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Chapter 8 summary

This chapter essentially wraps up what the whole book has been talking about. It lists hypotheses of both the begging era of Ecuador and the latest era of Ecuador. The chapter discusses whether or not we can look at Ecuador’s history of environmentalism and development and apply that to other countries that are similar status. I believe that this is true. I think that we can look at Ecuador as an example to predict how other countries may act in the same situations as Ecuador. There is the saying that “history repeats itself” but I hope that we can look at Ecuador and use them as an example of what to do and what not to do. After reading the book I came to the conclusion that Ecuador sort of failed. They continued to use resource extraction when it seemed like they were trying so hard not to. There is also a sense that they did not fail. I say this because environmentalism was certainly at the forefront of what was spoken about in the country far before many other countries. I think of the United States in particular. We are only now seeing somewhat of an environmental movement decades later after Ecuador tried to do some very groundbreaking things. I almost feel that Ecuador was being too progressive too soon. The rest of the world was not ready for Ecuador was proposing. Even now I am not sure the rest of the world would support the idea of money in exchange for no extraction policies.

So, when it comes to the hypotheses in this chapter, I believe that the “Ecoresiters have the potential to shift the state toward an alternative trajectory, but that possibility depends on the degree to which the state limits or empowers them. Without limits, they have the greatest likelihood of alternative being expressed and enacted.” I believe this to be very true. Ecoresister seem to be more of the everyday person that is affected by climate change. These are the people that have the most at stake in climate change. I also believe that these people are the very vast majority of people everywhere. Without any limits there would be strength in the sheer numbers of people and I think that there is power in the people. By that I mean that when people come together for a common goal there is the potential for great success. This was seen in Ecuador when Eco resisters came together to help protect their environments. This is also seen in topics unrelated to environmentalism. People protest and come together for a common goal and many times this sheds a lot of light on a situation and triggers a cause for change.

Ultimately, I thought Ecuador’s Environmental Revolutions was a pretty good book. It was certainly informative, it had plenty of statistics and it laid things out chronologically. It wasn’t the easiest read mostly for the fact that it was a little dry at times. This might be in part because of the topic itself. It is all very interesting, but when the who book is talking about political things its hard to make it real interesting. I also felt that the way Tammy Lewis described things in the book were often not the clearest. There were times where she would insert a long quote from an interview to reinforce a point but that wound up fragmenting the flow of what was being read. It felt like I was reading a textbook. I suppose in some ways it is a textbook, especially since we were reading this for a college course. All in all, it was not a bad book. I would recommend it to anyone who wants to learn about environmentalism and how it operates globally. Anyone who wants a history of Ecuador could also read this and realize how deeply steeped environmentalism is in the history of the country. I am glad that we were assigned this book and had to write up a summary. I learned a lot from it, and it has given me a much better understanding on the background of where we will be going for the 2020 experience trip. It has given me an appreciation for the place, and it makes me want to learn more!