as "one of the greatest failures in social and economic policies in recent decades" ("Correa Quiere Que Regresen los Emigrantes", *Ecuador News*, 4/8/2009:6). Furthermore, both government and *Alianza PAIS* representatives in New York often evoked the term tragedy to refer to the migration process, which was first articulated by President Correa himself. At the first *Alianza PAIS* event I attended, Alex explained that migrants were now being given an opportunity to have direct representation in the country's National Assembly because they are the victims of a "national tragedy", and President Correa has pledged to give migrants their proper place in Ecuadorian society. The two main *Alianza PAIS* candidates vying for the U.S. seats to the Ecuadorian National Assembly echoed Alex's earlier comment that night. They pledged to support the Correa administration's efforts to support migrants, including advocating for migration as a human right, universal citizenship for all Ecuadorians, non-discrimination for all

Ecuadorians, and extending social security to migrants. The two candidates also stated that migrants are ultimately victims of social inequality, corruption and failed economic policies and deserve a voice in the Ecuadorian congress. I also observed the same discourse of victimization with New York's *Casa Ecuatoriana* Director, who said the *Casa Ecuatoriana* was created to address the needs of Ecuadorians living abroad, given that President Correa has qualified Ecuadorian migration as a national tragedy, due to the high levels of migration after the 2000 bank holiday.

Official government propaganda also fosters promotes the victimization discourse. The SENAMI's official program for migration policy states that the SENAMI's primary obligation is to uphold the principles laid out in the 2008 Constitution which explicitly notes that that state is obligated to (1) Ensure non-discrimination against people based on their migratory condition; (2) recognize the principle of universal citizenship which includes protecting the rights of all Latin American peoples living abroad, and (3) Protect the rights of all Ecuadorian migrants living abroad (*Politica Migratoria Para el Buen Vivir*: 5)

These various examples of the type of rhetoric used by government officials and ruling party leaders are indicative of the effort on the part of the Ecuadorian state to depict migrants as a marginalized segment of the population in the context of Ecuadorian politics. Migrants are not only victims of deliberate actions of past governments, but also are victims of various forms of discrimination based on their identity as migrants. This victimization discourse allows the government to frame its actions as a restitution policy towards their migrant population.

Rule of Law Changes

The current Ecuadorian government made changes to the country's rule of law to further

incorporate migrants. One of the major accomplishments of the Correa administration was to successfully create a constituent assembly to draft a new national constitution that would reflect the principles of equality and diversity that the Citizens' Revolution proposes to create in Ecuador.

The new Ecuadorian Constitution includes a number of provisions pertaining to migrants' rights, or what the document itself refers to as human mobility rights. Title I of the new constitution describes the state as a territory with a geography that is defined by "natural, social and cultural dimensions." (*Constitución Política del Ecuador*, Article 4, No. 2, 2008). Title I also defines the terms of formal citizenship, which now includes second and third-generation Ecuadorian descendants (*Ibid*, Article 7, No. 2). The constitution now establishes dual citizenship as a right for all persons born in Ecuador, (*Ibid*, Article 8, No. 3), rather than just as a product of legislative fiat. Finally, Title I establishes that non-citizens residing in Ecuador have the same rights and obligations as citizens (*Ibid*, Article 9).

In Title II of the Constitution establishes equal protection rights for migrants, by providing that no person will be discriminated based on their migratory condition. This article also requires the state to enact affirmative action policies to promote equality for groups living in unequal condition, which includes migrants (*Ibid*, Article 11. No.2). Title II also establishes the right of universal education, which Ecuadorians enjoy regardless of their migratory status (*Ibid*, Article 28). Finally, Title II outlines "human mobility rights", which include the right to migrate, and the state's obligation to consider all migration legal. This article also requires the state to ensure migrants' capacity to exercise their constitutional rights by (1) providing assistance to migrants and families wherever they reside; (2) Providing protection and counsel to migrants; (3) safeguard migrants who are deprived of their rights abroad; (4) foster migrants ties to Ecuador

through family reunification and return migration; and (5) protect the rights of all transnational family members (Ibid, Article 40). Human mobility rights also include the rights of asylum and refugees and protects their right to remain in the country legally (Ibid, Article 41), as well as the right to leave and re-enter the country in accordance with government regulations (Ibid, Article 66).

The 2008 Constitution also requires the country's executive branch to account for migrant populations living abroad. For example, the executive is now required to create National Equality Councils, to ensure that the state develops effective policies to ensure the protection of rights for different groups, including migrants (Ibid, Article 156). The Attorney General's Office is also required under the Constitution to protect the rights of migrants living abroad (Ibid, Article 214.)

The new Constitution also includes a section that outlines the state's obligations to promote the *Buen Vivir*, which also applies to migrants. This includes an obligation to provide access to social security to Ecuadorians living abroad (Ibid, Articles 371 and 374) as well as to create a comprehensive migration policy that ensure unrestricted human mobility at both the national and international level (Ibid, Article 392). The last part of the Constitution requires the state to pursue a foreign policy that prioritizes regional integration with other Latin American countries, which includes free movement of persons throughout the region (Ibid, Article 423).

The rule of law established by the 2008 Constitution, thus firmly secures migrants' status as full members of the Ecuadorian state. Yet the way that migrants' rights are expressed in the Constitution impose a minority group status onto migrants within Ecuador. The obligations the constitution places on the state to protect the welfare of migrants and their families (including

those still living in Ecuador given the specific use of the term “transnational families”) represent a mandate to rectify migrants’ social and political marginalization, as they were previously deprived of rights and protections by the state. The emphasis on protections and restitutions reinforce migrants’ marginalization and victimization within the Ecuadorian nation-state.

Political Representation

Perhaps the most significant change in Ecuador’s migrant policy under Correa’s government has been to expand political rights for migrants living abroad. Ecuadorians living abroad have had limited political rights since 1995, when the Ecuadorian Congress passed legislation granting migrants external voting rights for Presidential elections (Jones-Correa 1998). The 2008 Constitution outlines specific political rights for migrants, including (1) the right to elect and to be elected to public office; (2) Take part in public interest issues; (3) Present legislation and ballot measures; (4) Consultation; (5) Participate in government oversight; (6) Recall their elected officials; (7) Work in the public sector and (8) create, join and fully participate in political parties or movements (Ibid, Article 61). Article 63 guarantees that migrants can vote in Presidential elections, and grants migrants the right to run for elected office in Ecuador.

The Constitution also grants migrants direct participation in the Ecuadorian National Assembly and calls for the creation of legislative constituencies abroad. Each external legislative constituency can elect two Assembly members, though the Constitution does not specify how these constituencies are to be organized (Ibid, Article 118). The Ecuadorian government approved the creation of three migrant constituencies: One for the United States and Canada; one for the European Union countries; and one for South America (*Consejo Nacional Electoral*,

<http://www.cne.gov.ec>.)

Finally, the new constitution establishes the right for all Ecuadorians, including migrants living abroad, to present legislation to all levels of government in Ecuador. Specifically, it allows any constituent to draft and submit a bill for consideration by the National Assembly (Ibid, Article 102). Some migrants invoked this right during an open meeting sponsored by Assemblyman Francisco Hagó's office in late 2009. At this meeting, leaders of a federation of local Ecuadorian sports clubs in the U.S. discussed legislation to be submitted to the National Assembly to create a government-sponsored sports federation for migrants living abroad.

The Ecuadorian government has also worked to encourage migrant electoral participation in New York. This includes voter registration drives at all area consular offices, creating three polling places in the Greater New York-New Jersey-Southern Connecticut area (Queens, NY, Newark, NJ and New Haven, CT) for elections and providing transportation for voters living in suburban areas such as Suffolk and Putnam Counties, NY, during the 2009 general election. The government also circulates information in New York community newspapers such as *Ecuador News* and *El Universo* to notify voters about election-related events³¹.

Government Policy and Programs

The fourth significant change in Ecuador's official migrant policy has been the creation of an extensive bureaucracy to work exclusively on migrant affairs. While other Latin American countries with large migrant populations such as Mexico and El Salvador have created bureaucracies to work on migrant-related issues, these are limited to lower-level departments or bureaus within larger ministries, usually within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Ecuadorian

³¹ See Appendix C:3 for examples of public information on official political affairs

government however, created the *Secretaría Nacional del Migrante*, or National Migrant Secretariat (SENAMI), an executive-level ministry specifically devoted to developing and enacting all migrant-related government policies. The SENAMI is described as “an active part of a global movement dedicated to promote universal citizenship” with the goal of “encouraging migrants to exercise their full rights and enable their capacity for take part in ‘good life’.” This, according to their mission, includes “planning and executing Ecuadorian migrant policy, fostering dialogue with migrant actors as well as articulating a clear public policy agenda that is consistent with the demands of citizens who are living abroad” (SENAMI, “Nuestra Vision, <http://www.senami.gov.ec>).

The SENAMI has developed a series of policy programs specifically designed to address key aspects of Ecuadorian migrants’ collective experiences. Specifically, the ministry has outlined six programs and initiatives that are part of its effort to meet the state’s constitutional obligations as outlined in Article 40 of the Constitution. These include:

Links Program: Under this program, the SENAMI is responsible for providing opportunities for migrants to communicate and interact with their relatives and communities back in Ecuador. This includes video conferencing for migrants to communicate with people in major urban centers in Ecuador including Quito, Guayaquil and Cuenca, as well as long distance telephone service.. This program also includes sponsoring cultural events in migrant communities that reinforce Ecuadorian culture and identities.

Welcome Home Program: The goal of this program is to provide resources and assistance for those migrants who intend to permanently return to Ecuador, as a way to stimulate return migration. There are two specific initiatives that make up this program: the *Menaje de Casa* and

the Cucayo Fund. The *Menaje de Casa*, or Household Goods Program, aims to reduce the financial burden that migrants seeking to return to Ecuador often endure by eliminating all import taxes on household and small business goods for return migrants (*Bienvenid@s a Casa* pamphlet, SENAMI). The Cucayo³² Fund, in turn, is a government funded competitive grant program designed to award up to \$USD 25,000 in seed money to migrants who plan to set up a small business in Ecuador, as well as financial advisement and technical assistance to help these aspiring small entrepreneurs (*Bienvenid@s a Casa: Programa Fondo Concursable “El Cucayo”*, SENAMI brochure).

Integrative Migration Policy Program: This program seeks employ a “humanistic and rights-driven” migration policy (*Nuestra Visión*, <http://www.senami.gov.ec>). The SENAMI’s official documentation does not offer more specific details on how this initiative works in practice, though the idea of a humanistic and rights-based migration policy was often echoed by government officials with whom I spoke or who I saw speak at public events in New York City. New *Casa Ecuatoriana* Director Pablo Calle told me that one of the organization’s goals was to support migrants in the free exercise of their rights. (In another instance, during an open meeting with the Ecuadorian community at the Queens Consular Office, the Consul General explained what steps the Ecuadorian government has taken to provide some sort of aid to migrants in detention, including opening a consular office in Texas, where many Ecuadorians are being detained awaiting deportation hearings. Ecuadorian officials also engaged in public lobbying to the U.S. and governments of various EU nations to adopt less restrictive immigration policies.

Migrant Bank Program: The SENAMI is actively working to create a financial institution to

³² Name is derived from the Quichua language, which refers a custom in which food provisions are taken to the *minga* or communal work site (Source: SENAMI)

provide free or low-cost services to migrants living abroad, as well their families and/or businesses in Ecuador. Services would include personal and commercial bank accounts that migrants and their family and counterparts in Ecuador can jointly access as well as low interest personal and commercial loans for migrants. Facilitating migrants' access to financial services and capital will ensure that migrants' investments effectively contribute to the country's overall economic development, according to the SENAMI (*Nuestra Visión*, <http://www.senami.gov.ec>)

Transnational Family Support Program: This program is designed to provide a variety of informational and support services to migrants and their families through a network of “Casas” or “Houses” across the Ecuadorian Diaspora. This is the basis for the *Casa Ecuatoriana*³³, or Ecuador House, system that the SENAMI has implemented in New York, Milan, Madrid and Caracas, as well as throughout various parts of Ecuador, to provide an institutional resource that fosters transnational ties. The *Casa Ecuatoriana*, acts as the main point of contact between Ecuadorian migrants and the government. At the same time, however, as discussed later in this chapter, it also plays an important role in migrant political engagement by directly participating in civic life.

The Ecuadorian government has also developed a number of new entitlement and service provision programs that extend benefits to Ecuadorian migrants living abroad. One is national Social Security program (IESS), which allows migrants to voluntarily enroll in the program. The second is the new Higher Education Law, which requires Ecuadorian universities to provide distance education programs for migrants to pursue higher education while living abroad (*República de Ecuador Asamblea Nacional*, 2010).

³³ Throughout the remainder of this chapter I shall refer to the Ecuador House by its Spanish language name

The Ecuadorian government and the SENAMI's migrant outreach programs reflect a concerted effort by the state to enact policies that address many of the issues most relevant to Ecuadorian migrants abroad, including their financial security, their social and cultural ties their rights and security in the countries of destination. At the same time, these policies and programs, such as voluntary social security, distance education and the Welcome Home Program, also meet address one of the state's major objectives in its migrant policy, which is to foster the growth of financial and human capital in Ecuador through return migration and continued investment. Perhaps most importantly, however, is that the SENAMI's mission and programs contribute to the institutionalization of the transnationalization of migrants' lives.

Direct engagement in community life

In addition to reforming its constitutions and laws, the Ecuadorian state also seeks to influence migrant political participation by directly inserting itself into the civic life of the New York migrant community. There are two government institutions which, during the course of my dissertation research, had a strong presence in migrants social, economic, and political lives, which are the *Casa Ecuatoriana* and the Consulate.

Consulate

The Ecuadorian Consulate in New York carries out all of basic tasks normally carried out by other consulates. They provide travel visas, passports and official identity documents for migrants, as well as bureaucratic procedures that Ecuadorian citizens require for affairs in Ecuador including as death certificates, marriage certificates, divorce filings and fiduciary powers for legal matters. In and of themselves these bureaucratic procedures are an important part of migrants' lives. As Saddiq (2008) notes, migrants security and well being in both home

and destination country is increasingly predicated on access to legitimate documentation. Hence, these also become important political matters, especially for the participants in my study. For example, *Alianza PAIS* devoted part of its campaign efforts in 2009 to pledge to pass a new Information Law, which would reduce the cost of important identity documents, including birth certificates and identity cards. The issue was also raised by migrant leaders and constituents during an October 2009 public meeting with Assemblyman Hagó, as well as by FUIE leaders during one of their meetings. In both cases migrant activists criticized the Ecuadorian government for how financially burdensome it was for most migrants to obtain identity documents.

The consulate's impact on the Ecuadorian community, however, is not limited to these bureaucratic matters. Much of the consulate's activities often walk the line between service provision and politics. Many of the public events organized by the government to promote Ecuadorian national identity, such as Ecuadorian Independence Day celebrations and the country's bicentennial anniversary, were coordinated by the consulate ("Se Cumplio el Tercer Desfile Internacional por el 24 de Mayo *Noticiero Universo*, 6/1/2009; www.consuladoecuadornewyork.com). Similarly, *Alianza PAIS*'s U.S. politburo co-chair Luis Ortiz noted that the government was opening a consular affairs office in Arizona in late 2010 in response to the S.B. 1070 passed by the Arizona legislature, adding that he thought "the consulate will have a lot of clients." The implication of Luis's comments are that the consulate is very much invested in carrying out the government's political mandate to the extent that it is able to do so through the services it is designed to provide for migrants.

The extent to which the consulate is involved in Ecuadorian politics in New York is perhaps a more important aspect of its role in the migrant community. The Queens consular

services office essentially serves as a de facto headquarters for Assemblyman Francisco Hagó, who held his all of his meetings with constituents and other public events he sponsored at the Queens consular office. I attended approximately a half a dozen events sponsored by the Assemblyman after his election in 2009. Not only were all of these events held at the Queens consular office, but the Consul General was also present at each of these. Furthermore, the consul himself often interjected in debates or was the focus of comments and criticisms by migrant community leaders in attendance. Such was the case at the second meeting between Mr. Hagó, where the leader of Alianza Ecuatoriana directly addressed the Consul General to demand what was being done to address the growing number of Ecuadorians in immigrant detention centers.

The partisan political interventions by the consulate have been brought to light by community media as well by as participants in my study, often as criticism against the government. At a planning session for the PAIS campaign committee Alex immediately said that everyone had to exercise discretion about this meeting after what happened with former consular official Ruth Loyola. Alex explained that Loyola was removed from her post in the consulate due to the publication of images by a Pachakutik Party volunteer showing her at the PAIS campaign inauguration event two weeks ago openly campaigning. In a separate incident, the Ecuadorian Consul General was forced to defend himself against allegations that he took part in violent altercation with activists of Ecuadorian opposition parties, as well as calls for his resignation (*Noticiero Universo*, April Special Edition 2009.) Finally, during a FUIE general body meeting in late 2009 a member of the organization produced a picture of the U.S. Consul general at a PAIS-sponsored event stumping for PAIS candidates during the general to denounce the politicization of the consulate.

Casa Ecuatoriana

The New York branch of the *Casa Ecuatoriana*, since its inauguration in 2009, has taken an active role in Ecuadorian the daily life in New. The *Casa Ecuatoriana* was designed to act both as a public liaison between the SENAMI and the migrant community, as well as public service provider for the community. The SENAMI describes the *Casa Ecuatoriana* as a “referent of support and accompaniment for the Ecuadorian living abroad, and a conduit between different aspects of the government and this population³⁴” (www.migrantecuadoriano.gov.ec 2011). The bulk of the Casa’s work is therefore focused on providing government services for migrants. *Casa Ecuatoriana* Director Pablo Calle explained the primary services that the Casa helps administer, which include the aforementioned *Cucayo* Plan; the Return Plan which provides financial incentives to encourage return migration to Ecuador for small business creation; and the Welcome Home Plan, which provides financial assistance for return migrants to purchase a residential dwelling. Beyond this, the *Casa Ecuatoriana* claims to offer other individuals services for migrants including legal aid, language courses, libraries, videoconferencing and internet services, and a virtual network for community organizations (<http://www.migranteecuadoriano.gov.ec>, 2011).

An equally important aspect of the *Casa Ecuatoriana*’s work is its role in fostering migrant civil society growth in New York, which is done through the Casa’s FORES³⁵ Workshop. The overarching goal of the FORES Workshop is to aid Ecuadorian civic organizations in capacity building. However, Pablo Calle described FORES’s purpose to me as

³⁴ <http://www.migranteecuadoriano.gov.ec/content/view/422/192/>

³⁵ Acronym for Migrant Organizational Structuring and Social Network Construction Project

follows:

The FORES Workshop has various objectives, including the creation of networks of work with Ecuadorian organizations to address the issue of migration, improving the capacity of community organizations that work on migration advocacy, and supporting the *Todos Somos Migrantes* sensibility campaign... The workshop focuses on various themes related to organizations, including how to structure an organization, identity issues and political engagement. It also seeks to teach participants how to obtain the 501© (3) exemption status for non-profit organizations ...we see it as something advantageous for organizations, since having that status helps them maintain fiscal and organizational stability. The call to participate in FORES is open and there are many organizations that are not 501© (3), but we have three organizations that have already successfully obtained the status, including the Ecuadorian International Center, the Ecuadorian Civic Committee and *Juventud Ecuatoriana*.

The FORES workshop also allows participating organizations that successfully complete all of the workshop sessions to apply for a government-sponsored grant program to help either pay for the 501© (3) incorporation process or to support the organizations' programs.

The FORES workshop was arguably the most significant aspect of the *Casa Ecuatoriana*'s work that influenced migrant civic and political life in New York. I was invited by the *Casa Ecuatoriana* Director to observe the FORES workshop sessions, to see the sort of capacity building work that was being done with participating organizations. I attended two of their daylong sessions, which were held at different locations throughout the New York City metropolitan area. The first workshop walked participants through 501 © (3) non-profit incorporation process. There were approximately 30 people in attendance, representing approximately a dozen different organizations from throughout the New York metropolitan area. These included a local soccer team, two arts and culture organizations, a journalists association, representatives of the Ecuadorian Civic Committee of Danbury, Connecticut, as well as leaders of *Juventud Ecuatoriana* and *Nuevas Raíces* (which are presented in Chapter Three). Much of the workshop discussion revolved around how organizations could successfully incorporate their

organizations as legal non-profit groups when their leaders and/or the majority of their members had undocumented status.

The second session I attended dealt with political engagement, and consisted of a U.S. politics and lobbying lesson organized by Make the Road New York, a local advocacy group that works with various immigrant organizations. This session included many of the same groups from the prior workshop as well as some new participants, including the Ecuadorian International Center (a non-profit advocacy group from Queens), as well as National Assemblywoman Blanca Ortíz. The presentation started with a lesson on basic U.S. civics, followed by a role playing exercise where participants took on the roles of different actors in the legislative process including public interest groups, legislators, constituents, unions and corporate lobbyists. The session helped stir participants' political passions, especially around issues of rights and the need to become politically engaged. Many of the participants also took the opportunity, at the encouragement of SENAMI representative present, to connect the presentation to their personal and organizational experiences. This led to an impassioned discussion on various issues including the lack of rights for immigrants in the U.S., the need to pressure the Obama administration and Congress for an immigration reform bill, the challenges of organizing around local-level issues in the metropolitan area, political apathy among many Ecuadorians in the U.S., and even the need to mobilize to address their concerns as migrants to the Ecuadorian government.

The previous account of the illustrates how the Ecuadorian government- through the *Casa Ecuatoriana*- now plays a significant role in the long-term outcomes of these migrant organizations, many of which are incipient groups. Because FORES is one of most touted aspects of its work, the *Casa Ecuatoriana* sees itself as a catalyst for migrant civic and political

engagement in the United States. At the same time however, the FORES program also serves as a vehicle to help the Ecuadorian government develop alliances with civic organizations that may allow the government to garner support among migrants for the Correa administration.

The *Casa Ecuatoriana*'s and Consulate's involvement with the migrant community thus provides an institutional framework for Ecuadorian transnational civic and political engagement, while simultaneously reinforcing a minority group identity among migrant organizations in New York City. The programs and services provided by both the entities, whether it is documentation or assistance programs, have become important political issue for a number of Ecuadorian migrant organizations. These compel migrant organizations to adopt some sort of transnational focus, as they respond to the *Casa Ecuatoriana*'s work. Yet as *Casa Ecuatoriana* Director Pablo Calle noted, the creation of initiatives like *Todos Somos Migrantes*, FORES and Welcome Home Program are driven by the fact that migrants are viewed as victims of discrimination in both countries because of their status as migrants. These programs, along with the Consulate's interventions for undocumented Ecuadorian migrants are, in the government's view, a way to give migrants dignity and provide a path towards greater social equality in Ecuadorian society. It is in this way then that the government's actions help create a context of collective action where marginalization and minority group identity are the focus of migrant organizations' transnational political engagement.

Dominican Government Migrant Policy

In contrast to the Ecuadorian government, the Dominican Republic's migrant policy is far less extensive and the Dominican government has been slower to grant full recognition to Dominican migrants abroad. Part of this is due to the uneasy history between the Dominican

Republic and its migrant population, largely as a consequence of the political violence that afflicted the country for much of the 20th century. This not only led many Dominicans to flee the country, but also saw a number of migrant organizations emerge to challenge the authoritarian regime of President Joaquín Balaguer from the late 1960s through the 1970s. *Alianza País* leader Radhamés Perez noted during our interview how Dominican migrants' political engagement was in response to the turmoil that prompted many people to flee the country after the 1965 Civil War broke out, and the subsequent U.S. military intervention to impose a transitional military-led government to quell a leftist uprising:

After the imposition of the counterrevolution a process of persecution, of terrible repression began in the Dominican Republic. And this facilitated a new wave of migration of Dominicans to the U.S. And of course, remember that the U.S. was in Vietnam at the time. They also needed cheap labor to come here, above all in the manufacturing sectors, in places like New York. That's what facilitated that wave of migration....Migrants kept talking about baseball, about other stuff, thinking about rice and beans, but at the time they also brought their own organizational forms with them.

Radhamés added how he and other Dominican activists in New York were recruited to play a critical support role in opposing the Balaguer government:

There was a sector, especially on the left, that understood that the work here [in New York] was to serve in denouncing the lack of liberty, lack of democracy, the political persecution that was prevalent in the Dominican Republic after the installation of President Balaguer in 1966... which would last until 1978. Of course, the demand that the political exiles be allowed to return was part of that vision... that sector understood that above all the work in the Dominican community in the U.S. was to be... a sort of bulwark which aside from political denunciation, had to play an effective role in locating economic and material support for a possible change...

Since the 1980s, however, state-migrant relations in the Dominican Republic underwent a slow change. For one, the Balaguer regime began a slow transition to democratic rule that largely put an end to political violence in the country. Second, a deep recession and fiscal crisis plagued the country through the 1980s, which led many Dominicans the country as economic migrants, rather than to flee political violence in the country. Many migrants were now focused on economically supporting their families and communities in the Dominican Republic, rather than operating as a community of political exiles.

By the late 1990s the Dominican government began to seek a rapprochement with its migrant population abroad, mainly under the leadership of President Lionel Fernández, continued under the leadership of President Hipólito Mejía, and now again under Fernández's second administration³⁶. Two factors account for this renewed engagement with migrants by the Dominican government. One is the economic impact of remittances, which as discussed in Chapter Two, account for a substantial part of the country's economic output as direct investment. Remittances are particularly important to the Fernández administration, whose economic policy agenda emphasizes trade liberalization and direct investment into the local economy. The second is due to President Fernández himself, whose personal experience living in New York as a child likely influenced him set in motion efforts by the Dominican government to further integrate migrants into Dominican society.

As a result, since Fernández's return to the Presidency in 2004 the Dominican government has enacted a number of changes that have significantly altered the landscape for migrants' political participation in the Dominican Republic. In this sense there are similarities

³⁶ Fernandez is currently serving out his third term as President of the Dominican Republic. Originally constitutionally limited to one term after his election in 1996, Fernandez was able to run for President again in 2004, and Constitutional reforms approved by voters eliminated Presidential term limits.

with the approach the Ecuadorian government has taken towards its migrant population. Yet there are also noticeable differences between Dominican and Ecuadorian state-migrant relations which not only affect migrants' outlook towards participating in Dominican politics, but also how transnational political engagement occurs among Dominican migrants.

