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**Social movements and protection of common goods:
Cochabamba Water War**

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Introduction

Among many conflicts that history has witnessed from the development of the human society until today, one type may be noticed as the most common type: conflicts over resources. Due the change of value and importance of resources over time, wars have been fought over different ones during the long history of humanity: in the prehistoric times, wars have been fought mostly over basic resources, such as food and water supplies; over time, thanks to the development of a more sophisticated lifestyle and after the discovery of the precious metals such as copper, silver and gold, these resources had been given much greater value than the others and they had become the source of clashes; finally, development and globalization led to the creation of a society in which everything may have a price and become the subject of purchase – only if you possess enough of money to buy it. Money represents wealth, and therefore everything that may be “turned into it” represents valuable resource. Natural resources, such as petroleum and precious metals, have long been the most precious ones on the global market. But, in the recent decades we have witnessed a growing demand for clean water. Economic development facilitated the access to it, but problems like growing pollution of precious water supplies and constant rise of demand, which increases its extraction, threaten to cause serious clashes over this resource in the future.

Natural resources are widely accepted term for all the resources which were not human-made and which can exist without human interference. When speaking in terms of exploitation, it is mostly referred on natural resources that human beings can hardly survive without – such as air, sun, water, vegetables and crops, animals, but also on minerals, metals and fossil fuels needed for the further expansion of technology and production. Progress of the economy led to the investments in the production and the advancement in technology, and globalization, on the other hand, helped spreading the spirit of development across the world. We managed to modernize our lifestyle and facilitate our lives as much as possible. With the constant and continuous advantage of knowledge and technologies, our lives are expecting to become even more simplified. In that continuous strive for the advancement and the discovery of the new means for making profit, human kind has become very greedy and reckless towards the needs of, not only other people, but also other living beings. A development of a complex economic system, devoted to the few basic postulates: free market economy, private means of production, entrepreneurship and the maximization of profit at any cost, was a result of a new wave of thinking. *Capitalism* raised from the desire for progress, ready to use all the disposable resources and turn them into profit. Western democracies, especially, adopted this system as the best wheel for the fast and progressive economic growth.

But, on the other hand, continuous exploitation of the necessary means of production, especially the natural resources, but also rapid economic growth and globalization, caused two major, global problems: at the first place, continuous exploitation of resources threatens to cause their exhaustion and scientists are now conducting researches based on the measurements of quantity of the available resources, in order to make predictions about their durability; and, on the second place, together with growing exploitation and the consumerism' related lifestyle came of the enormous pollution – of water, land and air. Modern way of life, addicted to certain daily uses of water, food, energy, batteries, transportation, paper, plastics, and other things that represent part of our “daily needs”, is in fact making us part of the global production machine called *globalization* and contributing to the destruction of our only home – the Earth. Unfortunately, if people continue spending everything they can take from nature, for granted – as they are used too – prognoses are not that bright. Mahatma Ghandi once said that “*the Earth has enough for the needs of all its inhabitants, but not for the greed of few.*”¹

For example, many people across the world had understood the consequences of climate changes and united, trying to make their voices be heard and to force the governments to reflect about their actions. But, climate changes are one very obvious problem which is already affecting people worldwide. What about the scarcity of natural resources?

Scientists are warning that natural resources we are used to in our daily consumption, such as petrolatum products and clean water, face with an enormous decrease. There are different prognoses about their amounts but one is clear – we are using more resources than the Earth can sustain.² When it comes to petrolatum, last few decades have brought many disastrous wars, which took millions of lives – and all of that because of precious oil and gas. But the beginning of 21st century brought forward one more important and also endangered resource: clean water. It is predicted that the future conflicts will be fought over water. Use of this resource is basic for the survival of all living beings, and its amounts have been endangered by continuous overexploitation and pollution. Powerful international corporations have understood this threat, and dedicated their business towards the increase of possession of water capacities. This business is growing very fast and almost unnoticeable.

Voices of local societies, whose lifestyle and surroundings have been threatened or even destroyed by the continuous exploitation of natural resources, often remains unheard, suppressed by

¹ Vandana Shiva (2002), *Water Wars: Privatization, Pollution, and Profit*, South End Press, Prologue p. xv.

² *We are using 50 per cent more natural resources than planet can sustain* (May 15, 2012), Retrieved from: <http://www.peopleandtheplanet.com/index.html@lid=30307§ion=33&topic=23.html> (accessed on: Nov 19, 2019).

the constant pressure coming from the international corporations, financial institutions but also their own governments. In those cases, people at first remain confused, in most cases shocked, and silent, while waiting for some changes to occur. But, when the consequences of these actions become too heavy to endure, one spark of oppression may lead to the long-awaited change. In that particular moment, people realize that the real power of change lies in their own hands. In most of the cases, it is some kind of a social movement which becomes a focal point of the struggle. It inspires the change, plans and conducts the actions but also represents a space where people can express their long-suppressed dissatisfaction and will for changes, and join their actions into one. All of this is giving legitimacy to the demands of the movement and creating its power. When institutions and governments fail to provide protection and respect the will of its people, social movements become the only agents which may give some sense of belonging and protection, and provide enough of strength and courage to the people who strive for some change. Their success depends on various factors: from the reaction of the government and other relevant actors involved in harmful projects, across the media coverage and success to get enough attention not only domestically but on the international level too, all over to the support and popularity it enjoys among people. Strive for the right cause, supported by a well-planned action and covered by media attention can make a strong influence on the decision-makers – but the course of action and the support movement joins is certainly among the most powerful “weapons” of the movement.

The purpose of this work is to explore the full picture of the adversary conditions in which social movements, whose aim is to protect natural resources from the corporate world, emerge and whether their actions can be successful. After explaining the importance of preservation of water for the humanity and the threat which corporate world represents for it, and the elaboration of characteristics, values and actions which make one social movement, there will be enough elements for a case study of Cochabamba Water War. It represents one of the most famous examples of social movement’ struggles, which was fought for the protection of water from the corporate world. It has later become a symbol of the global anti-globalization movement and an inspiration to many latter movements which headed towards the same goal.

Therefore, the first chapter of this work starts with the distinction and management of different kinds of resources, with particular accent on common-pool resources. It further focuses on water as a common-pool resource, and follows the elaboration of right to water. The aim of this chapter is to present the importance of common-pool resources’ management, especially regarding the use of clean water, which was the main reason of the war that emerged in Cochabamba (Bolivia) in 1999/2000.

Second chapter presents different views on the basic postulates of capitalism, with particular emphasis on the economic doctrine of shock, promoted by Chicago School of Economics. Its focus later moves on the relation of capitalism towards the common goods (particularly natural resources), regarding their use and management, and presents several examples of water privatizations, similar to the one which occurred in Bolivia.

Third chapter deals with different definitions and aspects of creation, organization and the course of action – which are the uniting elements of all social movements. The next part of this chapter contains elaboration of the relation of social movements towards the natural resources and presentation of several examples of social movements which are (or were) struggling against different ecological problems.

Fourth chapter represents the case study of case of Cochabamba Water War, which has been analyzed from several different aspects – through the brief history of neoliberalism in Bolivia, across the history of articulation of movement, illustration of the Water War and finally through the achievements of the Water War in Bolivia but also outside of it.

This work also contains a special chapter about the social movement which is currently being articulated and operating in Serbia against the small hydropower plant' projects. Its name is Defend the Rivers of Mountain Stara Planina, and it was particularly its struggle that inspired the idea of the author to explore the topic of social movements and their role in protection of the natural resources.

In the final chapter, author will present the conclusion about the importance of action made by social movements and their role in protection of natural resources.

1. Common Goods

1.1. Differentiation and management of the commons

Resources can be differentiated according to different variables. Therefore, one of the most common division of resources and the most obvious one is the division regarding their origin – on a *man-made* and *natural* resources. Man-made, as the name itself says, are the resources which were created by humans, who were using other resources, knowledge and technology for their development. Some of them are, for example, electricity, bridges, medicines, etc.³ On the other hand, we have *natural resources* which represent resources that are coming directly from the nature and which are useful to people on the direct way (such as water, used for daily consumption) or an indirect way (such as fossil fuels, used for production, for example). These resources can further be distinguished on their capacity to renew and for this reason we have a division on *non-renewable* and *renewable* resources. First group represent fossil fuels, such as oil, natural gas, coal and other fossil-fuel energy resources. Another one, resources named renewables, are recognized as the ones that can self-regulate, thanks to the arranged ecological system of the planet Earth. Here we name forests, groundwater capacities, the air, the wildlife (plants, animals and other kinds of living beings), pastures, rivers, lakes and fisheries.⁴

Resources can be further divided, regarding the consumption' property rights. Paul Samuelson (1954) defined one more categorization of resources and goods (that are produced out of them): on one hand, we have resources and goods that can be parceled among individuals, privatized and regarded as a *private consumption goods*, and, on the other hand, resources and goods that are regarded as the *collectively consumed goods*, on which there cannot be property rights⁵ and which can be consumed collectively, by *all* people (members of society, group, etc.).⁶ He explored the maximal utility of goods and resources through this division, which is a very important issue for the understanding of the significance of sustained consumption and use,

³ Elinor Ostrom (1990), *Governing the Commons: The evolution of institutions for collective action*, Cambridge University Press, p.32.

⁴ Steven C. Hackett (2006), *Environmental and Natural Resources Economics*, 3rd Edition, M.E. Sharpe, Inc, p. 88-89.

⁵ Paul A. Samuelson (1954) *The Theory of Public Expenditure*, A Review of Economics and Statistics, Vol.34, No. 4, p. 387.

⁶ Steven C. Hackett (2006), *Environmental and Natural Resources Economics*, 3rd Edition, M.E. Sharpe, Inc, p. 57.

management of the quality and quantity of resources and goods, and the claim of property – questions which were also bothering *Coordinadora* movement regarding the question of water supply in Bolivia.

Other authors, such as Elinor Ostrom (1990, 1994) and Steven Hackett (1960), accepted Samuelson's division on private and collective consumption goods and focused parts of their researches on the management of use of the latter - collective consumption goods. These goods can be further distinguished into, so-called, *common-pool resources* and *public goods*. Common-pool resources (CPRs) are often defined as the natural or man-made resources or goods that are: *held in common* of the group of individuals; *not assigned any individual property rights*; *difficult to exclude* (which means that it is difficult and costly – but not impossible – to exclude other potential users of this resource; and that they are *subtractable or rivalrous*, which means that an increase in use of this resource by one individual influences on the decrease of the amount of resource left for other individuals.⁷ Examples of CPR's are fisheries, forests, large underground basins of water, water-utility systems. On the other hand, last two characteristics of CPR (possibility of exclusion and subtractability) are often used to differ them from the public goods – which represent goods in whose case it even more difficult to exclude multiple users, but on the other hand - there is no rivalry in the consumption.⁸ For example, television or street lightning are the examples of public goods since their use by one individual does not subtract its availability to others.

Division on CPR s and public goods became especially important in the times of a modern, capitalistic system of production. Ancient societies were using natural resources such as water, pastures and air, and man-made resources, such as water-supply systems, as the *commons*.⁹ Everyone, belonging to a society and living in the surroundings had the right to use it. But, with the development of a private property and the economic system that acknowledged it as a crucial part of development (capitalism), most of these *commons* were privatized and regarded on as another means of producing profit. On the other hand, societies worldwide were (and are) struggling to defend those resources and their rights to use them freely. Therefore, the topic of commons became very popular among the academics and scientists, who were trying to figure out the compromising

⁷ Steven C. Hackett (2006), *Environmental and Natural Resources Economics*, 3rd Edition, M.E. Sharpe, Inc, p. 57; Elinor Ostrom, Roy Gardner, James Walker (1994), *Rules, Games, and Common-pool Resources*, The University of Michigan, p. 6.

⁸ Steven C. Hackett (2006), *Environmental and Natural Resources Economics*, 3rd Edition, M.E. Sharpe, Inc, p. 57.

⁹ Hyun Choe, Sun-Jin Yun (2017), *Revisiting the concept of common pool resources: Beyond Ostrom*, The Institute for Social development and Policy Research, p. 115.

solution between the strive for production and development, on one hand, and the strive of societies to defend their ways of life, on the other.¹⁰

Authors made different observations and explanations about the regulation and use of the common-pool resources. Differently from the public goods, common-pool resources may become excludable due its physical attributes, according to Elinor Ostrom (1994). If the good is limited and subtractable, its use may lead to the overconsumption – which is particularly important when we are talking about clean, fresh water. Therefore, in order to preserve the limited amounts and enable the sustainable use of this resource, its use must be restricted. This may be accomplished by using fences, packaging or/and fees. Ostrom concludes that the restriction in use of CPR can be realized: only if physical endurance of this resource is threatened and in accordance to legal terms of the juridical institutions.¹¹ But, the question remains – who will govern the common? Ostrom (1990) explored and refuted the arguments of the *tragedy of commons*, *prisoner's dilemma* and *the logic of collective action*,¹² which were considered as the most valuable, fundamental models of common's governing until then. She has concluded that all three models have the same problem which disenables them to successfully and sustainably arrange the management of commons: the *free-riders*. Those are individuals who do not want to contribute to the collective management, but are still using “a free-ride” on the efforts of others.¹³ As a solution to the management of commons, she suggested a mixed solution, based on common property management with the definition of boundaries determined by the institutions (state or local communities).¹⁴

Steven Hackett (2006) regards on CPRs as on resources over which a state or a group can have ownership rights, or they can even be perceived as open-source resources. He accents that the ownership status may be determined by cultural or traditional customs and reminds that some resources cannot be divided and owned privately.¹⁵ Thus, Hackett elaborated the appropriation model of the CPR made by Howard Scott Gordon, who also supported the presumption that the over-exploitation is inevitable without an effective regulation of use, but presented different view on the matter of management than Ostrom's. Gordon emphasized that if the price of resource on the global market remains unchanged, appropriators¹⁶ will always strive to maximize the overall group's revenue from the CPR by using minimal effort needed to manage it and, at the same time,

¹⁰ Ibidem.

¹¹ Elinor Ostrom, Roy Gardner, James Walker (1994), *Rules, Games, and Common-pool Resources*, The University of Michigan, p. 42.

¹² Elinor Ostrom (1990), *Governing the Commons: The evolution of institutions for collective action*, Cambridge University Press, p. 2-7.

¹³ Ibidem, p. 1-13.

¹⁴ Ibidem, p. 50-58.

¹⁵ Steven C. Hackett (2006), *Environmental and Natural Resources Economics*, 3rd Edition, M.E. Sharpe, Inc, p. 107.

¹⁶ Individuals or group who were given limited access to a common-pool resource and that can appropriate its units.

maintain its sustainable use. But, Hackett reminds on the *tragedy of commons*, stating that even though this idea might seem promising, the issue of self-interest may always confront the idea of the collective logic and efficient use of common-pool resources.¹⁷ Therefore, Hackett suggests a model of highly inclusive voting rules in a community. It implies that reaching a compromise of all people, belonging to a group, about the best solution for the sustainable management of the CPR and any major change in appropriation and use of it. Therefore, any threat from over-consumption would be eliminated, because the time needed to reach an agreement is often long and exhausting and there is a high possibility of refusing the proposed changes.¹⁸

Vandana Shiva (2002) also related to the question of governing the common goods in her research made about the water and water wars. She implied that the indigenous communities considered natural resources, such as water, air, sea, etc., to be collective and available to all living beings. Since some resources, such as clean water, have no alternative in nature, she underlined the urgent need for their protection from private interest groups. Shiva emphasizes that water needs to remain a common good.¹⁹ She declared that the only way to prevent water scarcity and ensure sustainable water use is to *make it locally managed*. The solution Shiva proposes is the creation of a “Water democracy”, a model which is combining the ecology and democracy, with the government as the patron of the rights of its own people. There will be more words about this model in the next chapter, *Water as a common-pool resource*.

The idea behind this chapter was to present the differentiation of resources according to several criteria. This will be very useful for the understanding of the next chapter, in which there will be words about the regard of water as natural, common-pool resource. Besides that, the elaboration of the governance of the so-called common resources, especially regarding the CPR, presented possible management systems for such a goods and became one of the strongest arguments in favor of preserving natural, common-pool resources *from* the private interest and profit-oriented economy *for* the communities and their sustainable use. All of the authors mentioned above agree about one important thing: CPR’s use must be protected and well managed (which implies including local societies in decision-making and management system) in order to provide its sustainable use and preserve it for future generations.

¹⁷ Steven C. Hackett (2006), *Environmental and Natural Resources Economics*, 3rd Edition, M.E. Sharpe, Inc, p. 107-110.

¹⁸ Ibidem, p. 212-213.

¹⁹ Vandana Shiva (2002), *Water Wars: Privatization, Pollution, and Profit*, South End Press, p. 19-20.

1.2. *Water as common-pool resource*

According to the previous chapter, water is a natural resource, often regarded as a renewable²⁰ and collectively consumed. Regarding its management, water belongs to the common-pool resources since its amounts are limited, and therefore its use must be sustainably managed. But, recent decades brought a change in relation towards it – water has become one of the most profitable businesses of the global market, whether in the matter of bottling and selling it around the world or in the matter of privatization and management of water utilities. Before further elaborating this issue, it is important to stress out the significance of water.

There are few things that need to be highlighted. Water is the most important resource for the existence of all living beings. At the first place, water is an element which represents most of the body mass – certain organisms are made up 90% out of water. In human body, for example, it makes about 60% of its weight.²¹ Besides that, water is a resource which is essential for a survival since most of the living beings consume water on daily basis and cannot survive a long time without it. Another aspect of its importance as the matter of survival, are sanitation and hygiene because the access to the fresh and clean water represents a prerequisite for prevention of infections and diseases. Water is out of crucial importance in process of the food production, too. It is widely known that the greatest civilizations of the ancient world were built up alongside the great basins of water (particularly great rivers), which were used for drinking and for the irrigation and production of crops. Some of them are: Egyptian civilization, which developed in the valley of the Nile; then Mesopotamia, bloomed in the fertile ground around rivers Tigris and Euphrates; ancient Indian civilization too, which evolved around the Indus river; ancient Chinese, who established their empire on the river bank of the Yellow river; and even the ancient Roman civilization begun alongside the river Tiber. Of course, many other, more or less known communities and civilizations, which were mostly depending on agricultural production, have appeared close to the vast water stocks. Further advancement of technology allowed people to move away from the rivers and lakes and start forming settlements across the countryside. Yet, the progress of the humankind and our new habits led to the increase of water usage. Improvement of the overall lifestyle, advancement in food production and progress of medicine allowed the growth of population and the

²⁰ In modern times, this may be questionable. Thus, water has always been regarded as a renewable resource due the existence of natural hydrological cycle (evaporation-condensation-precipitation and round), clean, fresh water may also be regarded as a *non-renewable resource*, due the high pollution of water and air (which influences pollution of precipitation water too), but also due its overexploitation (which is taking more that hydrological cycle can produce).

²¹ *The Water in You: Water and the Human Body*, Retrieved from: https://www.usgs.gov/special-topic/water-science-school/science/water-you-water-and-human-body?qt-science_center_objects=0#qt-science_center_objects (accessed: Sept. 26, 2019).

increase in the number of people worldwide. Our demands are growing, which is enhancing the production of food, and water is necessary as a resource in many different processes from the cultivation of plants and animals, but for the energy production – one example is the use of hydropower. Water is required for the extraction of raw materials, mining and processing of the precious metals, their cleaning but also for the process of cooling. Its use is imminent in the overall business processes – from manufacturing goods until selling the them.²² Water demand for the energy' industry is in vast increase. It is predicted that from 2010 until 2035 it will increase up to the amount of 135 billion of cubic meters which is about four times bigger than the biggest water supply of the USA – lake Mead.²³

Although our modern lifestyle and commodities demand the increase in overall consumption of water supplies, we must not forget neither neglect its *depletable* nature. Out of all the available amounts of water on Earth, fresh, clean water represent only 3% of it, which is about 35 million cubic kilometers of water. It is mostly concentrated bellow the earth, in deep groundwater basins, which are hard to reach, and in the ice caps of Greenland and south pole – Antarctica²⁴ (although this latter may be taken with precaution, since large amounts of ice have been melting due the rise of temperature, especially in the last few decades). This means that the amount of clean water available for the consumption of living beings is about 1% only (or 200000 cubic kilometers).²⁵ Different authors agree upon the fact that we are overconsuming this precious resource without even considering the consequences we will face in the future. Ismail Serageldin, former Vice President of the environmental and sustainable development of the World Bank, predicted in 1995 that wars of the next centuries will be fought for *water*. Therefore, he believes that the world must reflect and take the topic of clean water management very seriously, since the establishment of effective and sustainable systems of its use and provided accessibility to all people represent the only ways to prevent future conflicts.²⁶ It is said that over 1 billion of people around the world are

²² *Information brief on Water and Energy*, Preparation for World Water Day 2014: Partnerships for improving water and energy access, efficiency and sustainability (13 – 16 January, 2014), Retrieved from: https://www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/water_and_energy_2014/info_briefs_water_energy.shtml (accessed: Sept 26, 2019).

²³ Tom Tietenberg, Lynne Lewis (2018), *Environmental and Natural Resource Economics*, 11th edition, published by Taylor&Francis, p. 199-200.

²⁴ Peter H. Gleick (1993), *An introduction to global fresh water resources*, Water in Crisis: A Guide to the World's Fresh Water Resources, published by Pacific Institute for Studies in Development, Environment and Security, p. 3.

²⁵ Tom Tietenberg, Lynne Lewis (2018), *Environmental and Natural Resource Economics*, 11th edition, published by Taylor&Francis, p. 198.

