The Politics of Ethnicity:
Indigenous Peoples
in Latin American States

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David Maybury-Lewis

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Paradoxes of Liberal Indigenism: Indigenous Movements, State Processes, and Intercultural Reform in Bolivia

Bret Gustafson

The enraged horde shouts and lifts machetes on high. [They are] drunken, demented, thirsty for blood and vengeance. [W]ith mouths green with coca, they sack and burn, they rape our girls fleeing terrified through the streets of Calacoto. [ . . . ] The indios (Indians) are descending from the hills and they’ve taken over San Miguel. They are not here to beg for coins or to clutter the streets for our Sunday afternoon drives. Now nothing holds back these ignorant Indians, these dirty Indians, these indios de mierda (shiny indios). They have surrounded the city and they have triumphed. What Julián Apaza and Zarae Wilka could not do in years, the Mallku and Evo Morales have done in three weeks.

Luckily it was all a nightmare. [ . . . ] But in these three weeks the middle classes forgot their democratic, modern, and progressive exterior and asked for bullets against these miserable barbarians. . . . In September we found out that these dirty and repulsive characters that inhabit our nightmares, these beasts of burden . . . are infinitely more numerous than the whites. [ . . . ] In September the Indians lifted their head and touched our shoulder. It is a shame that it was accompanied by violence. In this bloody September, the Indians have sent us a message.

S. Monasterios. "Sound the Attack"
La Prensa (La Paz), October 8, 2000

Liberal Indigenism

Through the mid-1990s, neoliberal economic reforms in Bolivia were accompanied by legislative measures that “recognized” indigenous identities, languages, and organizations and ascribed to them new categories for participation within formal institutions of state governance.
Liberal indigenism even took a highly visible form in the personae of the president and vice president of the most active reformist regime of the MNR (National Revolutionary Movement, 1993–1997), represented in the alliance between a wealthy mining entrepreneur and an indigenous Aymara intellectual (Albó 1994, 1999). In a dramatic shift from prior "official" discourse, in 1994 the Constitution was changed to declare Bolivia a "multiethnic and pluricultural" nation. The old Ministry of Peasant and Agrarian Affairs was dissolved and a new Secretariat (now Ministry) of Ethnic and Indigenous Affairs was created (Healy and Paulson 2000). Reforms blending "liberal" and "pro-indigenous" tenets launched during this period include Reforma Educativa (Education Reform) in 1994, with a bilingual and intercultural curriculum adapted to cultural and linguistic diversity (Gustafson 2002); Ley de Participación Popular (municipal decentralization) in 1994, granting special status to "traditional" authorities and indigenous organizations (Albo and CIPCA 1999); and Ley INRA (land reform) in 1996, seeking rational and efficient land markets but also providing for the establishment of collectively titled indigenous territories and some land redistribution in the eastern lowlands (Assies 2000; Muñoz and Lavadenz 1997). In a country historically marked by apartheid-like race and class hierarchies, this blend of "neoliberal" and "intercultural" reformism seemed remarkable. One optimistic observer referred to the changes as the "friendly liquidation of the past" (Van Cott 2000a).

However, recent indigenous and cocalero (coca farmer) mobilizations have been accompanied by increasing military violence and a resurgence of racism in the public sphere. This suggests that all is not so friendly—nor has the past been liquidated—in this new period of liberal indigenism. In September 2000, Aymara farmers' unions from the altiplano region near La Paz cut off ground transportation in and out of the capital city for three weeks. Mostly rural Aymara representing part of the national CSUTCB indigenous and peasant union (Confederación Sindical Única de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia) were led by an ex-guerrilla named Felipón the "Mallku" Quispes. In the midst of these conflicts, the powerful coca farmers led by Evo Morales were also sporadically closing transportation routes along more than a dozen points in the Chapare region between La Paz and Santa Cruz, largely in response to coca-eradication measures pushed by the United States government. In June and July of 2000, constituent groups of the lowland indigenous federation CIDOB (Confederación Indígena de

Bolivia) had also confronted the government with their own set of demands, including the acceleration of slow-moving land reform. Temporarily allied with lowland mestizo peasant and colonist unions, they initiated another march on La Paz like those of 1991 and 1996. As cited in the epigraph, the Aymara Mallku would be associated with historical icons of Aymara rebellion (Julián 'Tupak Katari' Apaza and the 'Fearful' Zarate Willka) and was excoriated as a racial monster. Cocalero leader Morales was similarly cast as a subversive, terrorist, indomestico. While the response to the lowland indigenous mobilization of CIDOB would not be the same military violence or vitriolic racism, the combination of the three movements was lumped together in public writings lamenting the "anti-systemic" and quite often anti-modern resurgence of these "Indian" masses.

Has neoliberal interculturalism thus run its course? In economic terms, even the World Bank acknowledges that macro-economic stabilization has done little to reduce poverty or narrow the gap between rich and poor (World Bank 1999). In political terms, while some indigenous organizations have embraced land reform and municipal participation, neither appears to have muted indigenous protest. Nor does it seem that Bolivians who consider themselves as other than indios have taken rhetorics of "interculturalism" very seriously. Editorial responses to these events—fueled by Evo and the Mallkus' own fiery statements—would lead a casual observer to think that Bolivia was on the verge of a caste war. How might we interpret these events in light of the wider aura of indigenous resurgence in the region and particular manifestations of intercultural reformism in Bolivia?