Rhetoric/Discourse

Political discourse from the Dominican government does address the country's migrant population abroad, and makes a concerted effort to portray migrants as an important group that makes positive contributions to the Dominican Republic. Dominican government discourse, does not, however fully acknowledge migrants as members of Dominican society to which the state has obligations towards, in the way that the Ecuadorian government has done. Rather, the language and tone used by Dominican officials speaks of migrant's relevance to in largely instrumental terms, and reinforces differences between migrants and non-migrants in terms of their belonging to the nation-state.

The nature of the Dominican government's discourse is reflected in remarks made by President Fernández during his annual speech to the Dominican legislature in February, 2011, in which he noted the following about Dominican migrants:

We have the immense fortune to count on a Dominican community from abroad, prestigious, industrious, admired and respected, which not only contributes important resources to sustain the national economy, but which also enriches us with its social networks and its cultural, educational and scientific exchanges” [Speech before the Dominican National Assembly, 2/27/11 (As reprinted in *El Nuevo Diario* newspaper)]

In contrast to Correa's rhetoric, in which migrants are viewed as members of Ecuadorian society who have fallen victim to tragic circumstances, Fernández opts for a discourse in which

migrants seem to be characterized more as allies of the state, rather than members. Furthermore, migrants are discussed in largely instrumental terms, based on their contributions to the state rather than their ties to the state as citizens who were compelled or forced to leave.

Dominican migrants' contributions through remittances are heavily emphasized by government officials. For instance, during the inauguration of the National Council for Dominican Communities Abroad (CONDEX), a new entity created by the Dominican government to reach out to migrants in 2009, President Fernández once again stressed remittances as a fundamental motive behind the enactment of this new program, noting how migrants' remittances, which make up 20 percent of the country's GDP, are an important part of the country's economic development strategy, which provided the impetus for this program ("Presidente Juramente Consejo Comunidades en el Exterior, www.presidencia.gob.do). These same comments were echoed a year later by Dominican Secretary of State Alejandro Santos, who emphasized the economic importance of migrants remittances as the motivation for the efforts being made by the Dominican government to integrate migrant issues into its public policies (*El Nuevo Diario*, 12/19/2010). Other government documents emphasize the importance of Dominicans as human capital as the motivation for migrant-integration policies (*Reglamento de Aplicación, Decreto No.674-08*, 2008).

The Dominican government's discourse also emphasizes the importance of patriotism and national loyalty in accepting migrants as part of the Dominican state. In the run up to Dominican Independence Day in February, 2011, a Dominican consul in the U.S. publicly noted that Dominicans living abroad had an obligation to celebrate Dominican Independence, stating that "wherever we are, we must pay tribute to the men that gave their lives in exchange for the freedom that all Dominicans have today" (*Primicias*, 2/16/2011). The issue of patriotism was

also raised by President Fernández in 2008 during a discussion about the constitutional right of dual citizens to run for the Dominican Presidency. In an official press release, Fernández noted that dual citizen Dominicans have shown their loyalties to both the Dominican Republic and the countries in which they currently reside by participating in both electoral processes (Dirección de Información, Prensa y Publicidad de la Presidencia, 2008). Migrant leaders have assimilated this discourse as a way to legitimize their political aspirations in the Dominican Republic. Aspiring candidates for the new legislative positions created for migrant communities have, for example, touted the patriotism of Dominicans living abroad for their sacrifice sending remittances (“Aspirante a Senador por el exterior destaca patriotismo dominicano en envíos remesas, *El Nuevo Diario*, 12/19/2010).

Another aspect of the government’s discourse is that they opt not to use the term “migrant” to identify their migrant population. Instead, the government uses the term “Dominicans from abroad” (see quote above) or diaspora to refer to Dominican migrants. This is reflected not only in public discourses, but also in the new government programs that have emerged to work with migrant populations. The CONDEX, or the National Council of Dominicans from Abroad, which is the government entity in charge of government outreach with Dominican migrants, does not refer to these groups as migrants at any point despite the fact that their work is targeted mainly at Dominican citizens who have left the country. Finally government propaganda often ignores the role of the Dominican state in migration trends. For instance, a CONDEX executive summary from 2008 discusses the trends in the global economy have influenced migration and made migrants situation more precarious, but fails to discuss domestic factors that have led to Dominican emigration (CONDEX 2009). While the state’s decision to not use the term migrant may possibly be driven by a desire to be inclusive of second

plus generation Dominicans, the fact that the government's main interest is in working with the remitting population and those with human capital who seek to return suggests that it is in fact migrants whom they seek to court. The reluctance to use the term migrant may therefore reflect a desire by government leaders to use a discourse that steps aside discussions about what role the Dominican state has played in migration trends, and the extent to which they seek to integrate migrants into the national polity.

Changes to Rule of Law

In 2008 the Dominican government approved legislation that led to constitutional reform. Among the changes made were including new provisions that apply to migrants living abroad. There are two provisions in the revised Dominican constitution that apply directly to migrants living abroad. Article 20 of the constitution recognizes the right for Dominican citizens to acquire a foreign citizenship without renouncing their Dominican citizenship (*Constitución de la República Dominicana*, 2008.) This opened the door for expat voting to be adopted by the Dominican government in 2000.

The second constitutional provision related to migrants is found in Article 81, which addresses electoral constituencies for the lower chamber of the Dominican legislature. Specifically, this article designates seven seats in the House of Representatives for the various Dominican communities abroad, with the seats to be distributed by legislative action (Ibid, Article 81).

Outside of these two articles, the Dominican constitution does not include any additional language that addresses the rights of migrants or citizens permanently living abroad. The guarantees of dual citizenship and external legislative representation under the constitution

reflect an acknowledgement by the Dominican Republic that migration is a significant part of Dominican society. They also grant migrants the opportunity to further develop a political identity as migrants that can make claims on the Dominican government.

At the same time, however, the constitution does not explicitly establish migration as a right of all citizens, or include provisions that guarantee the full equality of migrants vis-à-vis non migrants, in matters such as representation in other areas of the government or in terms of access to entitlements and or civil protections that may be offered to non-migrants. This aspect of the constitutional reforms has not been lost among some leaders and political commentators among the Dominican migrant community in New York. New York-based political commentator Manuel Nin Matos, for instance, recently argued that the 2008 constitutional reforms keep Dominican migrants in a second class citizenship status by not guaranteeing full equality for Dominicans living abroad, and providing limited representation (Nin Matos 2008).

Political Rights

The Dominican government made a number of significant legal changes that grant migrants greater political rights in back in the Dominican Republic. In 2004, the Dominican government, after years of lobbying by a number of migrant organizations, passed legislation granting Dominicans living abroad limited voting rights. Yet this law only permitted migrants to vote in presidential elections, denying them legislative representation.

This form of limited suffrage was gradually been put to an end by Leonel Fernández's current government. Constitutional reforms approved in 2008 authorized the creation of external legislative constituencies for the Dominican House of Representatives. In early 2011 both chambers of the Dominican legislature finalized the creation of these legislative constituencies

by approving the External Representatives Voting Law. Under this law a total of seven representatives will be elected by the various Dominican communities abroad. Three representatives are to be elected from the Northern cities of the United States (New York, Boston and Providence), two from the southern U.S. and South America (which includes South Florida, Puerto Rico), and two from Europe (CONDEX 2011). Because these new legislative constituencies will not come into effect 2012, it is difficult to forecast how these new legislative seats will impact political engagement among Dominican migrants at this point outside of the traditional Dominican political parties' efforts to mobilize voters.

As I note later in this chapter, however, a number of Dominican organizational leaders with whom I spoke expressed various levels of skepticism as to how relevant these new elected positions will be for the migrant community in terms of exercising political power in the Dominican Republic. Concern and skepticism over whether these new legislative seats will be in place by the 2012 election cycle have also been noted by a number of Dominican migrant leaders who have already announced their candidacies for said positions. There have also been public criticisms from Dominican migrant leaders in the U.S. over the fact that Dominicans living abroad have been denied representation in the Dominican Senate, who have also noted that some people have threatened to start withholding remittances in protest (“Embajador Critica Rechazo a Senadores por Ultramar”, *Al Momentor* 6/1/09).

Policies and Programs

The Dominican government recently implemented a number of policy programs designed to expand migrants' involvement in the Dominican Republic. First was the creation of an office within the country's Central Election Board (JCE) to work specifically with migrant voters,

called the *Junta para el Voto en el Exterior*, or Voting Abroad Board. This office is responsible for coordinating all aspects of external voting, including registration and voting procedures (www.votoexterior.do).

Second, the Dominican government passed an executive order creating the Presidential Consultative Councils for Dominicans Abroad (CCPDE). These were conceived by President Fernández as a series of executive-level advisory groups across the various Dominican migrant communities to act as an interlocutor between the Dominican government and these communities. The CCPDE's role is to not only conduct outreach with the migrant community but to also advise the President on the needs and demands that each community has for the Dominican government (www.condex.gob.do) (CHECK ASA CITATION FORMAT)

Finally, in 2008 the Dominican government passed a law that created the National Council for Dominican Communities Abroad, or CONDEX. The CONDEX is a public entity run by the President and cabinet members from the country's State, Tourism and Public Health Departments, as well as the General Director of Migration. CONDEX's stated mission is to integrate the various migrant communities and connect them to the Dominican polity through the promotion of public policies that enable these communities to make meaningful social, political and economic contributions to the Dominican Republic. CONDEX is also responsible for working with various government and civil society organizations to foster these linkages between migrant communities and the Dominican state (Santos 2008.) The CONDEX has a number of specific functions it is designed to carry out, which include: (1) presenting national-level policies geared towards migrant communities; (2) Promoting community organization, educational, cultural, sports and health initiatives in migrant communities as a way to improve migrant quality of life; (3) Making policy recommendations to improve ties between migrant

communities and both public and private institutions in the Dominican Republic; (4) Making policy recommendations to improve communication between the Dominican Republic and its migrant population (Ibid: 8).

The creation of the CONDEX also led to a restructuring of the CCPDEs, which essentially operated as ad hoc executive committees. The CONDEX oversaw a restructuring of the CCPDEs by establishing regulations for their operation and election of their members, as making the CCPDEs formal groups that work in conjunction with the CONDEX to craft migrant policy (CONDEX 2009.)

As part of its efforts, the CONDEX has entered a number of collaborative agreements with a number of migrant-based organizations and other local organizations in New York City. These include the New York Dominican Officials Association (NYDO), The Hispanic Health Professionals Association (AHPSI), the New York Supermarket Association (which is dominated by a large number of Dominican-owned supermarket chains) and the Dominican-American National Roundtable (Ibid). These alliances are meant to conduct outreach with different sectors of the migrant population, in order to help craft policy proposals. There have been more recent efforts to sign similar collaborative agreements with the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) (CONDEX 2009).

Based on the description of its activities, the CONDEX essentially operates as an arm of the Dominican government to conduct outreach in migrant communities and on behalf of migrants, and in particular serves as a vehicle for the acting Dominican Secretary of State. The events that it has taken part in the U.S. includes co-organizing an annual health fair in New Jersey with the Dominican-American Community Association, speaking in the Rhode Island

Hispanic-American Chamber of Commerce's annual gala, and participating on a panel discussion at the third annual CUNY Dominican Students Conference. CONDEX also organized a summit between President Fernández and various Dominican elected officials throughout the United States, including members of the New York City Council and New York State Assembly. The meeting produced a number of policy proposals that have been submitted to the Dominican executive branch for consideration including assisting Dominican elected officials in the U.S. in future electoral efforts, providing legal assistance in the redistricting process to aid Dominican voters in the U.S., and mechanisms to assist Dominican politicians in the U.S. to channel aid to the Dominican Republic (CONDEX 2009.)

CONDEX has taken on the role as the main government agency/entity to focus exclusively on migrant affairs, mainly by acting as the government representative among different migrant constituencies abroad. Dominican government policy thus mirrors Ecuadorian government policy in that it has acknowledged the necessity of having a dedicated program that channels migrant concerns. Yet because the CONDEX was conceived as an advisory council, the Dominican government is not legally bound to craft law or policy to deal directly with migrants' demands. Furthermore its activities, including its focus on supporting Dominican elected officials in the U.S. may be interpreted as an effort by the government to reduce its long-term involvement with migrant communities by bolstering Dominican political incorporation in the U.S.

By contrast, the policy changes and migrant-oriented programs enacted by the Ecuadorian government are not only a response to constitutional mandates to provide protections and equal access for migrants, but also reflect an effort by the current government to create new paradigm regarding migration. Specifically, the new paradigm that the Correa government is

attempting to foster views migration as a social phenomenon affecting all members of Ecuadorian society, and which creates social problems that the state has a responsibility to address.

Direct Engagement with Migrants

With creation of the CONDEX and CCPDEs the Dominican government has extend its engagement with its migrant population abroad, including those living in New York. Furthermore, through CONDEXs consultation with migrant community leaders the Dominican government has started to take a more active role in fostering transnational civic engagement. However the fact that CONDEX is meant to be an advisory body for the Dominican government does not ensure that Dominican migrant organizations will be capable of fully empowering themselves in the Dominican polity, since their demands through CONDEX have no guarantee of being acted upon by any branch of the Dominican government. Furthermore it is not yet clear if the CONDEX will play a role similar to the *Casa Ecuatoriana*/SENAMI in trying to empower migrant organizations to make demands on federal and local governments in the U.S., or whether it will work to advocate on behalf of Dominican migrants rights as the Ecuadorian government currently does. There is no specific evidence of this capacity building effect thus far, but given the newness of the CONDEX there still exists an opportunity for those sorts of initiatives to emerge.

The policies enacted by the Dominican government are, at present, considerably less extensive than the efforts carried out by the Ecuadorian government for its migrant population abroad. While some aspects of Dominican migrant policy are yet to be carried out and ultimately may provide greater opportunities for migrants to seek substantive political engagement in the

Dominican Republic, the policies currently in place are decidedly less ambitious in providing migrants access to state resources or citizen rights and protections than what Ecuador offers its migrants.

Historical relations between home country states and migrant populations abroad appear to account for how each country has approached migrant incorporation, at least in some measure. Dominican migrants' contentious history with the Dominican government over the last half century seems foster nationalistic notions within the Dominican Republic that migrants have abandoned their homeland, despite the transnationalization of Dominican migrants' lives. This contributes to an opportunistic and half-hearted attempt at incorporation by the Dominican state, adopting policies that provide limited rights and access to resources from the state to migrant citizens. Ultimately state policies seem to provide few opportunities for migrants to make claims on the Dominican state to address their dual marginalization, and may in fact exacerbate it.

By contrast, the Ecuadorian government under President Correa has taken a more proactive approach to migrants' transnational practices, largely by expanding civil, political and social rights for migrant citizens abroad. Unlike the Dominican government, Ecuadorian government officials see migrants not just as a new constituency to be courted, but also view migration as part of a larger systemic problem that has affected much of Ecuadorian society. Restitution policies for migrants also represent an opportunity for the Correa government to legitimize itself as the government that successfully led the country out of nearly a decade of economic and political instability, towards a progressive and equitable society. While Ecuadorian migrants abroad acknowledge being stigmatized for their status as migrants, they now have various avenues to make claims on the state to address their dual marginalization, which is to some extent perpetuated by the government's discourse that reinforces migrants'

victimization in both the U.S. (currently) and Ecuador (by past governments). Nevertheless, state-migrant relations, though complicated, have facilitated transnational political engagement for migrants abroad.

Migrant Organizations Response to State Interventions

Ecuadorian migrant organizations

Changes to the rule of law and the creation of programs specifically targeting migrants have provided significant incentives and incentives for migrant organizations to seek greater political engagement in Ecuador. At the same time, however, these changes, along with the government's rhetoric and direct involvement in the New York migrant community, have also reinforced the idea dual marginalization among organization leaders. This, in turn has led organizations to utilize a minority group identity as a means to engage in both Ecuadorian and U.S. politics.

Among the migrant organizational leaders in my study there was a general recognition that the constitutional reforms were an important change that allows migrants to make greater demands for inclusion in Ecuadorian society as a minority or disadvantaged group, and as such aids in migrants' transnational political engagement. Vicente Mayorga of the FUIE explained how the process of drafting a new constitution in 2008 was crucial in getting the organization to participate in the Ecuadorian political process:

In a practical manner, in the U.S. the legal framework allowed us to be part of some coalitions that were part of changes in U.S. law. Same with Ecuador. We made a serious presentation to the Constituent Assembly In the state's political Constitution, one of our adopted proposals was to include protecting migrants living abroad a state policy.... This means that those of us Ecuadorians who are outside of our country are not left defenseless by the Ecuadorian state.

Vicente added how the new constitutional reforms gave his and other migrant-based organizations a reason to be involved in Ecuadorian politics:

I mention in some events that the Ecuadorian Constitution ensures access to free health care for all... Here we don't have health insurance. Undocumented persons don't qualify except for emergency cases. So now in Ecuador there's access. All three levels of education... free, all three levels up to university, which over here doesn't exist...

Other Ecuadorian migrant organizations and/or their leaders have also emphasized the importance of participating in Ecuadorian politics in order to defend the rights migrants have been granted. During a FORES workshop session, the Danbury Ecuadorian Civic Committee President emphasized the need for migrants to put an end to their political apathy and participate in Ecuadorian politics now that migrants had a voice and rights. Similarly, *Nuevas Raíces* frequently encourages its supporters to exercise their rights to government resources in Ecuador including the right to vote and to enroll in social security.

The expanded political representation provided considerable incentives for migrant organizations to mobilize voters, often by appealing to the idea of migrants being a minority group with a political voice. This was one of the points used by *Alianza PAIS* activists to recruit supporters. During their early campaign efforts in 2009 that I observed, Alex told me and the PAIS volunteers that Ecuador that has dramatically changed the power structure by pushing aside traditional elites and giving migrants and other historically marginalized sectors a voice in governance. According to Alex, the fact that Ecuadorians abroad realize how the political landscape has changed seems to have inspired migrants to be more politically active based on the responses he saw from voters in the run up to the election. *Alianza PAIS* Coordinator Ximena Peña made a similar point during our interview on how the new constitution encourages migrants to advocate for minority rights:

If you want to go back you have to participate... It also helps us... not just for those who want to go back, but also at the level of the Ecuadorian community here. If we can have some cooperation in our government here, in a foreign country; if the government provides that opening, we have to take advantage of it, because we as migrants are still contributing to the country's economic activity. We send remittances. So then I think it's fair that the government over there, if they can't address all of our needs, at least remember that there's a group of people that exist over here and offer some sort of benefit. ... I've lived outside of the country for 15 years...I'm educated. If I want to go back I will have a hard time getting work. I think there should be, affirmative action for people who meet the requirements and are applying for government positions.

Other migrant organization leaders in New York also saw the electoral process as an opportunity to advance their interests as community leaders and/or the interests of their organizations. In addition to the FUIE, which ran a slate of candidates under the movement's name (Ecuadorian election law permits both electoral parties and political movements to participate in elections), another Ecuadorian migrant organization, *Movimiento Inmigrantes en Acción* (MIA) also ran their slate of candidates. Ecuadorian International Alliance (a non-profit cultural and immigrant advocacy group) Director Walter Sinche ran as a candidate for the Pachakutik Indigenous Party. During my time observing *Alianza PAIS* Francisco Hagó's campaign I met a number of members of Juventud Ecuatoriana who were participating as volunteers for his campaign. Finally, an organization from Suffolk County, New York, *Lucero de América*³⁷, mobilized Ecuadorian migrants from the county to attend various campaign events to demand greater support from the Ecuadorian government in protecting migrants from discrimination and anti-immigrant violence.

For some migrant organizations the election opened the door to new opportunities to articulate their demands on behalf of the migrant community. FUIE President Antonio Arízaga explained why the electoral process was important in meeting their goals as community-based

³⁷ The term Lucero translates to "bright light" or "radiant light", though the name of the organization may also refer to Marcelo Lucero, an Ecuadorian immigrant from Suffolk County, NY, who was murdered in a bias crime in 2008.

organization in Ecuador as well as the U.S., despite falling short of winning an Assembly seat:

Whatever the election results were or what was-the advantages or disadvantages were, we believe the fact that we opened a path, we dared to participate in the electoral process, was already a win, because we proved that community organizations have the capacity to not only bring their message, but also to even win the election...

FUIE ex-President Vicente Mayorga addressed the importance of the external voting process in a broader context, noting how it has created a space for Ecuadorian migrant activism, after many years of confronting migrant apoliticism

We were always told not to speak about politics. We were not allowed to talk about. But now with the electoral situation allows us to discuss politics The whole electoral process has allowed us to go to forums, to discuss, to go to a sector of the community to [encourage them] to participate and think about the different proposals from each of the parties...It's great that people participate in politics. That lets them break that taboo of apoliticism. That's been strongly injected into the veins of the entire community, apoliticism Human beings essentially political; from birth until death, we're political...And the electoral process grants us that, to air out the country's problems, society's problems, class problems. It lets us talk about the economy; it lets us talk about interests. It lets us talk about corruption

Even migrant leaders who were extremely critical of how President Correa and past governments have dealt with migrants nevertheless saw the importance of taking advantage of the new set of political rights, since it provided an opportunity not simply to advocate on behalf of the particular interests of the migrant community, but also to challenge the notion that migrants continue to be marginalized by the Ecuadorian state. I observed this in comments made by Angel Borja, a candidate for the Immigrants in Action Party (MIA), during one of the Ecuadorian National Assembly candidate debates:

We seek to win a seat to work on behalf of migrants, who for years have been forced to leave Ecuador because of incompetent government; Even with the current government we have been once again been deceived by promises of change; Rafael Correa came to the US to get migrants support, only to forget

about us after he was elected president; MIA was born out of the betrayal of the Ecuadorian leaders in New York, who I advised for many years only; Migrants are treated like cockroaches in the US while the Ecuadorian government remains silent- the abuse must end!

State-sponsored programs that include or target migrants have also become an important incentive for migrant participation among the groups studied in my dissertation. Vicente Mayorga explained how the new social security law not only gives many migrants resources that they currently lack, but also invests them in matters of state policy:

One of the things we are promoting as change is access to voluntary affiliation to Ecuador's social security, which was a proposal of ours that has now become law. We can affiliate, and many of us have already voluntarily affiliated to the Ecuadorian social security so that we can get medical insurance, access to housing credits, the right to retirement pension...the majority of [migrant] community is undocumented. We are shut out of the U.S. social security. So then we don't have access, and we thought of this as an alternative.

The government's Migrant Bank project has also been a motivating factor for home country engagement. The FUIE, for instance, lists this as one of its primary organizational objectives in its newsletter (*Ecuamigrante* 8/1/2008). Furthermore, during an October, 2009 public meeting between with Assemblyman Hagó, FUIE leaders, local *Alianza PAIS* activists and leaders of other Ecuadorian civic organizations from New York and New Jersey pressed the Assemblyman on the Migrant Bank issue, demanding to know if it was going to be operating by the initial deadline of December, 2009.

The *Casa Ecuatoriana's* involvement in the migrant community has become a focal point for many migrant organizations' engagement in Ecuadorian politics, for both those who support or take part in the Casa's work as well as for those who have been critical of the Casa's activities. *Alianza PAIS* members were, unsurprisingly, largely supportive of the work the Casa has been carrying out on behalf of migrant constituents, and used the Casa as a rhetorical tool to garner

support for the party. As the ruling party, *Alianza PAIS* activists I met with in my study spoke highly of the work that the consulate and the *Casa Ecuatoriana* did on behalf of the New York migrant population. Alex, for example, pointed to the *Casa Ecuatoriana* as an example of the government's progress, during our interview:

They have an office here in Queens and they are trying to do their best to help migrant families in this sort of situation. For example, if a family member has passed away and they don't have sufficient resources to repatriate the corpse; they go to the *Casa Ecuatoriana*, which somehow makes the effort to make the repatriation possible. If someone has a legal problem, then the *Casa Ecuatoriana* has a database of various attorneys, where any person can get a free consultation. The President is aware that the majority of Ecuadorians who are living in New York live in Queens, so being aware of this, he gave the order to open a Consular Office in Queens.

The *Casa Ecuatoriana*'s FORES workshops also helped foster support for the government's work among the organizations which participated in the program. Participants in my study that worked with the *Casa Ecuatoriana* were quick and tout the benefits of their relationships with the *Casa Ecuatoriana* and less critical of the government. As Jorge Vivanco, President of *Nuevas Raices* notes:

[FORES] centered me as more of a leader. It's possible that I was diverging for many years. Now I know where I want to go and I do not have to go far ...I now realize that we could accomplish what we were doing, but I had to get to SENAMI... If SENAMI had come up with this 30 years ago who knows where we'd be? I knocked on many doors with this dance thing. I could sell them on creating a theater and mime group. But a group that denounces social problems using art? I had no listeners.. And that's where I was stuck I should have knocked on other doors and I would have saved myself 30 years. SENAMI expanded my vision and now I am very clear that I want this folklore thing to be even stronger...

Ronald Bautista, Vice President of *Juventud Ecuatoriana*, also noted the value of the SENAMI's assistance through the FORES program for his organization. First he noted how the workshop provided important lessons on organizing:

In FORES we went to a Jewish community center and we asked them questions. In our community there are a lot of different opinions and it's hard to bring them together, so we asked them "do Jews have the same problem?" They said "yes, we Jews have a saying: 'two Jews, five opinions'". And that's because everyone opines and have different, quite varied opinions. And that's what happens. When there are that many opinions, everyone wants to pull towards their side. No one wants to let go. So the solution we received was, "you have your mission and you have your goal."

Other participants in the FORES I spoke with also touted the benefits of the program. At the last session I spoke with a workshop participant from a Quichua cultural organization based in New York City. I asked this gentleman how he felt about the work done in the FORES workshops, to which he replied that in his view it was a very important tool for his and other organizations to learn how to become more efficient and stable. He added that hopefully they will be able to access some of the resources that the SENAMI is providing for organizations that complete the FORES program, since most Ecuadorian organizations have limited funding sources. This gentleman also said the fact that the SENAMI is doing this sort of outreach is important, since for many years migrants have been neglected by the Ecuadorian government only talked about migrants because of their importance to the national economy. He went on to note that the SENAMI cannot address all of the community's needs, and that ultimately it will be up to Ecuadorians themselves to take the initiative to address the problems that affect the community, especially since there are so many problems that Ecuadorians in the US have to deal with that make it necessary to be politically engaged.