²⁶ Peter H. Gleick (1993), *An introduction to global fresh water resources*, Water in Crisis: A Guide to the World's Fresh Water Resources, published by Pacific Institute for Studies in Development, Environment and Security, Foreword.

already affected by the water scarcity.²⁷ That number had overcome the number predicted in the prognoses of water scarcity made in 2000s for the period from 1998 to 2025.²⁸ Although Tom Tietenberg and Lynna Lewis bring out a very optimistic assumption that we currently have about ten times more fresh water than our consumption demands, they clearly state that this amount will continue to decrease in the upcoming years since the demand for energy production is rapidly growing, and on the other hand, pollution represents one more major threat to the remaining supplies. Over 2.4 billion people currently do not have access to safe water and sanitation due the contamination made by industry, radioactive materials, microorganisms (like bacteria) and due the exaggerated extraction of water is causing landslides and soil sinking into the remaining water supplies.²⁹ Vandana Shiva also warns that global amounts of water per capita has decreased for 33% since the 1970s. She claims that this outcome is not just a result of the increased number of people on Earth, but also the consequence of the intensified exploitation. Natural hydrological cycle has been disturbed by the durable hazardous human-made practices like: deforestation, mining and cultivation of single plant species, which are further contributing to the loss of the precious amounts of fresh, clean water.³⁰ Shiva is stressing out the importance of the almost invisible but already present water crisis.

Taking into consideration all of the previously presented data about the water availability and (present and future) scarcity-crisis, it must be agreed upon the fact that water should remain a common good, available to all people, but – at the same time – very carefully managed. Due the limitation of its amounts, certain kind of management-models should be arranged in order to protect it from over-consumption and keep its use sustainable, but at the same time, satisfy the demands of the modern society. Authors Vandana Shiva and Elinor Ostrom have provided two different models.

Vandana Shiva stressed out a view of water as a *common*, reminding that there is no alternative and that water may never be seen as a commodity. Water needs to remain “common good” because it represents an essential need of life and its use can only be shaped according to the ecological limits and the needs of people and other living beings.³¹ She has accused the economies of the developed Western countries for ignoring the needs and the economic status of the majority of people while conducting privatizations and proposed an alternative solution which can satisfy the demands of all people in form of a democratic and decentralized control over water – a “*Water*

²⁷ Tom Tietenberg, Lynne Lewis (2018), *Environmental and Natural Resource Economics*, 11th edition, published by Taylor&Francis, p. 199.

²⁸ Vandana Shiva (2002), *Water Wars: Privatization, Pollution, and Profit*, South End Press, p. 6.

²⁹ Tom Tietenberg, Lynne Lewis (2018), *Environmental and Natural Resource Economics*, 11th edition, published by Taylor&Francis, p. 197-202.

³⁰ Vandana Shiva (2002), *Water Wars: Privatization, Pollution, and Profit*, South End Press, p. 1-6.

³¹ *Ibidem*, p. 24.

democracy". This model is based on nine core principles: 1. *water is a gift of nature*, which needs to be kept clean and in sufficient quantity; 2. *water is essential to life*, which means that all living beings have the right to share it; 3. *life is interconnected through water*, therefore we must tend not to harm any other species or person; 4. *water must be free for sustenance needs*, which implies that imposing price on it breaks the inherent right to it as a gift of nature and denies its access to the poor; 5. *water is limited and can be exhausted*, therefore we must keep it from overconsumption; 6. *water must be conserved*, which is a duty of all of us; 7. *water is a commons* – it knows no boundaries and, thus, it cannot be owned or sold as a commodity; 8. *no-one holds a right to destroy*, whether by polluting, overusing or throwing waste into it; and 9. *water cannot be substituted*, which is reminding on its basic difference of water from any other kind of resource – it has no replacement in the nature. This model tends to prevent any kind of violation of water resources and denial of right to its consumption to anyone because water is a prerequisite in sustaining life. Therefore, it must be saved from the grief of capitalism.³²

Elinor Ostrom (1990) agrees, in certain way, about the idea of water as common good. While writing about the possible solutions of successful management of resources, Ostrom stresses out that water is not a resource that may be divided and privatized like, for example, a meadow can be.³³ According to her research of different successful and unsuccessful examples of resources management systems – there is no single solution of CPR management but the point is: common-pool resources like water and fisheries need to have limited access to a number of appropriators who will continue to share it jointly.³⁴ For solution she proposes a mixed private-public partnership which implies: defining the appropriators and their rights, based on cultural needs, ecological limits and differences in their demands; inclusion of all the relevant stakeholders in creating of the CPR' management system; defining of the monitoring, sanctioning and conflict resolution' practices, but also boundaries to the external influence while still making CPR' self-governing system to be part of a larger, overall governance system (at the level of state).³⁵

Thus, although there are still debates about the water as a common-pool resource and searches for possible new ways of its collective management, in many parts of the world there are communities which are conducting a real struggle to defend their water from the unwanted, imposed privatizations of utilities or large basins. Large multinational corporations, international financial institutions and profit-oriented governments see water as one more resource, as a

³² Ibidem, p. 34-35.

³³ Elinor Ostrom (1990), *Governing the Commons: The evolution of institutions for collective action*, Cambridge University Press, p. 12.

³⁴ Ibidem, p. 12-38.

³⁵ Ibidem, p. 88-102.

commodity which might be bought and sold, and, therefore, tend to realize their “best solutions” in order to make profit from its privatization. These actions are mostly hidden behind a widely accepted premise of capitalism – that privatization and development of water utilities and large basins (used for bottling) represent a key to the elimination of water scarcity.³⁶ But, the reality is often not that bright – after privatization, many people remain outside of scope of water consumption, whether physically, by using barriers (like fences), which are preventing them to access water, or economically, by letting a *free market* to impose prices for a gallon or bottle of water – those prices mostly exceed the living standard of people, especially from the area, making water more expensive than they can afford. Whether privatization represents a good model of management of, particularly water utilities, will be further elaborated in the chapter called *Examples of water privatizations*.

In order to achieve the conditions for a negotiation about the future management of common resources, communities in the developing (but also developed) countries strive to defend their water from the capitalistic idea of privatization. Therefore, social movements like Coordinadora in Bolivia serve as an agent, which can introduce the community as a relevant stakeholder, whose opinion needs to be counted when deciding about the management and use of CPR. Struggle to protect common resources from profit-based plans can be considered as a legitimate cause for the action whenever the rights of the community members regarding it are endangered. As already emphasized, water is an essential resource for the sustainability of life and its consumption must never be limited in terms of unavailability. Beside this, right to fresh and clean water and sanitation has already been recognized as a human right, and this fact gives even more legitimacy to the social movements which strive for the protection of this precious resource.

1.3 Right to water

As already mentioned, ancient communities and societies were directly bound to the available water supplies because their production was mainly tied to the crops and cattle cultivation. Therefore, their cultures, traditions and practices included rights and customs related to water usage and management. Most of the *old, non-modern, native* societies across the world could agree upon the one thing: water was considered to be a common good, along with some other goods like pastures, fisheries, air. Traces of this practices can be found in literally most of the old traditions and cultures, which is understandable, taking into account the way of life of our ancestors, which was mostly tied to the pastoral and agricultural production. One of the ancient texts which is

³⁶ George Reisman (1998), *Capitalism: A Treatise on Economics*, 3rd edition, TJS Books, p. 54, 83.

preserved until today contains mentioning of water as a common resource, together with the air, sea and the shore – that is *The Institute of Justinian*.³⁷ Even nowadays, there are countries which practice this custom. India, for example, also counts water as a common good. On the other hand, the Sharia law also includes some of the rights to water.³⁸ Yet, there is a question that may be imposed: what is a *right to water*? Does it have the same meaning as the *water' right*?

A *right to water* represents a human right of access to a fresh and clean water and sanitation, which is accepted and proclaimed in several international documents. This right has long been implied as a constitutive part of a *right to food* which was affirmed by the Article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) from 1966.³⁹ But during the time, question of water started to rise on the priority list of the international community. In March of 1977, in Mar del Plata (Argentina) there was a first Water conference. This event represents the turning point of the topics of water rights and water management. In the Action plan of the Conference it was declared, for the first time, that all people without regard of their development and social and economic status have the right to access the amounts of water needed for their basic needs.⁴⁰ Two year later, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, whose aim is to end all forms of discrimination against women and girls, also mentioned water and sanitation as the one of the integral parts of the Article 14/2/h, regarding the measures that state-parties will need to take in order to provide the non-discrimination, equality and better living conditions for the women who are living in rural areas.⁴¹ Also, Convention on the Rights of the Child from 1989 in the Article 24/2/c brings up the importance of access to a clean, drinking water when stressing out the measures which state-parties are about to conduct in order to reach the highest health' standards and provide an adequate health care for every child.⁴² In the next few years, several conferences organized by the United Nations had the topic of water as one of the main ones – for example, Dublin conference from January 1992 and the Rio Summit from July of the same year. Both of them resulted in recognition of right to

³⁷ Vandana Shiva (2002), *Water Wars: Privatization, Pollution, and Profit*, South End Press, p. 20.

³⁸ Ibidem.

³⁹ International treaty adopted by the United Nations' General Assembly in 1966.

⁴⁰ United Nations Water Conference, *Mar Del Plata Action Plan*, Argentina, 14-25 March 1977, Issued by the Division for Economic and Social Information, p.63 available from: https://www.internationalwaterlaw.org/bibliography/UN/UN_Mar%20del%20Plata%20Action%20Plan_1977.pdf, (accessed on: Oct 2, 2019).

⁴¹ *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*, New York, 18 December 1979, adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by General Assembly resolution 34/180, p. 5-6, available on: <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/ProfessionalInterest/cedaw.pdf> (accessed on: Oct 2, 2019).

⁴² Convention on the Rights of the Child, New York, 20 November 1989, adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by General Assembly resolution 44/25, available on: <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx>, (accessed on: Oct 2, 2019).

access to safe drinking water as a basic need⁴³ and a “commonly agreed premise”.⁴⁴ Steven Hodgson states that the official “Right to water” was developed in the *General Comment No. 15: The Right to Water*, which was adopted by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in January 2003.⁴⁵ This document interprets the mentioned ICESCR and finally endorses the right to water in the international law “as a prerequisite of realization of all other human rights.”⁴⁶ It also specifies the instructions and obligations of states for its implementation in two articles: Article 11 and Article 12. Article 11 emphasizes the importance of treating water as a “social and cultural good, and not primarily an economic one”⁴⁷, but the Article 12 emphasizes three very important aspects of the rights to water: a) water must always be available according to the basic needs; b) its quality needs to be safe for use; and c) it must be accessible in terms of physical accessibility (within the physical reach), economic accessibility (affordable to all) and non-discrimination.⁴⁸ Year 2010 was marked with two important resolutions. First one was the resolution of the General Assembly from July, in which the United Nations explicitly recognized the right to clean water and sanitation and the access to it as the precondition to realization to all other rights.⁴⁹ Second one was the resolution of the Human Rights Council from September, which confirmed this right to be part of the international law and called upon the state-parties to develop capacities to fully realize the right to clean water and sanitation as well as the other human rights.⁵⁰

The question remains – is the right to water the same as water’ right? Author Steven Hodgson states that these two terms have nothing to do with each other.⁵¹ Although there is no single definition of the water’ rights, widely accepted opinion is that it refers to the rights which are coming from a legal system of a country and regulating the extraction and use of water. And, on the other hand, as previously explained, the right to water represents one of the human rights. Although

⁴³ International Conference on Water and the Environment (ICWE), *Dublin Statement on Water and Sustainable Development*, Ireland, 31 January 1992, Principle 4, available from: <http://www.wmo.int/pages/prog/hwrp/documents/english/icwedece.html>, (accessed on: Oct 2, 2019).

⁴⁴ United Nations Conference on Environment & Development, *Agenda 21*, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 3-14 June 1992, op. cit. Chapter 18.47, available from: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/Agenda21.pdf>, (accessed on: Oct 2, 2019).

⁴⁵ Stephen Hodgson (2006), *Modern water rights: Theory and practice*, FAO Legal Office, p. 8.

⁴⁶ United Nations, Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, *General Comment No. 15: The Right to Water* contained in document: E/C.12/2002/11 (20 January 2003), op. cit. Article I.1, available from: <https://www.refworld.org/pdfid/4538838d11.pdf> (accessed on: Oct 2, 2019).

⁴⁷ Ibidem, op. cit. Article 11.

⁴⁸ Ibidem, Article 12.

⁴⁹ United Nations, General Assembly resolution 64/292, *The human right to water and sanitation*, A/RES/64/292 (28 July 2010), op. cit., available from: https://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/64/292, (accessed on: Oct 2, 2019).

⁵⁰ United Nations, Human Rights Council resolution 15/9, *Human rights and access to safe drinking water and sanitation*, A/HRC/RES/15/9 (6 October 2010), available from: <https://undocs.org/A/HRC/RES/15/9>, (accessed on: Oct 2, 2019).

⁵¹ Stephen Hodgson (2006), *Modern water rights: Theory and practice*, FAO Legal Office, p. 8.

between them there is no equal sign, these two terms are very interconnected since they represent two integral parts of the legal system related to the use of water – first one needs to provide the affiliation and management of its' use (*the water' right*) and the other needs to provide the respect of a human right of all people to have access to safe and clean water (*the right to water*).

Unfortunately, when one looks worldwide, the water' right is often been determined and established through the national laws. But the problem remains with the fulfillment of the right to water. Even today, in a globalized, modern world, which should be able to provide the respect of all human rights to every person, we are still witnessing to many violations. Especially when it comes to the remote areas of our planet or the areas of conflict, whose communities are often seen as *ignorant, peasant, resistant to changes* and finally *unimportant* for the developed societies. The right to water is one of the rights that has been denied to the indigenous communities worldwide.

Why particularly them? A shortage of written elaborations, researches and overall interest about the indigenous cultures, particularly about the communities living on the ground of both Americas, makes them still invisible in the modern world. This is partly due the fact that these societies are not opened enough to the strangers (to the *white* ones or *los gringos*), partly because of the violent colonial history and partly because of the continuous neglect of their rights and demands by the governments on whose territory they are living. Since this work will elaborate the Water War of Bolivia, a country laying the central Andes, it is important to emphasize a certain aspect of the Andean culture which may be helpful in understanding the importance of this resource for its communities. In the area of Andes, which covers territories of Bolivia, Peru and Ecuador, today lives about 1/3 of the whole indigenous population of both Americas.⁵² Their communities belong mostly to the Quechua, Aymara and the Spanish-speaking groups, but every one of the them has its own tradition and customs.⁵³ What bounds them, although their territory was divided into several countries, is a certain way of life. To understand it, it is necessary to perceive the region of Andes: it is mostly mountainous, binding the communities to the cattle breeding and the agriculture based on the mountain' terraces. For the survival in this remote areas, people of the Andes developed certain kind of irrigation systems, which have been sustainably used for centuries (since they have probably been copied from the Inca' culture). However, water in this area is not only the matter of survival – it is more than that. Irrigation systems have three important roles: at the first place, they are a very important factor needed for a production of food and survival; on the second place, it is a matter of a cooperation and conflict; and on the third place, it represents a pillar of the Andean

⁵² Rutgerd Boelens, David Getches, Armando Guevara-Gil (2010), *Out of Mainstream: Water Rights, Politics and Identity*, published by: Earthscan, p. 120-121.

⁵³ Ibidem.

culture.⁵⁴ There is a whole *cult of water*, which has been nurtured through the tradition and culture of the Andean people. Before the colonization, the territory was parceled among the tribes – each community had its own area and the “borders” that had to be respected. Since the communities were highly depending on water due their agricultural production, it has become the integral part of their identity. These communities respected water as a *common* good, but its management has been deployed to the group which is covering the area. The importance of water to the Andean culture can be perceived in a simple principle that a word “*lo Andino*” (the Andean) cannot be separated from the word “*el agua*” (the water).⁵⁵ Rituals celebrating it are still being practiced in order to please the *saints* who are the patrons (guardians) of water. The origin of these rituals can be traced hundreds of years in the past. Indigenous people of the Andes claim that their origin comes from the water and mountains.⁵⁶ It is believed that the irrigation systems represent the branches of the underground waters, which are uniting all its sources and taking it into the “*mama qucha*” (*Mother Lake*) – or better said – into the ocean. These paths of water have not only been perceived as the source of life, but also a way of connecting people to the gods and the dead. Another aspect of the Andean culture are the mountains, which represent the “*pacha mama*” (*Mother Earth*), and which are, actually, the owners of the water. Therefore, people living on certain territory perform rituals in order to *satisfy the patron saint of that area* and beseech for the water. Across the area of Bolivia, Peru and Ecuador there is a widely spread festival of water called *La Fiesta del Agua* (Water Festival), during which the irrigation system and reservoirs are being cleaned and ritually purified, and the gifts offered to the ancestors and patron-saints.⁵⁷

This retrospective to the Andean cult of water was important in order to understand that this precious resource is not only a matter of survival for the communities of the Andes, but also part of their identity. Native culture has been under the pressure of change since the colonization times. Today it represents a mixture of: local political and societal customs, the ones which came with the Spanish, and the modern, globalization side-products, such as tourism, migration, new technologies and neoliberal economic reforms.⁵⁸ Indigenous practice of water management is tied to the communal ownership, and particularly *this* way of management represents the main obstacle to the neoliberal policies on the continent. On the other hand, national and international policies did not even attempt to consider and modify its projects according to the tradition and customs of the

⁵⁴ Ibidem, p. 119.

⁵⁵ Ibidem, p. 127.

⁵⁶ Lake in the Andes, on the border of Bolivia and Peru.

⁵⁷ Rutgerd Boelens, David Getches, Armando Guevara-Gil (2010), *Out of Mainstream: Water Rights, Politics and Identity*, published by: Earthscan, p. 120-127.

⁵⁸ Ibidem, p. 123.

Andean, indigenous people and their culture. Therefore, this area has witnessed different conflicts in the past. But today, despite the differences, many communities across the Andes have accepted the form of centralized control over water resources – which means that the institutions of state are in charge of legislative and the regulation. All except Bolivia.⁵⁹ Water wars emerged in Bolivia happened because the community's right to water has been endangered. Although this war was not the only war that was waged for water (Vandana Shiva wrote about water wars of India, then wars over the Tigris and Euphrates between Turkey, Syria and Iraq, war between Israel and Palestine, conflicts over the river Nile, etc.), it became the most famous one because of the courage, fearlessness and, finally, success of the Bolivian people to defend their water from the harmful privatization.

Nevertheless, this chapter aimed to present the right to water, that is derived from the ancient times, but also the importance that water has for the indigenous communities and their culture. Presented facts will help understanding that there is one more equally powerful reason to protect the water, besides the basic survival – and that is the *indigenous' sacred ties to it*.

⁵⁹ Ibidem, p. 9-19.

2. Capitalism and resources

2.1. Capitalism – basis and policy of disaster

Despite the fact that certain elements of capitalism may be perceived throughout the history of development (like the production of material goods and their exchange, trade, etc.), it is still not a form we perceive today. Its roots are mostly tied to the late Medieval Times and the beginning of 16th century.⁶⁰ Though it has advanced and changed forms, the model we know today shaped during the last two centuries, according to George Reisman (1990). He believes that development of institutions and the progress of economy occurred when the right of man to pursue its own welfare and desires was finally accepted and allowed. Before this, people's success and achievements were strangled by different cultural or religious beliefs, making them concentrate on the preparations for the eternal "next life" and, therefore, caused neglecting the welfare in the present. Overall development of the humanity was stagnating until the influence made by the philosophy of *Enlightenment*.⁶¹ Reisman stresses out the importance of this philosophical direction for the development of economy, because it changed the incentive of people from the one created on beliefs to the one dedicated to the improvement of well-being.⁶² This advancement enhanced scientific and technological development and changed the view on the matter of accumulation of wealth – from saving for the "after-life" to saving for securing the financial future. It further led to the establishment of the instruments of capitalism. One of them are *the property rights*. Private

⁶⁰ *Mercantilism*, Encyclopedia Britannica, retrieved from: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/mercantilism> (accessed on: Oct 12, 2019).

⁶¹ The philosophical movement created in Europe in the 17th century, which ideas enhanced the development of humanity in art, economy, politics, and emphasizing the importance of freedom, happiness and knowledge. (Brian Duignan, *Enlightenment*, Encyclopedia Britannica, retrieved from: <https://www.britannica.com/event/Enlightenment-European-history>), (accessed on: Oct 12, 2019).

⁶² George Reisman (1998), *Capitalism: A Treatise on Economics*, 3rd edition, TJS Books, p. 19.

property over the land and natural resources is considered to be crucial for the production of goods and profit-making. Since the number of people and the demands constantly grew, production and supply upgraded progressively. This latter initiated the creation of one more instrument of capitalism – the *division of labor*. Considering that certain people are more successful in delivering certain goods, due their ability to produce them, possession of the means of production or, simply, because they live in certain territory rich with them, this instrument came naturally. Along with it occurred the increase of direct and indirect *exchange of goods*. The indirect one demanded the evolution of a monetary system and use of money in order to buy goods. Connected to this, the previously mentioned change of attitude towards the accumulation of wealth produced one more instrument crucial for the development of capitalism: *saving and investing* in means of production or purchase of goods. Besides that, in modern meaning of capitalism, *pricing system* also represents one of the economic (capitalistic) instruments. But, its and the existence of all other, previously mentioned instruments is preconditioned by two more, which represent the very basic foundations of the capitalism: *self-interest-based desire for profit* and the *freedom* (of competition).⁶³ Former one was emphasized by the George Reisman as the basic postulate of this economic system. He considered the endless need for wealth as an inseparable part of man's nature. Besides that, humans are believed to have limitless capability to advance and, therefore, they are competent enough to decide about the course of their actions and desires. According to him, the economic progress may occur only if all men are allowed to follow their self-interest, pursued in order to achieve desired well-being, and if they are doing it rationally and voluntarily. In this case, their actions will contribute to the overall progress of all people. Reisman considered self-interest and profit based activities as charitable, non-harming forces; moreover – very desirable for the welfare of all.⁶⁴ But, in order to achieve the progress, one more instrument remained to be fulfilled - the precondition of economic security: *freedom*. Milton Friedman (1962) considered freedom to be *the only* precondition to the capitalistic development. Concretely, his ideas were mostly tied to the establishment of a *free market*, since it gives people two aspects of freedom. First aspect are the economic freedoms, because free market protects people from the arbitrary made by the government or the other people (consumer from the arbitrary of prices made by seller, seller from the demands made by consumer, employees from the arbitrary of employer and vice versa, etc.) in the economic matters (price defining, for example). Second aspect given by the free market are the political freedoms: since political power is often tightly tied to the economic one, removing of this source of power from the hands of governments (oligarchs, dictators or groups), political pressure

⁶³ Ibidem, p. 27-28.