In this chapter I juxtapose indigenous movements, state reforms, and recent events. My purpose is not to judge whether or not indigenous participation has been secured or whether reforms have succeeded or failed. Rather I want to point out how conjunctural political conflicts and reform processes reveal gradual changes in regional and national politics, which are variegated across state terrain. I am interested in problematizing dualist perspectives that assume the existence of a hegemonic state project like "neoliberalism" pitted clearly against "indigenous" peoples, identities, and demands. Nor does the notion of unilinear movement toward "citizenship" or "democracy" totally encapsulate or exhaust the logics of either the state or indigenous peoples. Contrary to its own rhetoric, neoliberal interculturalism is not a uniform process of inclusion of previously excluded Indians, but rather a set of uneven, contradictory shifts of political languages and
institutions that seek to reorder and legitimate changing expressions of social difference, citizen identity, and hierarchical forms of participation. These new tactics of governance represent a transformative renewal of discourses and institutions through which elites seek to isolate centralized power (spatially, conceptually, and institutionally) from various forms of “indigenous” and other “popular” forms of political engagement. Certainly laudable for a reformist sensibility, interculturalist reforms do not, however, pursue robust versions of indigenous rights or overhaul structures of economic inequality. Nonetheless, new forms of social mobilization and paradoxes of the reforms themselves suggest that, as in the past, governmental projects are hardly guaranteed to obtain that which they seek and may in fact produce new and unexpected outcomes.

In Part One I describe two organizations usually cast as Bolivian indigenous movements: the multiethnic CSUTCB peasant union of the Andes and the indigenous confederation CIDOB of the eastern lowlands. Internal complexities and relations between these movements and the coca-growers and colonist farmers’ unions complicate our understanding of diverse indigenous positions vis-à-vis the state. In Part Two, I describe three key reforms that one might place under the rubric of liberal indigenism: bilingual education, municipal decentralization, and land reform. I sketch the logic and substance of the reforms and point out varied local responses that further highlight divergent regional histories of state-indigenous relations. In Part Three I return to recent mobilizations (the CIDOB march, the Aymara blockade, and cocalero resistance) to consider the relationship between conjunctural events, organized movements, and state reformism. The highly racialized public discourse surrounding these conflicts is highlighted to consider how and why both liberalism and the new interculturalism are far from settled in Bolivia.

I. Indigenous Peoples and Movements in the Andes and the Lowlands

According to the 1992 census, 57 percent of Bolivia’s population are native speakers of one of thirty-four Amerindian languages (Albó 1995). The Andean Aymara (1.6 million) and Quechua (2.4 million) generally capture the most attention because of their demographic and historic centrality vis-à-vis state formation processes centered in the highlands (Albó 1995). Aymara and Quechua symbols, languages, and cultural substrates pervade Bolivian identity formations of all types and contribute to the wider imaginary of Bolivia as an “Andean” country. Far from being pristine rural natives, Aymara and Quechua might be farmers, miners, urban intellectuals, schoolteachers, market women, truck drivers, urban merchants, or lost we forget, vice presidents and members of Congress. Those seen as Aymara or Quechua by observers may or may not consider themselves to be part of such a broader ethnic identity. Multiple local and regional histories have generated heterogeneous expressions of Aymara and Quechua heritages—and multiple forms of mestizaje and migration—across the Andes and beyond (Abercrombie 1991).

Thirty-two indigenous peoples or pueblos also occupy territories now absorbed within the borders of the eastern Bolivian lowlands or Oriente. They were called “savages” in the 1900 census when their numbers were estimated at 90,000; the indigenous census of 1995 states that lowland peoples number 260,000 today. These diverse communities that have survived colonialism and neocolonial state formation number from 50 to 200 (Araona, Paikoneka, Yuka); to 2,000–3,000 (Canichana, Chacobo, Esse Ejja) to 5,000–10,000 (Guarayu, T’ymán, Moxí) to 40,000–60,000 (Moxeno, Chiquitano [Besiro], Guarani). By no means isolated tribes or hunter-gatherers, lowland peoples generally live in agrarian regions intertwined with multiple forms of state power. Hispanic latifundist elites, extractive markets for natural resources, and forms of Catholic and Protestant tutelage and mission activity. As with the Aymara and Quechua, there are also lowland indigenous teachers, artisans, merchants, rural politicians, evangelical preachers, and national bureaucrats. One Guarani leader was recently named vice minister of ethnic affairs and a Moxéno leader was vice presidential candidate for the MBL party in the elections of 1997.

Running parallel to this highland-lowland distinction, two of the primary organizations usually referred to as “indigenous” are the Andean CSUTCB (Confederación Sindical Única de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia, founded in 1979) and the lowland CIDOB (Confederación Indígena de Bolivia, founded 1982). Amidst intercultural reforms and recent conflicts, these two organizations usually take center stage as key subjects and objects of neoliberal interculturalism. With roots in histories of syndicalism connected to corporatist state-building that began in 1952, the CSUTCB emerged as an autonomous national union in 1979. Though also representing non-indigenous peasants of Tarija, Beni and Pando departments, the CSUTCB is often considered to be a Quechua-Aymara organization. It
is built on pyramidal hierarchies of local, regional, and departmental syndical organizations and has a long history of direct political engagement within and against the centralized state. Having emerged out of the land reforms following the 1952 revolution, today the organization makes periodic demands on the state that cover issues such as prices, agricultural credits, access to higher education, and water rights and control. The CSUTCB maintains alliances with other national unions—primarily schoolteachers and urban workers—though these organizations have been weakened with privatization and the dismantling of the state economy. Having been labeled campesinos (peasants) following the 1952 revolution, CSUTCB leaders maintain this term of self-definition along with the more recent ethnic label pueblos originarios (original peoples). Several decades of Andean migration to the lowlands have also generated colonists’ unions (Confederación Sindical de Colonizadores) independent from the CSUTCB, yet often closely engaged with its political maneuvers vis-à-vis the state.