Yet despite this some of the organizational leaders in this study were less optimistic about the impact the Ecuadorian government would have on migrants' lives, and worried that migrants would continue to be marginalized. Jorge Vivanco of Nuevas Raices said his organization was taking a cautious approach to engaging in Ecuadorian politics because many members and organization supporters were skeptical that the current government, including the U.S.-based

assembly members, would aggressively pursue policies to protect Ecuadorians rights in the U.S. or address their interests. Other organizations, such as the FUIE and the Pachakutik Indigenous Movement New York chapter, denounced corruption in the consulate, the assembly members and the *Casa Ecuatoriana*. At FUIE meetings and at a multi-organizational meeting to start a recall movement against the elected officials, members of both these groups claimed to have evidence that the Assembly members, the Consul General and the *Casa Ecuatoriana* were doling out no-bid contracts to friends and family members, and refused to disclose how public funds were being used.

During our interview, former Pachakutik candidate and Ecuadorian International Alliance Director Walter Sinche characterized the government and elected officials work as mostly hollow rhetoric:

What are the assembly members going to the U.S. and Canada for? They never take a document to say “look, here’s what’s being done in the assembly. This is what we obtained in the assembly for you. As of now this is law. This is an accomplishment. This is the work.” The other day they arrived saying that the Higher Education Act was a reality, saying this and that...she [Assembly Member Linda Machuca] came- and all the assembly members do the same abroad. To this day there is no Higher Education Act... [It] doesn’t exist. But she said that there is a Higher Education Act abroad. That Ecuadorians living abroad could study. How? How is it in practice? Are there universities in the U.S. that the Ecuadorian government has agreements with to allow Ecuadorians to study there? They don’t discuss that...None of that is in practice, there’s nothing to indicate this. So then you have these non-operational projects that they claim are in effect. Those are lies.

Other organizations criticized the efforts to ensure voter participation. During the general election voting in Queens, a group of voters from an organization called *Lucero de America*³⁸ arrived from Suffolk County, NY to publicly denounce the Consulate and the Ecuadorian

³⁸ Lucero translates in English to “Brilliant Light” or “Beacon of Light”, though the organization may have also taken its name in honor of Marcelo Lucero, an Ecuadorian immigrant from Suffolk County who was murdered in a bias crime in 2008.

National Election Commission (CNE) to the media and voters present, alleging that the Ecuadorian election process in New York was a flawed and fraudulent process for abandoning Long Island residents. A spokesperson for the organization explained to me and members of the press that the CNE and/or the consulate failed to provide any transportation for Ecuadorian voters who lived out in East Hampton and other parts of Suffolk County. The spokesperson added that people in Long Island were anxious to vote and wanted to support the government's efforts, but faced many obstacles along the way, including a lack of information on how to register, the lack of a registration process in Long Island, and the lack of a polling place for voters in Long Island.

The *Casa Ecuatoriana's* efforts have also been the subject of criticism by migrant organizations. The *Casa Ecuatoriana* Director himself acknowledged that support for their efforts were far from universal, stating that they've had problems working with organizations because many people believed the *Casa Ecuatoriana* was a political recruitment tool and opted to avoid involvement with the Casa.

The FUIE was the organization in this study which has been the most critical of the *Casa Ecuatoriana's* efforts. While they continue to support the general template of rights and policies laid out by the Correa government, they have expressed skepticism about the government's commitment to make good on all of its campaign pledges to migrants in New York. Antonio Arízaga noted the major shortcomings of the *Casa Ecuatoriana* despite its potential to help the community:

Migrants are mentioned when [the government] needs votes, when they have to create an organization that justifies the budget. But regrettably the proper attention hasn't been given... There was hope that the *Casa Ecuatoriana*, which was created abroad, would possibly be the organism that would help solve many

of the Ecuadorian's problems. But we now see that's not the case... I'd just ask you to call one of these days... you can dial all the extensions and no one will answer, only to leave a message. The *Casa Ecuatoriana* is just a lot of propaganda. To this day they've been announcing that they provide legal assistance to migrants in any situation. They don't even have a lawyer. In the Jose Sucuzhanay case or the Marcelo Lucero case, they provided not one single lawyer. It was a personal lawyer that they had to get from somewhere else. [The issue] isn't that the *Casa Ecuatoriana* doesn't have a lawyer; it's that they show up on television standing with the family, but they've done absolutely nothing. No help or consultation whatsoever.

Walter Sinche was also pessimistic about the impact of these political changes on the fortunes of the Ecuadorian migrant community, mainly because of the lack of commitment he observed as a candidate in the 2009 election and in subsequent dealings with the newly elected assembly members. During our interview he noted the same lack of commitment by the *Casa Ecuatoriana* and to providing genuine aid to the families of Jose Sucuzhanay and Marcelo Lucero. Sinche also noted the lack of responsiveness by the *Casa Ecuatoriana* and other SENAMI officials to the interests of his and other organizations who reached out to the government to work with community leaders.

If a public official from any government, can be Ecuador or any other, I think has to be at the service of their people. Not in the case of the Ecuadorians. In fact there are certain organisms that currently are carrying out their tasks, but in the case of the *Casa Ecuatoriana* When they could have been working, and could do a joint community project with us [Ecuadorian International Alliance]... they didn't do it. It all becomes political.

Yet regardless of how migrant organizations assess the effectiveness of Ecuador's migrant policy, the whole process of the government's engagement with migrant organizations in New York has reinforced the dual marginalization that migrant leaders have identified with. Efficacy aside, the advocacy efforts made by the government to address migrant abuse in the U.S. are a reminder by the government that many Ecuadorians have and continue to be marginalized in the U.S., and look to the Ecuadorian state to intervene on such matters. By the same token, the

changes within Ecuador to integrate migrants have also affirmed migrants' status as a marginalized population group within the state. They recognize that they now have opportunities to demand rights as a marginalized group; yet in many cases the organizations in my study also see the lack of genuine commitment by the state to meet migrants' needs as proof that they remain marginalized.

Dominican organizational responses

Dominican organizational leaders, including those with whom I spoke, appear to be quite ambivalent about the Dominican government's migrant policy. While Dominican migrant leaders are encouraged by the changes in rhetoric and external voting rights, skepticism abounds on whether expanded voting rights will actually come to pass and what impact, if any, it will have on migrant's marginalization in both countries. Many organization leaders acknowledge that skepticism and even cynicism about the government's commitment to migrants-including with the changes approved by the government- is pervasive throughout the community, which makes organizing migrants to participate in Dominican politics a difficult sell. For those leaders who were fully engaged in Dominican politics, the government's current policies were seen as inadequate and only reinforced the necessity of making demands as a minority group in the Dominican Republic.

Some organization leaders with whom I spoke sought to see the benefits the Dominican government's currently policies had for migrants. Radhamés Pérez noted during our interview that the political discourse among Dominican politicians was changing for the better as it pertains to migrants:

I do see how this has really started to change and they try, in their discourse also,

to articulate some sort of proposal that within the realm of legal insecurity that I mentioned, of a return policy, helps Dominicans.... For example, on the return policy, what have we been saying? “Listen, if I’m going to return to my country, why do you have to charge me as a foreigner just because I live in another country?” Because if I live in Santiago and I’m moving to San Francisco de Macoris you don’t have to charge me money. So basic issues like that are now showing up in politician’s speeches.

Pérez was cautiously optimistic about the potential benefits of external voting:

One other aspect... which would really become a reality is that the Dominican vote from abroad will be of a higher quality than the Dominican vote in the country. Why? Because we don’t depend on a government position to live or to pay rent here [in the U.S.], so that my girls can go to school or to eat. My vote here is freer. My vote doesn’t depend on whether you as a candidate in the Dominican Republic, come before election day with five pounds of rice, a sack of beans, two sausages, a bottle of rum, those sorts of things.

Other migrant leaders in the U.S., however, have expressed frustration over a lack of genuine commitment by the Dominican government to provide representation to migrants, and see it as an attempt to marginalize the migrant population. A recent editorial from a Dominican community newspaper in Florida accused the Dominican legislature of purposely delaying the implementation process to deny migrants a chance to elect candidates in 2012, as well as of striking down a proposal to provide migrants seats in the Dominican Senate (“Amenazas contra Representantes Dominicanos en el Exterior”, *El Poder de Miami* 5/12/2009). Similarly, the Dominican Ambassador to the UN also criticized the Dominican legislature for rejecting a measure to create senate seats for migrant constituents (“Embajador critica rechazo a senadores por Ultramar”, *Al Momento* 6/1/2009).

Organizational leaders with whom I spoke in New York noted similar frustrations. PRD leader Manuel Félix sought to remain optimistic about the potential for the changes that have gone into effect to bring substantive changes in political power for Dominicans abroad, but also recognized that the experience with migrants who have previously returned to the Dominican

Republic to run for elected office has thus far been discouraging:

It's a more complex process. But whether within that complexity I believe we can clearly define how we participate in government. I'll give you a concrete example. In the current administration of Leonel Fernández there are two senators that are products of New York City: Senator Heinz Vieluf of Montecristi, and Alejandro Williams of San Pedro de Macorís. And both of them have been a complete frustration. One is a prestigious dentist and the other an entrepreneur. And both have legislated for their own particular interests. They haven't represented this city, and yet they are a product of this city.

Other migrant organization leaders with whom I spoke had a more pessimistic assessment of the changes enacted by the Dominican government. Many were unsure if these changes would even incentivize migrants to engage in Dominican politics, let alone actually empower migrants in the Dominican Republic. Marino Mejía, also of *Alianza País* (D.R.), offered a rather sobering assessment of the viability of external voting during our interview:

The Dominican vote from abroad, from a financial standpoint, is suffocating. This is because a migrant vote, for the Dominican taxpayer, is going to be very expensive- maybe 20 or 30 times more than a Dominican vote in the country. It's said that there are a little over one million Dominicans in the U.S. In the last general election we cast 53,000 or 54,000 votes, which means that it's insignificant from a qualitative standpoint. And yet millions of dollars were spent to run those elections and to get to where we are. In other words, it's a vote that's very costly to taxpayers...It's a victory of extraordinary value that we can vote from here, yet it's not reflected on election day because people don't vote. The traditional partyocracy's behavior, which has been so irreverent, so opportunistic, so corrupt, so vandalistic, has taken away the younger generation's desire and political to go vote for these corrupt people.

Mejía also points to the opportunistic and antagonistic attitude of the ruling parties in the Dominican Republic towards migrants as the reason for why the government has stalled in extending rights to the migrant population, and why Dominicans are reluctant to become engaged in Dominican politics:

The traditional partyocracy has always opposed voting abroad. [Migrants were seen] as a source of income in exchange for nothing more. And that was a long

lasting process, in which many politicians put together a sort of political platform of seeing us as some miserable money box to send a few pennies. Over time that approach has fallen apart and the fact that we send remittances...has given politicians a motive and a reason to make the concessions that have been made up to now.

Former PRD leader David Williams (who now belongs to a smaller Dominican political movement) also expressed ambivalence about how external legislators will be able to help Dominicans noting that while it provides greater accountability, it also has limits. He discussed the way clientelism and patronage limit the effectiveness of external representatives:

Remember, the representative is elected by your province, and if he doesn't receive you or if he doesn't give you the necessary attention, come election time you'll oppose him...The representative doesn't manage a budget, but does have some resources they can use. And that gives them certain economic power to say, "Look, tell so and so that I can't see him, but to go to finance so he can get \$300 and leave, to pay for his ticket." Then you're not as dissatisfied [as a constituent].

Williams also noted the skepticism that many in the migrant community have towards the new external voting changes:

It could strengthen us or it could weaken us...If we simply go to occupy a space, people won't value it- in fact, I've been in debates from even before the constitutional reform was approved, and over here there are a large number of people who were opposed to assigning congressional seats to Dominicans abroad, because they said that all these people will do is go to collect a paycheck. They will not solve any of the problems that affect us here, because we live here, not there.

For Dominican organizations that are not part of the electoral process there is even greater skepticism that these changes will have a significant impact on migrants' lives. Zenaida Méndez of the NDWC noted during our interview that more the rights migrants currently have will probably not mean much in the grand scheme of things for her organization or the Dominican migrant community more generally:

So we can participate, but I think we'll have to see [if it works]. I think that

Leonel Fernández is the one that has engaged the most with Dominicans here, because he grew up here. But at the same time he is like everybody else. He's just using Dominicans to his advantage. "I need to run," [so] he comes here and collects enough money for his campaign. He had this *comité*³⁹ or something and he gave people titles where they have no power at all. The only power that they have is maybe presidential palace telephone, so they can call. But they can't stop a deportation... So people put a lot of emphasis on voting, but I don't know [if it matters.]

Zenaida would go on to acknowledge that her cynicism about what migrants can get from participating in Dominican politics is part of the reason the NDWC largely avoids addressing political issues in the Dominican Republic.

Still other figures in the Dominican migrant community see little point in relying on the Dominican state to act on behalf of migrants in the U.S. Dominican scholar Bernardo Vega (1997), for instance, noted in a public speech that he considers it inconvenient for the migrant community to look to the Dominican government for any sort of political organization. Specifically, he noted that creating a Migrant ministry would lead to migrant political organization in the U.S. being undermined by Dominican political interests. He also rejected creating migrant advocacy groups at the consular level or delegating such tasks to Dominican political parties, since such efforts would fall prey to Dominican partisan politics at the expense of migrants' needs.

Even those organization leaders with whom I spoke that were fully engaged in Dominican politics claimed the changes that the government has made in its migrant policy do not adequately address migrants' demands, nor do they put an end to migrants' marginalization in the Dominican Republic. Manuel Félix explained how the external voting changes made in 2008 fall short of really addressing migrants lack of rights and demands, and noted what other

³⁹ Translation: committee

policies were needed to really address migrants marginalization:

We have congressional elections this year [2010], and there's no representation. That was a total deception. No one knows when that will go into effect. In other words, the PLD is once again mocking the Dominican community; because if the point was for Dominicans abroad to have a legislator, representing the diaspora's interests, why then did we not participate as of now in the electoral process? That was approved in the constitution as a feature, but no one knows when we will be elected to those positions. These newly elected officials were elected for six years. So now we have to wait six years to elect representatives from the diaspora in the congress? That was a media-driven reform for us Dominicans living abroad. But I personally believe that more than being represented in congress, we need to represent a government. We have to be represented in all facets of the national government; it's more than just having a figure in congress, it's having participation in all aspects of the government.

Félix also explained what migrant leaders within the PRD were proposing in order to address migrants' marginalization:

I think we'll have to create a ministry, not just an office for Dominicans abroad. We are advocating investment programs, government support, and that the Dominican central government outlines a policy to create a ministry for Dominicans abroad that deals with all their needs. Especially for the Dominican who goes back, who is tired and retired and wants to return and integrate himself into Dominican daily life, or into the country's economy. We're outlining the parameters for that ministry. It will no longer be an office for migrants abroad, but rather at the cabinet level. And it will be directed by both Dominicans here as well as from different parts of the world.

Similarly, David Williams explained that having a representative alone was not going to improve migrants' status in the Dominican Republic, and discussed the kinds of things migrant legislators and the Dominican government should do if they are genuinely committed to empowering migrants as citizens:

I am proposing something in my agenda. Dominicans who are retired over here, they get Medicaid⁴⁰ here [in New York] and they want to move to Florida. They go and Medicare covers their medicines and everything else over there. So then

⁴⁰ Presumably Williams was referring to Medicare, since he discusses retirees and refers to Medicare later in the discussion.

why can't each country sign a treaty so that if you want to go to Jurumucú, which is your province, the Dominican government, in agreement with the U.S. government through some sort of coordinated effort between governments, allows you to collect over there? Who would benefit? The Dominican government would, because the dollar is a strong currency and they want lots of dollars to come into the country. Those should be the tasks that properly belong to an external representative. Make life easier for their constituents and at the same time preserve their rights over there.

On the one hand, Dominican migrant organization leaders recognize the opportunity that expanded external voting rights offers to articulate their demands to the Dominican government. At the same time, however, these same leaders feel that migrants' transnational political engagement is nevertheless hindered by what they perceive to be attempts by the political elite in the Dominican Republic to limit migrant's political incorporation. Migrant leaders point to the delays in extending these rights, as well as the neglect on the part of politicians in the Dominican Republic to addressing migrant issues as proof that migrants are still largely unwelcome in Dominican political society and therefore marginalized by the state.

As a result, for some groups, such as the NWDC, their political efforts are almost exclusively directed at making demands for rights and recognition in the U.S., since the government is neglectful and resistant of migrants' demands and concerns. Meanwhile for those groups who are invested in Dominican politics, like the PRD and *Alianza PAIS* activists in New York, the Dominican government's policies and involvement in migrant affairs has compelled these groups to demand rights as a marginalized or disadvantaged group within the Dominican state. Furthermore even these groups harbor skepticism that they can successfully garner and/or sustain enough support from migrants to effectively engage in transnational political activism.

Conclusion

A comparison of migrant policies in Ecuador and the Dominican Republic not only

reveal a number of differences in the scope and depth of each country's involvement with their migrants, but also that the way in which each state has chosen to engage its migrant populations influences migrant political engagement in very specific ways. State policies not only shape the opportunities for migrants to use transnational political activity as a means to address their dual marginalization, but also affect the manner in which migrants identify themselves within the political sphere of their respective home countries, either directly or indirectly in the case of these two populations.

In the case of the Ecuadorian migrant community, the Ecuadorian government's decision to pursue a rather aggressive policy to reincorporate its migrant population in the nation-state through changes to the rule of law, expanded voting rights, a wide range of programs and a new pro-migrant discourse incentivize transnational political engagement by migrant organizations. Some of this is due to a positive response by migrants towards the new rights they are guaranteed by the constitution and by the government's rhetoric that is inclusive of migrants. However, part of this incentive to engage transnationally is also in response to the effectiveness of policies and programs put in place, which have a direct impact on migrants' welfare. Thus, among Ecuadorians, even if certain organizations are critical or disapprove of the government's efforts to empower migrants in the face of marginalization, they nevertheless see it as increasingly necessary to participate in Ecuadorian politics and recognize that the political sphere in Ecuador is more favorable for migrants to find a remedy to their marginalization. The state's rhetoric also influences migrants' engagement by formalizing their status as a minority group. As such, migrants frame their participation as a minority group in a dual context. Finally the fact that Ecuadorian migrant politics has been almost exclusively crafted at the national level has necessarily led organizations to direct their political activities at the national level of Ecuadorian

politics.

By contrast, the Dominican government's migrant policy seems to provide considerably less incentives for transnational participation for migrant organizations. This is partially due to the fact that many of the measures that would allow migrants to effectively take part in Dominican political life-such as external voting and government institutions to craft migrant policy- have been slow to materialize. However the larger issue lies in that there is a contentious relationship between migrants and the Dominican state that persists to this day, which not only limits the scope of what the government can and will do to reincorporate migrants, but also fosters a significant amount of skepticism and mistrust among migrant organization leaders that migrants actually stand to benefit in any substantive way from transnational political engagement. While this context also reinforces migrants' marginalization within the state, more groups are compelled to forego participating in Dominican politics altogether. And those that do are more pessimistic about their long term viability because of the obstacles that exist in the Dominican Republic. This may explain why most of the transnational political activity among Dominican migrants in New York is limited to political parties, while other non-partisan groups such as hometown associations, and operate at the local level in the D.R.

CHAPTER 5: MOBILIZING FOR STRATEGIC CITIZENSHIP: ECUADORIAN AND DOMINICAN MIGRANT ORGANIZATIONS, AND TRANSNATIONAL POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT

The previous two chapters discussed how transnational political activism among Ecuadorian and Dominican migrants in my study takes place through a process I call strategic citizenship; or selective claims for membership rights in home or host country based on migrants' perceived standing and the opportunities available to successfully articulate demands for rights in each country. Chapter Three argued that strategic citizenship by New York-based Ecuadorian and Dominican migrant organizations to pursue a transnational political program is driven by a narrative or discourse of dual marginalization employed by organization members, as well as by the perceived opportunities available for migrants to demand citizenship rights that address their marginalization in both countries. Chapter Four, in turn, discussed the role the Ecuadorian and Dominican governments play in shaping both the dual marginalization narrative and the opportunities for migrants to demand and obtain citizenship rights to challenge dual marginalization. The goal of these two chapters has been to demonstrate how transnational political engagement by this set of collective actors is shaped by structural and ideological factors, which create both opportunities and constraints to demand rights in both the U.S. and their countries of origin.

This chapter further expands on the strategic citizenship argument by exploring how a number of different civic and political organizations in the Ecuadorian and Dominican communities engage in transnational political activity. In this chapter I examine three different Ecuadorian migrant organizations⁴¹ and three separate Dominican organizations, all based in

⁴¹ It is worth noting that two of the Ecuadorian organizations examined here, while based in New York, aim to represent Ecuadorian migrants across the entire U.S.

New York, that take part in political activities. I use my observations and analysis of these groups to argue that the nature of migrants' strategic citizenship is dictated in considerable measure by the dynamics of these organizations, which determine the scope and the intensity of transnational political engagement. Each of the organizations examined in this chapter demonstrate that organizations affect political participation in terms of (1) the opportunities the organization provides migrants through framing and networks to mobilize and make claims upon both home and host country governments, and (2) by the institutional capacity for organizations to empower migrants to have a tangible impact on political processes in home and/or host countries.

The chapter first discusses the existing body of research on migrant transnational organizations, the majority of which has focused on the phenomenon of hometown associations (HTAs), and briefly assess the strengths and limitations of this work. I then provide a rationale for a comparative examination of migrant civic and political organizations, and provide a brief overview of key works on organizations that inform this chapter's analysis. The remaining portion of the chapter presents findings based on my study of six different migrant organizations in New York's Ecuadorian and Dominican communities. Specifically, the chapter first examines three different organizations in New York's Ecuadorian migrant community, which include: (1) Alianza PAIS⁴²: The current ruling electoral movement in Ecuador, which operates a U.S. politburo based in New York City; (2) the United Ecuadorian Immigrants Front (FUIE)⁴³: A grassroots social movement organization based in New York City and with chapters across the Diaspora; and (3) Juventud Ecuatoriana⁴⁴ (JE): A 501c (3) non-profit organization based in the

⁴² Translation: Proud and Sovereign Homeland Alliance

⁴³ *Frente Unido de Inmigrantes Ecuatorianos* in Spanish

⁴⁴ Translation: Ecuadorian Youth

New York metropolitan area whose work focuses on civic empowerment for Ecuadorians and regional economic development in Ecuador as a solution to migration.

The chapter also focuses on three Dominican organizations (1) the Dominican Revolutionary Party (PRD): One of the two main political parties in the Dominican Republic, which has a New York chapter; (2) Alianza País (A.P.): A leftist political movement that participates in Dominican elections, but actively works with other community and advocacy organizations in the New York Dominican community, with no relation to the similarly named Ecuadorian movement; and (3) the National Dominican Women's Caucus (NWDC): A non-profit organization focused on Dominican and other Latina women's participation and representation in U.S. politics, but also does advocacy work in the Dominican Republic.

This chapter assesses the degree to which the Ecuadorian and Dominican organizations in my study are able to seize on opportunities available to them in home and host countries; their capacity to appropriate organizational resources; and employ repertoires of action or tactics to effectively advance their claims against both the U.S and home country governments to address their marginalization. Specifically I discuss how the organization's ideology/public discourse, structure, leadership, membership, material resources and networks with other actors enable them to become viable political actors in the U.S., their home countries, or both, and to what extent.

There are at least two ways in which political participation can be understood and/or examined. First, at the individual level we identify individual political behavior as an actor's propensity to vote or partake in political activities, as well as their ideological persuasions or attitudes on policy issues. The benefit of using an individual-level analysis is that it allows us to discern the overall level of political engagement and to understand collection actions such as

voting trends on issues. As it relates to this research, studies on individual level migrant participation (DeSipio, Pachon and Lee 2003; Waldinger 2008; Itzighsohn and Villacres 2009) are particularly useful, since they not only focus mainly on external voting processes, but also use other measures such as familiarity with home and host country policy issues, and financial contributions to political activities in the home country. Most of these studies found transnational political participation remains relatively small in scope. These studies provide a realistic assessment of how prevalent transnational political practices are in terms of external voting, and caution readers not to overstate the transnationalization of migrants' political life.

A second level at which to examine political engagement is at the organizational level. While individual voting is the most basic level at which the majority of people in democratic societies participate, a substantial amount of political engagement is influenced and takes place within organizations. Scholars as far back as Tocqueville (1835/2000) have noted how voluntary organizations play an important role in political engagement. Contemporary scholarship has confirmed organization's relevance to political participation, either directly by mobilizing individuals into collective action (Lipsett 1960; McAdam 1985; Wilson 1973; Tarrow 1998), or indirectly by providing individuals the opportunity to become part of groups that foster solidarity and trust, which help nurture political mobilization among organization members (Putnam 1996 and 2000)

The findings in this study show that the organizations examined in this analysis have different experiences and outcomes of transnational political organization. The structure of each organization, including its membership, hierarchy, resources and networks each provide distinct advantages and limitations in either articulating or sustaining a political agenda that fully addresses migrants' dual marginalization. As a result some organizations may lean towards

engagement in one country over another, or face barriers in one or both states in their political goals.

Migration, Organizations and Transnationalized Political Engagement

Organizations are consistently shown to be a vital part of the migrant experience. The earliest sociological studies on migration, such as the *Polish Peasant in America* (Thomas and Znaniecki 1918) and *Old World Traits Transplanted* (Park and Miller 1921), each of which discuss the role that cultural and patriotic societies had not only on migrant adaptation but also on their political engagement during the early 20th century- a point which Foner (2000) noted in order to highlight the historical trajectory of home country ties in the migrant experience. Other scholars (Walker 1998/1971; Goldring 1998; Landolt, et al 1999; Levitt 2001; Smith 2006) have emphasized the emergence of hometown associations (HTAs), or civic organizations created by migrants hailing from the same town, city or province. These organizations originally emerged to provide migrants a vehicle for fraternization and cultural events, but many have evolved to become influential actors in home country politics, often locally, but sometimes at higher levels of governance. Smith (2006) for instance, notes the impact that an HTA created by Mexican immigrants in New York City were able to influence voters in their hometown to successfully defeat a long-standing incumbent mayor. Other scholars have described how HTAs influence local and regional economic development policy in their home countries, by entering into collaborative agreements with governments to fund various infrastructure and local development projects (Levitt 2001; Orozco and Lapointe 2004; De la Garza and Lowell, 2000).

HTAs play an important function in migrants' political aspirations and effective engagement. These particular organizations provide important resources and influence that make them a vital part of how migrants are able to effectively participate in political processes. Given

the nascent and often limited nature of external voting procedures set in place for migrant populations by home country governments, HTAs provide an opportunity for migrants to lobby, mobilize voters and collaborate directly with government entities.