⁶⁴ Ibidem.

on people's economic decisions will be reduced and people will be free to pursue their own well-being.⁶⁵ Both Reisman and Friedman have agreed upon and stressed out the importance of the weakened function of government – its' role should be limited and pointed on the defense of the people (from forces coming from the outside and inside the borders) and on providing freedom of choice and action.⁶⁶

But, were these instruments always used and realized for the purpose of the well-being of *all people*? Both authors emphasize the benevolent aspects of the spread of capitalism worldwide and its ambition to improve the welfare of everyone through imposing and protecting the right to pursue self-interest (Reisman) and providing freedom of choice and economic action (Friedman). Unfortunately, although the idea behind the development of capitalism and the creation of a free market seems noble and logical, when taking into consideration the advanced evolution of a modern society and the increase of demands which need to be satisfied, world has witnessed many negative sides of its violent imposition. Naomi Klein wrote about the, so-called, “*shock doctrine*”. It implies the use of different methods in order to push certain economic policies to a state, which has been affected by a deep national crisis. While people are being distressed and confused by the crisis, they are not able to resist changes imposed “from the outside” and these circumstances were widely used in order to impose the named policies into the developing countries. Klein called this practice “*a capitalism of disaster*”. Through elaboration of cases from Latin America, across Western democracies (such as UK and US), all the way to Russia and the “Asian tigers”, she finds the same pattern which was used in order to dismantle the current societal and economical practices and impose the policy of the *pure capitalism*, advocated by Milton Friedman.⁶⁷ He and his fellow colleagues from Chicago's School of Economics, whose student and one of the most influential mentors Friedman later was, were deeply convinced that freedom of market from the socialism's planning and governmental decisions are the prerequisites of the welfare of society. Following the comparison of methods of psychiatric shock, used by the Central Intelligence Agency on the prisoners, and methods of the economic shock, used on the states by the Chicago' School of Economics, Klein claims that the idea behind those projects was to completely *decompose* and then *rebuilt* – in the case of psychiatric torture, idea was to completely erase the mind of prisoners and rebuilt it by learning new, healthy models of behavior; in the case of economic torture, the idea was

⁶⁵ Milton Friedman (1982), *Capitalism and Freedom*, 2nd Edition, published by: The University of Chicago Press, p. 12-21.

⁶⁶ Milton Friedman (1982), *Capitalism and Freedom*, 2nd Edition, published by: The University of Chicago Press, p. 10; George Reisman (1998), *Capitalism: A Treatise on Economics*, 3rd edition, TJS Books, p. 21.

⁶⁷ Naomi Klajn (2009), *Doktrina šoka: Procvat kapitalizma katastrofe*, translated by: Tanja Milosavljević, published by: Samizdat B92, p. 61.

to completely decompose the economic policies of states and rebuilt them in sense of the capitalistic doctrine. Both practices included short-term, unexpected and intense shocks.⁶⁸ Concretely, the economic shock doctrine proclaimed by Friedman was composed out of the “sacred” trinity⁶⁹: 1. *cut of government spending*, especially for the social programs; the only role of government is to defend its people and their freedoms, therefore only investments that should grow are the investments in military; 2. *relief from state regulation*, which includes allowance of speculative financing, opening borders for import of foreign goods, removing of protective barriers on domestic products, abolition of the price regulation system, etc.; and 3. *privatization* of all state companies (including banks) and social institutions like post office, education, health and pension systems, even national parks.⁷⁰

Why was this kind of economic shock practiced? Officially, it was for the achievement of the maximum welfare for all people, which can only be created through the establishment of the free market. But, behind this, as considers Benjamin Dangl (2007), was the idea of re-colonization of the resources and industries which had to be abandoned with the achieved independency of former colonies from their masters.⁷¹ This claim can further be backed up by the examples presented by Naomi Klein, which show that the “repaired” economies suffered long and painful processes of conversion, leaving the majority of people impoverished and unemployed, and, on the other hand, the richest ones with even more fortune than before. In the example of Chile, which is considered to be Friedman’s⁷² pilot project from the 70s, these numbers are: 45% for the number of people who ended up under the poverty line, and 10% for the number of the richest ones, whose fortune increased for 83%.⁷³ Besides the economic shock, it is important to mention that, in most of the cases, these processes were very violent. Since communities opposed to the corporate capitalism in form of different social movements, their governments, supported by the U.S. Government, international financial institutions and big businesses, often used military and police to spread terror, violence and death. Among the Chicago School’ supporters – Chile’s conversion was considered to be a miracle. But, if this was a miracle, then the aim of the “capitalism of disaster” was indeed to accelerate the wealth towards the *top*, leaving behind shocked and destroyed “lower” classes.

⁶⁸ Ibidem, p. 33-65.

⁶⁹ Ibidem, p. 92-94.

⁷⁰ Ibidem, p. 67-69.

⁷¹ Benjamin Dangl (2007), *The Price of Fire: Resource Wars and Social Movements in Bolivia*, published by: AK Press, p. 23.

⁷² He was, at that time, the economic advisor of Pinochet, president of Chile.

⁷³ Naomi Klajn (2009), *Doktrina šoka: Procvat kapitalizma katastrofe*, translated by: Tanja Milosavljević, published by: Samizdat B92, p. 94-101.

These disastrous policies did not bypass Bolivia, either. Since the state was unable to pay its debt to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in 1985, U.S. Government came to help with a plan of removing state regulation on trade, suspending the rise of public sector salaries and dismissing thousands of workers. This practice was followed by the privatization of industries. Country was falling even deeper into the crisis, hit by massive unemployment and poverty, while big corporations were growing their fortune on the possession and use of former country's natural wealth. All of this resulted in a massive struggle against the corporate capitalism and the state-level violence when government decided to privatize the most important resource of all: water.

In the next two chapters, there will be words about the relation of capitalism towards the common goods, particularly the practice of privatization of water. Examples of the water privatizations across the world will briefly present different stories, in order to contribute to understanding the background of the frustration of the Bolivian people and their *Water War*.

2.2 Capitalism and relation towards the commons

Production of goods in the capitalistic world depends on the possession, exploitation and use of natural resources, or commons. They are the precondition of almost any human activity today: from transportation (for which we mostly use fossil-fuels), through the production of electricity (for which we use coal, hydropower, energy of the sun or wind), until the production of food. Development of science and technology, which enabled the use of resources as raw materials or as simple means for production, has brought numerous advancements to the overall welfare of humanity. But, at the same time, progress has brought numerous negative sides – from pollution, across climate changes, all the way to the scarcity of those resources. This is especially alarming when it comes to the basic resources, necessary for survival, such as clean and fresh water. Its over-exploitation is contributing to the rapid decrease of quantities, and, besides this, large amounts of remained supplies show an intense amount of pollution, even of the groundwater.⁷⁴ Pollution of air, which is also a basic resource for the survival, represents one major consequence of the rapid and globalized progress in use of resources. Climate changes, related to this, currently represent one of the most-debated worldwide threats to the humanity.

Many proponents of capitalism go that far that, besides defending of positive sides of capitalistic production (from the ones who are criticizing it), give their best to *deny* many of the obvious and problematic negative sides and diminish their importance in the overall human welfare.

⁷⁴ Maude Barlow, Tony Clarke (2002), *Blue Gold: The Fight to Stop the Corporate Theft of the World's Water*, E-book edition, retrieved from: <http://93.174.95.29/ads/AF1401347991CB5F22E188894A2FEA6F>, p.45, 67-68.

George Reisman (1998) believes that it is in the human nature to constantly advance its abilities and ameliorate its lifestyle. Therefore, he puts an accent on the improvements, which the development of technology, science and skills for extracting and using natural resources, have brought to the humanity. He emphasizes that the achievements made in medicine, food production, instant access to fresh and clean water, and in transportation and communication – prolonged the estimated life expectancy, almost eradicated the famine (indicating that still-existing hunger represents result of government's destructive policies), improved sanitation and the overall health, and made humanity more connected than ever.⁷⁵ Reisman claims that the Earth is made out of different chemical elements, out of which we use some for survival or production. Those *natural resources* are actually “free-goods”⁷⁶, which are given to us from the nature. Since it is in the man's nature to strive to satisfy his ever-growing demand for more wealth, he will continue to develop his capacities in order to extract those goods and be more productive. Reisman also emphasizes that there is no such a thing as “scarcity”, since the quantities of elements in nature exceed our current capacities to extract them. The only limit, he says, is the technological and scientific development, and not ecological limit, like the environmentalists use to claim. Since there are many known minerals which are still not being exploited and used, Reisman has no fear than humans will continue their development.⁷⁷

Problem with his view on the natural resources is that he disregards two major issues when it comes to the resources which do not have alternative in nature - such as air and fresh, clean water – those resources are available in limited editions and their remained quantities are affected by pollution. Regarding the first issue, as already mentioned, billions of people already lack clean water and sanitation and these numbers are prognosed to increase in the future due the over-exploitation, pollution, destruction of the natural water-habitat by dams, deforestation and drying of the wetlands. Second issue relates to the enormous problem of the nature in whole (including water, air and land), which is dramatically polluted by the enhanced production and extraction of resources. Concretely, vast amount of our surface waters is polluted with trash, waste-waters, pesticides and herbicides, bacteria, medical and radioactive waste released into the lakes, rivers and oceans mostly by the industries, cities and farms. This kind of pollution is pretty visible to the “naked eye” of every citizen. But, the problem is that the groundwaters show an increased pollution, too. Natural flows of water are unstoppable, so pollutants also end up in the underground

⁷⁵ George Reisman (1998), *Capitalism: A Treatise on Economics*, 3rd edition, TJS Books, p. 77.

⁷⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 39.

⁷⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 63-66.

water basins.⁷⁸ This fact is often been neglected by the capitalist proponents like Reisman whenever they are talking about the alleged “*false*” alarm’ of scarcity. For Reisman, water scarcity is directly connected to the economic development of a state and its ability to provide enough water to its’ citizens.⁷⁹ Vandana Shiva does not agree with this – in fact, she gives explanation about two paradigms of water scarcity. *Market paradigm* sees water scarcity as a result of insufficient trade of this, another commodity for a modern society. Besides that, market is not interested in cultural values, ecological destruction or the impossibility of people to afford it – its main drive is profit. On the other hand, *ecological paradigm* sees water scarcity through the eyes of its ecological limits (amounts available), but also through the economic limits of people to afford it. Shiva reminds that water can never be treated as a commodity because it is a biological need and has no alternative.⁸⁰ Therefore, ecological paradigm, as much more comprehensive, must be regarded as the main paradigm in question relating to the water scarcity. This claim may be further supported by the Naomi Klein’s conclusion about the capitalism of disaster which, in she claims that capitalism “*is not able to make difference between the destruction and creation, hurting and helping*”.⁸¹

Steven Hackett also warns that natural resources are not being used and valued in a proper way in the current economic reality, and emphasizes that the result of this are emerging pollution of nature and scarcity of basic, fundamental resources. He calls upon the ecological rationality, claiming that further economic development needs to be achieved in accordance to the scarcity while, at the same time, provides a maximum benefit to the decision maker (or a business) – simply, solution is to adapt the production to the current ecological reality.⁸²

In present model of economy, everything has its price and it is on sale – food, transportation, housing, medical services, knowledge, social services (pension, post-office), culture, media, policies, even natural resources. This practice started long before the modern times – through the exchange of goods. But, the actual roots of global market economy go back to the beginning of colonization, which opened the way to the trade with newly discovered and rare materials and goods, such as gold, silver, copper, spices, crops, etc. This was followed by the creation of large shipping enterprises, like Hudson’s Bay Company and the East India Company, whose aim was to explore conquered lands in search for valuable resources. Globalization increased the number of enterprises, but also their power – currently there are about 45000 international corporations, whose

⁷⁸ Maude Barlow, Tony Clarke (2002), *Blue Gold: The Fight to Stop the Corporate Theft of the World’s Water*, E-book edition, retrieved from: <http://93.174.95.29/ads/AF1401347991CB5F22E188894A2FEA6E>, p. 55-87.

⁷⁹ George Reisman (1998), *Capitalism: A Treatise on Economics*, 3rd edition, TJS Books, p. 83.

⁸⁰ Vandana Shiva (2002), *Water Wars: Privatization, Pollution, and Profit*, South End Press, p. 15-19.

⁸¹ Naomi Klajn (2009), *Doktrina šoka: Procvat kapitalizma katastrofe*, translated by: Tanja Milosavljević, published by: Samizdat B92, p. 59.

⁸² Steven C. Hackett (2006), *Environmental and Natural Resources Economics*, 3rd Edition, M.E. Sharpe, Inc, p. 8-9.

annual income overpasses twice the income of the four-fifths of the poorest people around the world. Their scope of work also raised – modern, so-called *corporative capitalism*, controls most of the petroleum trade and refineries, stands behind the massive production of paper, food, clothes, technology, etc., but also provides social services like health, education and water-supply (which was previously the role of government).⁸³

Some forty years ago bottled water was a commodity reserved only for the wealthiest people, and water-supply services were mostly provided by state. Although the beginnings of private water enterprises in the global North go back to 1800s, when a French *Lyonnaise des Eaux* was created, global South' water-supply systems remained undeveloped until the present days. In the 1980s, when a debate about the availability of water to every person became the highlight of UN policy, a new solution had to be found for the improvement of water systems. Instead of providing help (through sharing knowledge and giving loans) to the governments in order to ameliorate the existing or accelerate new water-supply systems, “northern” model of privatization of water-supply became favorable solution. At the same time, global market economy became the preferable economic model, so mentioned system of water management fitted perfectly in the plans for development of a global South. It was further supported by the financial institutions like International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, and the United Nations as well.⁸⁴ But, problem of this system is in the manner it was imposed, as explained in previous chapter. Concretely, regarding water-supply improvements, the World Bank started refusing requests for public utility' improvement loans and, started offering a solution of a public debt relief in exchange of accepting the neoliberal policies related to the reform of market, non-governmental investment in social services and poverty reduction. It actually forced countries of the global South to accept the planned privatizations.⁸⁵

Capitalism enthusiasts are completely right about the growing demands of the humanity and its' strive for accumulation of wealth. Thus, the problem is that, if allowed to follow only the profit-based self-interest, without regarding the ecological limits and the demands of the other people – humanity may end up in an ecological disaster, caused by the decrease in water quantities, or even worse – in conflicts over water. Water War in Bolivia should, therefore, be explored and emphasized as an example of water conflict on a micro level.

⁸³ Maude Barlow, Tony Clarke (2002), *Blue Gold: The Fight to Stop the Corporate Theft of the World's Water*, E-book edition, retrieved from: <http://93.174.95.29/ads/AF1401347991CB5F22E188894A2FEA6F> p. 125-128.

⁸⁴ Maude Barlow (2009), *Blue Covenant: The Global Water Crisis and the Coming Battle for the Right to Water*, E-Book edition, retrieved from: <http://93.174.95.29/ads/39C1AA67C8FCB251DF029F4A22DAC0D6> p. 90-93.

⁸⁵ Maude Barlow (2009), *Blue Covenant: The Global Water Crisis and the Coming Battle for the Right to Water*, E-Book edition, retrieved from: <http://93.174.95.29/ads/39C1AA67C8FCB251DF029F4A22DAC0D6> p. 102-104.

In order to preserve peace, it is important to emphasize the problematic of preservation of clean and fresh water from pollution and over-exploitation. At the same time, it is necessary to find an efficient and affordable, but sustainable system of water' use, in order to provide the respect of *right to water* to every single person. According to the previously stated and explained, it seems that corporate capitalist' models will not be able to provide these demands because of the selfish strive for profit, which overcomes the altruistic and equitable demands of society. Moreover, it seems that it is causing more damage than benefit to the overall water-management worldwide. In the next chapter, there will be more words about system of water privatizations and short presentations of several examples, in order to get a full picture of the relation of corporate capitalism towards the water.

2.3 Water privatizations

Belief in the unstoppable strive of a man for further development and advancement makes capitalism continuously looking for new sources of investment. With the progress of technology and the demands of current society, its focus moved from the precious metals across the fossil fuels, until the recent exploitation of water. Joseph A. Schumpeter believed that capitalism will not be able to endure much longer under the current circumstances, since the number of people (and quantity of their demands) are increasing rapidly, on one hand, and, on the other, it is starting to lack one of its basic foundations: *investment opportunities*.⁸⁶ He was partially right – corporate capitalism is indeed deficient in investment opportunities, but it is far away from the decline in power or total collapse.

Investment in water facilities became the business of 21st century. Even the *Fortune Magazine* predicted in 2000 that water will be the new oil – “*a commodity that defines the wealth of nations*”.⁸⁷ But, the foundations for this market have been placed several years before, from 1996 until 1998, during which three water agencies were founded: Global Water Partnership (GWP), the World Water Council (WWC) and World Commission on Water (WCW). Although, formally, these agencies aimed to ensure the space for negotiation of all relevant stakeholders regarding the sustainable management of water, the reality was much different. According to Maude Barlow (2002), their main purpose was to promote privatization and corporative exploitation of water resources. That is not a surprising fact if having in mind that the representatives of the largest water

⁸⁶ Joseph A. Schumpeter (1943), *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, edition published by: Taylor & Francis 2003, p. 107-112.

⁸⁷ Maude Barlow, Tony Clarke (2002), *Blue Gold: The Fight to Stop the Corporate Theft of the World's Water*, E-book edition, retrieved from: <http://93.174.95.29/ads/AF1401347991CB5F22E188894A2FEA6F> op. cit., p. 185.

corporations were part of the agencies' decision-making processes.⁸⁸ Besides that, in 1995 World Trade Organization (WTO) was created in order to ensure the free movement of capital, goods and services, and provide the elimination of all trade barriers and tariffs. It, along with the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT), perceived water as a *tradeable commodity*, whose trade is free from any import/export restrictions and controls, neither for the environmental reasons – since that kind of practice would represent a “violation of free trade”.⁸⁹ Water market still represents a growing segment of global market, and that is recognized by the powerful international corporations. Dominating ones on the water market scene are divided into three groups: first one includes two water giants, *Vivendi Universal* and *Suez* (previously called *Suez-Lyonnaise des Eaux*), which hold about 70% of the water market; second one represents large consortiums, made of corporations, which are challenging the titans on the global market: *Bouygues – SAUR* (France), *RWE – Thames Water* (Germany), *Bechtel – United Utilities* (United States – United Kingdom), and *Enron – Azurix* (United States); third group is consisted out of smaller companies that are part of the water industry, but are not powerful enough to challenge previous ones. The services of these corporations include providing the water services, wastewater' treatment, reconstruction and improvement of water systems and the new technologies, like the desalination of sea-water.⁹⁰

There are several different models or strategies used to acquire new water supplies. First one represents a model which includes *buying shares* of the existing company and turning it into corporation's subsidiary on the local.⁹¹ Second model refers to the *concession or lease contracts*, whereas financing and management of water systems is transferred on the corporation for a certain period (number of years). After the contract ends, public ownership takes back the utility.⁹² Manuel Schiffler differentiates former mentioned types of private-public partnership' contracts on the ones that include private financing (concessions) and contracts without it, where governments bear the whole cost of management (leases).⁹³ Third model represent so-called Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) contracts, which include building up of the new reservoirs or treatment plants (a.k.a. single facilities) in exchange for utilizing of the of water produced by the investment during the contracted time, as a way of repaying costs. Government guarantees for the return of loan if the investment

⁸⁸ Ibidem, p. 267-271.

⁸⁹ Ibidem, p. 280-281.

⁹⁰ Ibidem, p. 189-191.

⁹¹ Manuel Schiffler (2015), *Water, Politics and Money: A Reality Check on Privatization*, published by: Springer International Publishing Switzerland, p. 5; Maude Barlow, Tony Clarke (2002), *Blue Gold: The Fight to Stop the Corporate Theft of the World's Water*, E-book edition, retrieved from: <http://93.174.95.29/ads/AF1401347991CB5F22E188894A2FEA6F> p. 161.

⁹² Ibidem.

⁹³ Manuel Schiffler (2015), *Water, Politics and Money: A Reality Check on Privatization*, published by: Springer International Publishing Switzerland, p. 5.

does not pay off to the investor.⁹⁴ Schiffler emphasizes this last type of contract as the fastest one in producing a visible benefit, since corporation needs to fulfil the contracted deal on time in order not to lose the invested money.⁹⁵ On the other hand, the report of World Development Movement (2006) elaborates the negative sides of these contracts: besides the fact that the public money guarantees repaying of the debt in case of the failure of investment, there is also a problem of change of demands, since corporations often tend to do it when the real costs exceed the prognosed ones. This, they believe, creates a fertile ground for a corruption.⁹⁶

Regarding the financing provided by the international financial corporations, main institutions for providing loans are International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB).⁹⁷ IMF mostly concludes contracts about money lending with the government's central banks. On the other hand, WB provides loans for the private banks. It consists out of two agencies: International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), which gives loans to the governments for the improvement of water systems – but with the condition of mandatory privatization; and of International Finance Corporation (IFC), which provides loans for the corporations directly. But, the international financing wire is much more complex: besides these banks, there are also regional ones (like European Investment Bank, Asian Development Bank, African Development Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, Islamic Development Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank), which provide credits for water enterprises, too.