CIDOB, with offices in the lowland city of Santa Cruz, has a more recent institutional history emerging out of pro-indigenous development and solidarity movements of the 1980s (Riester 1985; Albo 1991). CIDOB voices political demands centered largely on territorial rights (over natural resources and political participation) for the pueblos that make up its membership. It is an affiliate of the transnational Amazonian indigenous organization COICA (Confederación Indígena de la Cuenca Amazónica). Though at times unified with the CSUTCB, CIDOB has generally chosen a less confrontational path of strategic negotiation with the state in pursuit of selective gains. Leaders of the CSUTCB have attacked CIDOB for this more conciliatory approach to state power, especially given the latter’s somewhat more energetic appropriation of certain aspects of “intercultural” reformism. CIDOB leaders and observers suggest in reply that their conciliatory tactics are more pragmatic means of dismantling centralist hierarchies—whether of the state or those reproduced within the structures of the CSUTCB movement itself (anonymous interviews, c.f. Urioste and Baldemar 1998; Yashar 1999). While some lowland groups are in fact organized in the structure of rural syndicates, public discourses about native peoples of the lowland generally use the label pueblos indígenas (indigenous peoples) in contradistinction to the Andean “original peoples” or the more generic class label of peasant.

Both the CSUTCB and the CIDOB are regionally heterogeneous, multiethnic federations entangled with political parties, NGOs, other popular organizations, and the state. Nonetheless, both generally represent themselves as largely defined by the indigenous or ethnic identity of their constituents. The CSUTCB, for example, is quite frequently allied with the rural teachers’ union and the COB labor federation engaging political questions that are often tinged with conjunctural sectoral and regional demands more than the generation of a sustained “indigenous” project. However, CSUTCB’s most public rhetoric is the discourse of Aymara-centric katarismo (Albó 1994) and the symbol of the colorful wiphala flag that marks wider “Andean” pluralism. The organization is shaped in dialogue with advisors from leftist intelligentsia and European labor solidarity actors, and permanently interwoven with political party attempts to co-opt leaders. Sometimes tense factional divisions (which resulted in one death at the last CSUTCB congress) are recurring features of CSUTCB political cycles. During 2000 this division emerged between the Aymara following Quispe and those sectors more aligned with coca grower Morales.

CIDOB is an equally heterogeneous movement that has more recently emerged on the national stage, although its constituent members have a long historical relationship with state formation. Lowland peoples are organized in various ways: as federations and “centrals” (federaciones and centrales are syndical terms), captaincies (capitanías, from the pre-Republican practice of labeling indigenous leaders captains), and cabildos (a colonial and mission structure parallel to the municipality). Others take their names from ethno-linguistic labels (the Tsiman Council, the Guarayu Native Confederation, the Ayoreo Council) as well as state provincial jurisdictions (the Indigenous Confederation of Beni). Most of CIDOB’s constituent members are dependent on national or international NGOs working in “development.” Foreign missionaries still maintain tutelary influence over some of the smaller indigenous populations in the Amazon region. The boom in official cultural policy has created new modes of articulation with the state, especially in development-related projects aimed at ‘training’ Indians to be healthy, democratic, gender-conscious, environmentally conscious, administratively skilled, non-violent, etc. Within CIDOB, the more numerous Guarani, Guarayo, and Chiquitano often vie for leadership with Trinitario (Moxeño) leaders of the...
Beni. Strategic alliances with colonist unions and some NGO influence have also intersected internal CIDOB differences—some of which manifest themselves in the events I describe below. Despite organizational complexity, CIDOB has maintained its position as a unifying confederation, although the possibility for emergence of alternative foci of mobilization is always present.

II. Neoliberal Interculturalism in Three Dimensions

Organizations like CIDOB and the CSUTCB grew in significance and in the "indigenization" of their public demands and connections to international indigenous rights movements during the 1980s and 1990s (Brysk 2000). Across Latin America, states like Bolivia, Ecuador, Colombia, and Mexico responded by adopting constitutions that proclaimed themselves "multiethnic" and granted some "recognition" to indigenous peoples (see other chapters in this volume). While certain aspects of Bolivia's pluralist reforms are certainly improvements on prior histories of violent assimilation or paternalistic indigenismo, the new liberal indigenismo is not the sign of recent inclusion of heretofore excluded indigenous peoples. The notion of inclusion generates an illusion of unilinear movement toward citizenship, obscures other politics at work, and masks prior histories of indigenous inclusion in Bolivian state formation—through labor, tribute, clientelism, and centuries of violence. In tension with demands of multiple indigenous actors themselves, this new liberal indigenismo in Bolivia seeks to engage and politically (and geographically) reconceptualize entities like the CSUTCB and CIDOB, while gradually dismantling prior idioms and forms of corporatist statecraft—including most significantly the idiom of class, centralized national unions, and discourses linked to "revolutionary" nationalism.

Multicultural neoliberalism emerged during the second of two phases of neoliberal reform in Bolivia. The first was the "stabilization" phase of structural adjustment (1985–1989). During this era the MNR (1985–1989) launched the now popularly satanized "Decree 21060" which freed the exchange rate, drastically cut state spending, and legislated the gradual privatization of state industries. In the face of widespread protests and unemployment, this "adjustment" was achieved with not insignificant use of state force and a gentleman's agreement for pacted governance between the center-right MNR and ex-dictator Banzer's right-wing ADN party (Conaghan et al. 1990; Malloy 1991; Nash 1992). As the interventionist state was reshaped, a boom in development aid aimed at absorbing the shocks of adjustment found fertile ground during this period through discourses linking "indigenous" identity with "poverty reduction" (Gustafson 2002).