Existing studies on migrant transnational organizations also have their limitations. Findings in this study reveal that HTAs are not used by Ecuadorian migrant respondents. *Juventud Ecuatoriana* President Eduard Miranda explained that HTAs have not caught on as an organizational form among Ecuadorian migrants, though they sought to promote that sort of organization in Ecuador:

The hometown association...in which individuals who left the country from the same area start giving back to their community back in their country of origin, to get them [migrants] involved. So there haven't been those actors who are like, "okay, let's get together, unite those in Ecuador and those in the U.S., and let's interact", which is the model that we want to create.

Many Ecuadorian migrants are nevertheless actively involved in politics through a variety of different civic and political organizations. This also is true for Dominican migrants this study, given the presence of political parties, community-based organizations and non-profit organizations that take part in Dominican and U.S. political affairs. While HTAs studies have yielded important findings about how civic organizations can be effective vehicles for transnational political engagement, they provide only a specific, undifferentiated view both of how migrants organize as well as how different organizations influence transnational political activities. Without other forms of organization by which to compare HTAs there is no consideration of organizational context, and thus no way to assess whether HTAs are more effective than other forms of organization in helping migrants deal with dual marginalization

It is for this reason that this study compares transnational political engagement among different organizations in the Ecuadorian and Dominican migrant populations in the New York

City metropolitan area. Each of these organizations approaches transnational engagement differently. Some orient most of their activities towards home country affairs; others are mostly committed to political empowerment in the U.S., while the remaining groups seek mutual political engagement in the U.S. and their home countries. These differences are driven in large measure by the dynamics of each organization, both among its members as well as how the organizations as a whole are able to interact with other political actors in the U.S. and their respective home countries. While a qualitative study such as this does not allow for generalizable findings regarding the effectiveness of organizations, it nevertheless provides a comparative insight on how different types of organizations, by virtue of their composition and resources, shape the way in which members of these groups participate in transnational politics.

In making this argument Chapter Five draws upon two key works. One is Moss Kanter's (1977), *Men and Women of the Corporation*, an ethnographic study of a major U.S. corporation that explores how organizational structures impact the behavior and actions of its members. The other is *Dynamics of Contention* by Tarrow, Tilly and McAdam (2001) where the authors expand on the theoretical model of collective action to show how collective actors engage in contentious politics based on a confluence of ideological and structural factors that enable actors to make claims against the nation-state. Moss Kanter's study provides important insight to this study on the manner in which the composition and dynamics of an organizations shape how its members perceive their roles and actions, while also illustrating how organizations enable or limit members chances of achieving their goals Tarrow, Tilly and McAdam's study, in turn, provide a theoretical framework that shows how collective actors'-which includes organizations-capacity to successfully make claims to a nation-state are predicated upon external and internal factors that allow them to obtain and capitalize on opportunities to become effective political actors.

Kanter (1977) found in her study that those who had opportunities to advance in the corporation demonstrated greater commitment to organization success and/or negotiating the corporation's internal politics to continue to advance. Those who lacked the opportunity to advance or whose path to success was thwarted often displayed resistance or disengagement from the organization. The corporation in Kanter's study also influenced employee behavior by having embedded systems of power, defined in this instance as the capacity for individuals to influence others to obtain autonomy of action. The capacity to obtain and exercise power within the corporation allowed those in leadership positions to gain credibility among other leaders and subordinates. Access to power also permitted individuals to create other sources of power in the organization. Finally, Kanter found that the power sources embedded within the organization fostered a sense of dependency by all employees, leading the less powerful to align with powerful actors, who are able to empower other employees to varying degrees.

While the organizations examined in this study are considerably different from the corporate structure outlined by Kanter's (1977) study, her work informs my findings in that it demonstrates how personnel structures and interpersonal relations extensively determine how organizations work, and the extent to which a given organization satisfies the goals that members have upon joining. Though there is no general pattern of how organizational dynamics help or hinder migrants in their transnational political endeavors, there are aspects of each organization in my study that either empower or hinder its members, and the organization as a whole, from effectively advocating for migrants to remedy their perceived dual marginalization. Some organizations like Ecuador's *Alianza PAIS*, the FUIE and the Dominican *Alianza País* have membership structures that make it easier to generate support, while others like *Juventud Ecuatoriana* and the National Dominican Women's Conference are structured in such a way that

makes it harder for them to have larger memberships, which leads them to pursue different goals. Similarly, differences in leadership between groups like the Dominican Revolutionary Party and *Juventud Ecuatoriana* create different outcomes in terms of whether each organization can successfully articulate an effective political agenda on behalf of their respective migrant constituencies.

The theoretical model of contentious collective action presented by Tarrow, Tilly and McAdam in *Dynamics of Contention* (2001), as well as Tarrow's *New Transnational Activism* (2005) is also important to analyzing the findings in Chapter Five. In the former, the authors offer a unified model applicable to both institutionalized politics and non-institutionalized politics (such as social movements). By focusing on contentious politics, or "episodic, public, collective interaction among claims makers and their objects, when (a) at least one government is a claimant, an object of claims or a party to claims, and (b) the claims, if realized, affect the interests of at least one of the claimants" (Tarrow, Tilly and McAdam 2001:5). The authors identify the dynamic elements of the classic social movement agenda (i.e. opportunities, mobilizing structures, framing and repertoires) in relation with each other.

According to the Tilly, Tarrow and McAdam model, actors involved in contentious politics capitalize on opportunities they recognize as being available for them to act, appropriate and employ organizational structures to mobilize people, and frame collective action based on broader interpretation of the context that leads to contention. Actors also have generally established previous relations- contentious or not- to other collective actors, which have shaped internal structures of actors and helped generate their stories., Finally, Tilly, Tarrow and McAdam contend that contentious action is driven by a combination of three elements: brokerage (a unit that connects actors from two unconnected sites), category formation, which

creates political identities, and object shift, or a change in relations between claimants and the object of claims. Tarrow (2005) later updated this theoretical model to analyze how activist groups effectively engage in collective borders across nation-state boundaries by emphasizing the importance of networks between groups across multiple polities. These networks, according to Tarrow, are critical to allowing activists to create opportunity structures and to frame their actions across various sites, which help mobilize people locally and to challenge governments and other political elites.

Ultimately this chapter aims to contribute to the broader argument of strategic citizenship by noting how the structure and internal dynamics of the organizations in which migrants participate play a significant role in shaping the direction and scope of migrants' political engagement. They also create different opportunities for migrants to effectively make claims that address migrants' marginalization in both the U.S. and their countries of origin.

The chapter first examines three of the Ecuadorian organizations I observed during my field research, in order to show how and to what extent organizations have sought to capitalize on the opportunities provided by the Ecuadorian state for migrants to make claims for greater rights, based on organization leadership capacity as well as the networks and resources organizations have to effectively participate in both Ecuadorian and U.S. politics. The chapter then analyzes three Dominican organizations to demonstrate how Dominican organizations face greater challenges in mobilizing migrants and/or making claims on behalf of migrants, either because of their ties to much-maligned political actors in the Dominican Republic or leader's reluctance to seek significant engagement in Dominican politics.

Case Studies of Transnational Migrant Organizations in New York City

I. Ecuadorian Organizations

Alianza PAIS

Alianza PAIS is the governing political movement in Ecuador, created by President Rafael Correa (2006-present) after his election. *Alianza PAIS* has local chapters called politburos that operate across Ecuador's various political jurisdictions. This also includes election districts that have been created by the Ecuadorian government for migrants in the U.S. and Canada (which are grouped together into a single election district for voting purposes), Europe and South America. The national movement leadership in Ecuador sets the movement's principles and objectives, while the local politburos select candidates and identify the constituency's policy items.

Many aspects of how *Alianza PAIS* is structured affect how the organization mobilizes migrants in the U.S. The first aspect is PAIS's legal status as a political movement, rather than a political party. Although it is the electoral organization used to support Rafael Correa, U.S. politburo director Luis Ortiz explained the particularities of being a movement and how it differs from a party:

A political party [in Ecuador] has the power to establish strict membership requirements, and to have more closed meetings. A movement has, in my opinion, a more open character, since it not only impacts members, who we call adherents. It also includes... We're using the word sympathizer, which means that, maybe you're not in agreement with everything, but in general... you sympathize with the movement and in some way support [it]. Adherent has more of a membership character; you have to attend a minimum number of meetings, be consistent and contribute ideas to generate income for the movement so that it can finance itself.

By opting to officially remain a movement, *Alianza PAIS* leaders believe they have the capacity to exert a broader influence on the migrant community by allowing for flexible membership terms. The relatively loose membership standards help accommodate a relatively wide set of political positions within the U.S. politburo. Alex, my principal contact and PAIS organizer, and Assemblywoman Blanca Ortiz, for example, identify with a more traditional socialist political

discourse of state-led redistributive politics. Other leaders such as Luis Ortiz have more moderate views, saying: “We don’t want a Soviet Union. We know those models have not worked. We belong to a globalized neoliberal financial system and we have currency... So we have to do things to improve, and many of those things are pragmatic.”

Alianza PAIS’s close association with President Correa also shapes the U.S.-Canada politburo’s efforts in mobilizing the migrant community. Correa’s populist appeal has been the focal point of PAIS’s mobilization strategy, which as Luis explained is due to the movement’s trajectory:

The movement started with a strict electoral character, because we didn’t actually have a movement. ... *Alianza PAIS* was created with only a presidential candidate knowing that we wanted a new constitution, new rules to the game so we started the movement with just a presidential candidate and we won those elections... All of the force in the movement was concentrated in the Presidential campaigns.

This reliance on Correa’s charismatic leadership presents both advantages and disadvantages for U.S. politburo leaders. On the one hand, because *Alianza PAIS* is so closely identified with President Correa, PAIS activists in New York have drawn upon Correa’s popularity among a broad cross-section of the country’s population and his administration’s accomplishments to mobilize the Ecuadorian migrant population.

Henry, a volunteer during PAIS’s 2009 election campaign, told me that because of Correa, Ecuador is now one of the few countries whose migrants not only have voting privileges, but tangible political power through legislative representation, which inspired him to sign up. I posed the same question to two older volunteers at another canvassing event, including a volunteer affectionately called “Big Chief.” Both men said that the president has gone to great lengths to end corruption and create a more democratic society in Ecuador and break with the political corruption of the past, which includes migrants. Alex also repeated told me that his

motivation for joining PAIS was to support Correa and his revolutionary project, not to be part of partisan political activities per se. Correa's popularity has been such that even PAIS rivals such as the FUIE and the Immigrants in Action (MIA), another migrant-based political movement, frequently made it clear that they supported Correa, despite opposing PAIS.

Alianza PAIS's ties with the Ecuadorian government also provided New York leaders access to considerable resources that aided their mobilization efforts, relative to other Ecuadorian migrant organizations. Ecuadorian electoral movements currently have access to limited funds for campaigning in the U.S. PAIS activists; however, have a variety of other resources they draw upon. New York leaders had access to the Ecuadorian Consular Services Office in Queens, which they used as a base of operations. *Alianza PAIS* leaders also used visits from top-level government ministers and elected officials in Ecuador to boost their standing with migrants. I observed both *Alianza PAIS* assembly candidates campaigning in Queens alongside National Assembly President Fernando Cordero, SENAMI⁴⁵ minister Lorena Escudero and Ecuadorian Internal Revenue Service director Carlos Marx Carrasco. PAIS leaders also had support from local migrant entrepreneurs that donated space, labor and/or supplies to the movement⁴⁶.

Yet some of the same aspects of *Alianza PAIS*'s organizational structure that enabled its early success also created limitations for migrant leaders to pursue a transnational, migrant-specific agenda. New York leader's efforts to articulate a migrant-specific platform have been subsumed by the movement's national political goals in Ecuador. This is partially due to the difficulty PAIS activists in New York have separating themselves from President Correa and/or the Ecuadorian government. Some of the *Alianza PAIS* activists in New York City acknowledged

⁴⁵ *Secretaria Nacional del Migrante*, or National Migrant Secretariat

⁴⁶ One notable example of this is Delgado Travel, a large travel and multi-service agency for migrants in New York City, which provided space at one of its main branches in Queens and airtime on its radio network to allow PAIS candidates to speak and to canvass voters.

the challenge they faced in articulating a migrant identity and political agenda within the larger movement. During the 2009 election campaign, Alex suggested that assembly candidate Francisco Hagó's main competition was actually from the Correa government itself and specifically the SENAMI. Alex was concerned that SENAMI representatives, who wanted to be seen as the main advocate for migrants, would take up too much of the public spotlight during the campaign, making it difficult for Hagó to make a claim to voters that he and PAIS leaders in the U.S. could effectively advocate on their behalf of migrants in the U.S.⁴⁷.

Other comments illustrated the struggle between migrants' demands and national movement goals. When I asked Alex to mention migrant-specific issues the politburo was pursuing, Alex fell back on discussing the Correa government's accomplishments thus far:

Personally what changes would I like to see at the migrant level? That there's some sort of organism that worries about worker's exploitation, or that workers who need help some sort of place where someone can provide that assistance Well... the *Casa Ecuatoriana* already exists, ... The new consulate in Queens also exists, which was the President's idea⁴⁸ ... the political work carried out by *Alianza PAIS* is to ensure, this type of information gets out to people, to the community, so that they are informed about these advances.

Ximena Peña, another *Alianza PAIS* coordinator in New York City, acknowledged that the migrant community's interests aren't always reflected in the manner in which the movement carries out its political goals:

I think there are very valuable people here, prepared migrant people with a great desire to collaborate... I told Jorge [López, the consul general] this. But sadly the *Casa Ecuatoriana* Director came straight from Ecuador. If we [the migrant

⁴⁷ It is important to note here that while all of the data was based on PAIS's political activities in New York City, Alex's comments refer to the fact that the migrant candidates who are elected to the Ecuadorian National Assembly are elected to represent all migrant voters living in the entire United States and Canada. Hence Alex's comments identify the entire constituency

⁴⁸ Alex is referring to the Main Consulate near the United Nations. The Queens consulate Alex alludes to is an extension office that provides limited services to migrants, such as documentation and voter registration.

community] had been unified, we could have put out a name and said “this person is worth hiring.” And if that would have gained momentum and then maybe we could have gotten something... Sadly, we don’t have political power and a lot of things are assigned to us from there. There are political interests that come from Ecuador. There are also problems in the community here that we can’t reconcile because we are selfish.

Furthermore, during the 2009 election campaign PAIS leaders and candidates in New York were sometimes overshadowed by President Correa’s image, making it hard for voters to distinguish between the two. Many voters with whom PAIS volunteers met on the campaign trail said their support for Correa was their reason for voting, saying or knowing nothing of Hagó’s candidacy. PAIS migrant candidates also relied heavily on President Correa’s popularity to garner support from migrant voters. Most of Hago’s talking points only highlighted the President Correa’s achievements on behalf of migrants.

Alianza PAIS’s composition as an electoral movement also creates obstacles towards being effective transnational political actor by relying on a hierarchical leadership model, where success within the organization is predicated on moving up the political ladder. Long term success for members, including migrant activists, is measured by the extent to which one is rewarded with government posts and/or the opportunity to run for elected office as a PAIS candidate. This creates strong incentives for many of the U.S. politburo’s migrant leaders to focus on advancing up the party structure.. Francisco Hagó’s campaign was a reward for his organizing efforts in the 2006 and 2008 elections. Luis Ortiz was appointed to government post in the Interamerican Development Bank. These are just a couple of examples.

Alianza PAIS’s hierarchical mobility structure has strained the U.S. politburo’s leadership. After the 2009 election, constituents at public meetings criticized Hagó and the other politburo leaders for demanding migrant unity, arguing that both PAIS and the community lacked leadership. Eventually, Hagó admitted that he could no longer focus solely on what goes on

within *Alianza PAIS* while serving in the Assembly. Luis Ortiz also acknowledged the problems that his and Hagó's departure pose for the movement:

Problems began to emerge within the provinces, which included us [in the U.S]. [People said] "Luis Ortiz has been sub-director since 2006." "This is not a dictatorship." "Other people should be in place." "Where is Luis?" ... So then the politburo here has been questioned... They have a right to question because the movement director, Francisco [Hagó], is an Assemblyman. He already left. Aside from that there's also my absence, since I came to D.C. It's been hard for me to go to New York every weekend. So right there it was unclear who took charge. It's a bad precedent and it's an undemocratic precedent to say, "I'm going over here, you stay in charge."

The leadership void has also led to infighting within U.S.-Canada politburo, particularly between Hagó's team and Assemblywoman Linda Machuca's team. During the 2009 campaign Alex proclaimed Hago the preferred candidate back in Ecuador. Hagó's team was also not enthusiastic about Machuca's election victory, arguing that she and her New Jersey supporters represented interests that diverge from politburo's goals. The two candidates made few appearances together during and after the election.

Conflicts also emerged between Assemblyman Hagó and his alternate, Blanca Ortiz, over her role. Ortiz acknowledged her tenuous standing early on, stating: "When I was approached to run, I felt that Hago, Jorge and Luis wanted me to run mainly to have someone to stand up against Machuca." Ortiz also described how she was marginalized within the movement after the election:

I quickly realized that Jorge, Luis and Francisco really just wanted to use me as a stepping stone for their own political aspirations, and had no interest in what I might have to offer substantively. As soon as the election was over and we won, Francisco told me not to speak to the press or engage in any sort of community work. From there things only got worse and I became increasingly marginalized by the PAIS leadership, to the point where I was nearly denied access to Consulate in Manhattan ... Furthermore Ximena [Peña] was assigned as my office

director mainly because she is a *levantamano*⁴⁹ that goes along with what Jorge, Luis and Francisco want. Their efforts to maintain control not only involve marginalizing me, but also limiting Linda Machucha's influence. The rivalry between Machuca and Hagó is a power struggle over control of the Casa Ecuatoriana.

These internal conflicts eventually began to undermine PAIS's credibility among the migrant community. Constituents began to denounce Blanca Ortiz's marginalization at public meetings with Assemblyman Hagó. PAIS migrant leaders also fell under attack by other political actors like the FUIE, Alianza Ecuatoriana and Pachakutik, over accusations of excessive patronage, corruption and lack of commitment to migrants as internal conflicts within the politburo persisted.

Observable internal conflicts may have also stalled PAIS's efforts to create networks with political forces in the U.S. I found no clear evidence that the movement had any significant contacts or networks with political actors in the U.S. or even locally in New York. As noted in the Chapter Four, U.S.-Canada politburo leaders were criticized by migrant community leaders for their limited support for hate crime victims, and for not supporting local groups in such efforts. Alex confirmed *Alianza PAIS*'s lack of networks with U.S. actors during our interview, and explained both the need and the challenges PAIS faces in networking with U.S politicians.

Well, the movement as such, no... Just now we're in the process of [getting ready] for the President to take office again... and the problem I see is that the two primary Assembly members won't be around to make contacts with representatives from the North American governments⁵⁰. But we still have the alternate Assembly members, and through them we've approached some [elected officials]. But eventually those sorts of conversations or approaches will have to be made [by PAIS].

⁴⁹ Translation: hand raiser. A derogative term used for a blind loyalist

⁵⁰ Ecuatorian legislators currently representing the U.S. migrant community also represent migrants residing in Canada.

Some PAIS leaders have established networks, such as Blanca Ortiz, who said she had ties to the mayors of Elizabeth and Newark, NJ, the State Board of Education, the Newark Street Vendors Association and an advocacy group called PROSID. However, according to Ortiz, it has been difficult to use these networks to shape *Alianza PAIS*'s policy agenda with the New York migrant population. Furthermore, given Ortiz's weak standing with politburo leaders it is difficult to imagine that she will be given the opportunity to help PAIS build its networks with U.S. elected officials.

PAIS's U.S.-Canada politburo's viability as a vehicle to exercise strategic citizenship has been compromised. An emergent leadership void and infighting among aspiring leaders have tarnished *Alianza PAIS*'s public image among a substantial part of the migrant community, and may have stymied networking efforts with U.S. politicians. Some leaders, such as Alex and Ximena, have started to push for greater capacity building and loyalty mechanisms through popular education campaigns modeled after Chavez supporters in Venezuela (called Revolutionary Defense Circles). But it remains to be seen whether these efforts can repair the damage done to PAIS's image among migrants.

FUIE

The FUIE, or United Ecuadorian Immigrants' Front, is a grassroots political organization started by Ecuadorian migrant activists in 2000 (*Ecuamigrante* 2:4, 2008). FUIE is made up of various smaller civic and political organizations who share a common commitment towards advocacy for greater civil and political rights for Ecuadorians in both Ecuador and the various host countries where Ecuadorians have migrated. The FUIE has an executive board elected by its members, raises its own funds, and sets its own agenda. The organization and its executive committee are based in New York City, but the FUIE has smaller chapters operating in London,

Madrid, Milan and Caracas. Though it has participated in Ecuadorian elections and created a non-profit service organization, leaders with whom I spoke to characterize the FUIE as a social movement organization with a progressive or radical-left political ideology, whose goal is to advocate for migrants' rights (including those of non-Ecuadorians) both in Ecuador and abroad.

The FUIE's structure as a grassroots social movement organization allows it to make demands that address migrants' dual marginalization in both Ecuadorian and U.S. politics. In particular, its members' strong ideological commitment, its movement-based structure and its coalition-based mobilizing tactics create opportunities for the FUIE to participate in both U.S. and Ecuadorian politics. However, these same aspects also impose constraints on the scope of their activities, and have driven the FUIE to adopt survival strategies that may affect its political participation.

The FUIE stated mission is to protect the rights of workers and families among the entire Ecuadorian migrant population through mobilization and direct action (*Ecuamigrante* 2008). The FUIE's ideological purpose has not only allowed the organization to establish a presence in Ecuadorian politics, but also avoid internal tensions among its members. According to current FUIE President Antonio Arígaza:

It's made up of people from the left and many people who perhaps had that trajectory in Ecuador or had democratic ideals... There's this problem in New Haven⁵¹? Then everyone goes to New Haven. There's a problem that's happening over here? Everyone goes there...everything works that way. ...So among us there's a sharpened ideological identity with a desire for change which has helped move us. Maybe that's what has given us results in the FUIE. Here's what happens in all of the Ecuadorian organizations. You don't have people who are committed; there are no consistent people, no honest people or people with the ideology who are willing to renounce their material position. The organizations

⁵¹ Antonio is referring to a 2009 incident in which a group of immigrant rights activists, many of whom were Ecuadorian migrants, were confronted and harassed by an anti-immigration group during a rally in New Haven, CT demanding immigration reform legislation be passed by the U.S. Congress.

fall apart in two or three years...Those things don't happen with us. That's because our composition has other characteristics.

My own observations of FUIE activities seem to confirm Antonio's assertions. During all of the meetings I attended there was almost always consensus on the positions that the organization's leaders proposed. Public events, such as demonstrations and outreach efforts during the Ecuadorian National Assembly election (in which the FUIE ran candidates), would consistently have around 20-30 volunteers present to support the organization's mission and ideology.

The FUIE's ideological orientation has made it possible for the organization to position itself as an advocate for migrants' rights in both Ecuador and U.S. On the U.S. side, former FUIE President Vicente Mayorga explained how the group has been able to form working relationships with various organizations in the U.S. to incorporate Ecuadorian migrant issues into broader social justice campaigns carried out by these organizations:

We also believe in the interconnecting lines of unity with non-profit organizations and sectors, diversity organizations here in the U.S. and of other countries, with progressive people, with students and with workers of different sectors. This has made the Front... become part various coalitions, of vindicative struggles that have been carried out here in the U.S. We are part of the New York Immigration Coalition, of the NYCPP⁵² and of the National Council of La Raza, which is at the national level.

The FUIE's ideological stance has also created opportunities to participate in Ecuadorian politics. In the 2009 Ecuadorian general election, the FUIE fielded candidates for the two National Assembly seats from the U.S.-Canada external constituency, running as a migrant-oriented, more progressive alternative to PAIS. In their campaign platform, the FUIE listed among its policy priorities enacting a Distance Education Law for migrants abroad, equal representation for migrants in all government ministries and agencies, a public fund to aid deportation victims and

⁵² New York Civic Participation Project

to repatriate deceased migrants, and greater oversight of migrant-oriented public services such as customs offices, the consulates and the Casas Ecuatorianas⁵³. During the campaign, Alex and Luis both noted that while *Alianza PAIS* was on good terms with the FUIE (since they supported President Correa), they nevertheless acknowledged that the FUIE was ideologically to the left of *Alianza PAIS*, and therefore a rival group.

Since the 2009 election the FUIE has increasingly has been able to parlay its ideological position to legitimize itself as an advocate against migrants' dual marginalization. During the FUIE's first meeting after the Ecuadorian election in October, 2009, organization leaders and members took highly critical positions towards the Correa government and the Assembly members from the U.S. Antonio Arízaga argued that the current government's mandate is being undermined by people who are aligned with the right in Ecuador. Vicente Mayorga denounced the lack of oversight on the consulates and the kind of service they've been providing, arguing that many of the services are very costly for migrants such as customs fees or getting legal powers. He also blamed PAIS leaders for failing to respond to these growing concerns from the community on consular issues as well as other larger issues affecting the migrant community, or for responding to the FUIE's accountability requests with hostility.

The FUIE was eventually able to use its ideological position to capitalize on growing dissatisfaction among constituents and other political activists in the Ecuadorian community. By August, 2010 the FUIE successfully convened a "Citizen's Assembly" of all Ecuadorian organizations in New York, in which they were not only able to create a Citizen's Oversight Council with representatives of various community organizations (including Pachakutik, *Fundación del Migrante*, The Ecuadorian Civic Committee of Danbury, CT and a newly established Ecuadorian street vendor movement), but also generate momentum for a movement

⁵³ See Appendix D:1 for a sample election flier outlining the FUIE's proposals

to recall both of the Ecuadorian assembly members representing the migrant community in the U.S.

The FUIE's ability to sustain organizational cohesion and thus effectively articulate its migrant-centric political agenda is also partly aided by its coalition-based movement organization structure. It was not uncommon to find that many FUIE members also belonged to other Ecuadorian organizations. Former President Vicente Mayorga was also affiliated with the Ecuadorian Popular Democratic Movement (MPD), a leftist political party. Former FUIE assembly candidate Carlos Cordova is also the President of the Ecuadorian Civic Committee of Danbury. Other FUIE members I met were also members of Pachakutik and *Fundación para el Desarrollo Social y Economico Camino Del Inca*⁵⁴, an Ecuadorian organization in New York City working on local economic development issues in Ecuador and the U.S. By maintaining such a fluid membership structure, the FUIE can more easily maintain its ideological focus, as members with other political interests can pursue

This organizational structure also allows the organization to successfully operate on a volunteer basis. There are no incentives within the movement to deviate from the ideological mission of the movement which, according to Antonio Arízaga, is what has allowed the organization to be successful in carrying out its political advocacy:

All the meetings are different, all of them, because one person can [go] one time, but not the next time. In other words, and since there's no imposed obligation—rather, the obligation is a moral one. It's a personal obligation. There is no pressure or sanction. So then people mobilize that way.