Along with the stagnation in approval of loans for the improvements of public water systems, came the promotion of privatization as the option that will, in short term, provide effective investments, connect more people to the water systems and do everything else that governments were not able to do. The supposed benefits of privatization that are emphasized are: *efficiency enhancing*, through the comply of the demands, introduction of realistic tariffs and modern technologies, *freeing* of the government *from the financial liability* towards its maintenance and *improving performance* of the overall system for the majority of its users.⁹⁸ But, examples around the world are testimonies of the failure of privatization in most of the cases. Report made by the World Development Movement claims that from 1996 until 2006 only additional 3 million people

⁹⁴ David Hall, Emanuele Lobina (2006), *Pipe dreams: The failure of the private sector to invest in water services in developing countries*, published by: World Development Movement, p. 42.

⁹⁵ Manuel Schiffler (2015), *Water, Politics and Money: A Reality Check on Privatization*, published by: Springer International Publishing Switzerland, p. 56-59.

⁹⁶ David Hall, Emanuele Lobina (2006), *Pipe dreams: The failure of the private sector to invest in water services in developing countries*, published by: World Development Movement, p. 42-43.

⁹⁷ Maude Barlow, Tony Clarke (2002), *Blue Gold: The Fight to Stop the Corporate Theft of the World's Water*, E-book edition, retrieved from: <http://93.174.95.29/ads/AF1401347991CB5F22E188894A2FEA6F>, p. 226-232.

⁹⁸ David Hall, Emanuele Lobina (2006), *Pipe dreams: The failure of the private sector to invest in water services in developing countries*, published by: World Development Movement, p. 9-10.

gained access to water and sanitation, while it is prognosed that about 1 billion people remain to be given access by 2015. Unfortunately, number of people who lack access to clean water and sanitation is now even greater than before.⁹⁹

Several documents, done by different authors, present the negative sides of privatizations and confirm its fiasco in most of the cases. Some of them have been used for the presentation of the next cases.¹⁰⁰

Case of Argentina represents one of the most famous privatizations. In 1993, it was pronounced as a “great success”, but only 9 years later it completely collapsed. After the end of military dictatorship, country was completely debilitated – a half of population has ended up in poverty, inflation was high and there was a great international debt left. Public water company in Buenos Aires was also burdened by many problems: on one hand, it was non-efficient, incapable to connect the suburbs, desperately in need for money and investments and, on the other, government forbid the rise of the tariffs. Although privatizations were rejected on referendum in 1989, government still decided to contract concession over the Buenos Aires water supply system. Only criterium for the election of bidder was *the lowest water tariff* it can provide. In order to attract the bidders, government took the following steps: firstly, it increased water tariffs substantially; secondly, it tied Argentinian pesos to the U.S. dollar; thirdly, it proclaimed that the debt of the public company will not be transferred on the concessionaire; and finally, it considerably reduced the number of workers. *Agua Argentina*, a newly formed subsidiary of the French conglomerate *Suez*, which signed the concession, made about 19% of profit in the first 8 years. But, in 2002 company had large loses – about 500 million dollars. This failure was caused by the several issues. At first, enormous costs of infrastructural improvement and connection enlargement overcame the prognoses. Therefore, company was unable to fulfill the required contract obligations (connect more people to the utility and provide efficient system of supply) and the debt of Suez towards the IFC was constantly raising, so it had to raise one more loan. Water tariff had to be increased (up to 20%), contrary to the agreement about its reduction (by 27%), which caused the reduce of number

⁹⁹ Today, 2.2 billion people lack access to safely managed drinking water services and 4.2 billion people lack safely managed sanitation services. (*Water, Sanitation and Hygiene*, retrieved from: <https://www.unwater.org/water-facts/water-sanitation-and-hygiene/>), (accessed on: Oct 22, 2019).

¹⁰⁰ David Hall, Emanuele Lobina (2006), *Pipe dreams: The failure of the private sector to invest in water services in developing countries*, published by: World Development Movement;
Manuel Schiffler (2015), *Water, Politics and Money: A Reality Check on Privatization*, published by: Springer International Publishing Switzerland;
Maude Barlow, Tony Clarke (2002), *Blue Gold: The Fight to Stop the Corporate Theft of the World's Water*, E-book edition, retrieved from: <http://93.174.95.29/ads/AF1401347991CB5F22E188894A2FEA6F>;
Special report by Public Citizen's Water for All program (2003), *Water Privatization Fiascos: Broken Promises and Social Turmoil*, published by: Public Citizen.

of households which were paying it – they were disconnected from the system. Consequences of the former had influenced the overall health, especially of women and children. None of the two renegotiations of contract helped to solve problems. Company required more and more money, while there was no improvement of the water facility – and the price of water was constantly growing. On the other hand, it did not suffer any penalties for the non-compliance of the contracted reforms. High corruption and secret agreements were exposed after the change of government in 1999. After the economic crisis, new government turned towards the more social model of water management and water tariffs so harmful concession was cancelled in 2006. Former to this, investments were frozen since 1999, because the new government refused to give more financial stimulus to the private company.¹⁰¹

Case of Atlanta (United States) shows some similarities. *United Waters*, again subsidiary of the Suez, signed a contract with the city of Atlanta. Like in the case of Aguas Argentinas, costs and the amount of work were miscalculated, so company started requiring more finances from the city in order to modernize it. It was refused. On the other hand, company continued collecting tariffs for the maintenance and improvements it did not provide, while slowly reduced the number of employees and raised water tariffs. Investigation revealed many irregularities in this case. Deal was abandoned in 2003.¹⁰²¹⁰³

City of Grenoble in France also represents a great example of failed water privatization. This case is famous for the prosecution of the mayor Alain Carignon, who was accused for corruption – actually, the international corporation, Lyonnaise des Eaux, illegally financed its campaign in return for the concession given for the water-supply system in Grenoble without any bidding. Contract was signed with one of the subsidiaries of Lyonnaise, called COGESE, which started the realization of signed with the instant increase of tariffs – by 164% at once! Also, beside the water tariff, a new fee was introduced – the so-called “*entry fee*”. From now on, citizens had to pay it every year. This practice was a way of exploiting more money for the city repository, which was tightly connected to the water company and secret deals. On the other hand, contract obligations were transmitted on other subsidiaries of the Lyonnaise and these agreements were also very suspicious, lacking of transparency and explanation for the public. With the change of the

¹⁰¹ David Hall, Emanuele Lobina (2006), *Pipe dreams: The failure of the private sector to invest in water services in developing countries*, published by: World Development Movement, p.34-37;

Manuel Schiffler (2015), *Water, Politics and Money: A Reality Check on Privatization*, published by: Springer International Publishing Switzerland, p. 31-44.

¹⁰² Rick Brooks, Carrick Mollenkamp (January 27, 2003), *Suez Unit, Atlanta Agree to Abandon Water Deal*, The Wall Street Journal, retrieved from: <https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB1043611033594698264> (accessed on: Oct 22, 2019)

¹⁰³ Special report by Public Citizen’s Water for All program (2003), *Water Privatization Fiascos: Broken Promises and Social Turmoil*, published by: Public Citizen, p. 3.

government, in 1992, came the change regarding corruption – soon after, mayor of Grenoble and Minister of the Environment were convicted for corruption in this case. In 1995, contract was cancelled and water service was brought back into the public hands. No major improvement has occurred during the time of private company' management of water systems in Grenoble.¹⁰⁴

Indonesian case was also very similar, although it differentiates from the previous ones because this deal was not broken despite its low performance. This privatization was realized within two contracts: conglomerates Thames' and Suez made partnerships with two different local corporations (close to president Suharto's government), which led to the establishment of two new private entities. It is important to emphasize a major problem with this privatization: *the national law of Indonesia prohibited any kind of investment in water supply system coming from the abroad.*¹⁰⁵ Nevertheless, these contracts were realized. Companies managed to prevent people from using private wells and made them connect to the piped system. Regarding financing, companies refused to be directly paid from the tariffs and required to be financed from the public water utility system which will continue to collect them. This measure protected companies from the risk of failure of investment, and, on the other hand, represented a great risk for the public utility – to make a debt it cannot repay. After the Suharto's fall, there was a re-negotiation of concessions: Thames and Suez agreed to buy the shares of the previous local companies and remove any ties it had to Suharto's government. But, with the financial crisis and the devaluation of the rupiah (local currency), salaries of the people and their purchasing power decreased companies made pressure on the public utility to pay its debt made on the high water tariffs (tied to U.S. dollar).¹⁰⁶ Yet, these companies did not comply what they were obliged to: only 60% of promised households were connected to the water utility, while the poorest communities remained without it. On the other hand, water tariffs increased drastically: from 0.10 dollar-cents to 0.54 dollar-cents, which is more than people could afford. In 2015, Central Jakarta District Court abolished the contracts and the overall privatization.¹⁰⁷

One case more should be mentioned, as a very interesting juncture of different economic practices – the case of Cuban water privatization. In 1997, due the decreased quality of water management in Habana, communist government in Cuba decided to contract two private companies

¹⁰⁴ Manuel Schiffler (2015), *Water, Politics and Money: A Reality Check on Privatization*, published by: Springer International Publishing Switzerland, p. 89-92.

¹⁰⁵ Special report by Public Citizen's Water for All program (2003), *Water Privatization Fiascos: Broken Promises and Social Turmoil*, published by: Public Citizen, p. 6.

¹⁰⁶ Special report by Public Citizen's Water for All program (2003), *Water Privatization Fiascos: Broken Promises and Social Turmoil*, published by: Public Citizen, p. 6-7.

¹⁰⁷ Constance Johnson (March 30, 2015), *Indonesia: Jakarta Court Bans Water Privatization*, retrieved from: <http://www.loc.gov/law/foreign-news/article/indonesia-jakarta-court-bans-water-privatization/> (accessed on: Oct 22, 2019).

in order to modernize water facilities and enhance the water supply on areas where it was still lacking. Companies were paid by the government itself and their contracted obligations were to modernize and operate the water facilities. Satisfied with the outcomes, government went even further and created a company, named *Aguas de la Habana*, which was jointly owned by itself (50%), Aguas de Barcelona (45%) and a private investor (5%).¹⁰⁸ This contract provided a leading role for the government in the matter of water system' modernization. Result is that the number of households receiving water increased, while, on the other hand, water tariff remained among the lowest in the world (until 1997, water service was free for the citizens of Cuba; after the modernization price went up on 4 pesos per month, which is about 0,17 dollar-cents). On the other hand, hotels and embassies had to pay much higher price.¹⁰⁹ Actually, government is paying for the modernization and operationalization of water system. Privatization in Cuba succeeded because the government played a role of constraint to the neoliberal strive for growth, which often tends to disregard the real necessities of people and contracted obligations. It managed to utilize the efficiency and expertise of private sector in order to really improve the water service while managing to maintain the acceptable price of water.

From the examples provided above, which are coming from both the developed and developing countries, it is clear that the real aim of multinational corporations is not the altruistic strive to advance the supply and distribution of water to the larger population. In many privatizations across the world, pattern is very similar: private investments, in most of the cases, were not “private” at all but represented loans, taken from international banks, or payments made by the governments (or better said, money of the citizens) for the modernization; most of the contracted obligations were never (completely) fulfilled, so contracts had to be re-negotiated, modified and, in many cases, even completely abandoned; governments and their people were mostly left without promised investments, with high unemployment and empty pockets – even with a decreased percentage of households connected to the water supply system (since people had to disconnect due the high charges). Even in cases which brought certain kinds of improvement, such as an increase of connected households or overall quality of water supply, there were loses which may be perceived in both the high price paid by the government and its citizens and, on the other hand, slow and painful process which increased unemployment and took many years to become efficient and profitable for both sides – providers of service and their customers.

¹⁰⁸ Karen Cocq, David A. McDonald (2010), *Assessing Water “Privatization” in Cuba*, Antipode Vol.42 No. 1, 2010, p. 18-19.

¹⁰⁹ Manuel Schiffler (2015), *Water, Politics and Money: A Reality Check on Privatization*, published by: Springer International Publishing Switzerland, p. 29.

In cases of the countries which are subordinated to the rule of law, harmful privatizations mostly ended up by abolishment of contracts or its modifications towards the more acceptable conditions. But there are cases of privatizations where governments pushed their realization and made profitable deals, although the character of those contracts was obviously harmful and contrary to the national laws and the will of majority of citizens. Therefore, people had to take the control by their own hands and fight for their rights. Social movements are the strength that can protect resources when governments fail. Cochabamba Water War is one of the most famous examples of such a victory. But, before analyzing the struggle which occurred in Bolivia at the end of 90s, it is important to elaborate social movements as actors of certain political process and their relationship towards the common goods.

3. Social movements and resources

3.1. Social movements – definition, differentiation and elements

Social movements represent sort of a collective action of people who, gathered along certain values and ideas, conduct different actions to in order to achieve certain aims. There is no widely accepted definition of social movements. Sociologist Mario Diani (1992) elaborated different definitions through the four approaches of authors which devoted their research to the question of social movements. According to the first, *Collective Behavior* approach, represented by the Ralph Turner and Lewis Killian, social movements represent special form of collective behavior which differentiates from classic forms of organizations and institutions.¹¹⁰ Still, this form of behavior does not lack certain kind of organization within its structure neither rationale for its actions – actually, it is recognized as an informal method of conceiving social changes. Second approach, the *Resource Mobilization Theory* promoted by Mayer Zald and John McCarthy, sees social movements as a set of views, principles and values which strive for the changes of the social structure. Their focus is put on the circumstances under which the beliefs and values become the

¹¹⁰ Mario Diani (1992), *The concept of social movement*, *The Sociological Review*, first published February 1, 1992, p. 4.

initiators of concrete actions. Nevertheless, they believe that social movements need leaders, strong organizational structure and meaningful cooperation with other organizations in order to succeed.¹¹¹ *Political process* approach, advocated by Charles Tilly, regards the political background and the social unrest which may explain *how* social movements arise. He indicates that the social movements represent a form of “*organized, sustained, self-conscious and identity-based*”¹¹² struggle of the underrepresented interests, which aim to make social changes by illuminating their demands and reinforcing them with the demonstration of public support. Alain Touraine and Alberto Melucci’s *New Social Movements* approach, contrary to the previous approaches, which explore the conditions in which conflicts appear or constrain, concentrate on the consequences of wider structural and cultural changes which may explain *why* social movements develop. Touraine defines social movements as the conflict for social control of *historicity* (“*overall system of meaning which sets dominant rules*”)¹¹³ between the different classes in current model of society. He further emphasizes two dimensions of development: *identity formation*’ dimension, which allows actors to clearly differentiate themselves, their adversaries and their goals, and the *sociological intervention*’ dimension, which aims to provide the remodeling of different beliefs within the movement, in order to fit them together and point them towards the joint goal. Melucci believes that modern conflicts are more prone to the symbolical and cultural sphere and elaborates the development of social movements through three dimensions: *solidarity* within the collective action, *opponency* to the ones that claims the same goods and 3) *intolerance* towards the current structural system.¹¹⁴

Diani concludes that these definitions share some of the joining elements which may help defining of the term “social movement”. First joining element is the *informal network of interaction*, consisted out of individuals, groups or organizations gathered in different kinds of organization forms – from the loose to completely tight connections. Second element represent *solidarity and shared values*, gathered within the collective identity, which provide the sense of inclusion and acceptance and an element of internal (within group) and external (outside group) recognition. Third element, *the collective action*, assumes that social movements are striving for some kind of a social change and therefore engage in (political or cultural) conflicts. And the fourth element involves *actions which are performed mostly outside institutions*, underlining that social movements perform actions that differentiate them from any traditional types of political actions

¹¹¹ Ibidem.

¹¹² Ibidem, op. cit. p.5.

¹¹³ Ibidem, op.cit. p. 6.

¹¹⁴ Ibidem, p. 6.

(voting and lobbying): public protests. Diani concludes with a definition constructed out of the previously elaborated: “‘A *social movement* is a network of informal interactions between a plurality of individuals, groups and/or organizations, engaged in a political or cultural conflict, on the basis of a shared collective identity”.¹¹⁵

Research about social movements has inspired different authors since the 1970s. Before that, this issue was elaborated within the theories of collective behavior. Social movement was not considered as an important factor in the political and social life of the community. But, after the 1968 and the wave of protests around the world, it was clear that world is witnessing a transformation of a society and their values and demands.¹¹⁶ This was the turning point for many issues such as women and other human rights, environmental protection, strive for peace, etc., which became the core values of the *new social movements*. Distinction on the *old* and *new* social movements comes from the observation of historic circumstances, actors and their aims. Therefore, old movements are recognized as the ones inspired by Marxist thinking, emerged within the industrial society, determined by the conflict of contrasted socioeconomic classes (workers versus capitalists) over the possession of means of production and movements which are striving for structural changes. New social movements (NSM) went over transformation during the time. They are focused on the critique of the social order and on the institutions providing representation. Differently from the workers’ movement, which demanded the change in the economic (capitalistic) structure and the reallocation of resources of production, these new movements became critical towards the progress made by globalization, demanding decentralization and better participatory mechanisms, enhancing of people’s solidarity in conflict against bureaucracy and reclaiming the autonomy instead of material gains.¹¹⁷

Claus Offe (1985) introduces next four as the most influential NSM: *environmental movements*, *human rights’ movements* (including feminist movement), *pacifism and peace movements* and *movements struggling for alternative models of production and distribution*. He also emphasized certain common characteristics through which these movements may be observed.¹¹⁸ First characteristic of NSM are the *issues*, which relate to the scope of “territory” that movement is covering, whether it represents part of the external territory (surroundings, such as town, city, group, nature), space of action (such as identity and practices coming from culture,

¹¹⁵ Ibidem, op. cit, p. 13.

¹¹⁶ Donatella Della Porta, Mario Diani (2006), *Social Movements: An Introduction*, 2nd edition, published by: Blackwell Publishing, p. 1-13, 33-64.

¹¹⁷ Ibidem, p. 9.

¹¹⁸ Claus Offe (1985), *New Social Movements: Challenging the Boundaries of Institutional Politics*, Social Research Vol. 52, No.4, p. 828-832.

ethnicity or nationality) or the internal territory (“individuals’ body, health, sexual identity”)¹¹⁹. Second characteristic are the *values*, which actually represent issues that are deeply rooted and respected within a community. They mostly relate to the scope of identity, autonomy and resistance’ attitude towards the control, bureaucracy, regulation, etc. Third characteristic of NSM represent *modes of action*, within which there is a division on internal and external ones. Internal modes of action illustrate the ways of uniting of different actors into a collective entity within a movement. Their relations are mostly informal and egalitarian, consisted out of network of participants and volunteers, with no clear differentiation between “leaders” and “members” and integrated by the joint perspective of issues and values. Regarding the external modes of action, NSM take unusual forms of participation: demonstrations and protests, whose aim is to summon massive public attention and mobilize more supporters. Their demands usually have very clear, short and negative connotation, such as “end”, “ban”, “no”, “never”, etc. which shows resistance towards certain issue in the society, while still leaving space for different identities, ideologies and affirmations of its participants. Besides that, these forms of external action provide no area for negotiation because they do not have formal organization which can participate in them, neither something to offer in return – but most importantly – the aim they are struggling for is often too important to be negotiated about. Fourth characteristic relates to the *actors*. Their participation is not conditioned by political ideologies or the socioeconomic position. Core of these types of conflicts lies in the more universal matters, such as gender, age, etc. or in the overall threats to the humanity (which are endangering the environment or global peace). But global inequalities and economic gap between the rich and poor still play the important role within these global issues. Socioeconomic and political divisions are part of the new conflicts, since they are incorporated into self-identification of participants, but only as *one* of the many identities within the collective entity – and not the core one, as it was within the conflicts of *old* social movements. NSM’ actors are consisted out of: *old* movements’ classes, people outside the labor market (such as unemployed, students, etc.) and the, so-called *new middle class*.¹²⁰

The latter has been elaborated by the many scholars and considered to be a result of social changes.¹²¹ Differently from the old classes of workers, this one represents a *highly educated* class of people, thanks to the proliferation of education and economic possibilities to afford it, which is

¹¹⁹ Ibidem, op. cit. p. 829.

¹²⁰ Ibidem, p. 832.

¹²¹ Donatella Della Porta, Mario Diani (2006), *Social Movements: An Introduction*, 2nd edition, published by: Blackwell Publishing, p. 55.

economically more secure and mostly employed in the *service-providing sectors*.¹²² NSM massiveness provokes the rise of confidence and more demands for participation of the new middle class in political life of the society. Main conflicts today are related to the struggles against technocrats, institutions of social control and private and public sector which is in charge of information' spread and achieving consensus.¹²³

Donatella Della Porta and Marco Diani (2006) have also examined new social movements, through the elaboration of different influences, that affect their creation and course of action: values, culture, identity, participation, types and action forms.