This period—one of gradual democratic opening—also saw the emergence of multiple indigenous mobilizations (Yashar 1998), including the massive lowland indigenous march on La Paz (1991) and the indigenous anti-Quincentenary movement (1992) which began to generate more public discussion about indigenous rights (Albó 1994). From 1989 to 1993 an alliance between the ADN (Democratic Nationalist Action) and the MIR (Revolutionary Leftist Movement) occupied power. Though this was a time of energetic effervescence among grassroots indigenous organizations, the state regime was marked by corruption and drug-trafficking scandals and the period was one of little substantive change in either the liberal advance or the cultural opening. The MNR returned in 1993 and launched the second wave of reforms (1993–1998) partially defined by the "cultural" opening. Among accelerated privatization of state industries and attempts to restructure the judiciary, public health, and pension systems, most significant of these second-generation reforms in relation to indigenous peoples were reforms in education, municipal decentralization, and land tenure.

These changes must be understood in reference to parallel transformations that occurred forty years earlier after the 1952 revolution. Then, as now, the state sought to "modernize" political identities and forms of participation to legitimate centralized authority and accommodate changing models of governance. After the 1952 revolution, middle-class reformers (also of the MNR party), launched an era of state capitalism in which a pact among miners, workers, and the party (with the peasants as subordinates) served as the foundation of state power. Indians were offered mass education (1955) to transform them from illiterate non-citizens into Spanish-speaking rural Bolivians. A national peasant syndicate was created and the extension of suffrage to Indians merged corporatist with clientelist structures—pursuing inclusion and "participation" in the form of centralized peasant unions. With agrarian reform in the Andean highlands and valleys (1953), many Aymara and Quechua indigenous communities were granted collective titles. Pre-revolutionary categories of race aimed at "indios" were here reshaped to notions of class aimed at forming a Spanish-speaking citizen reinscribed as inferior in terms of space and occupation: the campesino rural (rural peasant). Most of these transforma-
tions had little effect on lowland peoples then still subject to feudal hacienda subjugation or marginal existence on violent fronts of resource extraction. On the other hand, the boom in rural-urban migration spurred by land consolidation and access to education in the Andes would generate a core of urban Aymara and Indianist intellectuals in La Paz, as well as a large contingent of rural Andean sons and daughters who moved through the state schools to occupy posts in the national rural teachers' union. Both have some bearing on current engagements with liberal indigenism.

Considering this earlier legacy of attempts to re-engineer public identities and participation structures, the contemporary phase of neoliberal multiculturalism in the 1990s becomes less of a novelty. Indians—now as much protagonists as objects—are being redefined from class subjects into "intercultural" citizens. With liberal indigenism of the 1990s, the educational system no longer supposes that Indians will be assimilated as Spanish-speaking peasants. They now have the right to maintain their languages as bilingual and intercultural citizens (Educational Reform, 1994). Indigenous collectivities are being reimagined as localized entities and are granted new arenas of participation, no longer as corporatist peasant unions but as differentiated communities engaging a uniform national template of municipal politics (Law of Popular Participation, 1994). A limited land reform now provides for indigenous communal territories—only in the demographically and politically weaker lowlands—seeking legitimacy for a wider plan to rationalize land markets and create a juridical template for resource extraction while dismantling radical agrarianism and national syndicalism (INRA Land Reform, 1996).

This new liberal indigenism may sound like Machiavellian statecraft. It is apparent that cultural openings are secondary—and instrumental—to wider logics of managerial governance. It is also clear that differences between Andean and lowland populations have been consciously manipulated through these changes, accompanied by more and less subtle attempts to weaken the protagonism of centralized union structures (like the CSUTCB and the teachers, for example). However, to conclude merely that interculturalism represents an emergent strategy of liberal governance obscures complexity, refines these transformations, and is in any case a foregone conclusion—states are defined by the fact that they seek control through hegemonic governance. On the other hand, neither neoliberalism nor interculturalism have the support of all elites or all indigenous and popular sectors.

Though the above paragraph hints at a wider calculated logic, these reforms—like the state itself—are regionally fragmented in their implementation, meanings, and effects. In what follows I sketch in broad strokes the differential, sometimes contradictory articulations between these reforms and diverse settings of indigenous mobilization in the Andes and lowlands regions.

**Education as "Bilingual and Intercultural"**

In the 1990s, basic public education survived within pro-market reforms as an arena of state intervention necessary for improving human capital and governability (World Bank 1995). Though access to schooling has been a popular demand seen as potentially "liberatory" and "revolutionary" by activists and radical intellectuals in Bolivia, education in the neoliberal paradigm is considered to be a key to creating a literate, flexible labor supply. The pro-market approach favors localized school administration and basic skills learning, positions not altogether contradictory to platforms of international agencies or moderate calls for social equity and equality of opportunity (Reimers, ed. 2000). Along these lines proposals for Educational Reform in Bolivia, gestated during the MIR-ADN government, were nurtured by UNICEF and World Bank support, and would eventually enlist indigenous allies with the inclusion of a quite progressive proposal for bilingual intercultural education (Gustafson 2002). The MNR regime inherited the project and incorporated it into its broader package of transformation launched with decentralization in 1994.

Bilingual intercultural education (EIB) is not part of a standard liberal school reform plan. It emerged out of Latin American histories in indigenist and indigenous political proposals dating back to early expressions of indigenism from the 1950s and beyond. Its most significant precedent in Bolivia was the UNICEF-supported experiment in Aymara, Quechua, and Guarani regions that began in 1989 and that was subsumed into the state's 1994 Educational Reform. As a curricular proposal bilingual education is composed of eight years of schooling in both indigenous languages and Spanish, with administrative provisions for indigenous participation in school administration, curricular design, and teacher training. To meet these objectives, new participatory structures, Consejo Educativo de los Pueblos Originarios (CEPO: Original People's Educational Councils) were legislated by reform and have been set up in collaboration between the CSUTCB, CIDOB, the state Education Ministry, and European donors. Now the
Aymara and Quechua “nations,” the Guarani (via the Assembly of Guarani People), and the “multiethnic” Amazon (CIDOB), currently make up four such educational councils. While school reform aims at localizing participation to municipal levels, the symbolic legitimacy granted to native languages as markers of regional political territory complicates tenets of municipal governance. For example, Aymara and Quechua CEPÖs are to have putative jurisdiction over a range of departmental and municipal boundaries, as do the Guarani, facts that in both cases legitimate and do not dissolve extant supra-local indigenous organizations.