Finally, the FUIE's social movement organization structure has also given it the flexibility to adopt different tactics to challenge migrants' marginalization in both the U.S. and

⁵⁴ Translation: Inca Path Social and Economic Development Foundation

Ecuador. Much of the political activism carried out by the FUIE was characteristic of movement organizations. They mobilized members for May 1 immigrant rights rallies in Manhattan in 2009 and 2010. The FUIE also took part in a lobbying and rally effort in conjunction with a coalition of New York immigrant organizations coordinated by Make the Road New York. At the same time, the FUIE also did not hesitate to participate in the 2009 Ecuadorian elections by fielding its own Assembly candidates in order to advance its mission and bring the front added exposure. Arízaga explained during our interview the logic behind the FUIE's decision to participate in the electoral process despite not being an electoral movement:

... whatever the advantages or disadvantages were, we believe that by forging the path, by daring to participate in the electoral process, was in itself a victory, because we proved that community organizations are capable of not just carrying a message, but even to win elections.

Arízaga also noted that participating in the electoral process also helped the FUIE gain new volunteers, identify new leaders, and new organizations that are aligned with the movement. Arízaga was also quick to note, however, that this was not indicative of the FUIE's desire to transition into an electoral movement or party, but rather one of many strategies the FUIE is open to using to carry out its mission. As he noted, "our outlook is not electoral. Our work is permanent. And we aren't thinking about the 2014 or 2020 elections... We're not interested in something personal. Our commitment is with the community."

At the same time, however, the FUIEs structure as a movement organization has also placed certain constraints on the organization's capacity to mobilize. As a grassroots movement organization it has been difficult for the FUIE to secure financial and material resources, which not only limits the organization's work to mass mobilizations, but also their capacity to project

itself to a broader segment of the migrant population. Vicente Mayorga discussed some of these limitations in detail:

The fact that we've existed only as a voluntary group means that we haven't been able to develop the work agenda to the degree that we should. Since we all have to work, we all work, or better put, the free time that we have is dedicated to organizational activities for the FUIE... we haven't, for example, developed our own campaigns, due lack of full time personnel. We are part of some campaigns with some established organizations... but if during this next stage we can set up an office, I think we can make progress in that goal. But it's not easy to work with only volunteers.

Antonio Arízaga also said that financially the FUIE relies mainly on volunteer work since they currently cannot pay for full time staff. Arízaga explained that people have remained involved because of their ideological commitment to the issues that the FUIE works on, but he acknowledged that people still have to work to take care of their families. The FUIE's lack of material resources means that Arízaga has no office space and could not afford to travel to Europe and South America to organize other Ecuadorian communities. Arízaga said that as a result he relies on email, blogs and video conferencing to communicate with organizers in Spain, Italy and Belgium, though added that it was not a perfect substitute for face-to-face interaction

Other resource limitations abound. The FUIE's membership meetings are currently held in a makeshift conference room in a converted basement of an old apartment building in Queens that a FUIE member worked in as the superintendent. While the space was regularly available and free of cost, it was also small, dimly light and lacked proper ventilation or a/v equipment of any sort. Furthermore, where larger organizations such as *Alianza PAIS* had access to different mass media sources and ample resources for both print and electronic media, the FUIE relied on the most basic forms of communication, such as a basic electronic mailing list and photocopied fliers which they distributed only at rallies. They also lack the resources to hire a staff person to

update their internet blog, and as a result their website is only updated once every several months⁵⁵. They now rely mainly on a Facebook page to maintain an internet presence as a more cost-effective approach⁵⁶.

The organization's reliance on volunteers has also been a hurdle for the FUIE's ability to effectively carry out political engagement in both the U.S. and Ecuador. Organization meetings were infrequently held. Current President Antonio Arízaga has a full-time job running a jewelry shop in New Jersey, and all the other officers also have full-time jobs. Though the organization's leaders continued to make public appearances, at one point, the organization went nearly a whole year between meetings.

The FUIE has found ways to overcome their resource limitations to carry out its transnational political activism though this often compels the organization to compromise aspects of its work. One strategy has been carrying out coalition work with other organizations. For instance, the FUIE worked with Make the Road to participate in an immigration reform lobbying session and rally in Washington, DC. Ultimately, though the FUIE was only able to secure eight spaces for their volunteers to ride to DC, and as a result their presence was much smaller than they had originally planned.

The FUIE also recently created a new entity called the United Immigrant Front (FUI), a 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization that will work to provide free legal, workforce development and other professional services to Ecuadorian and other immigrant groups in New York City. While the work that will be carried out by the non-profit organization is consistent with the FUIE's overall mission of working to combat migrants' marginalization and will have FUIE members on its board of directors, the FUI's mission will not deal with direct political

⁵⁵ <http://www.ecuamigrante.com>

⁵⁶ <http://facebook.com/FUIEny>

engagement, largely because federal law prohibits 501(c) 3 to have any direct involvement in partisan political activities. Vicente explained the non-profit's mission:

We are going to open an office here in the U.S. to provide legal, professional and guidance services, in a public way, open. We need, of course, to look for resources, since staff is needed... We think that's necessary, because many of our people don't know who to turn to, and that leads to frauds and schemes... We are now in that stage, and if we're ambitious to also develop productive projects. Productive projects imply that we want to show people do develop businesses, but collective ones, not individually-owned... .

Antonio Arízaga added that this new project would not detract from the FUIE's participation in Ecuadorian politics, though it would be two separate operations:

We will continue to make pronouncements with respect to situations that are occurring in Ecuador; we will still address those as the FUIE. The other legalized organization can't take on that role, because that has to comply with a strictly community service role and we don't to mix it up with political affairs. Those are two completely different things.

FUIE leaders are hopeful that by being able to apply for grants for their new non-profit, they can also their resources to support their political work. Arízaga was hopeful that their fundraising efforts to get an office space would soon be met to have a permanent base of operations The FUIE achieved this goal in the summer of 2011, when they successfully secured a shared office along with a Filipino immigrant community organization in Queens (*Ecuamigrante* 2011.)

The FUIE's non-profit operations may provide some financial stability for the group, which would make it easier for them to address migrant marginalization in the U.S. The possibility exists, however, that this tactic may also reduce their engagement in Ecuadorian politics. Beyond the restrictions that U.S. laws place on non-profits for partisan political activities, there is a possibility that the FUI's service provision work may limit the time that FUIE leaders will have to pursue extensive political engagement. This is observable, for example,

in the cases of older New York-based Dominican migrant organizations such as *Alianza Dominicana* and the A.C.D.P., both of which started as civic organizations that promoted Dominican political engagement, but in recent years have dedicated themselves almost exclusively to service provision (Aparicio 2006). Whether the FUIE can successfully sustain separate political and non-profit operations remains to be seen.

A final hurdle rests in the fact that a significant number of their supporters are undocumented immigrants. While this has less bearing on their participation in Ecuadorian politics than in U.S. political engagement, it nevertheless has implications across the board for their political engagement. Vicente Mayorga conceded that working in coalitions with groups like Make the Road New York was critical because many in the FUIE are not yet citizens and it was important to tone down their leftist rhetoric to avoid scrutiny from the government authorities. The FUIE also had problems organizing a civil disobedience action for immigration reform, since many members were advised not to do civil disobedience, risking deportation.

Overall, as a social movement organization, the FUIE has been able to maintain internal cohesion, successfully positioning itself as a legitimate advocate for migrant rights in both the U.S. and Ecuador, and adopting different tactics to carry out their political activism, including mass mobilization, coalition building work, and even electoral participation. However their decision to continue operating at the grassroots level, coupled with their membership's varying citizenship statuses, has also created challenges in generating resources, which has limited what they can do and how consistently they can carry out actions. While the FUIE has looked to chartering itself as a non-profit to address their financial constraints, it remains to be seen whether this tactic will impact their political engagement in the longer term.

Juventud Ecuatoriana

Juventud Ecuatoriana (JE), or Ecuadorian Youth, is a 501 (c) 3 chartered non-profit civic organization that was established in 2006 and is based in New York City. Since its inception, the organization's mission has been, according to acting President Edward Miranda, to develop solutions to address the problems associated with adaptation, integration and underrepresentation among Ecuadorian migrants in the U.S. The organization is run by a seven-member board of directors that establishes the organization's mission, while the daily operations and project creation and development are handled by a four member executive board. While it is a membership organization, much of the JE's project planning and execution is carried out by its executive board, since the organization only has 18-20 active members- a factor that has a significant impact on the organization's activities

JE has carried out various community-oriented projects, including a scholarship program for Ecuadorian students in New York, a relief effort for natural disaster victims in Ecuador, free computers donations for low-income Ecuadorian families, English classes for adult learners, and free seminars on topics such as immigration law, homeownership, financial advisement voting and labor issues.

JE's status as a chartered non-profit organization has a significant influence on how the organization and its leaders approach political engagement. Similar to the non-profit arm of the FUIE, as a 501(c) 3 organization JE cannot engage in partisan political activities. While JE's leadership often used the word apolitical to describe their organization, they have as a goal to make JE a civil society organization that is free from partisan political affiliations in both the U.S. and Ecuador. JE President Edward Miranda explained how he and others in JE envision the organization's political role within in the Ecuadorian migrant community:

When we use the term apolitical it means we don't have a partisan inclination- Democrat, Republican, say here, or in Ecuador, *Partido Social Cristiano*, or other denominations...apolitical ...means you have to know how to get involved with decision makers, because that's the way in which we are going to get ahead... We don't have a strong political voice. As an organization we can't endorse a politician ...But as individuals, we can advocate with a particular ideal... I contacted Senator [José] Peralta⁵⁷, who is the elected official from the district with the largest Ecuadorian population; to get his support on the scholarships ... We are pushing Francisco Moya⁵⁸, who is of Ecuadorian descent... Letting him know what problems we have in the community and what we would like him to do as a political leader for his community. ...this is the political voice we want.

Eduard also explained how JE's projects also work to empower Ecuadorian migrants and encourage their involvement in the political process:

I want to support individuals through these scholarships, so they can continue their studies, and that a leader comes out of that who knows that his community- in this case Juve⁵⁹ - put in a grain of sand to help him graduate, and that he has a commitment to give back. He could become a councilmember, a community board member, go from the lowest levels of government... and eventually become the mayor of one of our cities... After all, there are a lot of Ecuadorians, large concentrations in different cities. So there's that possibility, if we foster a culture of registering to vote. What's important is to participate in democracy; to know who to elect, who is pro our interests. So we give information to our community about the politicians who are, as we say, our choices.

JE's leaders see their role as community leaders and as an organization to create and shape a cohesive Ecuadorian migrant constituency, and to help formulate a policy agenda for the migrant community. Operating as non-profit may thus reflect a strategic decision by JE leaders to carve out a space as a non-partisan actor within Ecuadorian migrant civil society in New York. Their non-profit status also forces JE to develop different strategies for political engagement beyond becoming appendages of the political machines in Ecuador as well as in New York City. .

⁵⁷ New York State Senator José Peralta, whose electoral district includes the areas of Jackson Heights, Elmhurst and Corona, which is the geographic hub of the Ecuadorian community in New York City.

⁵⁸ Francisco Moya won election to the New York State Assembly seat previously held by now State Senator Peralta. Moya's district includes parts of Jackson Heights, Elmhurst and Corona, Queens.

⁵⁹ *Juventud Ecuatoriana* is often referred to colloquially as Juve by its members and within the migrant community.

The organization's leaders recently started trying to parlay their reputation as an Ecuadorian civic organization to help create a transnational policy agenda that will address issues related to migrants' marginalization. JE's executive board members have used their newfound status as civic leaders to create relationships with local and state elected officials in order to advocate for migrant-specific issues and create political influence for the Ecuadorian community.

Furthermore, as previously noted in this study, JE's active involvement on community development and empowerment issues led a number of PAIS leaders and activists (including Alex) to join JE prior to their eventual transition to electoral politics. This has allowed JE to establish networks within the Ecuadorian government officials in the New York metropolitan area, which in turn has created new opportunities for the organization to work with Ecuadorian government officials to address migrant marginalization. JE helped push through a joint initiative with the Ecuadorian Consulate and another migrant non-profit, The Migrant Foundation, to establish a *pro bono* legal service program for migrants in the U.S. and in Ecuador. JE was also one of the most active participants in the SENAMI's FORES civic organizational development workshop, and helped educate migrants about services offered by the SENAMI.

JE has also set its sights on more ambitious political projects. In 2009, JE successfully negotiated an agreement with the Azuay provincial government in Ecuador to help create economic development and education initiatives in the province, as a way to reduce the pressures for residents to migrate. Edward Miranda described the motives behind JE's co-development agreement in Azuay Province:

Something has to be done regarding migration. We have to create structures. Incentivize the productive sector. Create a better migration policy for the families that are there [and] the individuals who have left. After a few meetings with

provincial authorities, we were able to sign a co-development agreement with the Azuay Province. It's to make it so that migrants' experiences over here help our country as well. It's not just about what they call "cash transfers" by way of remittances... but also transferring ideas... All those people we have with a lot of skill, who can create new jobs, create new firms, innovate... And also try through resource transfers to get people to think differently, so that we can start to create and make better structures for ourselves... We want to start a pilot program, have that experience and then multiply them in different provinces.

Eduard's description of the logistics behind the co-development initiative reveal how he and the other organizational leaders view JE as an interlocutor between different actors to channel resources to shape development policy in Ecuador:

We are getting universities in Quito and the U.S. involved; people in academia, individual social actors here and there, and authorities here and there involved. So it's really a new model for how social actors identify problems and want to get involved... we're uniting a lot of places, different minds, different perspectives, towards the same path, which is to see in what way we can improve structures in these zones, which are marked by high migration.

While the notion of migrant actors spearheading co-development projects has actually been observed in Mexico, for example (Orozco and Lapointe 2004), what is key here is that JE has been able to use its reputation as a reliable and efficient civic group to create political capital with both Ecuadorian government officials, as well as up-and-coming elected officials in New York. The organization's structure also allows its leaders, Edward and Vice President Ronald Bautista, to shape JE's work.

JE's membership composition, however, also presents obstacles for the organization's ability to shape policy. While Ronald Bautista initially suggested that there were approximately 20 active members in the organization (meaning individuals who help volunteer and plan activities), Edward Miranda later said the number was actually lower. Edward acknowledged the need, and also to be more diligent at recruiting members, saying: "Lately perhaps we haven't

been created enough events to get support. We are looking to concentrate more on those sorts of events.” As a result of its small membership, the onus of the much of the organization’s work lies on the executive board, and in particular Eduard and Ronald, who not only conceive and plan most of JE’s events, but must also act as the public face of the organization. Their small membership base also reduces their access to financial resources, since the organization partially relies on member dues. This means that the executive board members must also work full-time jobs in addition to their duties at JE. The organization’s size also limits their projection within the migrant community. While JE has tried to enlist social media technology such as Facebook to raise awareness of the organization and its activities, Ronald acknowledged its limited effectiveness, stating that “Facebook is a good information tool but it’s not entirely efficient... when we post events on Facebook many people-are so bombarded with events on Facebook that they don’t pay attention or they simply click ‘I’m attending’, but in reality there’s no way to be sure that the actual number of people who said they would actually go.” Nevertheless, JE continues to explore the potential of social media to project itself within the Ecuadorian migrant community.

The other issue of concern regarding JE’s size is the extent to which the organization will be able to adapt to the migrant community’s needs and demands. While in its current form JE’s leadership has considerable influence on the organization’s direction, it is worth considering whether JE can include and foster new ideas in the longer term. As young leaders, Edward and Ronald are receptive to innovative policy solutions for Ecuadorian migrants’ issues and concerns. But in the longer term JE may require new leaders and new ideas, which can only come from a broader membership base from which they can recruit and shape new leaders.

II. Dominican Organizations

Partido Revolucionario Dominicano/Dominican Revolutionary Party (PRD)

The PRD is currently the second largest political party in the Dominican Republic. It was originally founded by former Dominican President Juan Bosch as a populist, progressive political party after the fall of Rafael Trujillo's right-wing authoritarian regime in the early 1960s. After a short-lived term in power with Bosch's election (which was cut short by a military coup, the 1965 Civil War and subsequent U.S. military intervention), the PRD underwent a rift in 1973, when Bosch left the party to establish the more centrist Dominican Liberation Party (which is the current ruling party in the Dominican Republic and of a more center-right ideological orientation). After Bosch's departure the PRD was re-oriented towards a liberal democratic ideology under José Francisco Peña Gómez's leadership, who is now regarded as the party's seminal figure. However after Leonel Fernández's first term as President in 1996, the PRD has found itself at something of a crossroads, with an older guard that remains committed to Peña Gómez's liberal democratic principles, and a more centrist wing headed by former President Hipólito Mejía, who in 2010 successfully won the PRD primaries for the 2012 Dominican Presidential election.

The PRD's structure abroad is largely influenced by the political context that migrants face in the Dominican Republic. In other words, the fact that Dominican politicians in general have an ambivalent and opportunistic attitude towards their migrants abroad (as noted by many of the Dominican respondents in this study) is manifested in the party's organization. On the one hand, the PRD has established a highly bureaucratic organizational structure for its U.S. operations. There is a Federal Committee for the U.S. which in addition to its own executive board includes PRD national committee members living in the U.S., as well as various representatives from each of the local chapters, called sectionals (*Estatutos Generales* 2009). The

PRD has local party chapters, also called sections that operate in each of the areas abroad with large Dominican population groups including New Jersey, New York, Boston, Providence and Miami. Manuel Félix, one of the PRD's main coordinators stated that: "We are a municipal committee. The New York Sectional has the same importance as a Dominican province." He also noted that New York sectional has local-level organization in all five of the city's boroughs. Thus, much like the Dominican government's approach to migrant incorporation, the New York PRD Section has also established a rather extensive bureaucratic structure in order to recruit migrants into the electoral process.

The PRD's New York Sectional also has a tiered membership structure, which Manuel Félix said includes official members and sympathizers, much like *Alianza PAIS*. Official members, according to Félix, pay quotas, are expected to attend regular official party activities, and are organized into regional or zone committees within the New York party section. Sympathizers in turn, are non-member supporters who the party tracks through a database, and calls on them to turn out for elections and other activities where the PRD needs to mobilize large numbers of supporters, such as rallies.

This combination of a flexible membership structure coupled with the bureaucratic appears to be effective in the PRD's efforts to mobilize the Dominican migrant community. According to Félix, the PRD has been able to recruit approximately 40,000 active militants and another 70,000 supporters in New York City, though I was unable to verify these figures. Anecdotal evidence from my field research; however lends some credence to the PRD's claims. I attended three separate events organized by the PRD or where the PRD was present, including a public training session for new and veteran supporters, a rally to support the party during the 2010 mid-term elections in the Dominican Republic, and a float at the 2010 Dominican Pride

Parade in the Bronx. All of these events had significant numbers of supporters, ranging from about 100 or so persons at the training session, to several hundred for the mid-term election rally (which is noteworthy in that at this time Dominican migrants still had no representation in the Dominican national legislature), which suggests that the party has the capacity to mobilize a good number of supporters for activities.

Another important feature of the PRD's organizational structure is that the New York Section operates largely autonomously from the national leadership in Santo Domingo. This is not to say that the PRD's national leadership in the Dominican Republic grants New York leaders special privileges or does not try to assert its leadership abroad. In fact, for one of their training and recruitment seminars in 2010 the national party leadership sent an organizer directly from the Dominican Republic to address supporters on matters of party discipline and parliamentary procedures that are to be used for all official PRD meetings, which he stressed are critical to improving discipline among party militants. His presence and presentation reflected an effort by national party officials towards achieving cohesiveness and asserting some measure of authority with the New York Section.

Yet David Williams, a former leader in the PRD's New York Section, explained that in the past and even now PRD New York Section have considerable leeway to pursue their own political objectives, without fear of reprisals or punishment from national party leadership, should they oppose what migrant leaders do or propose::

PRD-istas here, in relation to the *PRD-istas* in Santo Domingo, have more independence than those over there. That is, you can adopt a more defined, more consistent political stance than people over there, sine those over there are subjected to discipline. Not so for those over here. Over here discipline is relative.

Williams also offered an anecdote on his own experience dealing with party discipline and the relatively loose authority structure under which migrant leaders operate:

We enjoyed certain freedoms that leaders over there didn't enjoy. For example ...I once said because [former President Joaquín] Balaguer's police took the luxury of travelling to Puerto Rico, and ... beat a comrade, that the Dominican exiles could feel obligated to exact revenge. And that led the [U.S.] State Department to call [former PRD president] Juan Bosch or informed Bosch through the Dominican chancery that his people in Puerto Rico were making threats. And that led Bosch to suspend me for three months...And we didn't accept that suspension as valid or as having any force. If that had been in Santo Domingo, I would have been obligated to accept it. In Puerto Rico, nobody dared stop me from entering the PRD headquarters or speak on behalf of the PRD. In other words, that created a sort of independence.

The loose authority structures within the PRD are likely shaped by the ambivalence that politicians in the Dominican Republic have towards migrants, as was noted in Chapter Four. This allows the PRD New York Section leaders to craft their own political agenda, much of which focuses on working with Dominican elected officials in New York City and in the state legislature. Mr. Félix described some of the projects that he and other PRD New York Sectional leaders were focusing on at the time of our interview:

We have three major challenges here. These are unemployment, the gang problem and housing. The city just announced that 8,000 residents of upper Manhattan will lose their Section 8 [vouchers]... So we have to design strategies to accommodate or relocate these people, orienting them towards different parts of New York City... We have to reorient our dropout youth or potential school dropouts. We are going to double our efforts with incumbent elected officials [in New York]. We've given them our support, our vote. And they have to respond to the integrated participation programs that we want to develop for the community... We hope that the schools, the elected officials and the community agency directors collaborate with us on the integration of high school dropouts.

According to Mr. Félix, the PRD New York Section has also garnered support from a number of local community leaders in northern Manhattan to support their mobilization efforts. This

includes an executive in the Washington Heights-Inwood Coalition (a non-profit social service provider), and various executives at the Audubon Partnership for Economic Development (a community development non-profit organization.) Mr. Félix, also offered a broader explanation for why the PRD New York Section was heavily invested in supporting and establishing relationships with local leaders, particularly elected officials in New York City and state government.

Those are our people, and they aspire to be in a position where they can help Dominicans and Latin Americans in the long term. So we have to be co-participants in that great aspiration. We can't be strangers to their cause. If they are elected officials, it's because they represent the community. And each one of these elected officials is a product of the Dominican diaspora, a product of the heart of our community, which is why we have a moral and political obligation to give them our support

The financial aspect of the PRD's operations in New York also seems to play an important role in how the organization formulates its agenda. PRD activists in New York said they have never relied on the national party or the Dominican government for financial support. Félix explained how the PRD funds its New York operations:

In the past we had to provide assistance to the country, to the [national] party. But now the Central Election Board finances political activities... It wasn't like that before, but now we're totally independent. The section has its finance director. We meet every four months to evaluate a fundraising plan...

Former PRD leader David Williams confirmed the lack of financial support for New York operations, but explained how the need to independently fundraise offered the section more freedom to act:

Back then we organized ourselves into zone committees. For example, there was a zone committee [I belonged to] here called the Luis Manuel Caraballo Zone

Committee. That zone had the luxury of telling [PRD national President] Peña Gómez, “look, here’s \$20,000”...because we had a \$100 fixed quota when we had 87 members... and when we had come to realize we had some incommensurate economic resources. And with those economic resources you gain political power since politics is basically, and especially in countries like ours, defined by economics. We had a lot more power than activists over there, and more independence; much more independence.

The leaders of the PRD New York Section, by virtue of the weak disciplinary structures and overall ambivalence of politicians in the Dominican Republic, have been able to operate with a considerable amount of autonomy from the national party leadership in the Dominican Republic. The PRD’s decision to work on local issues is also driven by the relative lack of opportunities that party leaders in New York have to take part in substantial engagement in Dominican politics. Comments from the Dominican contacts in this study that were presented in Chapters Three and Four reflect the perception among migrant political leaders that the Dominican government is largely unresponsive to migrants’ demands. Manuel Félix acknowledged the lack of dialogue between PRD leaders in New York and the current Dominican government:

This government has been very curt... very distanced from us... In the last PRD administration we appointed officials from the other parties to be advisors to the President. This administration has totally distanced itself from us. They don’t want, don’t need us, I believe. There’s no mutual development project, no mutual participation. Yes, there is dialogue. We meet through the consulate, through the Central Election Board. We participate in whatever has to do with the election process. But in terms of concrete development projects, there’s none.

Félix also described the current government’s efforts at creating external legislative constituencies as “mutilated”, since the government procrastinated in passing legislation to create these constituencies in time for the 2010 Dominican congressional elections⁶⁰. While Félix’s

⁶⁰ external legislative districts in the U.S. are expected to be established in time for the 2012 Dominican general election

comments are driven in considerable measure by partisan political differences, they nevertheless reflect the fact that migrant activists face obstacles in articulating demands on behalf of migrants, which reinforces feelings of marginalization. This also confirms the skepticism expressed by other Dominican migrant activists towards the government's commitment to incorporating migrant populations, as noted in Chapter Four. At a minimum, partisan politics dictates which groups, if any, will have opportunities for substantive political engagement in the Dominican Republic. More likely, however, is that for government and elected officials in the Dominican Republic, migrants have only an ancillary role in the country's political life. These barriers to engagement have therefore driven the PRD's New York activists to direct much of their energy towards engagement in U.S. politics, through support for elected officials of Dominican descent.

Furthermore, because Dominican migrants currently lack legislative representation, the PRD New York Section's leadership capacity is further limited, since the organization cannot mobilize voters to elect a migrant legislator from New York City.. Manny Félix, for his part, believes that the proposed legislation to create external legislative constituencies in New York will help create more opportunities for the PRD and other migrant groups to obtain tangible power in Dominican politics, and ultimately opportunities to make demands on behalf of migrants:

It will radically change things, based on the experience we've gained. I think we will have to create a migrant ministry, not just an office of overseas⁶¹ affairs. We're pushing for support programs, for contributions from the government. We're demanding that the Dominican central government outline a policy to create a Ministry for Dominicans Abroad that addresses the necessities of Dominicans living abroad, and especially for Dominicans who return, who want to return and incorporate themselves into normal Dominican life, or into the productive life of their country.