Regarding the *values*, they emphasized that modern form of social movements are mostly against globalization and neoliberal reforms.¹²⁴ The spread of scope and actions of the transnational corporations and financial institutions (such as World Bank, International Monetary Fund, etc.)m which demand reduced regulation and more freedom of trade – as already explained – led to the rise of aversion towards globalization, not only among the individuals and societies around the world, but also within international organizations such as UNESCO¹²⁵, FAO¹²⁶, but also churches, media, etc. Thus, anti-globalization movement takes various forms and it is incorporated within different conflicts led by the NSM.¹²⁷

Della Porta and Diani have also elaborated the influence of *culture* on the collective action, through the role of values and cultural elements. Considering the question of values, there are different views: one points that collective action may emerge from the system that is unable to produce certain values; other, thus, believes that collective action serves for production of the new systems of values. What is evident, is that values have changed and/or modified throughout the history, but their influence on social movements cannot be neglected due the identification they provide for the actors. On the other hand, cultural elements provide our self-identification in the world. But cultural codes may represent either assistance (due its sense of collectivity) either an obstacle to the formation and action of the social movements.¹²⁸

¹²² Claus Offe (1985), *New Social Movements: Challenging the Boundaries of Institutional Politics*, Social Research Vol. 52, No.4, p. 833.

¹²³ Ibidem.

¹²⁴ Donatella Della Porta, Mario Diani (2006), *Social Movements: An Introduction*, 2nd edition, published by: Blackwell Publishing, p. 2, 64.

¹²⁵ UNESCO is one of the organizations of the United Nations, devoted to the development of education, science and culture.

¹²⁶ The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations that leads international efforts to defeat hunger.

¹²⁷ Donatella Della Porta, Mario Diani (2006), *Social Movements: An Introduction*, 2nd edition, published by: Blackwell Publishing, p. 64-65.

¹²⁸ Donatella Della Porta, Mario Diani (2006), *Social Movements: An Introduction*, 2nd edition, published by: Blackwell Publishing, p. 87.

Examination of the role of *identity* showed its three important aspects: identification, networking and continuity.¹²⁹ Regarding the first one, it must be emphasized that collective action requires *identification* in order to determine common traits and provide ground for solidarity. Identity forms from the process of a self-identification (internal) and the recognition that comes from the others (external), especially from opponents in the social conflict. *Networking* is second aspect of the identity, since it provides a new web of relationships within and outside the social movement. In industrial society, locality played a major role in the connection of actors and facilitation of solidarity. Post-industrial society has overcome this obstacle and, therefore, new social movements are able to spread spirits of identity and solidarity more widely, even globally. Third aspect of identity represents the *continuity*, in the matter of connectedness to some of the previous events (or a concrete struggle), which provides a sense of joint significance of a collective action through time and space. Together with the development of identity forms the specific representation of movement, expressed in symbols (certain objects), practices and rituals (models of behavior and action) and, of course, narratives which develop from them and the collective action over time.

Concerning participation, sociologists believe that social networks make an important role in people's decision to join particular social movement. It is emphasized that their personal contacts and other influence coming from their simultaneous participation in different organizations and associations have a strong impact on individual decisions to join, but at the same time, straighten the internal solidarity within a movement. Additionally, participants contribute to the internal movement's network by bringing in their own wire of connections and contacts while, at the same time, creating the new ones within movement.¹³⁰

There are different types of social movements that have been recognized. Della Porta and Diani recognize two main models: professional and participatory movement organizations.¹³¹ First, *professional movement organizations*, are presented through the existence of a developed leadership, constant resources coming from the outside, small number of members and pursuit towards the constituency. Problem with these types of movements is that they completely depend on the will of the patrons, whether those are certain donors or authorities itself. Second type, *participatory movement organizations*, may show in a form of mass protest or a grassroots organizations. Mass protest forms do not endure for long because their combined approach, constituted out of participatory democracy and certain levels of organizational structure, provides a

¹²⁹ Ibidem, p. 94-96.

¹³⁰ Ibidem, p. 114-118.

¹³¹ Ibidem, p. 145-150.

weak model of decision-making assemblies (due the revocability of its delegates) and finally creates confusion and collapses. On the other hand, grassroot organizations use combined mechanism of strong participation and low levels of organizational structure. Despite the facts that this type of movement often lacks funding and rely only on the enthusiasm for engagement of participants, it shows surprising success in the achievement of its goals worldwide. Besides the provided types, it is important to emphasize that social movements often take forms of networks, especially the large ones (global movements).¹³²

Form of action that new social movements conduct varies from case to case, but most common and recognizable ones today represent petitions, peaceful demonstrations, boycotts, occupation of institutions, blocking traffics, strikes, etc. An analysis from 2002 show that the first three are the most popular, but also most successful in obtaining the realization of demands. All of these forms represent sort of protest, which is said to be the “*political resource of the powerless*”¹³³. It is not a new form of showing disagreement related to the certain issues, but since the 19th century there was a change in tactics. Concerning the *logic of action*, there are two different strategies: cultural and political ones.¹³⁴ Cultural strategies seek for a change the system of values and, therefore, their actions are pointed to the transformation of the society itself. On the other hand, political strategies aim to change the political system and consist out of several levels of action – from the conventional ones to the ones using violence. At the beginning, NSM seek change through the actions which are within the democratic framework: such as signing petitions and organizing peaceful demonstrations. Next level of political strategy represents turn to the boycott techniques, as more visible and more direct form of action. Third level rises it to the unlawful, but still tranquil stage of unofficial strikes and seizing up and occupying of institutions, while the final, fourth level, includes even violence (whether in a form of material damage or personal injuries). Violence may have two purposes: symbolic, since its usage shows oppression to the certain decisions or status-quo, and instrumental, because its’ aims may be winning in struggle or attracting media’s attention.¹³⁵ But, it must be emphasized that violence needs to be limited and carefully planned, in order not to repudiate supporters or cause the increase of repression by the opposed side, which may lead to escalation of conflict. Which form of action will be taken depends on the development of the situation. The aim of social movement is to show dissatisfaction and promote its demands, while at the same time trying to gain more support and mobilize participants, who will give it legitimacy. On

¹³² *Ibidem*, p. 157.

¹³³ *Ibidem*, op. cit. p. 166.

¹³⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 170.

¹³⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 173-176.

the other hand, its actions must be creative enough to attract the attention of media, since they are the most powerful medium of spreading information and creating the public opinion. The force of movement lies in the largest number of people it can gather. Current situation and relations within the society may affect the form of action, especially when it comes to the escalation of violence, but tradition and culture may prevent the use of force – for example, Switzerland’s culture of action differentiates from the Latin America, for example. Switzerland has introduced a direct political participation of citizens through referendums, which reduces threat from escalation into violent action forms. In the states of “weaker” democracy, like in Latin-American area, social movements tend to produce the same effect – to incorporate people’s demands and make them participate in decision-making through the process of mobilization and pressure.

As presented in the previous paragraphs, there are many aspects which influence on, either the creation either course of action of social movements. It is clear that NSM mostly point on pursuing aims which are bringing benefit to the majority, regardless of their identity, culture, values, etc., and mostly work against the harmful neoliberal practices. Their forms of organization and action may differ from case to case, but the uniting elements are their less structural and more egalitarian, participatory arrangement and the nonconventional forms of action, which aim to attract more support and connect people. They are being influenced by culture, identity and values, but create new ones in return.

In the next chapter, there will be words about the social movements which are devoted to the protection of common goods, particularly natural resources.

3.2. *Relation of social movements towards the commons*

Global capitalistic market practices, as explained in the previous chapters, led to many ecological disasters through the financing of exploitation of resources, requiring total extraction and privatization from the governments in exchange for loans, and through suffocating all forms of resistance. Therefore, social movements arise worldwide as an indicator of dissatisfaction by and rejection of those policies. Some of the reasons lie in the prevention of further destruction of nature and in challenge against all the projects regarding resources’ extraction, deforestation, hydroelectric and other ones that influence biodiversity, but also, thereby, our own lives. These movements are often classified as *environmental* movements. From Canada to Latin America and South Africa and from American West, across Europe all way to the Asian East, globe has seen social movements fighting for certain environmental causes and threats. It is considered that all of them form a part of a much wider and one of the most influential global movements of modern times: global

environmental movement (GEM). Its' roots go back to the 19th century of U.K. and U.S., where the first concern ever had risen about the industrial pollution of environment. Environmentalism¹³⁶ later spread all over the Europe, but concrete form of movement we know today started to develop in the 1960s. It had two different phases.¹³⁷ One is a phase of *radical environmentalism*, inspired by the creation of Earth First! movement in the 80s. Its' basic postulates relied on fight against the "civilized" world, modernization and technology, and the promotion of the restoring and return to the "hunting and gathering society". Second phase represents a *revolutionary environmentalism*. The aim of this movement is to gather all social movements in a fight against, not only harmful consequences made by the neoliberalism, but also for ending of the man's domination and control over nature. Humanity must understand that it is a part of the nature – and not its master. GEM strives for fundamental changes of economic systems, social relations, institutions and human values. Therefore, it includes more than just environmentalists: movements and groups supporting women's and other human rights, trade unions and workers, educators, peace movements, peasant and indigenous groups, and even political parties are part of it.¹³⁸ More and more people around the world start to comprehend the importance of environmental issues and tend to act, to participate, in preservation of nature – whether on a local, regional or global level. Resistance gives them a sense of belonging and contributing to the joint cause.

A study about environmental social movements, made by the Budd L. Hall (2009), analyzed movements coming from Brazil, Canada, El Salvador, Germany, India, Sudan and Venezuela.¹³⁹ Findings show that there are few common traits that unite them. One of them shows rise of the sense of importance of biodiversity and enhanced reflection that humankind represents an inseparable part of it. People understand that all living beings are interconnected in a web of life and that deterioration of nature makes harm to the whole system. Besides that, one more common trait shows more amplified role given to the actions and knowledge of indigenous communities, which have even "deeper" knowledge about the system of Earth. Regarding the participation and the course of action, mentioned study concluded that people join environmental resistance' movements because they are becoming aware of certain environmental issues, but also because they

¹³⁶ An articulated political and philosophical concerns about the destruction made by the human action and lifestyle on nature and biodiversity.

¹³⁷ Steven Best, Anthony J. Nocella (2006), *Introduction: A Fire in the Belly of the Beast*, Igniting a Revolution: Voices in the Defense of the Earth, AK Press, p. 9-10, 20-22.

¹³⁸ Corporate Europe Observatory, Transnational Institute (2005), *Reclaiming Public Water: Achievements, Struggles and Visions from Around the World*, p. 267;

Budd L. Hall (2009), *A River of Life: Learning and Environmental Social Movements*, Interface: a journal for and about social movements, Volume 1, p. 56.

¹³⁹ Budd L. Hall (2009), *A River of Life: Learning and Environmental Social Movements*, Interface: a journal for and about social movements, Volume 1, p. 51-56.

know that those issues cannot be resolved only by removing the cause – a broader action of social and political changes is often necessary in order to prevent further damage of nature. Under the auspices of neoliberal politics of development, free-market and mandatory privatizations, it is often the common goods, such as water, that are being devastated. Water particularly, because it represents very profitable resource at the global market.

When it comes to the water resources, movements around the world have struggled to defend their rivers from dams and other harmful projects, underground water supplies from the over-extraction, and water utility systems from harmful privatizations.

Dams are still very popular tool of colonizing rivers and putting their power and water into the hands of governments. It is considered that we are losing river power if let it flow into the sea/ocean without being used. Vandana Shiva wrote about the different struggles which were taken against the large river dams' projects in India.¹⁴⁰ They were more intensified because we are talking about a country with a riparian civilization, whose settlements and agriculture are tightly connected to the rivers. These projects caused relocation of whole settlements, deforestation and the change of hydrological cycle, which further caused scarcity of water in once water-rich country. On the other side of the world, Colorado river is facing a dramatic change of river-flow, largely caused by the dams, but also severe droughts, which is completely disrupted ecosystem and fisheries within it.¹⁴¹ Mekong river faces the same problems as Colorado – it resulted with the lowest water-level in last 100 years, which is threatening to the lives of tens of millions of people living around it and *from* it (agriculture).¹⁴² In Serbia, people are currently gathering around a social movement, called “Defend the Rivers of Mountain Stara Planina”. This struggle, against a very destructive form of dams (derivative small hydropower plants), will be more elaborated in the Special chapter.

Regarding over-extraction of underground water, there were also many struggles around the globe. Bottling water is said to be “one of the fastest-growing and least-regulated industries in the world”.¹⁴³ Large multinational corporations like Nestle, Coca Cola, PepsiCo, Procter & Gamble and Danone are among the bottled-water giants. Since this industry is growing, it is understandable why these companies seek for more sources of fresh, clean water and why they tend to exploit a maximum of water from the already owning ones. Problems is, as mentioned, that the export of

¹⁴⁰ Vandana Shiva (2002), *Water Wars: Privatization, Pollution, and Profit*, South End Press, p. 61-70.

¹⁴¹ Abraham Lustgarten (May 20, 2016), *Killing the Colorado: Drought be Dammed*, retrieved from: <https://www.propublica.org/article/drought-provokes-debate-on-unplugging-great-dams-of-american-west> (accessed on: Nov 5, 2019).

¹⁴² Ron Brackett (August 1, 2019), *Drought, Dams Drive Mekong River to Its Lowest Level in 100 Years*, retrieved from: <https://weather.com/science/environment/news/2019-08-01-drought-dam-drive-mekong-river-to-lowest-level-in-100-years> (accessed on: Nov 5, 2019).

¹⁴³ Maude Barlow, Tony Clarke (2002), *Blue Gold: The Fight to Stop the Corporate Theft of the World's Water*, E-book edition, retrieved from: <http://93.174.95.29/ads/AF1401347991CB5F22E188894A2FEA6F>, p. 155.

bottled water has no boundaries in quantity of extracted gallons (because of the removal of import/export restrictions). Maude Barlow wrote about struggles of Wisconsin and Michigan to preserve water from the greed of Nestle, but also about struggles of native Aboriginal people and protest of Canadians against projects proposed by the Coca Cola and PepsiCo. Also, in 2014 Coca Cola had to close its plant in Varanasi, India, after it has been pressured by the public which claimed that its over-extraction caused water shortages.¹⁴⁴ This is not a unique case; actually, Coca Cola had closed several plants in areas where people opposed or even attacked its facilities – for example in Kerala, India in 2004¹⁴⁵ and, recently, in Guerrero, Mexico (2018).¹⁴⁶ In Kerala, anger has now been transmitted on the plant of PepsiCo, since locals started demanding for its closure, too, since 2016.¹⁴⁷ Nestle is currently struggling with different forms of dissatisfaction all over United States and Canada – for example, there is a fight over the Strawberry Creek (Los Angeles area), led between grassroots opposition, government and Nestle;¹⁴⁸ on the other hand, there is a strong opposition to the new permit for extraction in Ginnie Springs (Florida)¹⁴⁹; and in Canada, there is a continuous struggle against bottling water from the Great Lakes, particularly in Wellington County (Ontario) and Hope (British Columbia).¹⁵⁰

In the previous chapter, several examples of harmful water utility' privatizations have been presented. In most of these cases it was exactly people, gathered around certain forms of social movements, who were combating against it by using different tactics – from more peaceful ones (petitions, peaceful demonstrations) to more unlawful and more violent ones. But one case won most of the international attention – it was the first “Water war”, which emerged in Cochabamba, Bolivia in 1998. At first, it was a struggle of indigenous people, but later transformed into one of

¹⁴⁴ *Indian officials order Coca-Cola plant to close for using too much water*, The Guardian (June 18, 2014), retrieved from: <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2014/jun/18/indian-officals-coca-cola-plant-water-mehdigani> , (accessed on: Nov 5, 2019).

¹⁴⁵ Anand Kumar (July 21, 2016), *Coca-Cola is in troubled waters (again) for a factory it was forced to shut down 12 years ago*, retrieved from: <https://scroll.in/article/811352/why-coca-cola-is-in-troubled-waters-again-for-a-factory-it-was-forced-to-shut-down-12-years-ago>, (accessed on: Nov 5, 2019).

¹⁴⁶ Eric Mandel (2017), *Security concerns force Coca-Cola's largest bottler to close in Guerrero, Mexico*, retrieved from: <https://www.bizjournals.com/atlanta/news/2018/03/26/security-concerns-force-coca-colas-largest-bottler.html>, (accessed on: Nov 5, 2019).

¹⁴⁷ P.K. Krishnakumar (May 11, 2016), *After Coke, Palakkad now wants PepsiCo to shut its plant due to water crisis*, retrieved from: <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/cons-products/food/after-coke-palakkad-now-wants-pepsico-to-shut-its-plant-due-to-water-crisis/articleshow/52204403.cms>, (accessed on: Nov 5, 2019).

¹⁴⁸ Tom Perkins (October 29, 2019), *The fight to stop Nestle from taking America's water to sell in plastic bottles*, retrieved from: <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/oct/29/the-fight-over-water-how-nestle-dries-up-us-creeks-to-sell-water-in-plastic-bottles>, (accessed on: Nov 5, 2019).

¹⁴⁹ Jennifer Hermes (August 2, 2019), *Nestle Waters NA Faces Struggle Over Permit to Draw 1.2M Gallons of Spring Water a Day*, retrieved from: <https://www.environmentalleader.com/2019/08/nestle-waters-na-faces-struggle-over-permit-to-draw-1-2m-gallons-of-spring-water-a-day/> , (accessed on: Nov 5, 2019).

¹⁵⁰ *Protect water: Boycott Nestle*, The Council of Canadians, retrieved from: <https://canadians.org/nestle> and <https://canadians.org/publications/factsheet-nestle> , (accessed on: Nov 5, 2019).

the first associations which stood in front of privatization of the water utility. Their struggle, which later transformed into violence on the streets of Cochabamba, remains one of the most celebrated and the most famous social movement' struggles of all times.

4. The case study: Cochabamba

4.1. History of neoliberalism in Bolivia

In order to understand the readiness of Bolivian people to defend its water until death, it is important to present a brief history of Bolivia and reforms (starting with the 1950s), which shaped the economic and political stage for Water War.

History of Bolivia is full of riots and turmoil that even ended in violence and bloody conflicts. Certainly, one of the most influential political parties, which left a very important reformation' legacy was the *Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario* (Revolutionary Nationalist Movement or MNR), founded by Victor Paz Estenssoro in 1941. After several turmoils from 1943 until 1952, time marked by shifts between the rules of military and oligarchy, violent social revolution in 1952 finally made space for the first revolutionary president – Victor Paz Estenssoro (1st mandate from 1952-1956). He and his MNR party made certain openings of Bolivia towards the world: at the first place, they agreed to pay the debt, accumulated due the Great Depression, which Bolivia suspended in 1931; secondly, they agreed to compensate capitalistic companies which had loses due the re-nationalization of mines; and, thirdly, they allowed U.S. companies to explore oil

deposits.¹⁵¹ During Estenssoro's second and third¹⁵² mandate (1960-1964), Bolivia was introduced with a "Triangular plan",¹⁵³ whose aim was to realize intense austerity measures through fiscal rationalization and restructuring of the state mines. Foreign experts considered them to be mismanaged and causing unnecessary loss of state money. These measures included cutting out salaries and reducing the number of employed, while, on the other hand Estenssoro promised the international aid.

A military coup, which otherwise started in Cochabamba army garrison, led to the establishment of the Second republic in 1964. While seducing peasantry with a representation of strong leadership, so-called "peasant president", General Barrientos, and his military government¹⁵⁴ united with the industrialists and agribusiness in order to suppress any kind of workers' resistance and continued with reform. They imposed an *Investment code*, which provided benefits, protection and privileges for foreign investors (such as Gulf Oil), and conducted a forceful implementation of Triangular plan, which led to the huge decrease in number of employed, their salaries and benefits, and to transmitting mines management into the hands of military.

Enhanced guerilla war and rising demonstrations, caused by the death of revolutionary Che Guevara, high unemployment and poverty, led to the revolution which forged a civil-military government in 1968. New government turned away from the policies of its predecessors¹⁵⁵ – labor unions were allowed again; military occupation of mines was terminated, workers were rehired and given better salaries; but, most important measure of all was the expropriation of Bolivian subsidiary of the Gulf Oil. The latter caused cut of the U.S. aid to Bolivia (by 75%) and company's boycott, which brought a 15 million dollars damage to the Bolivian economy. Another military coup in 1971 established a dictatorship, military regime of the Colonel Banzer. His regime relied on repressive stability, maintained at any price by suppressing all signs of organization and militancy, and on foreign loans raised for investment in mines, which only enhanced Bolivia's foreign debt.¹⁵⁶ Foreign companies and financial institutions, which were giving loans, became warmly welcomed. Strive for free-market economy led to several economic impacts which mostly hit the poorest ones (peasants and workers) – for example, Bolivian peso saw a massive devaluation in 1972 while, on the other hand, wages' rise was frozen although the prices of basic necessities and overall costs of living increased dramatically.

¹⁵¹ Waltraud Q. Morales (2010), *A Brief History of Bolivia*, 2nd edition, published by: Facts On File, Inc., p. 154-158.

¹⁵² Due the unrest within the state and struggle of the opposition to undermine his rule, Estenssoro organized reelections in 1964, to show his power. He was reelected, but a military revolution forced him to resign.

¹⁵³ Waltraud Q. Morales (2010), *A Brief History of Bolivia*, 2nd edition, published by: Facts On File, Inc., p. 163-164.

¹⁵⁴ Ibidem, p. 171-183.

¹⁵⁵ Ibidem, p. 184-190.

¹⁵⁶ Ibidem, p. 191-192.