This new proposal for schooling faces a variety of political responses. Bilingualism and educational reform have faced the most opposition from teachers’ unions who see it—in some ways accurately—as part of a wider strategy to weaken the national teachers’ union (Berrios 1998; R. Calla 1999, Gill 2000). Bilingual education is also attacked by conservative elites as anti-national and atavistic. Both CIDOB and the CSUTCB demanded bilingual education in position statements as early as 1989 (CSUTCB 1991), but these organizations have responded differently in practice. Because the CSUTCB has a history of strategic alliance with the rural teachers’ union (CONMERB), Andean responses to education reform have been tepid if not hostile because of teacher opposition to reform. Many Aymara and Quechua also fill the ranks of the rural teachers union and see the reform as a threat to gains they have struggled to achieve (R. Calla 1999), or as “neoliberal assimilation” now dressed in native languages (e.g. Patzi 1999). Tense state-local relations in regions like the Aymara provinces around La Paz also shape a sometimes hostile response to state education. On the other hand, there has been more support for EIB in some Quechua regions of Sucre and Chuquisaca (Lópeh, personal communication). Bilingual education has been most actively appropriated by the Assembly of Guarani People (APG), a constituent organization of CIDOB (Gustafson 2002). Lowland peoples like the Guarani were marginal to the 1955 school reform and never benefited from the limited mobility provided by public schooling. New opportunities for accessing teaching jobs and school resources via bilingual school reform have made the Guarani key allies of educational change. The Guarani engagement with state bilingual education reform today also emerges during a period of indigenous revitalization—rather than state corporatism. In Guarani country bilingual education generated a revival of ideas about language and culture that under state and NGO tutelage legitimated the growth of the Guarani movement itself. However, class and liberatory discourses are not so easily effaced, as textbooks, public events defending “education,” and increasing Guarani protagonism in rural politics have been marked by claims for land, equality, and an end to feudal systems of debt peonage (Gustafson 2002). CIDOB’s other constituent organizations in the lowlands have had less access to bilingual education (due to administrative obstacles, lack of materials, and the difficulty of working with thirty distinct languages).

Decentralization as “Popular Participation”

In April of 1994, MNR President “Coni” Sánchez de Lozada also implemented a dramatic municipal decentralization plan—reportedly his personal favorite—called the “Popular Participation Law” (Ley de Participación Popular, LFP). The devolution of certain forms of decision-making and administrative control from centralized regimes to local (municipal) and regional (departmental) levels is broadly referred to as decentralization. In the terms of liberal modernization, decentralization is cast as a means of moving control over the allocation of state “services”—primarily basic health, education, and infrastructure seen as necessary for growth—closer to the “consumers” of these services. For supporters like the World Bank, decentralization promises efficiency and local accountability in the administration of public goods. With “Popular Participation” the central state treasury literally makes periodic deposits into 311 new bank accounts for the 311 municipalities across the country. Decisions about use of these monies have some state stipulations, but are managed by locally elected municipal councils, replacing the old departmental development corporations.

Along with neighborhood groups, civic committees, and other types of local community organizations, “traditional” indigenous organizations like the ayllus, captaincies, and cabildos can now be officially granted juridical status as “territorial base organizations” (organizaciones territoriales de base, OTBs). As representatives of juridical entities attached to a certain municipality, indigenous authorities can participate on oversight committees watching over municipal councils. If vetted by a national-level party, indigenous individuals can run for office on the municipal council itself. This intercultural “recognition” was imagined in official public rhetoric as a reconciliation of the modern Western state with the Indian substrate of Bolivia. As President Sánchez de Lozada said in a speech at Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government in 1995, “we’ve taken a Western model of governance...
and overlaid it onto an Oriental base.” Notwithstanding this rhetorical simplification, decentralization indeed emerges within myriad local and regional mosaics of identity and power as state reform seeks to reshape political energies through electoral cycles (Bigenho 1999). Popular participation is thus a regulated form of limited democratization that attempts to decentralize opposition movements and unions while seeking to re legitimate national political parties managed in quite undemocratic fashion by urban elites. Nonetheless, decentralization planners in Bolivia argue that their plan goes beyond the mere transfer of administrative responsibilities and generates a radical process of citizen participation (Van Cott 2000a). Even those who oppose neoliberal orthodoxies in other sectors concur that Bolivian decentralization promises democratic participation at the grassroots and may transform top-down corruption and prebendalism [this word refers to patron-client systems for distributing economic patronage] party systems (Albó and CIPCA 1999; Andersson 1999). Agrarian activists such as Miguel Urioste (2000) have even suggested that this fledgling “democracy” at the grassroots is preferable to the “old-style” union protagonism pursued by leaders like the ‘Mallku’ Quispe.