⁶¹ Literal translation of the word *ultramar*, which is the term used in Dominican politics to discuss matters related to Dominican migrants living abroad

David Williams was less optimistic, however, as to what external legislators will do to help the PRD or other political groups. As noted in Chapter Four, Williams said that many Dominican migrants are leery that an external legislator will simply go run for office in order to collect a paycheck and neglect their constituents. These views were also echoed a degree by Mr. Félix. Félix remained confident that congressional representation for migrants in the Dominican Republic would help. Yet as previously noted in Chapter Four⁶², he also acknowledged that previous migrants who have returned to run for elected office in the Dominican Republic have left a bad impression on migrants.

Other aspects of the PRD New York Section's organizational dynamics also create major obstacles in effectively mobilizing migrant constituents. One major problem is the perception by party members that there is no clear cut meritocratic system in place that rewards loyalists with the opportunity to move up the organizational ladder. Rather, financial influence plays a big role in who becomes a decision maker or candidate within the New York Section. My observations and interviews with members of the PRD's New York Sectional revealed inconsistencies between what the party rhetoric about leadership opportunities and the reality of the situation as experienced by other activists. For example, during the PRD's public training workshop I attended in northern Manhattan in 2010, Mr. Félix told new and old supporters that Dominican parties select members based on their capacity to make concrete contributions to the party's mission. Félix added that individuals selected to join the PRD are ones who are able to contribute to the party's social ethic.

Yet David Williams offered a very different and more sobering take on how one moves up in the Section which often involves patronage and financial influence more than grassroots mobilization and ideological loyalty:

⁶² See Page 160

[Say] all of a sudden, I show up, the owner of a chain of 16 supermarkets, eight supermarkets, or four mega laundromats, or a real estate business. I show up and say “what does the PRD need here?” Three computers are needed; this or that is needed. So I say, “Here, buy it.” Pa! Pa! Pa! Done. And I put myself at your level in less time than you did- a lot less. So now apparently we’re competing on equal standing. But in reality I have the advantage because I have resources. When television and propaganda resources are going to be used, I will use them. You won’t. You’ll rely on the sympathy of the people in the party who have known you for a lifetime, which, if these people don’t have this in place [Williams pointing to his head], will turn against you to support the new person....So that has a major effect, because I will create disillusionment. And that’s the norm. If you’re from the Bronx and I’m from Brooklyn, and I beat you because people from the Bronx turned out in larger numbers for me than those who turned out for you in Brooklyn, you can say “he beat me, but he worked for it.” But if I beat you because I own supermarkets and I have funds to pay more supporters to distribute propaganda, to pay for television ads, to pay for more press releases, you’ll say “Let him win if he can, because I’m not going to do work in Brooklyn.”

Small entrepreneurs such as those Williams describes do in fact have considerable influence in the PRD. On July 3, 2011, a PRD blog called *Red del Partido Revolucionario Dominicano PRD*⁶³ reported that 2012 PRD Presidential candidate Hipólito Mejía met with a group of Dominican supermarket owners in New York to garner support (*Red del PRD*, 8/3/2011). While this case reflects lobbying more so than the sort of corruption and/or patronage that Williams referred to, it nevertheless shows the influence that these ethnic entrepreneurs have within the party

It is not simply the lack of transparency or meritocratic criteria in selecting leadership posts, however, that leave migrant activists dispirited. Williams also described the pattern he saw with many supporters and activists within the PRD that have made it harder for the PRD and other political parties (including his own new party) harder to mobilize Dominican migrants to participate in the Dominican electoral process:

⁶³ Translation, PRD Net

Many get frustrated and don't continue. They leave. And when, you talk to them they say "don't talk to me about politics", or "I'm not into that mess" or, "I went to so and so", who's the governor of my province, "and he didn't meet with me and said he couldn't do anything..." Now that I've been outside of the PRD for some time I've seen that new people have arrived. Those new arrivals are unaware of the things that I told you as far as [politicians] being ungrateful, since they haven't lived through it they don't know it. And since they don't know it, they go all in. But after a while they realize that it's not what they believed.

Williams noted that there are exceptions where grassroots activists like him were able to exert some power, but said this was hard to achieve, citing an incident with him and former President Hipólito Mejía over a dispute Williams had with a government official:

Of course, at a certain level that doesn't happen. In my case, for instance... Hipólito [Mejía] came to... a school in upper Manhattan and I told him "Mr. President, look, this happened to me with the colonel", and he said "How can this be?"... "Wait, I am going to resolve this." Pa! And he gave me a signed letter to the civil-military authorities, "Grant Mr. David Williams all of the possible attentions, even in my antechamber." Later I went and indeed, it worked. But again, you're then at another level, because there are many levels. It's like a ladder.

The PRD New York Section is also hampered in its mobilization efforts by the electoral process itself, and the divisions that it has created within the national party which have manifested themselves in the Section. Hipólito Mejía's decision to seek the PRD's Presidential nomination against Miguel Vargas, the presumptive PRD candidate, became a contentious issue within the party. For some, Mejía's candidacy meant a retreat from a more liberal stance towards the center. Williams said this was one of the reasons he opted not to return to the PRD and instead join a smaller political movement:

Hipólito's people came here when decided to run for reelection, and he said to me, "*coño*⁶⁴ David, the man says he will take care of you. "*Coño*, you support

⁶⁴Left untranslated because the word has no direct translation, as well as to preserve the authentic tone of Williams' remarks

reelection.” And the thing is, if I support his reelection the first thing I would have to do is take down everything related to Peña Gómez, because Hipólito never supported him. Second, I have to face my family, because I raised them with a certain consciousness. So I can’t do that now, just because I got a contract for supporting his reelection. That’s immoral.

For other PRD activists in New York, Mejía’s candidacy undermined what was perceived as a rightful succession for a new generation of leaders. Editorial pieces on the PRD blogs reflected the contentious nature of the primary election after Mejía’s decision to run for the party’s nomination.

The PRD does gain legitimacy by being a viable electoral party in the Dominican Republic. This legitimacy enables the New York Section to mobilize a good number of migrants, particularly the more ideologically driven partisans as well as those with real aspirations towards political power. Party leaders in New York, however, face a number of challenges to migrant agenda, and thus allow its migrant members to exercise strategic citizenship. The first is the general ambivalence from political elites in the Dominican Republic towards the migrant community in general and to their full incorporation into the Dominican political system, which makes it hard for migrants’ demands to resonate among the national party leadership. This ambivalence also makes it hard for the PRD activists in New York to advocate for migrants, since they have no formal representation at this time (though this may change in 2012.) The second issue is the persistence of clientelism and cronyism within the PRD, which breeds cynicism and frustration among other activists who invest their time and efforts to support the party. As a result of these factors, much of what the PRD activists have done to concretely advance migrants’ demands is to support Dominican candidates for elected offices in the U.S. - In effect, to operate as a lobby group in the U.S. While PRD New York Section activists may be able to parlay their name recognition and organization resources to support political

empowerment in the U.S., its constraints make it a less effective transnational actor. While it is possible that national party officials wish to see the Section play this role, respondents did not suggest that this was the case. These constraints may be indicative of what DiMaggio and Powell (1983) refer to as coercive institutional isomorphism, where organizations resemble other units in the same context or environment. According to DiMaggio and Powell, one of the ways in which organizations, and particularly political organizations, tend towards isomorphism is due to coercive pressures by other organizations upon which a particular organization is dependent for resources and/or legitimization. In this case, though PRD activists in New York claim to have autonomy of action because distance (which weakens central party discipline) and independent fundraising (which lets them organize without direct reliance from the central party), because their legitimacy within the migrant community and their access to power within the Dominican state are predicated on their ability to be identified as official party leaders, they face pressures to adopt the organizational structure already in place for the PRD. Hence PRD New York activists must commit resources to electoral campaigns in the Dominican Republic (even though they as of yet have no direct legislative representation), and must submit to the party's bureaucratic processes in order to maintain their legitimacy.

Alianza País (AP)

Alianza País (AP) is a new Dominican political movement that emerged in 2008. It was created by a group of political activists and leaders who belonged to various leftist political movements in the Dominican Republic and the Dominican diaspora, and was conceived as a new progressive alternative for the Dominican polity. While it bears no relation to the Ecuadorian movement of the same name, *Alianza PAIS*, it is similar in that it outwardly attempts to craft a transnational political movement to represent all citizens, including those living abroad. AP tries

to differentiate itself from other Dominican political movements by characterizing itself as a proponent of transparent and decent governance for all Dominicans in its rhetoric.

AP leaders in New York believe that the organization's commitment to a new and inclusive form of governance for Dominicans necessitates attention to migrants' demands. They also believe that the organization's mission and composition offer the opportunity to incorporate migrants' demands into a political program for the Dominican Republic. Marino Mejía, a member of AP's New York Directorate, explained how AP necessarily has to adopt a bi-national focus if they are to effectively carry out their commitment to decent and transparent government for all Dominicans:

We've not had good luck in terms of the elected officials we've had... which at the end of the day become corrupted and wind up in jail. The case of Miguel Martínez⁶⁵ and others who are close to being caught... So in that sense I see things such that we have to work in two waters: As it relates to the Dominican Republic in political terms, and as it relates to the Dominican community and even the Latin American community here in North America. I think that for obvious reasons, those two sectors have to be unified.

AP leaders in New York also claim that what also sets their organization apart from other Dominican political movements is its broad ideological stance, which as Mejía notes is focused on unifying people of all progressive political persuasions, noting that "all of the progressive forces, all of the forces on the left, the patriots, the people without any sort of partisan political alignment, understand that the country is being mismanaged and heading down a bad path fit within our movement." AP leaders believe that they have benefitted from their broad based ideological approach, as it has allowed them to recruit greater numbers of migrant activists who

⁶⁵ Mejía is referring to former New York City Council member Miguel Martínez, who represented council district 10, which includes Northern Manhattan and parts of the Bronx, and which has a large Dominican constituency. Martínez was indicted by federal prosecutors in 2009 after a federal investigation found evidence of Martínez illegally embezzling through a fake non-profit organization in his district. Martínez resigned from his council post after the indictment and was subsequently sentenced to five years in prison for his actions (source: http://topics.nytimes.com/topics/reference/timestopics/people/m/miguel_martinez/index.html.)

do not identify with the Dominican left or who otherwise eschew partisan politics. AP's New York Chief Coordinator Radhamés Pérez explained how this tactic has allowed the New York AP activists to grow in a fairly short period of time:

Here in New York, for example, we have a group that, well, for me is incredible. I'm not saying that all are militant, but we have over 200 people who have joined. That's a lot... We're not looking to build an amalgamation of already established groups, we're looking for an amalgamation of citizens who really understand that they can dedicate themselves to this... That's to say, there's space for people with distinct ideologies and doctrines to come together to develop a common strategy

The open strategy that Radhamés refers to was on display during the 2010 Bronx Dominican Parade, where AP organized a contingent to do outreach with the public in attendance.

Supporters ranged from people with no previous political affiliation to former activists from a wide range of groups including the Dominican Worker's Party, the Dominican Communist Party, the PRD (to which Mejía belonged until 2004) and even the Dominican Liberation Party (PLD).

A recent edition of *En Movimiento*, *Alianza País*'s monthly newsletter, discussed a recruitment effort in New York City, in which one of a half-dozen new members was quoted as saying: "I am a militant Catholic. I have never been part of a political party and I have never voted, so that I wouldn't be taken for a fool" (*En Movimiento*, 41:2). Other news reports from Dominican community press in New York City and articles from the organization's newsletter have also noted the organization's recent success in attracting new supporters ("Atypical political movement takes root in NYC", *El Nuevo Diario*, 3/28/2011; "Nuevos Miembros Ingresan Alianza PAIS", *Noticias M. La Paz*, 5/2011; *Alianza País* Juramenta Nuevos Miembros en Nueva York, *En Movimiento* No. 39:3; Arrancó en Nueva York la Jornada de Afiliación, *En Movimiento* No. 40:2) These examples suggest that in fact AP's wide-tent approach seems to be attracting a broader base of support from the migrant community. Mejía also noted that AP

has been successful in organizing Dominican migrants in Long Island, while AP's newsletter also discusses successful recruitment efforts in Massachusetts, New Jersey and Pennsylvania, led by Radhamés Pérez (*En Movimiento* 39:2).

Alianza País activists in New York also had success in engaging migrant voters by virtue of its organic linkages to city's Dominican community. In addition to his role as AP's General Coordinator in New York, Radhamés Pérez, is also Executive Director of a non-profit service organization in Northern Manhattan called *Acción Comunitaria La Aurora*⁶⁶. Pérez explained how his trajectory as a community activist in New York City has given him credibility as a migrant leader, which also aids AP organizing efforts:

So we have a link to the community. People know that I'm on the left, but they don't reject me. They don't really care what I really believe in and represent, ideologically speaking, because at the end of the day what people see is what we do on their behalf. For example, in 2006, during all the large pro-immigrant demonstrations...we said "look, let's deal with this issue." We convened a meeting, and a couple of groups showed up...And we said, "Let's organize a march. Let's do it in northern Manhattan." Of course we had relationships with churches, service organizations...the march was convened...*El Diario La Prensa* and a newspaper called *Hoy* said that there were 1,500 people at that demonstration.

Similarly, Mejía explained how professional experiences in New York's migrant community, have aided him in AP's recruitment and advocacy:

I worked as a laborer; as a taxi driver; I managed a multi-service agency⁶⁷, until I got my board of education license, where I worked for nine years ...I worked at various institutions, including one called... Working Education. I don't remember exactly⁶⁸. I worked there for three years as a consultant, directing in some measure a study on the socio-economic impact of taxi drivers. I currently work

⁶⁶ Translation: Aurora Community Action

⁶⁷ Multi-service agencies are private companies that offer a variety of professional services for migrants, including long-distance phone service, wire transfers, shipping services, check cashing and passport services, among others.

⁶⁸ Mejía is referring to the Center for Worker Education, a division of the City University of New York that is dedicated to providing college education courses for full-time laborers.

with the New York Archdiocese, coordinating a food pantry. And I work at Mary Mitchell teaching GED and citizenship classes. I also have a part-time job...at the Autonomous University of Santo Domingo Alumni Association, where I am the Executive Director, where we are...offering three levels of English... for immigrants.

AP leaders in New York believe that their own experiences as migrants along with their past commitments to working with Dominican and even other migrant populations in New York not only give them a clear understanding of migrants' needs, but also an organic connection to the community that permits them to recruit Dominican migrants into AP. In fact, during the 2010 Bronx Dominican Pride Parade, Pérez, Mejía and other AP activists were well received by the public in attendance along the parade route as they chanted in support of their movement and greeted individuals to discuss AP's mission. New York AP leaders have also been recognized by national organizations such as the National Dominican American Roundtable for their commitment to civic engagement (*En Movimiento* 28:1.)

AP activists have started to capitalize on their growing appeal among Dominican migrants to begin organizing Dominican migrants. They have, for instance, demanded the creation of external legislative districts for migrants in the Dominican Congress (*En Movimiento*, 37:6). AP has also successfully organized public demonstrations at the Dominican consulate to demand legislation in the Dominican Republic to require a baseline public education budget for education equivalent to four percent of the country's GDP (*En Movimiento*, 35: 2). Furthermore, as AP's General Coordinator, Radhamés Pérez has criticized the Dominican government for lack of effort in aiding Dominicans deported from the U.S. to reintegrate into the country's labor market (*En Movimiento*, 23:6). Finally, AP has started to make efforts to support the election of Dominican candidates to elected offices in the U.S.

While it appears that *Alianza País*'s New York Section has made noticeable progress in establishing itself as a viable transnational political actor, its composition as an electoral movement imposes a number of limitations to its capacity to strategically demand rights in both home and host country. One limitation that AP leaders acknowledge is the bureaucratic obstacles created by Dominican law that works against their movement. While Radhamés Pérez expressed confidence in the grassroots approach that AP was using in New York by bringing together different local community activists, he also noted that the election laws impose stiff criteria for AP must meet in order to have any sort of electoral relevance in the 2012 Dominican elections:

There are various requirements for recognizing a political party. First you need to have two percent of the total vote from the previous presidential elections. In our case that means 82,000 Dominicans who have to sign, to say that yes, you have the right.. Second, you have to have...people who come out to say that they are from your party in each of the 31 provinces and the capital district, which is how the Dominican Republic is administratively divided. And you have to have locals in each of the 32 provinces. In other words it's a hard task for people without economic resources.

Marino Mejía adds that AP activists also realize that the current lack of migrant representation in Dominican politics, affects the organization's work:

We have people in different boroughs and some towns, like in Long Island. And we've been organizing certain programs, such as economic empowerment... We have a number of important professionals...who without being organic members, make a quota contribution because they believe *Alianza País* is a new organization... And we do all of this in order to deal with problems over there, because neither *Alianza País* nor any other party can run candidates from here.

Some AP leaders remain confident that the proposed legislation to create external legislative constituencies will come to fruition by 2012, so that they can participate in the electoral process.

At the 2011 New Jersey Dominican Affairs Conference, Pérez attempted to persuade Dominican migrant community leaders that external representation not only represented an opportunity for

the Dominican government to pay a historical debt to migrants, but also as a chance for migrants to channel their talents and experiences to create the political capital to enhance democracy for all Dominicans (*En Movimiento* 37:6). Other AP activists, however, expressed concern that external representation will fall short of expectations if Dominican political culture doesn't change. Freddy Galarza, an AP activist from New York, argued in an editorial piece that so long as the PRD and the PLD remain the primary political forces in the Dominican Republic, who have violated the constitution and other laws for political expediency, external representation will fail to meet migrants' demands (*En Movimiento* 38:5).

The challenge created by the Dominican political system for AP's New York activists is exacerbated the skepticism from migrant constituents towards participating Dominican politics. As noted in Chapters Three and Four, many Dominican migrant activists with whom I spoke discussed how many migrants felt that little was to be gained from participating in Dominican politics while living in the U.S. Radhamés Pérez noted how the challenge this presented: :

There's even a sector that questions the utility and presence of partisan Dominican activism, because they say- and mind you, I who am a lifelong militant within partisan Dominican politics find some merit to this- because they say that all that does is further divide the Dominican community.. If Dominicans pay more attention to Dominican politics that will just lead them to get more involved in their party's dynamic and not in the dynamic of protecting their rights, improving their living conditions and getting representation over here [in U.S. politics.]

Mejía echoed Pérez's assertions regarding the ambivalence that exists within the migrant community.

Alianza País has a lot of work in terms of convincing voters that we have to remove those corrupt leaders from there...the vote from abroad is partly a myth. First, that out of a little more than a million Dominicans abroad, that only 54,000

vote is a tiny amount that tells you that it's not worth the effort, that the government makes the financial effort so that people don't show up to vote.

The AP leaders with whom I spoke also recognize that their organization also imposes limits on how they can engage in New York electoral politics. Marino Mejía explained to me how this would be the case:

Taking part in U.S. politics by running candidates with an *Alianza País* profile would cause us major harm. I considered running for District 77⁶⁹, back when *Alianza País* didn't exist. If that were now...*Alianza País* could mobilize all of its members, so that Marino Mejía gets to the Assembly. But then Marino Mejía isn't an organic member of *Alianza País*; he's a candidate for the Democratic Party, or the Independence Party, or the Republican Party.

Finally there is the question of whether migrant issues actually resonate among the AP national leadership in the Dominican Republic. On the one hand migrant-related issues and organizing efforts are prominently featured in AP's monthly newsletter, and are given consistent coverage. This coverage is carried out by migrant activists themselves, so that their voices and opinions are given adequate space to be considered by party supporters. At the same time, however, an examination of the coverage of AP's Presidential candidate Guillermo Moreno reveals that while he has met with AP supporters and activists in New York and other parts of the U.S. on multiple occasions, there is little in his public statements that speak directly to specific migrant concerns or demands. While this does not clearly delineate Moreno's commitment to a migrant policy agenda, it does raise questions as to whether migrant issues are relevant to AP activists and supporters in the Dominican Republic, and whether migrants will be guaranteed the space they are seeking to make claims to address dual marginalization should AP have long term electoral success.

⁶⁹ New York State Assembly District 77

Alianza País thus finds itself in a somewhat complicated situation as a result of its composition as a political movement involved in the Dominican electoral process. On the one hand, they have embraced a broad-based ideological approach and adopted a rhetoric that seeks to be inclusive of all Dominicans, which has resonated with migrant voters of various political persuasions that have become disenchanted with the major parties. AP has also benefitted from building its New York operation with leaders who have strong ties to the migrant population and a proven track record of migrant advocacy. Furthermore, AP's New York Section finances its own operations, which grants the organization considerable independence to act, similar to PRD's New York Sectional. These factors have allowed AP to have early success in mobilizing voters to demand rights for migrants in both the U.S. and the Dominican Republic, and even to insert migrant issues in the U.S. into the Dominican political debate. At the same time however, as an electoral movement they face many obstacles in pursuing their transnational agenda. Some of these revolve around the electoral system, which not only favors the major parties that command major resources, but also largely restricts migrants' participation in Dominican politics. Furthermore, AP's New York activists also have to overcome the apathy and cynicism in the political process that has become pervasive among a considerable number of migrants (which is also reflected in low external voting turnouts.) As a result, despite important ideological and membership differences vis-à-vis the PRD, as an electoral movement there currently appear to be significant limitations that *Alianza País* faces moving forward.

National Dominican Women's Caucus

The National Dominican Women's Caucus is a non-profit advocacy organization based in New York City that was founded in 1991 by Zenaida Méndez, a Dominican migrant with an extensive history of community organizing. According to its mission statement, the NDWC seeks "to ensure the equitable participation of Dominican women in all aspects of life in the

United States of America and to explore the impact of critical changes in public policies on the ability of members of the Dominican/Latino communities to address their needs and the ability of the nation to respond to these needs” (NDWC, 2011). The NDWC also claims to be the first Dominican women’s advocacy organization in the U.S. and looks to advance an agenda of civic and political empowerment for women (Ibid.) According to Méndez, while the NDWC originated as a movement to represent the interests of the Dominican community, it eventually took on a more expansive view to focus on all Latinas and address issues affecting women more generally, such as discrimination and violence. The NDWC sees itself as a political organization and devotes much of its work to matters of civic and political representation, as Mendez explains:

The focus of the Caucus was to identify women who could run for office, for school board, who can be commissioner, anything that had to do with civic life and participation. We also were very fortunate that we got a grant from the New York Women’s Foundation to do a college counseling program, so we also work with young women to make sure that they go to Ivy League colleges in the U.S.

As a small non-profit advocacy organization, the NDWC’s agenda is a reflection of Méndez’s own political vision and trajectory, as she noted:

In the neighborhood where I live we had a nursery school... when I went to leave my daughters there; they told me they didn’t have enough room because of a lack of funds. So I asked “what can I do?”... I organized the parents in the building and went to the city council, to the YWCA, and some months later we got it open. I went back to college, got involved in the day care center. That led to getting involved in the community. I saw there was an organization, which I didn’t know what they did. I went inside, right here on 10th Avenue...where I live. I went and I asked what they did. They told me, we organize tenants and advocate for tenants rights.... To make a long story short, I was there for four years. They hired me after two semesters as an intern and I did, from tenant organizing to [running] the food coop, to the community newspaper, you name it.

Méndez then explained how her community organizing experiences led her into electoral politics.

David Dinkins became Manhattan Borough President and they called me. They said, “We would love for you to join our staff.” I wasn’t ready to work for an elected official, because I was always picketing in front of elected offices. But even my co-workers said, ‘no, you need to take the job’, ‘it’ll be good for you to be there’. I was very involved in this community in every which way and that’s the reason they wanted someone who knew the community. And I happened to be black and Latina, so it was perfect. So I took the job with David Dinkins... I was a liaison to Community Board Four⁷⁰ for several years ...in 1991, I founded the Dominican Women’s Caucus because I saw that there were several women organizations but none of them were focusing on women’s political power.

The influence that Méndez has in her role as the NDWC founder and Executive Director means that her views on issues shape the organization’s agenda. As noted in Chapter Four, Méndez feels that migrants have little to gain from participating in Dominican politics because of the corruption and lack of commitment on the part of government and elected officials in the Dominican Republic. Despite her skepticism, Méndez made nevertheless made some efforts to use her influence as NDWC’s Executive Director to promote transnational ties. For instance, Mendez sits on the board of the Dominican Bridge Fund, a transnational philanthropic organization that promotes economic development in the Dominican Republic from Dominican communities in the U.S (Dominican Bridge Fund 2011). The NDWC itself also carries out a small number of advocacy campaigns in the Dominican Republic, including advocacy around reproductive rights and deportation of Dominican migrants who were raised in the U.S. Mendez also said that she has traveled with delegations to the Dominican Free Trade Zone to see how women are treated there in the work area. .

The NDWC and its leaders are therefore not definitively opposed to transnational civic engagement or advocacy; rather, its concerns (and more specifically those of Méndez, the NDWC’s founder), is that the state of electoral politics in the Dominican Republic is such that

⁷⁰ Unclear if this is the exact number, as it was not clear from the recording

for the NDWC, there are few incentives to invest time in the political process, or to promote migrants' participation in Dominican politics. Beyond this, as noted in below, Méndez and the NDWC believe that as an organization they best serve the interests of Dominican migrants by concentrating on mobilization efforts in the U.S. where they can more easily devote time and energy to being effective advocates for their constituents:

My focus is here. Our focus is very clear because contrary to what people think, we're not doing that well. Latinas still make 58 cents to the dollar compared to a white man, so we are not doing as well as people think. And I don't like to dilute my energy.

The profile of the NDWC's remaining leadership also plays a role in directing their political advocacy and empowerment work towards the U.S. political system. Board member Marisol Alcantara sits on New York City Community Board No. 9, and previously worked as a Regional Legislative Coordinator for the New York State Senate (Womenelect.org, 2011). Another board member, Judith Amaro, is the daughter of Miguel Amaro, a long-time Dominican activist in New York and founder of the New York Dominican Parade (Miguel Amaro Foundation, 2011). These deep ties to the New York political establishment lead the NDWC to favor empowerment. The fact that the NDWC is an organization with small membership also means that the board members, much like the case of *Juventud Ecuatoriana*, have considerable latitude in putting their own personal mark on the organization's agenda.