After series of bloody massacres, turmoils and massive demonstrations (about 50,000 people), military was forced to resign and Bolivia finally got its first civilian president after 18 years – in 1983. He was replaced on the next elections (1985) by Victor Paz Estenssoro (4th mandate), who soon continued with his reforms. Estenssoro encountered Bolivia as burdened with huge international debt (about 5 billion dollars) made by the military regime, in the time of globalization and new economic order which demanded some terms from developing countries and in a struggle with cocaine producers.¹⁵⁷ In order to solve the first problem, government printed more banknotes which only led into inflation – by 1985, its rate was between 14,000 and 25,000%, making it the highest inflation ever encountered. Investments in mines showed as completely wrong when the decrease in prices¹⁵⁸ of resources dragged Bolivia into much deeper debt-crisis. International financial institutions, particularly IMF demanded the implementation of so-called *neoliberal economic formula* in order to provide new loans. Estenssoro then contracted Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada, an economic expert who, consulted by a famous economist Jeffrey Sachs, created the unpopular decree Law 21060, known as the *New Economic Policy*. It was based on the famous “shock-doctrine”¹⁵⁹, which aimed to provide sharp but effective economic measures in order to shock and reverse Bolivian economy. In order to liberate Bolivia’s economy, thousands of people were fired from public sector, salaries of the employed ones decreased dramatically, social services and subsidies were terminated and private enterprises were privatized. Besides that, government imposed a *Martial law*, forbidding any kind of oppression to reforms. There were two amazing results of the so-called “Bolivian miracle”: first, inflation decreased from 14000% to only 10% in two years¹⁶⁰ and second, Bolivia’s economy was revitalized.¹⁶¹ But the truth behind was much more painful – about 2 million people were doomed to the line of starvation; mining industry fell from 26,000 employees on 6,000 only; average salary fell on 10 dollars in 1985; unemployment and impossible living conditions led to the flourishing of coca production – by 1989 every 10th citizen became involved in business. It was actually the coca business that revitalized the economy

¹⁵⁷ Ibidem, p. 201-204.

¹⁵⁸ Naomi Klajn (2009), *Doktrina šoka: Procvat kapitalizma katastrofe*, translated by: Tanja Milosavljević, published by: Samizdat B92, p. 182-183.

¹⁵⁹ Waltraud Q. Morales (2010), *A Brief History of Bolivia*, 2nd edition, published by: Facts On File, Inc., p. 204-214; Naomi Klajn (2009), *Doktrina šoka: Procvat kapitalizma katastrofe*, translated by: Tanja Milosavljević, published by: Samizdat B92, p. 168-177.

¹⁶⁰ Naomi Klajn (2009), *Doktrina šoka: Procvat kapitalizma katastrofe*, translated by: Tanja Milosavljević, published by: Samizdat B92, p. 171.

¹⁶¹ Waltraud Q. Morales (2010), *A Brief History of Bolivia*, 2nd edition, published by: Facts On File, Inc., p. 213.

– it is estimated that about 500 million dollars (around 20% of profit) returned from multibillion illegal trade.¹⁶²

Two more measures contributed to the neoliberal reform of Bolivia. In 1994, Sanchez de Lozada created two laws: Law of Popular Participation, which led to decentralization, and Law of Capitalization. This law enhanced privatization of national oil industry, railroads, electricity system, telecommunications and airlines.¹⁶³ Everything was privatized except few systems, including water supply. Actually, first attempt to privatize water in Cochabamba occurred in 1996, at the same time when the concession for La Paz has been arranged. But, World Bank and municipal government could not get to the agreement about the main aspect of the project: how will water be brought to the city. These negotiations failed.¹⁶⁴

General Banzer's government, whose mandate started in 1997, right before the Cochabamba Water War, further continued with market reforms and brought new foreign investments. In 1999, Bolivian government accepted pressure from the World Bank, which demanded privatization of water in Cochabamba as a condition for new loans.¹⁶⁵ Cochabamba is the third largest city in Bolivia, but it has struggled with water shortages for decades. Municipal company called SEMAPA, which provided water since 1967, covered only 57% of population and had a constant problem with the availability of water due the large percent of losses caused by water leakages (about 50%).¹⁶⁶ The famous Misicuni Multipurpose Project (MMP)¹⁶⁷ has been raised by three presidents but none of them really put it into realization. Its purpose was to solve the problems of centralization of water system, distribution to the nonconnected areas and provision of constant supply of drinking and irrigation water. World Bank considered the MMP to be very expensive and refused to give finance its realization without modifications.¹⁶⁸ Bolivian government, forced by new

¹⁶² Naomi Klajn (2009), *Doktrina šoka: Procvat kapitalizma katastrofe*, translated by: Tanja Milosavljević, published by: Samizdat B92, p. 171-177;

Waltraud Q. Morales (2010), *A Brief History of Bolivia*, 2nd edition, published by: Facts On File, Inc., p. 204-214.

¹⁶³ Waltraud Q. Morales (2010), *A Brief History of Bolivia*, 2nd edition, published by: Facts On File, Inc., p. 223.

¹⁶⁴ Manuel Schiffler (2015), *Water, Politics and Money: A Reality Check on Privatization*, published by: Springer International Publishing Switzerland, p. 19-20.

¹⁶⁵ Benjamin Dangl (2007), *The Price of Fire: Resource Wars and Social Movements in Bolivia*, published by: AK Press, p. 59.

¹⁶⁶ Andrew Nickson, Claudia Vargas (2002), *The Limitations of Water Regulation: The Failure of the Cochabamba Concession in Bolivia*, Bulletin of Latin American Research, Vol.21, No. 1, p. 104-105.

¹⁶⁷ It projected the construction of dam, large reservoir and a tunnel which would collect water from the basin of Misicuni, Viscachas and Patucuni river, and a hydroelectric power plant, aimed to produce more electricity for Cochabamba. (Andrew Nickson, Claudia Vargas (2002), *The Limitations of Water Regulation: The Failure of the Cochabamba Concession in Bolivia*, Bulletin of Latin American Research, Vol.21, No. 1, p. 105).

¹⁶⁸ Manuel Schiffler (2015), *Water, Politics and Money: A Reality Check on Privatization*, published by: Springer International Publishing Switzerland, p. 20.

demands coming from the financial institutions, declared a decree *Law 2029* in 1999. According to this law, there was no guarantee of expansion of water utility system to rural areas of Cochabamba.

On the other hand, it prohibited traditional water practices which, actually, meant breaking up with the tradition of water *seen as a good which cannot be owned and which belongs to the whole community*. At time when the law was put in force, many houses were getting water from their own wells, rainwater collection tanks and from the cooperatively-built local systems of supply, which were mostly constructed by the joined finances and cooperation of the locals (some were even financially supported by the non-governmental organizations and the World Bank itself). This autonomous water utilities were funded through the local revenue, collected only for the electricity bills and maintenance only. Law 2029 prohibited further building of such systems, and what is more, demanded them to be handled to the central system without any compensation.¹⁶⁹ It even included wells, which were constructed on people's own land, and rainwater collection tanks. Yes, it took the rain too.¹⁷⁰ This measure mostly affected small irrigation farmers, who needed large amounts of water for the agriculture.

But, problems did not end up here. Law 2029 proved to be a concession contract, signed on forty years with *Aguas del Tunari* – a consortium of enterprises including International Water (part of bigger Bechtel¹⁷¹ corporation), Abengoa of Spain and four Bolivian companies. Contract was neither publicly discussed neither presented before it took effect on November 1st, 1999.¹⁷² This contract predicted an increase of water tariff for 35% at the beginning, and additional 20% in 2002, when water would be provided by the MMP. This increase included costs of financing the investment (the MMP), paying off the accumulated debt of SEMAPA and a guarantee of 16% rate of return on capital to the Aguas del Tunari.¹⁷³ Although it does not seem so large, there are several more points which have to be considered in order to realize the impact of such an increase. At the first place, any kind of public subsidies, which existed to detain the low price of water, was forbidden from now on. Secondly, the price of water became directly tied to the global market

¹⁶⁹ Oscar Olivera (2008), *Cochabamba! Water War in Bolivia*, published by: South End Press, p. 8-9.

¹⁷⁰ There is even a movie, called *Tambien la Lluvia* (Even the Rain from 2010), which depicts a Bolivian Water War from the perspective of a group of Spanish producers and actors, who went to Bolivia to film a movie and suddenly found itself in the middle of a violent struggle. Link to the IMDB site: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1422032/>.

¹⁷¹ It is one of the largest construction companies on the world, with more than 19,000 projects in 140 countries. Their business is related to oil, railroads, mines, airports, defense, wastewater and water utility systems. Since the failure of Bechtel to deliver promised changes in infrastructure and connectivity in most of the water-related projects, it is said that the motto of the company (attributed to the CEO, Stephen Bechtel) became: *"We're more about making money than making things"*. (Benjamin Dangl (2007), *The Price of Fire: Resource Wars and Social Movements in Bolivia*, published by: AK Press, p. 61).

¹⁷² Oscar Olivera (2008), *Cochabamba! Water War in Bolivia*, published by: South End Press, p. 9.

¹⁷³ Andrew Nickson, Claudia Vargas (2002), *The Limitations of Water Regulation: The Failure of the Cochabamba Concession in Bolivia*, Bulletin of Latin American Research, Vol.21, No. 1, p. 112.

price, which caused a very high increase in price of water per gallon, compared to the time before concession. Thirdly, as already explained, many people were unemployed or having salaries which were hardly enough to survive. Counted according to this model, prices went up drastically. To make it more clear, according to Oscar Olivera, the rise of water-bill for about 20-30 dollars maybe did not make a huge deal for the family living in Washington, but for the Bolivian whose (minimum) monthly salary was 330 bolivianos (about 55 dollars),¹⁷⁴ such an increase was a complete disaster. As if that was not enough, one more point related to the future price of water: payments became be tied to U.S. dollar, which meant that people would continue to pay its bills in bolivianos but if a bolivano suffers any drop in value, the price of water will increase according to the price equivalent in U.S. dollar.¹⁷⁵

One more important clause of the contract, which became visible only when the Law 2029 took effect, was that this contract *superseded* any other contracts, laws or decrees, which actually made it superior to any other former or future decision during the time of concession.¹⁷⁶ Aguas del Tunari had been given an exclusive right over the water resources and its supply system, which practically did not leave much options to the people of Cochabamba.

When operation started on 1st November 1999, all contract' proclaimed confiscations were announced. Company took over the water supply utility. Soon after, new company' bills arrived and, surprisingly, showed that people were now consuming "more water than usually" – although they never really changed their consumption' customs. Some bills even showed alarming increases such as an increase from 5 to 20 cubic meters per person monthly, which was completely impossible, especially when taking into account that many people still had access to water for only two hours a day.¹⁷⁷

As previously shown, Bolivia has undergone very tough times within the few decades before the Water War. Its history was marked with violent revolutions, military coups, repression of all forms and finally complete economic devastation of the country, caused by the wrong decisions, mismanagement, constant borrowing and, later, imposed neoliberal reforms. After these turbulent times, middle-class people in Cochabamba (but also other areas in Bolivia) were mostly left unemployed and poor. Wages of those employed were often very low, making it hard to survive with. Country was further affected by the war over cocaine, which became the most profitable business after the privatization of most of the public enterprises and large unemployment. Water-

¹⁷⁴ Country Economy, Bolivia Minimum Wages, retrieved from: <https://countryeconomy.com/national-minimum-wage/bolivia?year=2005> (accessed on: Nov 11, 2019).

¹⁷⁵ Oscar Olivera (2008), *Cochabamba! Water War in Bolivia*, published by: South End Press, p. 8-9.

¹⁷⁶ Ibidem, p. 10.

¹⁷⁷ Ibidem, p. 10.

supply system was one of the few enterprises which remained publicly governed. Its privatization was a difficult task to perform, not only because of the low financial power of Bolivian citizens, but also because of the traditional ties to the water as “sacred and common” resource. Therefore, people of Cochabamba had nothing to lose (but their lives) and they were very determined to protect the water.

4.2. *Articulation of social movement*

Bolivia has seen many forms of resistance during its history, particularly of the indigenous communities, which were struggling to enhance the respect of their rights and to become part of decision-making. Last massive mobilization (about 50,000 people), which took place in 1985, ended up in bloody confrontation between the protestors and the military, and finally led to the end of dictatorship military regime. Since then, as explained in the previous chapter, Bolivia has undergone radical economic transformation, embodied in introduction of neoliberal policies. Radical methods such as massive lay-offs, salary cuts, privatizations of public enterprises, and, on the other hand, imposition of the *Martial Law*, which caused imprisonment of hundreds of union leaders and forbade any kind of resistance, led to the accumulation of high resentment among the people of Bolivia. It grew more forcefully since the imposition of anti-drug policy in a society where vast majority of population, struggling for a survival, became involved in coca’ production and trade.

One union, called *Confederacion de Trabajadores Fabriles* (Confederation of Factory Workers), started to gather people working in factories in order to re-establish social networking and solidarity, which has been lost during the long time of authoritarian regimes. Several union leaders wanted to hear the voice of small and large unions in order to understand problems of the contemporary unionism. These meetings created several ideas for action, which were conducted in order to attract more people who were working, not only in factories, but also outside them. Their engagement uncovered many problems that Bolivians were facing (particularly women and underage workers) which related to their basic rights, working hours, salaries and security at working place. They saw no hope at the horizons. The work of Fabriles soon became famous within the Bolivian public, mostly thanks to the dedicated work of journalists, who were also dissatisfied with their working conditions and unconditionally helped the strive of the movement to improve

working conditions. Everyone started looking at Fabriles as someone who can provide solution to their problems.¹⁷⁸

The problem of water would probably never become the main axis of the Fabriles without a notification which came from the farmers, who have already started opposing to the contract signed with AdT. Actually, it was the irrigation farmers and peasants from the rural parts of Cochabamba which started the rebellion first. They completely understood the consequences which the new Law 2029 and concession contract had on their traditional ways of life and food production. Due the confiscation of autonomous-utility systems and their own wells, as well as the rain-collection tanks, farmers and peasants felt pressed, not only to connect to the central water supply and accept the unaffordable price of water, but also to resign of their tradition, customs and the way of life. The latter was especially hard if we consider the wide-spread Andean tradition of regarding water as a free gift, coming from *Pachamama* (Mother Earth). They could not accept that management over that “gift” has now been given to the foreign company, whose only aim was to profit from it, as if it was a commodity.

Besides workers and farmers, it is important to mention one more group, which later became involved in the movement for water created in Cochabamba – it is called *Pueblo en Marcha*¹⁷⁹ (People on the move). Pueblo en Marcha gathered different professionals, from environmentalists, teachers, to architects, economists and even elected officials, whose main aim was to draw attention on some important issues related to the policy-making and decisions of the government.

On the other hand, a group called *Civic Committee*¹⁸⁰, created by the mayor and representatives of Cochabamba’s elite after the first blockades, strived to become facilitator in the negotiations about the contract with AdT. But, people did not trust them and decided to refuse their participation in the creation and future actions – therefore, they stayed out of the social movement.

On November the 4th and 5th 1999, irrigation farmers, supported by coca producers, organized road blockades in protest against the law and concession, and called for a broader meeting, which was organized on November 12th and gathered many interested sides. This meeting formed the spirit of the struggle: *Coordinadora de Defensa del Agua y de la Vida* (Coalition for Defense of Water and Life). Or, simple, *Coordinadora*.¹⁸¹ Its structure emerged around already formed farmer’s committees and associations, which were long established in these communities

¹⁷⁸ Ibidem, p. 25-26.

¹⁷⁹ Ibidem, p. 27.

¹⁸⁰ Ibidem, p. 29.

¹⁸¹ Ibidem, p. 25-29, 54-55.

and served for decision-making.¹⁸² Professional groups, like Puebla en Marcha, joined the movement. Coordinadora, actually, united the organized rural periphery with the diffuse, but more influential urban center into one single fight. Juan Carlos Dominguez further elaborated the union of two different discourses: discourse of the farmers, who controlled traditional water systems, and discourse which was about defending the weak economy from harmful reforms and about taking control over the decision-making (thus, introducing participative democracy). Dominguez found three cultural elements that united these two discourses: first was devotion towards the rise of solidarity and reciprocity, which will withstand against individualism and profit-oriented economy; second element related to the idea of “people” or the “plebeian crowd”, formed out of social entities whose mobilization will give legitimation to the social movement; and, finally, the third one was the regard on water as the precondition of life and a resource whose traditional and cultural value exceeded the economical one.¹⁸³ Fabriles served as the coordinator of the whole project, due its ability to articulate popular discontent and put it into action – its devotion, actually, enabled the union of these two sides. After the formation of Coordinadora, Fabriles offered its infrastructure – rooms, internet service, fax machine, telephone and space for gatherings – and proposed it for the head office of the movement.¹⁸⁴ Since the broadcasted informational campaign, conducted by professionals and sponsored by schools, which briefly elaborated all the negative sides of water law and concession for the people of Cochabamba, it has become clear that the most important struggle of all was the struggle for water. The slogan of Cochabamba became “*El Agua es Nuestra!*” (“*The water is ours!*”).¹⁸⁵ But, the name of the movement consists not only the word “*agua*” (“*water*”) out of word “*vida*” (“*life*”) too. It came up from sentence of one farmer, spoken on the constitutive assembly on 12th of November 1999: “*Let’s not have just ‘water’ in our name, but ‘life’ as well, because they are takin everything from us. All that is left are water and air*”.¹⁸⁶ Coordinadora included peasant farmers, irrigators, local water communities, people connected to the central-water supply, unionized workers, professionals and experts, freelance reporters, students, businessmen, and all other people who identified with it. The joining element was a struggle for water, which is a condition of life and on which cannot be denied right to anyone. But, under its surface, there was a whole wire of connections, resentments and demands of different groups and associations, but also

¹⁸² Benjamin Dangl (2007), *The Price of Fire: Resource Wars and Social Movements in Bolivia*, published by: AK Press, p. 63.

¹⁸³ Juan Carlos Dominguez (2015), *Social Movement Discourses and Conditions of Possibility in Bolivia and Mexico*, *Convergencia Revista de Ciencias Sociales*, No. 69, Universidad Autonoma del Estado de Mexico, p. 159.

¹⁸⁴ Oscar Olivera (2008), *Cochabamba! Water War in Bolivia*, published by: South End Press, p. 27-28.

¹⁸⁵ Benjamin Dangl (2007), *The Price of Fire: Resource Wars and Social Movements in Bolivia*, published by: AK Press, op. cit. p. 63; Oscar Olivera (2008), *Cochabamba! Water War in Bolivia*, published by: South End Press, op. cit. p. 54.

¹⁸⁶ Oscar Olivera (2008), *Cochabamba! Water War in Bolivia*, published by: South End Press, op. cit. p. 27.

individuals, which formed the soul of the movement. Coordinadora became a space of expressing wide range of identities and demands (strive for land, better salaries and working conditions, for participation in decision-making, etc.), while, at the same time, held different people together pointed towards the same cause.

What made Coordinadora functioning in this manner was its the specific political and organizational structure. It is said that the political participation was *horizontal*, allowing social groups to use Coordinadora for discussion, deliberation, decision and implementation of collective agreements.¹⁸⁷ Therefore, Coordinadora provided space for real participation in decision-making and democracy in practice, which was obviously lacking in the political life of Bolivia outside the movement. Its internal organization relied on assembly-type and direct democracy. This form of organization was recognized at the beginning of movement and it was used for solving of problems, reaching agreements and for organizing collective actions. Internal organization relied on three levels of assemblies. First level (or small) assemblies represented meetings of different workers' groups, where each member could express its own opinion. Second level (or *Coordinadora*) assemblies included representatives of the former mentioned groups, who were sent to expose the demands and proposals of that sector particularly. These assemblies were also attended by people from various interest groups (such as environmentalists, intellectuals and members of the water committees), but also individuals who were not part of any of them but considered important for their voice to be heard. Decisions made within this level were then presented to the large town meetings, called *cabildos*, which included thousands of people gathered on the *plaza* (square). These meetings were organized occasionally. In some cases, even the mass of about 50,000 to 70,000 people made part of decision-making. Representatives of Coordinadora would present the proposals and public would express collective judgement by applauding or whistling. Final decisions about next steps of action were decided on the *plazas*. The only weakness of this form of organization was its fragility – it did not have large temporary membership. That meant that in the times of mobilization, number of people supporting the movement rose rapidly, but in the times of calm, its activity and popularity decreased. Movement also had to deal with constant tries of major's cabinet to bribe people from different neighborhoods, by offering them reconstructions in exchange for political loyalty.¹⁸⁸

Coordinadora stood for three main ideas: first, water is a *public* resource; second, Law 2029 has monopolistic character and therefore it is *unacceptable*; and, third, there is a real *threat* of turning water into a commodity. At the beginning, the demands of Coordinadora were the revision

¹⁸⁷ Ibidem, p. 56, 38-39.

¹⁸⁸ Ibidem, p. 58-59.

of concession contract and controversial Law 2029, because they did not guarantee the long-awaited components of the MMP (water supply, electricity and irrigation) and because the Aguas del Tunari evidently did not have enough resources for such a big project.¹⁸⁹ Because of ignoring of demands by the Cochabamba' municipality government and Bolivian government, but also due the rising support of people, expressed in the ten thousand' mass, gathered for the first joint demonstration on December the 1st, the demands of Coordinadora changed from "revision" to "cancelation and annulation" of the problematic concession contract and Law 2029.¹⁹⁰ On this large town meeting, it was agreed upon the date – 11th of January 2000 - as the final deadline for fulfilling the request.

Regarding actions taken by Coordinadora in Bolivia, they depended on the development of the overall situation – at the beginning of the struggle, people organized barricades on the roads leading to Cochabamba, in order to make government pay attention on their demands. Later, Coordinadora organized massive but peaceful demonstrations, which gathered thousands of people and turned into the large town meetings, crystalizing the demands of the people of Cochabamba. Demonstrations emerged into an overall strike, followed by the symbolic actions of opposition to the privatization (burning of bills), and finally grew into the civil war which was fought on the streets of Cochabamba when government decided to send police and military to stop protestors. These actions will be further elaborated through the next chapter, which will provide the whole history of the Water War.