Openings to local participation also respond to pressure from indigenous movements and have been eagerly engaged in the lowlands and the highlands. Overall more than 50 percent of the country’s municipalities had some kind of indigenous or “peasant” representation after 1996 (Albó and CIPCA 2000). Because smaller and larger parties qualify for federal funds based on their success in local and national elections, decentralization launched a fever of recruiting indigenous candidates by parties across the ideological spectrum (K. O’Neill, personal communication). Smaller left-leaning parties such as the Free Bolivia Movement (MBL) are now trying to make advances and build constituencies from the ground up. As party politics in Bolivia is rarely an ideological issue, much less a template for ethnic block voting, large parties like the ADN, MNR, and MIR have also sought out indigenous candidates—complicating other modes of indigenous mobilization, dispersing political energies, and dividing leadership networks. In the lowlands, the Guaraní, Besiro (Chiquitano), and Guarayu have had notable successes because they had prior organizational solidity and could muster rural majorities in some municipalities. In the late 1999 elections, municipalities such as San Antonio de Lomerio had nearly all seats on the council occupied by Besiro representing four separate parties. In the Andes, local level syndicates have also engaged munici-

pal politics (Albó and CIPCA 2000; Urioste and Baldeamar 1998). Nonetheless, supra-local leaders and organizations have not all been weakened by decentralization. The coca growers mobilized voters by borrowing the affiliation of a near-defunct party called the Movement to Socialism (MAS). In party clothing the coca-growers’ union then took control of nearly every municipality in the Chapare region and put leader Evo Morales in the national Congress with more votes than any politician in the country. As the MAS expands its influence beyond the coca issue, Amazonian indigenous leaders with few explicit ties to coca have also borrowed the jersey of the MAS party to become local candidates, moves that create alliances and factions across mestizo, colonist, coca-grower, and indigenous groups. How these inter-party and intra-ethnic relations work themselves out in relation to formalized indigenous organizational politics is an unfolding question for future research.

The INRA Land Reform and Indigenous Territoriality

The issue of land reform and land tenure is perhaps the most conflictive of this trio of transformations. Liberal prescriptions for efficient market-led growth require land tenure regimes based on private property and efficient land markets. This requires an orderly land registry free of overlapping claims, fraudulent titles, and massive corruption (Muñoz and Lavadenz 1997). Beyond the suppositions of this position, one would also hope for a more equitable distribution of opportunities and land ownership that doesn’t reflect years of elite land-grabbing and violent dispossession of the poor—as does Bolivia’s current situation. After several years of engagement and struggle among the government, business elites, and indigenous and peasant movements, one set of answers to this land question came in the form of the INRA Law (Instituto Nacional de Reforma Agraria) passed in 1996.

As with education and decentralization, Bolivia’s version of land reform acknowledges some “indigenous” rights to collective ownership as a means of legitimating certain exceptions to a wider market-based model. The INRA law provides for the establishment of Tierras Comunarias de Origen (TCOs: Originary Communal Lands). Private holdings over a certain acreage that do not fulfill a social objective or generate tax revenue for the state can be expropriated for these indigenous territories. Supporters of the law emphasize that the provisions for lowland indigenous territories and stipulations for redistribution to migrants and landless peasants balance “equity and efficiency” and
make this more than an "orthodox land market liberalization measure" (Munoz and Lavadenz 1997, 19). Even radical observers have somewhat generously called the INRA law an "unusual combination of neoliberal and social justice measures" (Deere and Leon 2001, 37). However, policy analysts suggest that the reform program will have little effect on rural poverty in Bolivia, especially in the Andes where poverty is widespread (Munoz and Lavadenz 1997, 22).

This was not a generous gift to indigenous peoples. In 1995 CIDOB and the CSUTCB united to march on La Paz in defense of a more radical version of the law—a march that led to eleven deaths and an eventual division between the two organizations. CIDOB and the lowlanders won favor while the Andean indigenous farmers gained little. Andean communal lands—some held in collective title since the 1953 reform—remained largely unaffected (Munoz and Lavadenz 1997). Nonetheless, as lowland peoples began to make claims for TCOs, Andean communities have followed. Out of 113 demands for TCOs pending in November of 2001, 32 were demands made by "ayllus" of the Quechua and Aymara highlands (www.inra.gov.bo, February 2002). Colonist unions and lowland peasants can also use the INRA law to apply for both individual and collective (cooperative) holdings—sometimes conflicting with lowland indigenous territorial claims. For their part, lowland indigenous organizations have laid claim to some 14 percent of national territory (15 million hectares), although these TCOs have yet to be completely demarcated (ibid.; Munoz and Lavadenz 1997, 20). The limited provisions for land titling have been stalled and blocked during the Banzer regime, as each demand generates scores of complaints and political maneuvers by "third-party" landowners in indigenous regions. Localized violence in response to the demarcation is erupting between indigenous peoples and cattle ranchers in different sites (Assies 2000; infra.). In addition, indigenous peoples are rarely granted unitary collective holdings, more often regions are divided into several polygonal plots crisscrossed with superposition of "third-parties" (ranchers, large farms, towns, and public works). Unless coupled with some kind of municipality-like ascription of political power, territoriality promises little in the way of self-governance, control over natural (especially subsoil) resources, or guaranteed access to quality public services. The land reform has, however, generated a new set of identity politics, as diverse communities attempt to redefine collective properties through expression of "indigenous" identity as well as recuperation of traditional areas of use (e.g. Lema 2000, Roper 2000).