The ties that the organization has to other political actors also shape the NDWC's political engagement. The organization has also established coalitions with various advocacy groups in the U.S. to carry out its political agenda, according to Méndez:

We do a lot of work with the National Organization for Women, the National Women's Political Caucus. We do a lot of work with an organization called the Sister Song, out of Atlanta, with those reproductive rights justice. We follow a lot

of legislation, make sure that women know what are the legislation that are affecting women in New York State and nationally. We're getting ready to go to the NOW national conference in Boston, next weekend. We're going to be doing two workshops there.

The relationship with these organizations runs even deeper than simple coalitions and collaborations. This is particularly true of the NDWC's connections with NOW. In addition to her role as the NDWC's Executive Director, in 2004 Mendez was named NOW's Director of Racial Diversity Programs. Pulling double duty between NOW and NDWC has created a symbiotic relationship between the two organizations, and places the NDWC on path towards deeper political engagement in the U.S.

While the NDWC's connections and leadership experience have allowed the organization to become an effective political actor in the U.S., these same factors have also pulled the organization further away from being an advocate for the Dominican population, particularly in a transnational context. As a small non-profit organization the NDWC's agenda and identity are shaped in large measure Méndez. Her lifelong commitment to community activism and to creating an organization to politically empower Dominican and other Latina women in New York appears to be the key factor in the NDWC's success as a political actor. The NDWC has been able to create programs such as leadership training for Dominican and other Latina women, while also cultivating partnerships with national and local elected officials, as well as other influential women's advocacy groups such as NOW, to provide Dominican women a path towards political engagement and power in the U.S. At the same time the NDWC has also remained active in advocating for women's issues in the Dominican Republic, albeit in a more limited fashion and more in the fashion of transnational activist groups akin to those examined by scholars such as Tarrow (2005), and Keck and Sikkink (1998).

Yet in addition to the same obstacles that other Dominican organizations in this study face, including limited avenues for political engagement and growing ambivalence about participating in Dominican politics by migrants in New York, the NDWC is also limited by its composition as a small non-profit organization. Because the organization's work is highly dependent on the vision and leadership of its leadership, the organization is mostly tied into the U.S. political process given that Mendez herself has been mostly active in U.S. politics. Her skepticism about political engagement in the Dominican Republic also explains the organization's limited engagement. Finally, the fact that the organization is not member driven also raises questions as to the overall impact that the NWDC can have on overall political engagement by Dominican migrants- a criticism that is also true of *Juventud Ecuatoriana*.

Conclusion

This chapter has sought to incorporate an analysis of organizational dynamics in order to understand how transnational political engagement and more specifically the process of strategic citizenship unfolds for the Ecuadorian and Dominican organizations. Organizations- whether political parties, social movement organizations, home town associations or non-profit organizations- are a central part of how people participate in political activity, particularly in democratic societies with a strong or emergent civil society. As such, in order to better understand how the transnationalization of migrants' political engagement develops, some understanding of how organizations permit or prevent migrants from articulating their demands and address their marginalization in both home and host countries is necessary.

The findings in this chapter indicate that for each of the six migrant organizations that were part of this study, their composition played very specific roles in their capacity to aid their members in their efforts to address migrants' dual marginalization. An organization's rhetoric or

ideology, membership composition, leadership structure, and financial resources either fostered bi-national engagement, as in the case of FUIE, *Juventud Ecuatoriana* and *Alianza PAIS* (D.R.), or limited such mobilization, such as with the NWDC, the PRD and to a lesser extent *Alianza PAIS*. The organization's resources, including its linkages with government actors in home and host country, as well as with other political actors, also serve to either enable or limit these groups from articulating a migrant-specific agenda to address dual marginalization. Finally the political context created by home country governments under which each of these organizations act also shaped the structure of opportunities for the transnationalization of migrant political engagement to take place, with Dominican organizations in this study facing greater obstacles than Ecuadorian organizations in this regard. Ultimately the ability and/or desire to mobilize migrants for transnational political engagement and make effective demands for rights to end migrant marginalization is an important part of what accounts for strategic citizenship. If the organizations have the means and the opportunity to demand rights for marginalized migrants in both home and host country, they seem to ready to do so, but will favor action in one site over another where they can project the most power.

CHAPTER 6: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In the preceding chapters of this dissertation, I have attempted to probe the phenomenon of migrant transnational political engagement, using the experiences of the leaders of various Ecuadorian and Dominican migrant civil society organizations in New York City. The research was driven by three key questions. First, what role do civil society organizations play in Ecuadorian and Dominican migrants' political participation? Second, does participation in civil society organizations enable their voices to be heard by host and home country governments? Third, how do these forms of political participation inform our understanding of what it means for Ecuadorian and Dominican migrants to be citizens? My overarching interest was to better understand the different ways that migrants organized to pursue transnational political agendas, and whether this sort of organizing empowered migrants to address the social, economic and political issues they have faced as a result of migration.

Based on my findings, which are drawn from 18 months of participant observation research, interviews with members of eight different civic and political organizations and analysis of primary and secondary sources, I conclude that in order to fully understand how migrant transnational politics unfold it is necessary to examine how the different organizations migrants create for political activities determine how and why migrants opt to pursue politics in both sending and receiving countries. Despite research that has described how migrant transnational politics occurs and its forms (Østergaard-Nielsen 2009; Itzighsohn and Villacres 2009; Waldinger 2008), as well as studies on the political dimension of organizations such as hometown associations (Levitt 2001; Orozco and LaPointe 2004; Smith 2006), transnationalism scholarship has not devoted sufficient attention to what organizations do to enable, constrain and define transnational politics.

Rather than simply being vehicles for political participation, organizations are a critical part of how transnational politics occurs through appropriating narratives, creating political identities and structuring the demands migrants make and to whom they direct such demands. Organizations are central to what I refer to as strategic citizenship. Strategic citizenship, I argue, is the response by Ecuadorian and Dominican migrant political organizations to a condition I call dual marginalization, where migrants feel culturally, economically and politically excluded in both home and host countries. Organizations appropriate the dual marginalization narrative to create a political identity, where they label themselves as visible minority groups in both the U.S. and their home countries, and proceed to make claims citizenship rights in each country as a minority or vulnerable population group.

Migrant organizations are also central to strategic citizenship in that migrants make decisions on how and where to focus their demands for rights based on how the organizations in which they take part provide opportunities (in the way of resources, networks and ideological frameworks) and pose limitations (by virtue of resources, organizational structure and membership dynamics) on how they can and do act. Finally, strategic citizenship is further shaped by state, and particularly home country government responses to migrant claims. This is specifically observed through government rhetoric, laws and policies towards migrants, and relations with migrant organizations, all of which shape both the opportunities migrants believe they have to demand citizenship rights, and what sorts of demands migrants make on the sending state.

As noted in Chapter One, strategic citizenship bears some similarities to Aihwa Ong's (1999) concept of flexible citizenship in understanding how migrants move between states in response to the realities of contemporary capitalism. In her work, Ong argues that flexible

citizenship is a phenomenon where migrants reposition themselves across multiple nation-states and adapt to new social conditions in order to strengthen their place in capitalist accumulation, while also circumventing discipline by the state. While flexible citizenship includes actions such as holding passports and establishing relations with political leaders in various countries, Ong's theory is ultimately focused on how citizenship reflects creating a cultural sense of belonging in everyday practices. Strategic citizenship more directly reflects how migrants mobilize to seek membership in both migrant-sending and receiving countries, and the various elements that migrants must negotiate in order to achieve full citizenship rights.

Strategic citizenship shares Bauböck's (2007) view of transnationalism as subjects who are mutually incorporated in multiple territories or at the least who with their practices aspire towards that goal, since they have vested interests in both sending and receiving countries. Strategic citizenship, however, includes states as well as migrants' discourses, along with the organizations as key determinants in the emergence and development of transnational political practices. By combining all of these elements into strategic citizenship I seek to show how this phenomenon can be understood as a new expression of established citizenship theories rather than a radical transformation of citizenship. Strategic citizenship, as a response to dual marginalization ties into Brubaker's (1990) idea of citizenship as an instrument of social inclusion and exclusion. At the same time the interplay between discourses, organizations and states also reflects both Marshall's (1950) and Mann's (1987) view of citizenship as the institutionalization of social conflicts between the ruling elites of a territorial jurisdiction and its subjects, therefore an institution that is historically contingent based on how relations between the rulers and the ruled change over time and context.

Strategic citizenship by Ecuadorian and Dominican migrant organizations highlights a current social conflict that has emerged in the contemporary global economic system. Because international labor migration from low-income to wealthier countries has become an integral part of economic activity for both migrant-sending and receiving countries, strategic citizenship, as a way of interpreting migrant transnational politics, embodies the social conflicts that have emerged from migration. This can be observed not only in how migrants mobilize to demand rights for inclusion in both home and host countries, but also in the response by political elites to migrants' mobilization and the structural factors (in this case organizations) that shape the outcomes of these conflicts. This dissertation explores the concept of strategic citizenship and, how it reflects the social conflicts between migrants and political elites in the U.S. as well as Ecuador and the Dominican Republic, respectively

Chapter three of this study introduced the concept of strategic citizenship by focusing on the context that accounts for transnational political engagement and mobilization by Ecuadorian and Dominican migrant civil society organizations in the New York City metropolitan area. Based on findings from my interviews with various civic and political leaders, as well as a year and a half of participant observation work, I found that Ecuadorian and Dominican migrant transnational political participation is driven by a perceived dual marginalization that both migrant organization leaders and constituents face as they participate in the social, economic and political life of both home and host countries. The subjects in the study frequently referred to problems such as anti-immigrant discrimination, xenophobic violence, exploitation by *coyoteros*, landlords and employers, and lack of access to basic education and health services as evidence of their marginalization in the U.S. At the same time, these same migrants often felt equally marginalized by their home country governments, who have failed to protect migrant citizens

living abroad, lack policies to address migrants' interests, have been slow to extend full political and civil rights to migrants, and have done little to combat migrant prejudice from non-migrants.

Dual marginalization, which for a number of organization leaders reflected their personal experiences, is also informed by various structural conditions that characterize the Ecuadorian and Dominican migration experience. This includes the expansion of the remittance economy, the growing tensions over immigration in the U.S. and the presence of large concentrations of both Ecuadorian and Dominican migrants in New York City. These factors provide a context that helped shape migrants' collective political has allowed for the dual marginalization narrative to take hold.

Ecuadorian and Dominican migrant political activists in New York City, including politicians and civic leaders, have seized on the notion of dual marginalization to help forge a distinct migrant political identity that has helped give shape to their transnational political activities. Specifically, migrant activists have sought political engagement in both the U.S. and their respective home countries by self-identifying as a visible minority in both countries. Ecuadorian and Dominican migrant activists in my study are part of the broader immigrant rights struggle in the U.S., which members and supporters view as a civil rights issue. At the same time, home country political engagement for these organizations focuses on demands for greater political equality through legislative representation, full voting rights and equal representation in government institutions; legally guaranteed civil rights for migrants abroad; and rights to social programs that provide migrants educational, health care and social security benefits.

Ecuadorian and Dominican migrant organizations attempt to make demands in both the U.S. and their home countries, but do so based on their perception of how successfully they can demand and obtain rights as a minority group. While Ecuadorian migrant organizations leaders

see bi-national engagement as a necessity, many organizations have emphasized political involvement in Ecuador because of the changing political landscape in Ecuador that currently favors migrant incorporation. This is more favorable given the high percentage of non-citizens in the U.S. which results in more limited opportunities for U.S. political engagement. Dominicans, however, while also demanding rights in both countries, seem to be more optimistic about their prospects arising from political participation in the U.S., due to the historical tensions between migrants and the Dominican government and persistent patterns of cronyism and clientelism in Dominican politics.

Chapter Four transitioned from how migrants respond to dual marginalization through political organization based on minority rights in both home and host countries to the role of states in shaping migrant political practices. Specifically this chapter sought to show not just that nation-states shape transnational practices, but also that the various dimensions of state policy condition citizenship claims. Chapter Four accepts the premise that both sending and receiving states continue to play a pivotal role in shaping migrant transnational practices, but attempted to examine the full extent of migrant policy to see exactly how state actors seek to assert control over migrants as they make claims from abroad for greater citizenship rights.

Both the Ecuadorian and Dominican migrants in this study are based in the same city, and subject to the same host country immigration policies, particularly limited legal rights as non-citizens and risks of deportation for many members of both populations who reside in the U.S. with an irregular/undocumented migratory status. Chapter Four therefore examined Ecuadorian and Dominican government policies towards migrants abroad, in order to demonstrate how the rhetoric of state officials, changes to the rule of law, and legislative policy all shape the scope and nature of migrants' transnational engagement and demands.

Particularly since Rafael Correa was elected President in 2006, Ecuadorian migrant policy has been one not only of rapprochement with its migrant population, but in fact has embraced a progressive rhetoric that seeks to champion the rights of all migrants, both immigrants living in Ecuador and their own nationals living abroad. This aggressive courting of migrants is, as I argued in my description of strategic citizenship, an effort by the Ecuadorian government to assert greater control over its migrant population and more specifically over their remittance income, as a source of revenues. This is particularly important for Ecuador, which has only recently weathered a severe financial crisis that spurred a mass migration abroad in the past decade. However, the migrant policy changes in Ecuador also respond President Correa's Citizen's Revolution, which aims to expand political power and welfare state programs for disaffected segments of the population including working class, Afro-Ecuadorian, indigenous persons and migrants. This is reflected in all three of the aforementioned aspects of Ecuadorian migrant politics, through government public discourse, recent constitutional reforms granting citizenship rights to migrants, and legislative policies targeted at migrants. These same state practices that seek to incorporate and advocate for migrants also reinforce dual marginalization among nationals living abroad.

The Ecuadorian government's discourse has sought to validate migrants by proclaiming them an integral part of the national body politic and victims of the failures of past governments to whom the state has an obligation, rather than as expats who have abandoned their homeland. The state's pro-migrant discourse also advocates for migration as a universal right under international law and for international norms to protect the rights of all international migrants. The government's discourse has helped to create an environment that incentivizes migrants to feel they are invested in the polity and in Correa's citizen's revolution.

Changes to the rule of law enacted by the Correa government have also stimulated migrants' involvement in Ecuadorian political life. The current government successfully carried out national referendum that ratified a new constitution that embodied the progressive ideologies embraced by President Correa. The new constitution (which was drafted by migrant representatives in the constituent assembly), not only cemented dual citizenship and external voting as fundamental rights, but also provided migrants abroad direct representation in the national legislature and established equal rights and protections for migrants abroad as a fundamental mandate of the state. Aside from the clear incentive for migrants to exercise their new political rights, these reforms also validated in the minds of many of this study's subjects that the state recognized migrant contributions and involvement.

Finally, the Correa administration enacted policies that create or extend various public programs and services specifically to all citizens living abroad. These include voluntary social security enrollment distance education programs, remittance-sending incentives and small business lending, as well as the creation of cabinet-level ministry for migrant affairs, which administers direct service programs for migrants abroad through the *Casa Ecuatoriana* network. These policies provide a policy agenda that fosters migrant political involvement. Additionally, the Ecuadorian government has also enacted programs such as the FORES program, to work directly with organizations on capacity building, which simultaneously creates support networks and loyalties with participating organizations, while also imposing organizational forms that potentially limit their range of actions, including mounting political campaigns in Ecuador.

At the same time, however, the same government actions that have sought to incorporate and in some measure empower migrants within Ecuador have also shaped their political engagement by reinforcing marginalization and the kinds of citizenship demands made by

migrants. Government rhetoric has also perpetuated migrants' marginalization through a victimization discourse. The state legitimizes migrants' citizenship status, but also views them as a disadvantaged group that requires protections from the state. Many organization leaders and migrant constituents alike in this study have internalized this identity to make demands upon the state for greater protections, including direct support for migrants who are victims of xenophobic discrimination and violence, and affirmative action programs in Ecuador for migrants.

Constitutional reforms also reinforce migrants' marginalization by legally recognizing them as a visible minority and mandating the state to provide equal protections for migrants. Migrant organization leaders in my study have seized on these new constitutional rights and protections to make demands for equal representation in all government bodies beyond the legislature, such as government ministries, as well as for guaranteed representation in the newly created Citizen's Participation Council, an elected body designed to ensure government accountability.

Finally the Correa administration's policy implementation efforts have had perhaps the most immediate impact on migrants' engagement and in reinforcing marginalization. A number of migrant leaders viewed the government's efforts to provide direct services for the migrant community (such as *pro bono* representation and consular services) as half-hearted and thus reflective of migrants being treated as second-class citizens by the Ecuadorian state. Many organization leaders in this study also said that state policies did not go far enough to protect migrants, such as the access to distance education or excessive requirements for social security eligibility, which added fuel to the notion of dual marginalization. Ultimately though, despite the reinforcement of marginalization, Ecuadorian government policy has nevertheless incentivized Ecuadorian migrants to remain highly involved in home country politics, perhaps to a greater

extent than in U.S. politics, because they have tangible interests and rights that they can use to obtain a wide range of rights and a stronger political voice.

The Dominican Republic's migrant policy, in turn, is more fraught with tensions than that of the Ecuadorian government. Like Ecuador, the Dominican government under President Leonel Fernández has recently taken concrete steps to engage and politically incorporate their migrant population abroad through a combination of political reforms and policy initiatives. There are noticeable differences, the Dominican government's migrant policy and that of Ecuador's that have tempered migrants' enthusiasm towards participating in the Dominican electoral process to advance their interests. Current migrant policy in the Dominican Republic and the tepid response by migrant organization leaders are colored by historical tensions between Dominican migrants and the Dominican state, stemming from years of political violence and repression that forced many Dominicans to leave in the 1960s and 1970s and mobilization by political exiles to challenge authoritarian regimes under Rafael Trujillo and Joaquín Balaguer.

One noticeable difference between the two countries lies in the rhetoric or political discourse used by Dominican government officials to deal with migrants. While Dominican political discourse has increasingly acknowledged migration as a relevant experience since Leonel Fernández's first Presidency in 1996⁷¹, political elites in the Dominican Republic continue to reinforce separation between migrants and non-migrants in their rhetoric. Dominican politicians eschew the term migrant, opting instead for descriptors such as Dominicans abroad and diaspora. Relations with migrants are characterized by the state as alliances or partnerships rather than state-subject relations. Furthermore, the tone of much of the government's rhetoric is

⁷¹ Fernández has served three non-continuous terms of office, having been elected in 1996, and then elected for two additional terms in 2004 and 2008, after a constitutional amendment was passed repealing one-term limits for the presidency

instrumental in character, focusing almost exclusively on the economic benefit of remittances when discussing migration. Finally Dominican politicians have qualified migrant incorporation by raising questions about their loyalty. Such rhetoric appears to reinforce social distance between migrants and the Dominican state.

Recent changes in the Dominican Republic's rule of law have started to respond to the demands made by Dominican migrants for greater citizenship rights. However these measures are considerably smaller in scope than what the Ecuadorian government has done to expand migrant citizenship rights. Constitutional reforms approved by the Dominican government in 2008 now acknowledge the right to dual citizenship, and have outlined provisions for the creation of direct representation in the lower chamber of the Dominican national legislature (not in the Dominican Senate). However unlike the Ecuadorian constitution, the Dominican government does not acknowledge migrants as a protected group nor provide specific sets of rights for migrants other than limited political representation. This has led some migrant leaders to denounce the Dominican government for relegating migrants to a second-class citizenship status.

Finally Dominican policy programs have been limited in nature. Few government policies or programs are in place that actually do direct outreach or service provision for migrants outside of standard consular services. The most significant policy program enacted by the government has been the CONDEX; an inter-agency government body (largely under the direction of the Dominican State Department) designed to conduct outreach and consultation with different sectors of the Dominican migrant population. While CONDEX has established dialogues and working agreements with a number of New York-based Dominican migrant organizations, these partnerships have not yet produced concrete policy initiatives or legislation

sponsored or endorsed by migrants in the Dominican legislature. The Dominican government, unlike their Ecuadorian counterpart, has not introduced programs to expand services to migrants, nor provide resources for migrant citizens living abroad. Not surprisingly, many Dominican migrant leaders, including some who took part in this study, have denounced the government's lack of attention to migrant affairs and adopt a pessimistic tone with respect to what migrants can expect to gain from continued political engagement in the Dominican Republic in their efforts to demand greater citizenship rights. As a result the organizations in this study, including the Dominican political party chapters in the U.S., have concentrated much of their political activity on securing and expanding Dominican representation in various state and local elected offices in the U.S.

That sending states craft policy in response to the impact of migration and attempt to exercise some sort of social control over migrants has been noted by a number of scholars (Orozco and Lapointe 2004; Smith 2003 and 2008). This study, however, seeks to show that states do more than simply adopt policies that outline the terms of membership—in this case, sending states take an active role in shaping the consciousness, identity and goals that migrants employ when they opt to pursue transnational political engagement, which ultimately informs how Ecuadorian and Dominican migrant organizations demand citizenship rights. In this respect migrants' transnational practices are strategic in that they adapt and respond to the states' attempts to control migrants as subjects. Furthermore, state policies and migrant organization's responses bring into focus how citizenship embodies the social conflicts between ruling elites who seek to control subjects and the subjects who make demands for greater inclusion in the state.

Chapter Five examines the last major element in strategic citizenship- the organizations in which migrants carry out their political activities. As noted in the chapter, most political activity, outside of casting a ballot or speaking with an elected official (in democratic societies), is carried out through organizations. Numerous scholars (Lipset 1961; Almond and Verba 1963; McAdam 1980; Wilson 1973; DiMaggio and Powell 1984; Putnam 1996 and 2000; Keck and Sikkink 1996; Tarrow 2005) have noted in different ways that organizations have a tangible impact on how people mobilize to make political demands or participate in electoral politics. This chapter sought to illustrate that in order to better understand how migrants become involved in transnational politics it is necessary to consider how organizations mediate the process. The chapter provides in-depth analysis of three different Ecuadorian and three different Dominican organizations, including electoral parties, social movement organizations and non-profit advocacy organizations. In doing so I argued that each of the organizations examined in the chapter demonstrate that organizations affect political participation in terms of (1) the opportunities the organization provides migrants to mobilize and make claims upon both home and host country governments, and (2) by the capacity for organizations to empower migrants to have a tangible impact on political processes in home and/or host countries. I focused specifically on the personnel structures and interpersonal relations, coupled with the structure of and resources available to each organization that help structure the opportunities that are available to effectively make claims upon both home and host countries for citizenship rights that address their dual marginalization.

One key factor that emerged in the research was the role that membership dynamics played for each of the organizations present. For larger groups such as Alianza PAIS and the Dominican Revolutionary Party (PRD), large membership numbers provided greater legitimacy

among migrant constituents and enabled these groups to command greater resources for political activities in New York. This allowed these groups to command considerable attention among migrants and shape the political discourse in the migrant community. At the same time, however, having so many members also made internal conflicts and divisions among leaders and members more prevalent, which hindered their effectiveness in engaging with migrant constituents' concerns, and thus leading to increasing resentment and distrust in these organizations as effective representatives of migrants' interests. The smaller organizations such as the *Frente Unido de Inmigrantes Ecuatorianos*⁷² (FUIE), the National Dominican Women's Caucus (NDWC) and *Juventud Ecuatoriana*⁷³ (JE) were more effective in maintaining cohesive membership and ideological unity, and thus able to advance specific political goals. These smaller organizations also had more stable leadership structures that made it easier to mobilize members and supporters. Small size also meant having a limited scope of activity and/or lacking resources to make major inroads in mobilizing migrants or keeping a steady pace of activity. This circumstance often compelled these organizations to either foster networks with other actors or adopt new tactics such as seeking non-profit status, which potentially undermines or changes the focus of the organizations' original mission.

A second observable factor that impacted transnational political participation was the structure of organizations, and in particular the tendency towards isomorphism (DiMaggio and Powell 1984). This tendency was particularly evident among the electoral movements, where their orientation towards electoral politics often proved constraining. On the one hand these organizations, such as the aforementioned PRD, Alianza PAIS (Ecuador) and Alianza País (D.R.) instantly tapped them into home country politics and provided access to political elites to help

⁷² Translation: United Ecuadorian Immigrants' Front

⁷³ Translation: Ecuadorian Youth

advance migrant interests. Yet their composition also meant being beholden to central party discipline and imposed home country political interests at the expense of articulating a migrant agenda. The hierarchical structure of these electoral movements also bred intense competition among members to move up the movement/party ladder, which created leadership voids (as with Alianza PAIS) and fostered resentment from lower-level operatives at perceived patterns of clientelism and patronage politics.

Non-electoral movements were often able either to create more transparent forms of leadership (FUIE), or organize themselves in such a way as to allow appointed leaders to shape their mission with few constraints (JE, NDWC). Yet some of these organizations, because of their size and/or structure, have found themselves compelled to resort to non-profit status as a tactic for long-term survival, ultimately restricted the scope of their political activities. There is a precedent for this among older Dominican civic organizations that started as political organizations and become non-profit groups. That Ecuadorian organizations have started to adopt this tactic seems to point to an isomorphic trend that is fostered by the structural conditions under which many migrant-based organizations operate, particularly in terms of financial resources.

Contributions

This research has sought to make substantive contributions in a number of areas, including contemporary migration, citizenship, transnationalism and political organizations. This study has sought to demonstrate that the experiences of both Ecuadorian and Dominican migrants in New York reflect the interconnectedness of these issues.

The genesis of this project was an interest on my part to better understand what role organizations played in mobilizing migrants into transnational political activities. My research

suggests that organizations require greater attention in the study of transnational practices, including political engagement, since they not only provide resources that enable or limit transnational activities, but also foster structured relationships that help define migrants' collective consciousness and their overall goals in seeking out transnational political engagement, which vary according to the organization.

These findings have also contributed to the area of transnational studies by employing collective action frameworks to better understand how migrants engage in transnational political practices. This theoretical approach has been advocated by Vertovec (2002) as a way to expand on transnational studies. While Keck and Sikkink (1996) and Tarrow (2005) have applied this theoretical framework to studying transnational activist networks, I have attempted to use a similar lens to look at migrant mobilization, which in many ways varies because of their relationships to their home countries. By taking this approach I also hope to make a contribution to the field of political sociology by examining the relationship between organizations and political engagement among migrants. The findings from this study note how, for Ecuadorian and Dominican immigrants, many of whom remain non-citizens, transnational practices become a potential vehicle for community empowerment. The extent to which the organizations in which migrants participate are able to tap into resources and networks that permit them to effectively make claims in both home and host countries provide Ecuadorian and Dominican migrants with avenues to address conditions they face in both the U.S. and their home countries, as the examples of the organizations in this study illustrate.