4.3. *Water War*

In the previous chapter, we could see that the first resistance against harmful decisions of the municipal and Bolivian government came from the irrigation farmers who blockaded roads that led to and from Cochabamba on November the 4th and 5th, 1999. After the constitutional assembly of Coordinadora, this movement started to conduct actions in order to educate and inform citizens about the destructive consequences of the both Law 2029 and concession contract signed with AdT. Oscar Olivera Foronda¹⁹¹, 44-year-old agriculture farmer and former worker of the shoe factory,

¹⁸⁹ Andrew Nickson, Claudia Vargas (2002), *The Limitations of Water Regulation: The Failure of the Cochabamba Concession in Bolivia*, Bulletin of Latin American Research, Vol.21, No. 1, p. 114.

¹⁹⁰ Oscar Olivera (2008), *Cochabamba! Water War in Bolivia*, published by: South End Press, p. 29-30.

¹⁹¹ Oscar Olivera Foronda was a factory a worker at MANACO shoe factory since he was only 16-year-old. But the idea of unifying workers got him and his fellow colleagues fired from the MANACO. He returned to the agricultural production, but at the same time devoted his life to the development of various unions and worker organizations. He was a director of the *Fabriles*, the spokesperson of the Central Bolivian Workers' Union and a participant of the Workers' Union of MANACO, which became the strongest union in Bolivia. After the forming of Coordinadora, he became a spokesperson of the movement and one of the leading faces of the resistance. He was a winner of The

who wrote public statements and press releases for Fabriles and later Coordinadora, was chosen as the main spokesperson. The aim of speeches held all over Cochabamba was to unite rural and urban water users in a struggle against a common problem that exceeds all the others (they were in a constant dispute over the excessive consumption, accusing each other for water shortages). Coordinadora called people of Cochabamba for the first mobilization on December the 1st, 1999. No one expected to see large crowd – coca farmers were one of the many groups which did not see any particular benefit from these protests. But, soon something changed.

Mobilization on 1st of December showed that Coordinadora started to gain a large support among the people of Cochabamba: about ten thousand people showed up! This number exceeded the numbers of people supporting any of the existing political parties on their rallies. December' gathering turned into the first open town meeting, on which it was decided about the deadline given to the government in order to cancel harmful concession, revoke the Law 2029 and return the price of water to the pre-concession time. After the 11th of January, which was appointed as the crucial date, people will perform the blockades of all roads within and outside town and cut-off Cochabamba from the world until the government responds to their demands.¹⁹²

This gathering did influence on the political stage of Cochabamba, especially because new municipal elections which were scheduled for the 5th December. All parties became interested in solving of the water conflict. For example, the *Nueva Fuerza Revolucionaria* (NFR, or the New Revolutionary Party), whose president was the mayor of the town, was part of the coalition that ruled Cochabamba and approved the infamous rise of water price of 35%. But, suddenly, after the implementation of those measures, the NFR gave support to the rising civil opposition and abandoned the coalition. On the other hand, respective candidates from six political parties signed a joint agreement against the rise of water price.¹⁹³

On 11th of January, as planned, Coordinadora started with realization of the planned citizen strike. Idea was to held constant road blockades until the government responds to their demands or even calls for a meeting. On the other hand, Civic Committee, the same one that was not accepted as part of the movement, also called for people to join. Transportation workers, as well as the businessmen, responded to their call, but only for the short-term – after 24-hours, they decided to

Goldman Environmental Prize in 2001. The government of Evo Morales offered him to join as a minister in 2005. Oscar refused it, because he does not believe in the power of politics. He currently works as a general coordinator of *Fundación Abril*, which is dealing with environmental problems. (retrieved from: <https://www.narconews.com/Issue67/article4698.html>, <https://www.goldmanprize.org/recipient/oscar-olivera/>, accessed on: Nov 13, 2019).

¹⁹² Oscar Olivera (2008), *Cochabamba! Water War in Bolivia*, published by: South End Press, p. 30.

¹⁹³ Andrew Nickson, Claudia Vargas (2002), *The Limitations of Water Regulation: The Failure of the Cochabamba Concession in Bolivia*, Bulletin of Latin American Research, Vol.21, No. 1, p. 113-114.

return to work. Urban-factory workers left as well, leaving the whole burden of the resistance on the rural activists. The next day brought some new circumstances which benefited to the overall resistance. Namely, bosses of the MANACO factory dismissed sixty workers who were part of the Workers' Union of MANACO. Workers, led by Oscar Olivera, decided to hold a 24-hour strike in solidarity to the dismissed workers, but also with the road blockades, which were still ongoing. Five hundred of them rode bicycles from MANACO factory to the center of Cochabamba, calling for other workers to stop their doing and join the struggle. Mass managed to stop the traffic in town and to close all shops. Another town meeting was held on plaza where government was called again to stop ignoring its citizens and to send negotiators.

On 13th, government of Cochabamba scheduled a meeting. But, its realization showed serious disrespect towards the representatives of Coordinadora. At the first place, meeting was postponed for several hours, leaving movement' representatives to wait until the government officials finally showed up. Second disrespect was showed during the meeting, when the police started throwing tear-gas on the crowd gathered on the streets, which caused Coordinadora to abandon meeting. After several hours, negotiations continued but brought less success than expected: government agreed to *revise* contract and Law 2029. However, the change of the water' price was refused.

Assembly of Coordinadora has agreed about a radical move – people of Cochabamba will stop paying the water bills and their determination was shown through a symbolic act of burning AdT's water bills on the main plaza of Cochabamba.

Besides that, another mobilization was scheduled for the February 4, 2000. Since government has been given three months to perform the agreed on the meeting, Coordinadora planned a peaceful meeting (without blockades). But, its name caused confusion among the state and town officials. "*La toma de Cochabamba*" (or the takeover of Cochabamba) meant to have a symbolic meaning (takeover by flowers and music), but fear from violent actions made Special Security Forces (*Grupo Especial de Seguridad, GES*) and police on motorcycles, called *dalmatas* (dalmatians), to arrive to the to the town few days before the mobilization.

On 4th of February, soldiers began with repression at four main points of the city where the mass was gathering. They throwed tear-gas on the people, who managed to finally outmaneuver them, but stumbled on police which was distributed near the main plaza, forbidding demonstrators to pass. At the same time, many of the urban residents of Cochabamba were watching the resistance from their windows. As Oscar Olivera testifies, these people first started to open their doors to help the demonstrators, by giving them water to drink and wash of their faces from the gas; next move was to join them on the streets, "*with baking soda painted on their faces, with bandanas soaked in*

vinegar, with rocks, with everything".¹⁹⁴ Those who decided not to go out, helped by throwing necessary things, like paper, which was burned in order to decrease the effects of the gas. This battle was really exhausting for the both sides in conflict. No one expected that fights will continue tomorrow.

According to Olivera's claims, when Coordinadora's demonstrators entered the town on the next morning, they realized that the whole town was under the siege of citizens, who armed with "bricks and stones". Television teams transmitted the live stream of fighting, and people started getting out, on the streets, and joining the struggle. Media played a huge role, not only because of the live stream, but also because it interviewed random demonstrators who openly talked about what was really going on the streets of Cochabamba. And the resistance was tough since people showed more strength, courage and unity than ever before. Coca farmers were, for example, the first to take positions and block the town. Young men were fighting the police in the fiercest battles in the city center, while a group of elderly people contributed by banging on pots only few hundred meters from the fights. Children were carrying out coffers, filled with stones, down the streets.¹⁹⁵

On Sunday, 6th of February, something unexpected happened: government signed an agreement which proclaimed the freeze of the price of water.¹⁹⁶ Thus, two months were still left until the final deadline for cancelation of the contract and Law 2029. This move gave people hope and enhanced their energy.

Coordinadora continued its actions through organization of the first referendum in history of Bolivia, *la consulta popular*.¹⁹⁷ It gathered more than 50,000 people, who voted completely voluntarily for the eradication of harmful concession and annulation of the even less popular law. But, even after the presented power of the people's will, it was clear that government did not mean to fulfill the promised (revision of contract and law). Therefore, Coordinadora came up with more radical demands: Aguas del Tunari had to leave Cochabamba forever and water law had to be changed, not revised. At the same time, government gave its best to diminish the work of the movement, portraying its members as drug dealers and vandals.

3rd April of 2000 was the final deadline. On the next day, Coordinadora started with planned road blockades again, supported by the large mass of people who came armed with bottles filled with water and oil, bricks, sticks and stones, ready to revenge to the *dalmatas*. But no one showed up. Government has announced that it will remain consistent in its decision not to bring soldiers nor

¹⁹⁴ Oscar Olivera (2008), *Cochabamba! Water War in Bolivia*, published by: South End Press, op. cit. p. 34.

¹⁹⁵ Ibidem, p. 35-36.

¹⁹⁶ Ibidem.

¹⁹⁷ Ibidem.

police to the demonstrators. Another town meeting was organized in order to decide what to do to provoke the response of the government. Proposal of giving it additional, final 24-hours to cancel the harmful contract was rejected. Instead, mass proposed to take over Aguas del Tunari *now*. Olivera testifies that he hardly managed to calm down the crowd, once they came in front of the company's doors: "...I tried to remind everyone that the building itself was our collective property...and to tell them that the process may...involve more compromise than they want...we were trying to take care of the people so the government would not have any excuse to repress them."¹⁹⁸ Finally, crowd took down the sign of AdT from the building and took over the offices but sustained from any kind of destruction – which was characterized as a symbolic act against the company, but the government, too.

On the next day, April 5, a delegation of ministers came to Cochabamba to try to discuss a solution. Organized meeting included representatives of the Civic Committee, members of Parliament, mayor, business leaders and the Union of truck drivers, leaving only Coordinadora out of negotiations. Mass of about 5,000 people gathered around the prefecture and the police, determined to stay there until the decision about AdT's departure has been brought. Representatives of Coordinadora managed to enter the building through the side entrance, but were not allowed to participate in the discussion. After a few hours and on mayor's demand, they were finally allowed to join and present their position, but only few moments afterwards, tear-gas has been released on the gathered crowd and police entered the room with an arrest warrant. Coordinadora representatives were accused for the destruction of the private property. Thanks to the efforts of the archbishop of Cochabamba, they were released *on bond*¹⁹⁹ and pushed towards the entrance, while the television reporters were waiting.

Arresting of the leaders of Coordinadora brought about 40,000 people to the streets of Cochabamba on the April 6th. Large number of soldiers was heading towards the them. But people were ready – everyone, from old to young. They painted their faces with war-colors and prepared for the battle: younger men were wearing leather gloves to be able to throw back the canisters with gas; women prepared canisters with water to be thrown on them, too; others held bottles ready to smash into the ground. There were even indicators about the possible attempt of assassination of Oscar Olivera.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁸ Oscar Olivera (2008), *Cochabamba! Water War in Bolivia*, published by: South End Press, op. cit. p. 38-39.

¹⁹⁹ Ibidem.

²⁰⁰ Ibidem, p. 41.

On the other hand, he was urgently called on a meeting, which was undergone during the Coordinadora's preparation for the battle. Archbishop informed him that discussion resulted with a decision of canceling the contract with Aguas del Tunari.

As soon as the town meeting was organized, Archbishop came as the spokesperson of the AdT's decision, but failed to answer questions relating to the Law 2029 and connectedness of the rural parts of Cochabamba to the central system. Farmers and peasants decided to stay in town. After the town meeting, there was a Mass, organized in the town cathedral. According to the testimony of Olivera, one of the priests approached and whispered to him: "*Oscar, everything is a lie. The Government had refused to approve any of it*". He was also told that a Martial law has been imposed and that the representatives of Coordinadora had been chased by the police. They managed to hide, and Olivera even succeeded in connecting with one of the journalists, who recorded a message for the people of Cochabamba, telling them to continue to fight.

The final battle has begun – people were resisting against the heavily armed police and army, which resulted in more than one hundred wounded. One 17-year old, called Victor Hugo Daza, who was just passing by, has been shot dead by one of the snipers.

On 9th of April 2000, government has called Coordinadora for a meeting. Military occupation of the town has ended and people were now controlling the plaza. Roadblocks and barricades have been restored and strengthened and thousands of people were occupying the city. Meeting implied two different positions: first was coming from the technocrats, which were strongly holding the position of the continuance of the contract; second was the position of the officials close to president Banzer, who were open for negotiation. Three days later, special airplanes took the negotiating sides to La Paz, to sign an agreement to cancel the concession and return water into the public hands. Blockades within the town were ended on the same day (April 11th), while the rural ones endured for one day more, until Parliament changed the water law (Law was also changed on the same day, but it had to be approved by the Parliament).

The question that remained was who will take charge over the municipal water company. People were demanding Coordinadora to do it, but that was not possible because of two reasons: it was lacking technical capacities to do it and that was not the aim of struggle. A common ground was found, by forming of the transitional board of directors, with two of them coming from Coordinadora, two from the major's office and two from the union of the workers at the company.²⁰¹

²⁰¹ Ibidem, p. 45.

But, the war against the multinational corporation (Bechtel) did not end up here. In order to recover from the failed investment, company sued Bolivian government in front of the World Bank's International Center for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID), demanding \$50 million for damage. This caused world spread international campaign. Over 300 organizations from 43 countries signed so called "International Citizens Petition", with a specific demand for ICSID to open the process for the public. Besides that, people around the world have organized protests in front of the Bechtel's offices. However, ICSID refused the petition. Bolivian first Water Minister, Abel Mamani (one of the former Coordinadora activists), challenged the legal basis of treaty, on which it was based the legality of right to resolve this dispute in front of the ICSID. He pointed on irregularities of the contract which directly violated Bolivia's constitution. After the long-term pressure, board of supervisors of the company decided upon a resolution in which they asked Bechtel to give up its case. On 19th January 2006, Aguas del Tunari (or, better said, Bechtel) settled the case for nominal 2 bolivianos (\$0.25).²⁰²

4.4. *Achievements of the Water War*

The struggle of people of Cochabamba represents the first great victory against the corporate system in Latin America and one of the first and, certainly, most famous struggles for water in history. Its development was followed and supported by millions around the world. Water War of Cochabamba became an inspiration to many movements who were struggling against the corporate world and neoliberal reforms. It also enhanced global strive of declaring right to water as a human right. But, before presentation of those, macro-level achievements, it is important to emphasize the micro-level or achievements this struggle has brought to the citizens of Cochabamba.

According to the Morgan Bronwen (2011), there are two main micro-achievements of the Cochabamba Water War: one relating to the management of the water-utility after the war and the other, relating to the change of the Water law.²⁰³ First achievement relates to the management of SEMAPA, to whom the control over the water-utility was returned after Aguas del Tunari retreated from Cochabamba. As already mentioned, an agreed board of directors was chosen to supervise the work and improvement of water supply system. But, several problems emerged at the beginning of their mandate. Within the board itself there was a division onto the members who were pro-

²⁰² Benjamin Dangl (2007), *The Price of Fire: Resource Wars and Social Movements in Bolivia*, published by: AK Press, p. 68;

Morgan Bronwen (2011), *Water on Tap: Rights and Regulation in the Transnational Governance of Urban Water Services*, published by: Cambridge University Press, p. 116.

²⁰³ Morgan Bronwen (2011), *Water on Tap: Rights and Regulation in the Transnational Governance of Urban Water Services*, published by: Cambridge University Press, p. 99-107.

collaboration with cabinet of the Mayor (the same government which tried to impose the harmful privatization) and the ones who were against any kind of collaboration with political parties. Besides this and according to the testimony of one of the citizens of Cochabamba, SEMAPA's structure has not changed a lot after the war and it still represented a mechanism for robbing money. Also, outside the water-utility system there was a stagnation in apathy, which was undermining the social control over water. Unfortunately, SEMAPA did not have enough of technical capacities to conduct long-awaited reforms, making it skip transnational-partnership opportunities which could bring some advantage. Power of mobilization decreased too, but causes behind this may be easily explainable if considering the situation in Cochabamba after the War: people defended water from foreign exploitation, whose only aim to profit from this "commodity" – therefore, people's interest began to decrease after they managed to return water to the traditional way of life and fulfill the demands of respecting "water as territory" (which meant that its' use and management belong to the people who inhabit certain territory) and "water as service" (which meant emphasizing social justice' dimension in distribution of this service); price of water was also returned to the one before the war and, although it later increased with the rise of costs of SEMAPA's improvements, in that particular moment its decline represented a very important achievement. On the other hand, people had other problems which Water War did not solve – Oscar Olivera explained it through several sentences, in which he described an encounter with a woman from Cochabamba, who stopped him on the street one month after the Water War, asking *what will they do now* – because people were still unemployed and hungry.²⁰⁴ Poverty became the main cause of mobilizations in the upcoming years, which led to the final breach with neoliberal policies and projects all over Bolivia, and to the election of the first Bolivian indigenous president: Evo Morales²⁰⁵, who was elected in 2006. Taking into account the presented above, it may be concluded that Water War did bring certain

²⁰⁴ Oscar Olivera (2008), *Cochabamba! Water War in Bolivia*, published by: South End Press, p. 48.

²⁰⁵ Politics of Evo Morales, focused on poverty reduction, decrease of foreign influence and nationalization of resources, led to the economic boost of Bolivia. Re-nationalization of oil and gas inspired economic growth (which was about 4.9% per year since 2006). During his mandates (2006-2019), Bolivia has also managed to reduce its external debt, which fell from 52% of GDP in 2005 to 24% of GDP in 2018. But, the greatest support of people of Bolivia Morales achieved through the increase of minimum salary (for 515% in 13 years – from 440 bolivianos in 2005 to 2060 bolivianos in 2018) and the fact that 1.6 million of people emerged from extreme poverty. In the recent years, government of Evo Morales have faced with a lot of criticism, particularly due the dependence of Bolivia's economy on oil and gas production, but also due its' connections to illegal coca production and several corruption scandals. All this led to the decrease of Morales's popularity and his resignation, which occurred after the elections (October, 2019), followed by serious of accusations about irregularities. Morales has fled to Mexico, where he obtained asylum and claims that he was forced to resign by the threat from another military coup. (retrieved from: <https://www.telesurenglish.net/analysis/Ten-Important-Accomplishments-Under-Evo-Morales-20141009-0069.html>, <https://latinamericanpost.com/26049-bolivias-economy-the-key-to-evo-morales-reelection>, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Evo-Morales>, accessed on: Nov 16, 2019).

amount of success, regarding the use and price of water, but failed to bring expected amelioration of water-management.

Second micro-level achievement represents one more positive and more important change – the change of Water law. One of the two main demands of Coordinadora, besides cancelling of the concession, was the annulation of Law 2029. After negotiations, a water new law named Law 2066, was proposed on April 11, 2000 – the same day as the War ended. This law protected drinking water and became a foundation for institutionalization of the demands of activists. The latter, Law 2878, which passed four years later, was a law which regulated not only drinking water, but also irrigation, farming and forestry, and it has completely fulfilled two main demands of the Bolivian society.²⁰⁶ One of those demands required determination of norms which would protect “water as territory” - this was achieved through the *legal institutionalization of indigenous customs* (embodied in use of traditional irrigation, autonomous water-supply systems and wells) *but also the right to water*, which became inseparable part of Bolivian identity. This institutionalization has been done through the creation of register of *licenses*, which were designed to provide and ensure rights of the traditional water usage (for consumption and irrigation) to the rural, but also urban groups. Legal protection, that provides free-of-charge and constant usage of water, was also incorporated in the constitutional protection of rights of the indigenous communities, regarding the use of natural resources. Second demand, which would provide and protect “water as service”, was fulfilled by securing of the social justice and democratic process at regulatory level. It legally protected the accessibility to water to all Bolivians regardless of their material status, and a mechanism for their political participation in the matters related to the water management. Social justice was achieved through a granted procedural protection of the people who are at risk of being disconnected, but also by removing of the measure which preferred economic efficiency and financial sustainability over solidarity, redistribution and transparency – all in order to enhance more equity in accessibility to water. Participation was achieved by enhancing citizen’ participation in the tariffs’ setting through the creation of a system of regular meetings of municipal government and the neighborhood’ committees in every five years. Law 2878 was the first law in Bolivia that was created on basis of the extensive and costly empirical work: researchers applied two proposals of future water management, one made by the government and the other by the activists, on the computerized replica of the Bolivian water-system (which included seasonal changes too). It was designed thanks to the water simulation model developed by the Danish Hydraulic Institute. The

²⁰⁶ Morgan Bronwen (2011), *Water on Tap: Rights and Regulation in the Transnational Governance of Urban Water Services*, published by: Cambridge University Press, p. 102-107.

latter proposal, made by the activists, showed as more equitable and more efficient and therefore, this model shaped the future water management in Bolivia, provided in the Law 2878.²⁰⁷

Regarding the macro-level outcomes of the Cochabamba Water War, Morgan Bronwen emphasizes external and internal achievements.²⁰⁸ Macro-level external achievements may be perceived in two important accomplishments. First one relates to the acknowledgment of human right to water, which started with the end of the Water War. The new constitution of Bolivia, which was approved in 2009, recognized right to water as a *fundamental human right* (Article 20).²⁰⁹ Besides that, on the 5th World Water Forum, which happened in Istanbul in 2009, 24 states led by Bolivia, Venezuela and Equator, signed a counter-declaration in which they recognized water as a “basic human right”. This declaration represented an opposition to the formal Ministerial Declaration, which declared water *only* as a “basic need”. This move inspired future development of the right to water. As already mentioned in the chapter about development of right to water (chapter I.3), two important resolutions were adopted in 2010 – one by the General Assembly of United Nations and another by the Human Rights Council – which emphasized a right to water as a prerequisite of all other human rights and called upon states to fully realize it, as well as the other human rights. Second macro-level external achievement represents the formation of the *Bolivian Alternative for the Peoples of Latin America* (ALBA), an initiative for regional cooperation and development, especially in the matters of management of natural resources and utility-services. It involved countries that had suffered harmful consequences from the market-regulation, privatizations and free trade. The final aim of this initiative was to form a sort of multinational institutions which will provide regional development outside the scope of Washington consensus.