These reforms in education, decentralization, and land tenure simultaneously produce standardization and variegation in their logics and their effects. If there are unifying logics behind Bolivian versions of neoliberal interculturalism, they might include the overarching divide (strategically exploited by the state) between lowland and highland indigenous histories, entities, and juridical status; the regulated and technocrat-controlled modes of reform decision making and incultation of subjects with new "knowledge" for participation; the reproduction of state legitimacy through idioms, laws, and entities for bureaucratically channeling grassroots action; and the attempted respatialization of politics away from state-centric categories of "class" and confrontation with the central government. However, despite this apparent unity, each reform also invokes, legitimizes, and instrumentalizes distinct political imaginaries of the "indigenous" as supra-local linguistic territory or "nation," as a municipal-level "traditional" authority; or as a potential regional "territorial" collective. Each also seeks to channel indigenous political energies—and diverse levels of indigenous organizations—into distinct state entities shaped by very different kinds of power (schools, parties, bureaucratic structures) and distinct temporal and spatial frames and cycles. Each reform also puts into a play a different, sometimes contradictory set of material and political resources linking Bolivian state legitimacy with European and North American development aid. While there are certainly identifiable substrates that bring these changes into something we can label "liberal indigenism" or "neoliberal interculturalism," contradictions and redirections abound. Case studies of local (Bigenho 1999; Andersson 1999; Roper 2000); sectoral (Assies 2000; Gustafson 2002); and institutional (Van Cott 2000b) issues must be considered to grasp the complexity of state change as it intersects multiple sites and levels. One might also consider the significance of these reforms in light of ongoing social conflicts, as I attempt in what follows.

III. "Bloody September": Reformism and Mobilization

Three sets of what would be framed as "indigenous" protests erupted in the Bolivian national arena in mid-2000. These include the CIDOB mobilization of June and July 2000 in Santa Cruz; the Aymara-dominated CSUTCB mobilizations of April and September of 2000 in the La Paz region; and the ongoing coca growers' struggles in the Chapare region near Cochabamba. The Aymara-CSUTCB and the CIDOB marches were clearly self-ascribed indigenous mobilizations. Both
evoked claims of indigeneity to make their demands legitimate and both were labeled as indigenous by the press and government. While the "ethnic" identity of the coca growers as both individuals and as a collective movement is somewhat more complex, I include them here because they were portrayed as part of the wider "Indian" masses by the urban press, because coca-grower politics are inseparable from wider peasant-indigenous issues, and because cocalero leader Evo Morales would also take up the label of "indigenous" during the conflicts. In what follows I will briefly describe each mobilization and conclude with some observations on how these events are linked both to intercultural reformism and to other political processes.

The Context: Political and Economic Crisis

Bolivia in 2000 and 2001 was in a political and economic crisis heightened by the fact that the country was entering into the pre-electoral period for the 2002 presidential elections. Political parties and movement leaders began staking out positions and constructing alliances for national elections. Opposition parties began to attack the government as did a number of movements, sectors, and regional interests. Privatization plans generated a violent conflict over water in Cochabamba in April 2000. The struggle unified urban Cochabamba civic groups with the coca growers and nearly brought down Banzer. The Ayllmara mobilized in April and again in September, and an array of other public and private sector interests made unrelated demands on the government. Strikes by state employees included the teachers, health workers, and riot police. Truck drivers called a stoppage against rising gas prices and even business elites demanding credit relief threatened a hunger strike. On top of it all, the U.S.-sponsored "drug war" was pushing for complete eradication of "illegal" coca—sparking yet another year of violence in the Chapare region. President Banzer was rather weak in his responses. Determined to cleanse his image as an ex-dictator, he was somewhat unwilling to use the kind of force traditionally practiced by the Bolivian state in the face of significant protests. Despite the regime's feeble attempt at holding conciliatory "National Dialogues," diverse social protests continued and peaked in September of that year.

CIDOB: Public Negotiations and Backstage Politics

The CIDOB march began and ended with less drama on the national scene than the Ayllmara and cocalero mobilizations. CIDOB had organized a Grand National Assembly of Indigenous Peoples in June of 2000 as a means of getting their demands on the agenda of Banzer's national "dialogue." After preparatory meetings in seven sub-regions, CIDOB called for its constituent organizations to gather in Santa Cruz to present a set of unified demands to the government. A pliego petitorio (list of demands) was drawn up by various CIDOB committees on land, education, health, housing, and natural resources. These included the acceleration of the INRA land reform and the reversion of certain new provisions, the immediate granting of collective titles stalled in the bureaucracy, the reversion of recent timber concessions in indigenous territories, and increased social investment in health and bilingual education. Other more specific demands included those seeking use of debt relief monies for improved housing for the Guarani and Weenahayek regions and yellow fever vaccination and anti-malarial campaigns in the Amazonian Pando and Beni departments. The political wish list also included radical calls for the granting of municipal status to indigenous territories (the TCOs) and for indigenous control over subsoid resources. The right to elect its own indigenous minister at the national level topped the CIDOB list.

Around 500 indigenous leaders gathered in Santa Cruz in the early days of July. While all were constituents of CIDOB, a portion were aligned with the leadership of one influential CIDOB constituent called CPESC, the Coordinator of Ethnic Peoples of Santa Cruz, representing primarily Chiquitano communities. CIDOB was also joined by two components of "peasant" unions that were more closely aligned with CPESC. One was the Santa Cruz Department affiliate of the national CSUTCB movement (FSUTC-Santa Cruz). The other included provincial and departmental branches of colonists' unions from the northern parts of Santa Cruz and the Amazon area. Each had specific demands somewhat overlapping with those of CIDOB—most clearly the more rapid implementation of the INRA law—though neither of these peasant entities claimed "indigenous" identity. These inter-ethnic alliances had roots in political party connections (through the MAS) and certain NGO agrarian positions promoting alliances across ethnic lines.