A second area where this study has sought to make a contribution is in our understanding of citizenship- a central concern as it relates to migration and migrant transnational practices. By arguing strategic citizenship embodies Ecuadorian and Dominican migrants' response to

exclusion within the contemporary global political economy, I endeavor to reintroduce the arguments spelled out by Marshall (1947) and Mann (1983) that citizenship is ultimately the embodiment of social conflicts between ruling political elites and the subjects over whom they seek to rule. The current iteration of the global economy has in fact altered citizenship in certain ways, though not, as has been argued by some scholars (Soysal 1995; Jacobson 1996), through eroding state sovereignty in a meaningful way. Rather, contemporary forms of citizenship, including dual citizenship, mean that citizenship rights reflect the current social conflict between elites in both sending and receiving countries who seek to control migrants for their economic value as labor power and remitters and migrants who seek to empower themselves as mobile subjects within the system of global capitalist accumulation. This assessment adopts Marshall (1950) and Mann's (1987) interpretation of citizenship as crystallization of social conflicts between elites and the governed, but argues that for migrants the struggle for rights crosses multiple nation-states.

A third area in which this project aims to make a scholarly contribution is in understanding how strategic citizenship, as a reflection of transnational political engagement, has changed the political landscape of Ecuador and the Dominican Republic, as a starting point towards a broader evaluation of how politics and governance in Latin America have adapted to migration. As noted in this study, Ecuadorian and Dominican migrants' claims for citizenship rights are a direct response to the fact that political elites in each country have crafted policies that seek to incorporate migrants sufficiently so as to secure remittances as a form of direct investment, and thus preserve migrant labor power as a source of capital accumulation. Migration has thus altered government development strategies in light of changes to the global economy, where low-income economies like Ecuador and the Dominican Republic are critical

providers of labor. At the same time, the emergence of a migrant minority political identity among both Ecuadorian and Dominican migrants reflects the emergence of new social categories that not only inform how subjects of these countries organize themselves. But in the case of Ecuador in particular, they have engendered changes to the rule of law that have further expanded the scope of the politics of representation in these two Latin American countries. Whether this is a particularity of these two countries or indicative of a broader trend among Latin American migrants remains to be seen.

Finally this study has also sought to add to the body of research on contemporary immigration in the U.S. by bringing much needed attention to the dynamics of Ecuadorian and Dominican immigration. As noted earlier in the dissertation, Ecuadorians are the second fastest growing Latino immigrant population in New York City since 1990 (Caro-López 2011), outpaced only by Mexican migrants and surpassing Dominican migration during this period. Furthermore, as Bergad (2010) has noted, the Ecuadorian population in the United States has increased nearly 20-fold since 1970, from a mere 35,000 to over 600,000, and has almost doubled in the past decade. Yet despite this dramatic surge in Ecuadorian migration, there is a surprising dearth of scholarship that documents this new population group, with Jones-Correa's (1998) study of Latino political engagement in Queens (which included Ecuadorians among other groups) and Pribilsky's (2002) study of early Ecuadorian migration to New York being the only notable studies on Ecuadorian migration carried out to date. Yet even these studies leave room for significant exploration of the Ecuadorian experience, and in particular how Ecuadorian migration and transnational political engagement has changed with the rapid expansion of the Ecuadorian migrant population, and the accompanying political changes in Ecuador and the U.S. that influence how Ecuadorians have started to mobilize transnationally. This study aims to show

Ecuadorians' increasing relevance in the social fabric of New York City and the U.S., including the impact that this population will have on ethnic politics and civic participation.

Similarly, despite the growing body of scholarship on Dominican immigration and political engagement (Pessar and Grasmuck 2001; Graham 1996; Levitt 2001; Aparicio 2006; Gonzalez-Acosta 2009; Itzighsohn and Villacrés 2009), these studies have not fully explored the confluence of structural and ideological factors that shape transnational political engagement. This study seeks to show, as previously noted, that their political engagement is predicated on a particular shared understanding of why they must organize transnationally, and the political identity that informs their political participation in each country as well as how the Dominican government has conditioned their activities.

Limitations and areas for future research

This study sought to offer a broader perspective on migrant transnational political activities by employing a comparative framework between Ecuadorian and Dominican migrant experiences. The fact remains, however, that as a qualitative and largely ethnographic project, the perspective offered here remains relatively narrow in scope. The decision to employ a qualitative methodology was made in order to demonstrate how the subjective lived experiences of organization leaders shape the identity construction process that informs their political objectives. This approach also permitted me to observe how organization dynamics influence transnational political activities.

Yet because of this the study focuses on the experiences of a relatively small number of actors, given the plethora of Ecuadorian and Dominican migrant organizations both in New York and across the U.S. This study therefore cannot, by design, speak to the general experience of all organizations within each population. According to Pablo Calle of the SENAMI, there are over

200 documented Ecuadorian organizations operating in the New York City area alone.

Dominican organizations are also quite numerous, based on a scan of community news sites and anecdotal accounts from some participants in this study. Other organizations may be driven by other considerations when they opt to participate in transnational politics, if they do at all, or have different dynamics that lead to different outcomes.

A related issue is the fact that my research subjects did not include migrant hometown associations (HTAs), which is one of the more important organizational types currently involved in transnational practices. Many of the existing studies on transnational practices, including those which have informed my own research (Orozco and Lapointe 2004; Goldring 1998; Levitt 2001; Landolt and Baires 2001; Smith 2006) have demonstrated the importance of HTAs in enabling transnational economic and political practices. The fact that there is not an HTA present in the study should be noted as a limitation, given how important these organizations have become in the context of transnational activities. In the case of the Ecuadorian migrant population, however, as noted by *Juventud Ecuatoriana* President Edward Miranda in Chapter Five, HTAs do not have a significant presence in the Ecuadorian migrant experience- a point confirmed by the lack of mention of HTAs by Ecuadorian government officials. HTAs are, however, more visible in the Dominican migrant community, and as Levitt (2001) has noted, play a significant political role at the local level, by mobilizing resources for community development projects and to elect candidates to local office. Time constraints made it difficult for me to network sufficiently within the Dominican community to connect with New York-based HTAs. Nevertheless, in addition to missing a relevant organizational form, the lack of a HTA also made it more difficult to take into account the question of scale in political engagement. With the exception of *Juventud Ecuatoriana* all of the organizations studied in both populations engaged at the national level in

their home countries. Organizations like HTAs, which operate primarily at the local level, may have provided a different perspective on why migrants opt to participate in transnational political activities and what form their participation takes.

One avenue of future research to address this limitation is to develop a larger-scale survey of organizations to measure the overall volume and form of transnational political engagement, focusing on organizational types and other quantitative indicators such as membership size and demographic profile, resources, size of networks and types of political practices. This would help identify broader trends in political engagement and measure the influence of structural factors. Itizghsohn and Villacrés (2009) recently sought to survey overall transnational political engagement by Dominican migrants, mainly in the area of constituents propensity to vote in Dominican elections. Their approach, while limited in scope, nevertheless provides a way to study organized transnational political activities by migrants from a macro-level perspective.

Similarly, the decision to focus only on New York-based organizations raises other questions regarding the impact of host country politics that this study could not explore at this time. While the decision to study two separate migrant populations made it possible to compare the role of sending states in reinforcing dual marginalization and shaping strategic citizenship by Ecuadorians and Dominicans, the host country context was similar. This did make it possible to identify clear sources of marginalization that migrants felt by virtue of being in the U.S. and compare how each population responded to the host-country context. However many Ecuadorian and Dominicans have migrated to other countries, including Italy and Spain, where the host country context is different, both culturally as well as in terms of immigration policy. The present study is unable to speak to how differences in host country context impact the discourses

and strategies that shape Ecuadorian and Dominican transnational practices, which may be quite different in other countries, based on how migrants are incorporated elsewhere. This would be the next logical step for this line of research, in order to provide a more comprehensive analysis of how strategic citizenship manifests itself in varied host-country contexts. Østergaard Nielsen (2003; 2009) has compared differences in how Turkish migrants engage in transnational practices in different European countries. Expanding my research to examine Ecuadorian and Dominican migrants in Europe would help contribute to cross-country comparative studies on migrant transnationalism in different host-country contexts.

Appendix A: Sample Interview Protocol

Open Ended Questions for Organization Members

I. General Information

1. How did you become part of the organization/movement?
2. How long have you been active in the organization's activities?
3. What are some of your major responsibilities in your current position?
 - Mission and Constituencies
 - What was the mission of the campaign?
 - What do you see as the the current goals/priorities of the organization as an elected official?
 - How would you describe your constituency? Are there any specific sectors of the immigrant community that you work for?
 - Do you anticipate any changes in the organization's mission in the future? Why or why not?
 - Tactics
 - How do the assembly persons and/or the movement come to a decision on how to advance its goals?
 - What methods or strategies are used by the movement/organization to carry out its objectives?
 - How does the organization/movement determine whether they have been able to advance its stated objectives, based on the strategies or tactics employed?

IV. Resources

- What are the major resources the organization relies on to conduct its work?
- In the case of financial or material resources, how does the organization obtain the necessary resources to carry out its objectives?
- How will having two assembly persons affect access to resources?

V. Relationship with government/state actors in home country

- What sort of engagements or interactions do you have with government authorities in the home country? Which government authorities do you work with, specifically?
- How would you characterize your relationship with government officials in Ecuador-cooperative, neutral or conflicted? What are the reasons for that relationship?
- How reliant is the organization on collaboration with home country government officials to meet its goals?

VI. Relationship with government/state actors in host country

1. How important is it for your organization to be engaged with government authorities in the United States? Why is this?
2. What sort of engagements or interactions do you have with government authorities in the US? Which government authorities do you work with, specifically? (IF APPLICABLE)
3. Are state or federal government authorities in the United States receptive to the organization's political activities?

VII. Relationships with non-government actors

1. Does the organization work with any non-government actors as part of its political activity in the home country? If so, who?
2. How would you conduct your relationship with other non-government actors who work on similar issues in the home country- cooperative, neutral, competitive or hostile? Why would you characterize it this way?

VIII. Impact on Governance in the home country

1. Is the way that your organization deals with particular issues different from how home county government officials deal with issues? If so how?
2. How have local residents responded to the manner in which your organization has tried to deal with political issues?

Appendix B: Sample Consent Forms



Ph.D. Program in Sociology

The Graduate School and University Center
The City University of New York
365 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10016-4308
tel. 212.817.8770 fax 212.817.8770

Dear Sir or Madam,

My name is Howard Caro-López. I am a student in the sociology PhD program at the City University of New York (CUNY) Graduate Center. I am conducting a study to document and understand how and why different immigrant communities become involved in organizations that conduct political activities in their countries of origin.

As a representative of one of these organizations I am requesting your participation in my research study. Specifically, I am requesting your permission to interview you about your knowledge on this topic. As a participant in this study any information that may identify you will be considered confidential unless otherwise indicated.

If you wish to allow your name and any identifying information to be used publicly, please mark the line provided below this paragraph. By marking the line below your name and any information that may identify you may be used. If you also wish to allow your organization to be identified, please place mark the second line provided below this paragraph. By marking the second line, the name and other information which identifies the organization which you represent may be used or will be changed in the study.

By placing mark on the line provided below I have granted permission for my name and any information provided in the interview that may identify me to be used in this study:

PLACE AN "X" ON THE LINE _____

By placing mark on the line provided below I have granted permission for the name of and any information provided in the interview that may identify my organization to be used in this study:

PLACE AN "X" ON THE LINE _____

The risks from participating in this study are no more than encountered in your everyday life activities. The benefits obtained from of your participation is that it will give both academics and immigrant scholars a better understanding of the how immigrants organize to carry out political activity in their home countries, and the consequences of their organized activities. There will be approximately 12 organizations taking part in this study.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. There are no negative consequences if at any time you decide to end your participation in the study.

[Type text]

<http://www.gc.cuny.edu>

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365 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10016-4399
TEL: 212.817.8770 FAX: 212.817.1536

With your permission, I would like to record this interview on audio tape. The audio tapes and transcriptions of this recording will be stored in a locked file cabinet that only the principal investigator will have access to, if you have explicitly requested that confidentiality.

If you agree to be interviewed and to allow the interview to be audio recored, please sign your name in the space provided below and make a circle around the word "YES"

**I agree to allow my interview to be recorded
by audio tape:**

YES

NO

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at any time. Please contact me at (718) 753-5869, or by email at hcarolopez@gmail.com. You may also contact my advisor, John Torpey, at (212) 817-8777 or by email at jtorpey@gc.cuny.edu. If you have questions about your rights as a participant in this study you can contact Kay Powell, IRB Administrator, The Graduate Center/City University of New York, (212) 817-7525, or by email at kpowell@gc.cuny.edu.

Your signature indicates that you have read the information provided above, have been able to ask questions and have received answers to any questions regarding this research project. Your signature also indicates that you agree to be interviewed. You may withdraw from the research at any time. You will be given a signed copy of this letter.

Participant's Name

Signature

Date

Investigator's Name

Signature

Date



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Estimado Señor or Señora,

Mi nombre es Howard Caro-López y soy un estudiante doctoral en la facultad de sociología del Centro de Estudios Graduados (Graduate Center) de la Universidad de la Ciudad de Nueva York (CUNY). Estoy llevando a cabo un estudio para documentar y entender cómo y por qué distintos grupos de inmigrantes forman parte de organizaciones para llevar a cabo trabajo político en sus países natales.

Como un individuo que trabaja con una de estas organizaciones, deseo pedirle que participe en mi estudio. Específicamente le estoy pidiendo que acepte ser entrevistado sobre su conocimiento acerca de este tema. Su nombre y toda la información recopilada en esta entrevista que lo/la identifiquen serán confidenciales a menos que usted de su autorización para divulgar las mismas.

Si usted desea autorizar que su nombre e información sea usada públicamente, por favor haga una marca en el espacio proveído debajo de este párrafo. Al hacer una marca dentro del recuadro su nombre y cualquier otra información que le pueda identificar podrá ser usada públicamente en el estudio. Además, si deseas autorizar que el nombre de la organización que usted representa sea utilizado en este estudio, favor de hacer una marca en el segundo espacio provisto debajo de este párrafo. Al marcar la segunda línea, el nombre y toda información que pueda identificar a la organización que usted representa tampoco serán utilizados en el estudio.

Al hacer una marca en el espacio proveído autorizo que mi nombre y toda información recopilada que me identifica en esta entrevista sean utilizados en este estudio:

HAGA UNA "X" AQUÍ _____

Al hacer una marca en el espacio proveído autorizo que el nombre y toda información recopilada en esta entrevista que identifique la organización que represento sean utilizadas en este estudio:

HAGA UNA "X" AQUÍ _____

Su participación en este estudio es voluntaria. Si en cualquier momento usted elige no participar en el estudio, esto no le afectará en ninguna manera negativa. Si usted decide ser entrevistad@, usted puede rechazar contestar cualquier pregunta o parar la entrevista en cualquier momento.



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Si usted me lo permite, me gustaría grabar esta entrevista. Las cintas y las transcripciones escritas de esta entrevista serán guardadas en un lugar seguro y bajo llave al cual solamente el investigador principal tiene acceso, si es que usted ha pedido confidencialidad explícitamente.

Si usted acepta tomar parte en este estudio y a ser grabado en cinta magnetofónica (audio), por favor firme su nombre en el espacio provisto debajo y haga un círculo alrededor de la palabra "SÍ".

Estoy de acuerdo con que esta entrevista sea grabada en cinta magnetofónica:

SÍ

NO

Si tiene alguna pregunta favor de comunicarse inmediatamente conmigo al (718) 753-5869, o vía correo electrónico a la dirección hcarolopez@gmail.com. También se puede comunicar con el profesor supervisando mi estudio, el Dr. John Torpey, al (212) 817-8777, o vía correo electrónico a la dirección jtorpey@gc.cuny.edu. Si tiene alguna duda o pregunta sobre sus derechos como un participante en este estudio puede comunicarse con la Sra. Kay Powell, Administrator del "Institutional Review Board" (IRB) del Centro de Estudios Graduados (Graduate Center) de la Universidad de la Ciudad de Nueva York (CUNY), al número telefónico (212) 817-7525, or via correo electrónico a la dirección kpowell@gc.cuny.edu.

Está tomando una decisión sobre participar o no. Su firma indica que ha leído toda la información en este documento, que has tenido la oportunidad de hacer preguntas sobre el estudio y que has recibido respuestas a sus preguntas. Tiene el derecho de no participar en el estudio en cualquier momento. Se le proveerá una copia firmada de este documento

Nombre del participante

Firma

Fecha

Nombre del investigador

Firma

Fecha



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Appendix C: Ecuadorian propaganda on the Citizen's Revolution

These images, along with those in Appendix C-2 are examples of the different ways in which the current government has employed the concept of “Citizen’s Revolution” within its propaganda disseminated within the migrant population abroad.



Appendix E: FUIE Electoral Propaganda: The flyer below illustrates the basic proposals made by the FUIE candidates during the first ever vote to elect migrant candidates to the Ecuadorian National Assembly. The flyer lists proposals that address many policy issues in Ecuador as well as issues in the U.S. such as anti-immigrant hate crimes, family reunification policy and comprehensive immigration reform legislation.

TU Decides TU Futuro El Cambio es Ahora

Nuestros candidatos son hombres y mujeres honestos y capaces, con una amplia trayectoria de lucha por los derechos de los inmigrantes y que jamás han claudicado; por lo que son una garantía para llevar las propuestas y aspiraciones de los ecuatorianos en el exterior y el compromiso de caminar juntos por el cambio social y la patria Nueva en el Ecuador.

NUESTRAS PROPUESTAS

Promover la Reunificación familiar y el estatus migratorio de los ecuatorianos en el exterior. Protección de los Derechos Humanos, por una vida digna y un trato justo, contra la explotación, el discrimen, el abuso y la violencia.

Ley que reglamente el Seguro Social voluntario para los ecuatorianos en el exterior, para beneficios de salud, vivienda, y una jubilación digna

Educación Universitaria Abierta y a Distancia en el Exterior: y acuerdos para convalidar los títulos.

Ley de Inversión para los inmigrantes; asesoramiento, exoneración de impuestos a maquinaria y préstamos a bajo interés, para talleres, pequeñas empresas, agricultura, etc. orientadas a **REACTIVAR EL APARATO PRODUCTIVO,** y crear fuentes de trabajo garantizando un retorno digno de los ecuatorianos.

Compañías de economía Mixtas Estado y los inmigrantes, Asociaciones o Cooperativas para la explotación de la minería y petróleo.

SERVICIOS CONSULARES Descentralizados y más eficientes, que amplíen el horario de atención y los fines de semana
Consulados Móviles.

Representación de los inmigrantes en el C. Nacional Electoral, C. Superior del IESS, SENAMI, Consulados. C. de Participación Ciudadana.

Creación de un Fondo público: Para la repatriación de ecuatorianos fallecidos en el exterior y asistencia inmediata a detenidos y deportados.

Limpiar la corrupción en los aeropuertos y aduanas del Ecuador. Auditoria, Fiscalización y Rendición de Cuentas en EMBAJADAS, CONSULADOS, SENAMI, DEFENSORIA DEL PUEBLO, CASA ECUATORIANA.

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1995 - 1999 Dean's Scholarship, **American University**

PUBLICATIONS

Caro-López, Howard (2011). *Ecuadorians in New York City, 1990-2010* Center for Latin American, Caribbean and Latino Studies (CLACLS) New York City Latino Data Project Series Report.

Meléndez, Edwin and Caro-López, Howard (forthcoming). “Changes in the Structure of Low Wage Labor Markets and Migration Selectivity”. *Pathways to the Middle Class: Puerto Ricans in Low Wage Labor Markets and Workforce Development*, Centro for Puerto Rican Studies, Hunter College

Caro-Lopez, Howard and Limonic, Laura, (2010.) *Dominicans in New York City, 1990-2010*. Center for Latin American, Caribbean and Latino Studies (CLACLS) New York City Latino Data Project Series Report .

Caro-Lopez, Howard and Eugene Miller (2008). *Building Capacity in the Third Sector*, Center on Philanthropy and Civil Society Report, CUNY Graduate Center

Caro-Lopez, Howard (2008.) *Immigrant Economic Mobility and Socio-Economic Conditions: A Comparative Analysis of Foreign Born Caribbean Groups in New York City*. Center for Latin American, Caribbean and Latino Studies (CLACLS) New York City Latino Data Project Series Report.

Caro-Lopez, Howard (2007.) *Socio-Economic and Cost of Living Indicators among Foreign and Domestic-Born Latino Nationalities in the New York Metropolitan Area, 2005*. Center for Latin American, Caribbean and Latinos Studies (CLACLS) New York Latino Data Project Series Report.

EXPERIENCE:

RESEARCH

Interests – Political Sociology, Migration Studies, Latin American Studies, Latino Sociology, Social Movements, Community Studies

Summer 2009-**Center for Latin American, Caribbean and Latino Studies** New York, NY
 Summer 2010 **CUNY Graduate Center** Director of Quantitative Research

- Coordinator for the New York City Latino Data Project (LDP), the Center's primary research project to oversee and publish demographic studies on the city's Latino population conducted by graduate students fellows.
- Participated in the selection of 2009-2010 LDP Fellows and supervised fellows in the completion and publication of their reports

- Served as public liaison for Center on requests for data and to present data findings.
- Panel discussion participant on WABC TV Latino affairs program *Tiempo* on health insurance trends for Latinos in the United States, discussing findings from a study conducted by CLACLS in 2009.
- Authored demographic briefs on Ecuadorians and Dominican populations of New York City

Summer 2008- **Center for Puerto Rican Studies, Hunter College (CUNY)** New York, NY

Summer 2009 Dr. Edwin Meléndez Graduate Research Assistant

- Collaborated on research article on Changes in the Structure of Low Wage Labor Markets and Migration Selectivity for Puerto Rican workers, as part of a Ford Foundation-funded research project on Puerto Ricans in Low Wage Labor Markets and Workforce Development
- Coordinated the development of an online data center for demographic data on Puerto Rican communities in the United States, by collecting public data sources which track Puerto Rican respondents. The data was used to prepare policy briefs on Puerto Ricans by geographic location
- Developed and helped administer survey questionnaire on legislative policy priorities for New York City Council Members, at the request of members of the council's Asian, Black and Latino Caucus.

Fall 2007- **Center on Philanthropy and Civil Society, CUNY Graduate Center**

Spring 2008 Dr. Eugene Miller: Assistant Director Research Fellow

- Selected as William Randolph Hearst Graduate Fellow.
- Conducted quantitative research for a Center working paper on Music Philanthropy. I collected and analyzed charitable contribution data from foundations in New York City to not-for-profit music organizations.
- Analyzed and interpreted survey data from 2008 Emerging Leaders/International Fellows Program (ELIFP) Evaluation, and co-authored final report for ELIFP Evaluation report with Dr. Miller.
- Results of ELIFP Evaluation report were presented to major donors for the program
-

Summer 2007 **John Jay College of Criminal Justice (CUNY)**

Puerto Rican/Latin American Studies Department

Dr. Jodie Roure, Assistant Professor

New York, NY

Research Assistant

- Developed a survey questionnaire to evaluate the impact of the John Jay/St. John's University Summer Pre-Law Program on minority students perceptions on law and law school
- Assisted in preparing grant funding proposals for a high school human rights curriculum project in two New York City public high schools

- February 2012 “*Creating Migrant Minorities: The impact of Ecuadorian and Dominican nation-state practices on Migrant transnational political engagement*” Regular Paper Session: Immigrant Contexts, Citizenship, and Political Struggle, **Eastern Sociological Society Annual Conference**, New York, NY
- February 2012 “*Black and Brown in America.*” **Lambda Upsilon Lambda and Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternities Black History Month Forum**, George Washington University. Guest Panelist.
- April 2011 “Marginalization and Strategic Citizenship Practices by Ecuadorian and Dominican Migrant Activists in New York City”. Transnational Round Table: A Dialogue on Xenophobia in the Ecuadorian Diaspora in New York. **Office of Ecuadorian Outreach/FLACSO Ecuador**, Fordham University
- February 2011 “Constituents in Motion: Transnational Political Participation and the Emergence of Strategic Citizenship among Ecuadorian and Dominican political organizations in New York City” Regular Paper Session-States and Transnational Activism. **Eastern Sociological Society Annual Conference**, Philadelphia, PA
- Summer 2009 “*Politics Beyond States? Assessing Views on Political Transnationalism in the Social Sciences*” Section on Political Sociology/ Refereed Roundtable: “Migration and Transnationalism” **American Sociological Association Annual Conference**, San Francisco, CA.
- Spring 2006 “*Hometown Associations and Collective Remittances in Mexico and Dominican Republic: Agents of Development or Dependency?*” Section on Migration/Refereed Roundtable **Eastern Sociological Society Annual Conference**, Boston, MA
- Spring 2005 *The Minority Experience and Self-Reported Health: The Effects of Minority Men and Women’s Life Experiences of Self Reported Physical Health.*” Section on Public Health Sociology / Refereed Roundtable. **Eastern Sociological Society Annual Conference**, Washington, DC

MEDIA

- Spring 2012 **WZDC-CD, Telenoticias Washington.** Contributor for news report on racism and racial discrimination within the U.S. Latino population.
- Fall 2009 **WABC-7, “Tiempo” Latino Affairs Sunday Program.** Participant in panel discussion with spokesperson from Make the Road New York on health insurance trends for Latinos in the United States. Presentation recorded and archived at <http://www.7online.com>.

Fall 2009 **StoryCorps Historias**, held at Center for Puerto Rican Studies, Hunter College-CUNY. Participant in national oral history project, sponsored by **NPR** and the **American Folklife Center**. Oral History recorded and preserved at the **Library of Congress**.

SKILLS

Native English and Spanish Speaker

Intermediate-advanced quantitative analysis: Coding, bi-variate and multivariate analysis with SPSS

Intermediate-advanced qualitative analysis: confidentiality agreements, interviewing, coding, survey design

Basic geo-coding analysis: creating thematic maps with MapInfo

SERVICE

2011- Fair Housing Tester, Equal Rights Center

2006-2010 Co-Chair, CUNY Graduate Center Latino and Latin American Students Assoc.

2000 Volunteer, Letelier-Moffit Human Rights Award Program, Institute for Policy Studies

1998 Student Representative, American University Diversity Initiative

1996-1997 Communications Director, American University Latino American Students Organization (LASO)

CURRENT MEMBERSHIPS

American Sociological Association

Eastern Sociological Society

Office of Ecuadorian Outreach