But, there are more macro-level external achievements of the Cochabamba Water War, that need to be mentioned. At the first place, it is important to emphasize that Coordinadora managed to show how people have the power to shake the legitimacy of the government, political parties and the existing unions. Besides that, successful mobilization of *Cochabambinos* has empowered the courage and confidence of the citizens and workers and showed that they can make a change. Benjamin Dangl emphasizes the importance of moment in which the Water War emerged: it was in the time of the rising anti-globalization sentiment and global movement. Oscar Olivera was, for example, called to participate in a mobilization against the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, which occurred in Washington DC in April 2000. Cochabamba Water War has already been

²⁰⁷ Ibidem, p. 103.

²⁰⁸ Ibidem, p. 111-115.

²⁰⁹ Alex van Schaick (January 21, 2009), *Bolivia's New Constitution*, retrieved from: <https://nacla.org/news/bolivias-new-constitution> (Nov 16, 2019).

established as a *symbol* of this movement.²¹⁰ Besides this mobilization, more movements emerged and fought against water privatization all over Latin America: in Argentina, where people rose against French company *Vivendi* and led to the cancellation of contract; in Equator, where the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Equator (CONAIE) organized and defended their water against corporations and, similarly to Bolivian case, managed to create its own proposal of water reform; in Bolivian town, El Alto, where people managed to banish the French company, *Suez*; in Uruguay, where a social movement, created upon the model of Coordinadora and called National Commission in Defense of Water and Life (CNDAV) managed to force²¹¹ the government to call a referendum about a new constitutional amendment – this amendment required more participation by civil society and citizens in the water management; etc. Regarding the fight for the protection of resources against privatization, Coordinadora’s struggle remains as one of the most inspirational ones in the recent history.

Regarding the macro-level internal achievements, Cochabamba Water War was only the beginning of the changes that occurred in Bolivia at the beginning of the 21st century. Indigenous communities, led by the coca producers, continued to organize demonstrations all over Bolivia. In September 2003, Bolivia has encountered one more war fought for resources - the Gas War. But before that, in February, due pressure made by the IMF on the Bolivian government a decision was made to rise the income taxes for 12%. That caused first series of protests made by students, labor and social organizations, demanding that IMF finally leaves the country. These protests were led by the Evo Morales, leader of the *Movimiento al Socialismo* (MAS, Movement for Socialism) and coca producers. Demonstrations were further supported by the police forces, who were already protesting because of the low wages. Demonstrations caused a two-day civil war, which took several victims, when government decided to send armed military onto the unarmed protestors. The man behind the orders was Sanchez de Lozada, former Minister of Planning, the creator of the neoliberal-reforms of Bolivia and current president of Bolivia. His decision led to the growing demands for his resignation.²¹² Although peace was made by cancelling of the announced tax increase, new demonstrations emerged in September – in Cochabamba, again. Tens of thousands gathered on the streets, demanding the re-nationalization of gas. They were against selling of the precious resource by low prices to the “strangers” (foreign companies), who later take advantage and earn a lot of

²¹⁰ Benjamin Dangl (2007), *The Price of Fire: Resource Wars and Social Movements in Bolivia*, published by: AK Press, p. 69-71.

²¹¹ In October 2003, CNDAV presented a petition, signed by 283,000 signatures, to the National Parliament and demanded a referendum in which it will be decided about the constitutional amendment regarding protection water as a human right and about its privatization.

²¹² Benjamin Dangl (2007), *The Price of Fire: Resource Wars and Social Movements in Bolivia*, published by: AK Press, p. 77-87, 117.

money on its re-selling by much higher prices. “*El Gas No Se Vende!*” (The Gas is Not for Sale!)²¹³ was the parole of the demonstrators. Protests soon spread all over Bolivia. Struggle has spread the demand: people now wanted all natural resources to be put under the national governance and be used for the national development. Actually, this struggle represented a culminating point of the dissatisfaction caused by the neoliberal policies of Sanchez de Lozada, which were growing since the 1985 and first deliberated during the Water War in 1999. At this moment, president Lozada had about 9% of support but refused to resign.²¹⁴ Gas war was bloodier than the previous ones – 64 people²¹⁵ were killed in battles that happened in September and October in several towns in Bolivia. Cochabamba became a “town of ghosts”, cross-cut by the barricades and battle-corners as it was only four years before. On October 16th 2003, people from different parts of Bolivia started marching towards La Paz, in order to request the resignation of the president Lozada. He finally accepted and fled to United States, where he is still in exile.

The power of people, that was presented in Cochabamba after the long period of stagnation, gave more strength and courage to the Bolivian citizens. After the Water War, they realized that people of different material status, coming from different groups and belonging to different identities may bring long-awaited changes if they join forces and point them against common cause of their dissatisfaction. Social energy, that emerged in Cochabamba in order to protect water, has transformed into the revolt against the poverty, hunger, underdevelopment, unemployment, but also into powerful strive to protect all natural resources, Bolivian culture, traditional way of life and sovereignty from the interference coming from the “outside”. If I may add, this seems to be the greatest achievement of the Water War on the internal level, but also external level, since it has enhanced development of similar social movements around the world.

²¹³ Benjamin Dangl (2007), *The Price of Fire: Resource Wars and Social Movements in Bolivia*, published by: AK Press, op. cit. p. 117.

²¹⁴ Ibidem, p. 87.

²¹⁵ Linda Farthing (July 13, 2016), *One Step Forward for Bolivia's Gas War Victims*, retrieved from: <https://nacla.org/news/2016/07/13/one-step-forward-bolivia-s-gas-war-victims> (Nov 17, 2019).

5. Special chapter: A story about Serbian rivers

According to a study that have been done by River Watch, an organization which is struggling to protect rivers of Europe, Balkan rivers represent the “*Blue Heart of Europe*” composed of the wildest rivers of Europe, rich with beautiful crystal-clear streams, spectacular waterfalls, deep river canyons and huge and unique wildlife – 69 of fish species, which are characteristic for this area only and 40% of all endangered mussels and snails of the continent.²¹⁶ But these rivers are now threatened by 2,800 hydropower projects. Many of them are already been realized and show a dramatic destruction of both biodiversity and surroundings, and influence on the overall human life in those areas.

These projects have boosted since the 2012, says the report done by the Bank Watch,²¹⁷ when Energy Community Ministerial Council of European Union decided to adopt new renewable energy targets for 2020. They were based on the Renewable Energy Directive from 2009 (299/28/EC), which obligates states of EU to fulfill at least 20% of shares by renewable energy in gross energy consumption. For Serbia, particularly, this goal represents 27% of renewable energy. According to this directive, each state of EU (including the ones which are part of the accession negotiations) had to develop its own National Renewable Energy Action Plan and start with its realization. Most of Western Balkan states had prioritized hydropower.²¹⁸ In Serbia particularly, these projects mostly represent building of *small hydropower plants of derivative type* – which implies that rivers and streams are being dammed by putting their water into the pipes, long between 2 and 5 kilometers, aiming to enhance water velocity and the efficiency of the plant. But, the consequences of these type of dams are disastrous: from drying the whole river-basins, across impacting the local life (of people, plants and animals), deforestation (which is performed for the construction of roads) and erosion of land, all over to the complete change of habitat and surroundings.²¹⁹ Besides that, these plants produce a very small share of Serbia’s supply of electricity (about 0.8% in 2018, according to the report made by the Bank Watch).²²⁰ Plants that are

²¹⁶ Save the Blue Heart of Europe, sites: <https://balkanrivers.net>; <https://blueheart.patagonia.com>.

²¹⁷ Network which is monitoring actions of international financing institutions like European Investment Bank and European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

²¹⁸ Pippa Gallop, Igor Vejnović, Davor Pehhchevski (2019), Report: *Western Balkans hydropower: Who pays, who profits*, p. 10-11.

²¹⁹ Further elaboration of harmful consequences of small, derivative hydropower plants, as well as the pictured examples, may be found in the project-study of the Faculty of Forestry, University of Belgrade: “*Smernice za održivo planiranje i upravljanje slivnim područjima malih hidroelektrana u zaštićenim prirodnim dobrima.*” This project has been led by professor dr Ratko Ristić, dean of the Faculty of Forestry.

²²⁰ Pippa Gallop, Igor Vejnović, Davor Pehhchevski (2019), Report: *Western Balkans hydropower: Who pays, who profits*, p. 35.

being built are projected upon a 30-year-old Cadaster of Small Hydropower Plants, made in 1987, when interest for hydro energy as the renewable type of energy was rising worldwide. Today, 30 years later, when many of the developed states had turned towards more “green” types of renewables (such as the energy of sun and wind, but also biomass), states of the Balkans paradoxically started with realization these old hydropower plans. Currently, there is around 90 of small hydropower plants (SPP) that have been built in Serbia, while the planned number is around 850. They are mostly built in remote, protected mountain areas of National Parks, Nature Parks and Special Natures Reserves.²²¹ Although these areas²²² and endangered species²²³ living there are protected by laws, SPP projects are still ongoing, thus violating all the norms of the Republic of Serbia and the will of people who are living in the surroundings. What creates even more confusion is that these projects have to be approved by the Ministry of Mining and Energy (which has to provide energy licenses)²²⁴ making this Ministry directly involved into the violation of law.

Regarding the financing, report made by the Bank Watch showed that the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the European Investment Bank (EIB) have been providing large amount of financing for these projects, through the commercial banks in the region, which provide loans for the final clients (investors of these projects). EBRD and EIB refused to provide any further information about the final beneficiaries. Commercial banks, that had provided most of the loans for investors in Serbia, are mostly Erste & Steiermaerkische Bank (Austria) and Unicredit Group (Italy). SPP projects have often been performed by relatively anonymous small companies, behind which there are larger energy companies like state-owned Elektroprivreda companies (in Serbia, but also Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina). Investors enter these projects because of the feed-in-tariffs, which imply that investors are being granted by cost-based purchase prices and the compensation that is paid to them in the proportion of the costs of the production. Contracts are usually signed on the term of 15 to 20 years, providing a big profit.²²⁵

In the last few years, communities across the Balkans started complaining about this kind of projects and begun organizing in order to prevent their realization. In Serbia, there is a group named

²²¹ Ratko Ristić, Ivan Malušević, Siniša Polovina, Vukašin Milčanović, Boris Radić (2018), *Male hidroelektrane derivacionog tipa: Beznačajna energetska korist i nemerljiva ekološka šteta*, VODOPRIVREDA Vol. 50, p. 311, retrieved from: http://www.vodoprivreda.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/12-Ratko-Ristic-i-saradnici_R.pdf (accessed on: Nov 21, 2019).

²²² Protected by: Zakon o zaštiti prirode (National Conservation Act) from 2009 and Zakon o nacionalnim parkovima (National Parks Act) from 2015.

²²³ Protected by: Pravilnik o proglašenju i zaštiti strogo zaštićenih i zaštićenih divljih vrsta biljaka, životinja i gljiva (Declaration on the protection of strictly protected and protected wild-species of plants, animals and fungi) from 2011.

²²⁴ Zelena Energija, site: <http://zelenaenergija.pks.rs/ZelenaEnergija.aspx?id=27&p=7&>.

²²⁵ Pippa Gallop, Igor Vejnović, Lyubomir Kostadinov, Andrey Ralev (2018), *Financing for hydropower in protected areas in Southeast Europe: 2018 update*, p. 4-42.

Odbranimo reke Stare Planine (Defend the Rivers of Mountain Stara Planina, ORSP), which represents a leader of the struggle conducted in Serbia. This group started developing at the end of the 80s, when residents of several villages of the Mountain Stara Planina resisted against the project of changing of the flow of river Toplodolska.²²⁶ When this question was raised again in 2017., residents of Stara Planina, who will later create mentioned movement, organized a performance under name “Prayer for a river”, which attracted a lot of public and media attention. In 2018, movement leaders created a Facebook group, whose aim was to gather more public attention and spread the word about the problems of SPP projects on Stara Planina. This group soon attracted more than 80,000 supporters, and became a space for sharing information, opinions and experiences from different areas of Serbia which is being affected by this problem.

At the beginning, movement was made out of people from Stara Planina whose initial aim was to succeed in banning of the construction of derivative SPP on the Mountain Stara Planina. But due the rise of support among people around Serbia, who pointed out on the state-level of this problem, the demand of the movement became the *overall ban of all SPP projects* which are being planned on territory of Serbia. Besides this demand, the movement advocates also for a promotion and development of capacities for use of other sources of renewable energy’ – sun, wind and biomass.

Communities from all over Serbia are now addressing to the ORSP in order to help them with support and planning of the concrete actions in order to prevent realization of SPP projects in their area. One of the recent examples is the village community of the city of Brus, from central Serbia, which managed to defend the river Graševica from the SPP. Struggle against the SPP even managed to unite communities such as Serbs and Albanians, which are conducting a joint struggle to defend river in the village of Štrpce, on Mountain Šar Planina.²²⁷

Regarding the communication within the movement, most of the actions and potential solutions, as well as the news, attitudes and the expert analysis, are being presented and discussed within the Facebook group, while the core of the movement performs correspondence with domestic but also international institutions and organizations, and prepares and presents public statements and press-releases about the struggle against SPP projects. The idea is to create a

²²⁶ The information about the movement was provided by Milica Marušić, activist of *Odbranimo reke Stare Planine*, in a document named: „*Odbranimo reke Stare Planine – Informacije o pokretu*“, in which she answered on questions sent by the author, regarding the history, organization, goals of the movement and the actions that have been performed.

²²⁷ Radio Kim/ KoSsev (October 30, 2019), *Počelo potpisivanje peticije protiv izgradnje MHE*, retrieved from: <https://kossev.info/pocelo-potpisivanje-peticije-protiv-izgradnje-mhe/> (Nov 21, 2019).

constant pressure on the institutions, through different actions, in order to make them prevent further devastation of nature and biodiversity made by these projects.

Many of the activists of movement managed to gather a lot of documentation, photographs, evidences and information of public importance, provided by institutions, which are being regularly published. All that information makes part of the material which proves violation of many laws and regulations, directly accusing some of the institutions for participation. Besides constant pressure, this movement neither joined neither supported any of the political parties – therefore, it is not politized.

Actions made by the movement mostly include establishment of contacts with media and different domestic, but also international institutions, such as several faculties from the Belgrade University, local and regional associations, River Watch, Bank Watch and European Water Movement (whose part the movement became in 2019). Besides that, in 2018. activists managed to stop the work of Rudinjska river and return it into its river basin and started visiting many villages on Stara Planina, but also outside it when called, to present the consequences of SPP projects to the residents, who often lack relevant information. ORSP also performed several actions of cleaning of rivers from the trash. In 2019, movement organized a petition signing for an international call for protection of the rivers of Stara Planina, which gathered around 10,000 signatures around Serbia. Since then, around 50 letters of support were sent to the movement, as a sign of support coming different organizations and associations. During the past few months, activists have helped organizing and persisting of the watch in the village Topli Dol, whose residents are trying to prevent the realization of one more SPP project. Regarding the legal battles, ORSP has been supported by lawyers who provided help in solving of several unjustly raised accusations against the residents of certain villages (Rakita and Topli Dol), where even physical clash occurred with the private security of the investor. These people were guilty for raising their voice against the projects which were planned and started without their consultation. In addition to that, ORSP managed to gain both first and second instance verdicts in favor of the residents of the village Rakita, where investor continued to build SPP regardless of the will of the residents and the legal constraints - he did not have permission to perform it.

Since 2018, there were several peaceful protests, which were organized to raise awareness about the problem of destruction made by the SPP projects. First one was a protest in Pirot, on September 2nd 2018, gathering around 4,000 people gathered and finally formalizing the demands of the movement, which were then sent to the Government and to the President of the Republic. In October 2018, there was a protest in the Municipality of Babušnica, near Pirot, where people were trying to show to the local government that they oppose the SPP in village of Rakita. On 27th of

January 2019, there was the first ecological protest in Belgrade, the capital of Serbia, which gathered around 8,000 people who opposed the SPP projects built on the rivers around the country. Another two protests were held in May and September 2019. First one occurred in front of the Unicredit Bank' headquarters in Belgrade, because it is one of the main commercial banks which is providing loans to the investors, and the second was organized in front of the Presidential Palace. After the latter one, President of Serbia called leaders of the movement of ORSP and representatives of the experts on a meeting, whose result was a promise of forbidding further projects in the protected areas of Serbia. This achievement does not represent the fulfillment of all the demands of ORSP and its supporters, but certainly represents the first move made by the Government of Serbia towards the implementation of the will of people. People are still waiting for its fulfillment, too.

The movement will continue, as proclaimed, continue its struggle until all the rivers remain free from the threat called *small hydropower plants*.

Conclusion

Since certain common goods, particularly natural resources, became severely endangered due to the two main causes of the developed, modern world – pollution and the over-extraction – it must be concluded that their management and use need to be urgently redeliberated and organized in order to preserve them for the future.

The advancement of technology and the overall development of science provide space for some new resources and techniques, and a gradual replacement of the old ones. For example, due to the consequences of climate changes and the pollution of air, it is prognosed that fossil fuels will soon be completely replaced by the new sources of energy and, therefore, scientists are constantly looking for some innovations and exploring different kinds of resources which will produce more of the “clean” energy.

But, despite the development of technology, it must be acknowledged that there is one resource, which is completely non-replaceable and – more important – whose existence is crucial for the preservation of the life on Earth: that is clean water. Although there are scientific advancements regarding solutions which will increase the amounts of clean water, such as systems working on de-salination of the sea water and work on the chemicals which can clean up the polluted water and turn it into the “drinkable one”, it is a fact that none of these solutions cannot compete with the fresh, clean water coming from the spring or river. What is more, these solutions represent a struggle of humanity to try to find some alternative, but unfortunately it is hardly believable that any of them can ever be completely safe for human consumption – ocean water is already full of microplastics which can hardly be filtered out.

Besides that, one more fact needs to be considered: large majority of the world population will probably not be able to afford such systems – particularly communities living in the developing countries. They can survive without electricity, transportation and Coca Cola, but *not without water*.

For, currently, the most popular economic system, capitalism, it is said that it has been in crisis for already some time (since 2008)²²⁸ – partly because of the decrease of the resources vital for its sustainability and development (such as fossil fuels) and partly because of the rising dissatisfaction of the people worldwide, who are standing up against its policies which are creating

²²⁸ Ian Bremmer (June 2009), *State Capitalism Comes of Age: The End of the Free Market*, retrieved from: <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2009-05-01/state-capitalism-comes-age>.

a growing economic gap. Therefore, corporate world has concentrated its actions towards finding of the new sources of profit – and pointed its interest on the most precious of all resources: clean water.

However, as presented above, corporate world has not provided a durable, ecologically efficient and equitable solution, which would benefit the majority of people, but, at the same time, help to preserve water for the next generations. As mentioned, people can live without oil and gas, electricity and precious metals – we can see that through the lives of many millions of people which still live in poverty. For them, but also for communities which have limited access to water every day and for the indigenous communities which see water as part of their identity and tradition, this resource represents *the real treasure*. And when the corporative strive for profit becomes stronger than ethics and respect of human rights and dignity, it is exactly these people who raise to defend their water.

In most of the cases, developed countries and its residents are not even aware of the difficult conditions in which some people struggle to obtain water on daily basis. Although, as presented in the previous chapters, even for the citizens of some developed countries outcomes of the certain water-privatizations represented a huge financial burden, for most of the people living in the Globalized North, it is unthinkable that someone must carry its water for dozens of kilometers from the springs, because it cannot afford to be connected to the central water-supply system. Neither that someone can be denied the access to, once, common mountain source, river, lake, well or even to the drops of rain that fall on its own land – only because that water, from now on, belongs to some private company.

It is exactly the strive for survival that makes the essence of social movements. Although people in Cochabamba wanted to defend their water from privatization and secure it for the future generations, it turned out that this struggle was not only about water. It was about poverty, unemployment, repression by the system, dissatisfaction with neoliberal policies, and the overall change of the political atmosphere. But, its development and struggle led to one more important conclusion: people are ready to endure a lot of pressure, wrong policies and their consequences, and accumulate dissatisfaction for a long period of time, but it is the real struggle for survival that can make them raise and strive for some change. Water, as the most important resource of all, is and will be the uniting element of further clashes between the rich and poor, the dominant and the oppressed, between the ones who decide and the ones whose voices are not being heard enough.

Social movements represent the accumulating force which provide space for those voices to be heard and supported. It also provides the sense of unity and protection in cases where the state fails to do it, and encourages people to step up and fight for their rights and demands. Last few

years have witnessed the raise of global movements, which are striving for different causes, but one is clear: the global society has woken up.

History of Bolivia shows that the power of people can bring long-awaited changes. But, Cochabamba Water War, particularly, demonstrated how a strive to protect natural resource from the corporative system may unite people on a small scale (around one social movement) and bring, not only desired local changes, but also global ones. Local achievements, such as the change of water law, cancelling of concession and establishing of the common management system of water-supply, brought the long-awaited modification of water system, but also represented an introduction in much more structured, systemic changes that occurred in the next few years. But on the global level, this war represented the root for establishment of the human right to water and the beginning of the worldwide struggle for water, which – as it may be concluded, will be the cause of future wars.

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