Under surveillance from plainclothes police, and rapidly tiring from cold rains, sickness, and lack of logistical support, the indigenous and peasant representatives weakened as government negotiators stalled for time. As the CIDOB-led coalition spoke of initiating a march on La Paz, government ministers finally arrived to negotiate in Santa Cruz. The government would try to sectorialize demands (negotiating separately for health, education, and land), leveraging relatively easy deliv-
ery of schools and homes against more contentious points. Some ministers reportedly attempted to bribe individual indigenous leaders to withdraw from the march.18

CIDOB reached an initial accord for investment in the areas of health, education, and housing, and declared victory on July 4. However, this agreement was disputed by some of the Amazonian indigenous and northern Santa Cruz-based colonists and peasants as it made no specific agreements on land demarcation processes. CIDOB members CPESC and CIRABO (Central Indigena Regional de la Amazonia Boliviana, representing nine northern Amazonian ethnic groups) and the peasant-colonists maintained the plan to march. CIDOB issued a public international statement supporting CPESC and the colonists, although they declared their interests resolved (Amazon Coalition e-mail). The CPESC-colonist-peasant faction went on to achieve the signing of another agreement several days later. This included the promise to move forward with the titling of territories (TCOs) in Chiquitano lands, a promise to grant land titles for colonists' parcels, the reversion of the timber concessions, and even an agreement to establish the Chiquitano Academy of the Besiro Language.

While I am not prepared to speculate on the backstage politics behind the agreements reached, this outcome highlights the difficulties of speaking of clearly unified indigenous movements and interests. Here party politics, state sectorialized reformism, NGO-dependence, and regional alliances serve to complicate the indigenous position. The institutionalization of "cultural difference" by sectors (education, land, health) here came into play as state agents dismantled wider political positions through selective and separate negotiations. External resources from NGOs continue to be instrumental to the shaping of indigenous tactics and alliances across regions and ethnic boundaries. However, most significant in these events is perhaps the fact that neither the state's liberal indigenism nor indigenous identity-based mobilization precludes the formation of cross-ethnic alliances. The emergence of new connections between entities of national unions and local movements now fragmenting and recombining in new spaces is a process that responds neither to the objectives of official reform nor to a clearly "indigenous" political project.

**CSUTCB: Between the Aymara and the Cocaleros**

As the CIDOB protest faded from the scene, the Aymara and coca growers struggles would shake the country with road stoppages beginning in April 2000 and continuing through much of the following two years. Judging by the press commentary, the deployment of state violence, and the effective paralysis of the country for twenty days in September, the Aymara and coca growers brought significantly more consternation to the government than did CIDOB. This has much to do with geopolitics. Aymara communities of the CSUTCB are geographically positioned around La Paz and have long been cast as the Bolivian elites' prototypical ethnic foil, garnering much of the intimate racial prejudice expressed against "indigenous" peoples in the national arena.19 The coca growers are also conveniently positioned along the main highway between La Paz and Santa Cruz. Demographic weight and geographic position grant relative power to these sectors through their use of the nonviolent *bloqueo* (blockade) of the country's main highway. Plan Colombia and the U.S.-backed militarization of the drug war also made of the coca growers' movement an international "security" issue. Internal movement cycles and the upcoming elections further contributed to the events. Both Aymara leader Quispe and cocalero leader Evo Morales were engaged in their own competition for prominence within the CSUTCB movement—shaken up by its connections with national political parties and maneuvers for support. All of these factors—geographic centrality, international security, and electoral junctures of both states and movement—gave these events national prominence.

CSUTCB leader Felipe Quispe mobilized several thousand Aymara in his area of influence near La Paz. Blocks were set up around La Paz in April and then again in September. Quite distinct from CIDOB, Quispe and the Aymara proposed a complete overhaul of the INRA law, demanding the implementation of an older CSUTCB proposal, the aptly named INDIO Law (Instituto Nacional de Desarrollo Indigena y Origionario). This sought indigenous control over land reform, distribution of titles and territories, and control over subsoil, soil, and water rights for Andean communities. The Aymara also asked for significant state investment in their region and one thousand new tractors—even as the Mallku Quispe simultaneously announced the coming formation of an autonomous Aymara state and Aymara military high command.

The coca growers blocked a score of points along the country's principal highway and shut off all movement between Santa Cruz, Cochabamba, and La Paz. The leader Evo Morales, like many of the coca growers, is a migrant of indigenous (Quechua and Aymara) de-
The idioms through which indigenous politics are still (mis)interpreted without boots" (Oliva 2000) seeking a "cornmunitarian guerrilla war" as a warning against academic simplifications as well. Outside of descriptive interest, I comment on press accounts to point out the distance between "interculturalism" as an official policy and in one segment of the public sphere. These dualisms should also serve as a warning against academic simplifications as well.

Responses: Escalation and Violence

In September 2000 the country was paralyzed. Press accounts and editorials decrying indigenous subversion and imminent racial violence escalated with the conflicts. As violence between the army and protestors escalated, urban commentators called for government action, and the press adopted a language of "we" the urban, modern, Spanish-speaking Bolivia against "them," the anti-systemic, anti-modern, violent, racial other. The reading of La Paz and Santa Cruz-based papers that follows is certainly only a partial lens on these events, but suggests that government violence found some sympathy among urban readers who spoke of events in terms of a modern, ordered, Bolivia against the primitive, unruly, Indian other. Talk of "two Bolivias" returned to the press, creating dichotomies which dehumanized protesters and facilitated justifications for army violence. Urban non-indigenous ideas about the 'Indians' are still mired in colonialist discourses, seemingly incapable of processing the reality of new indigenous protest.

Outside of descriptive interest, I comment on press accounts to point out the distance between "interculturalism" as an official policy and the idioms through which indigenous politics are still (mis)interpreted in one segment of the public sphere. These dualisms should also serve as a warning against academic simplifications as well.

The Aymara Felipe Quispe was described as an anti-national "Nazi without boots" (Oliva 2000) seeking a "communitarian guerrilla war" (LR 10/3/00), a return to the "premodern world" of "superstitions and cultural backwardness," and the expulsion of the whites from the country (LP 10/5/00; LR 10/3/00,10/4/00). As meetings with govern-
These leaders and their constituents were further attacked because of their supposedly determinative linguistic identity (arguments that returned in later attacks against bilingual education), and dependence on outsiders (a sign that any powerful indigenous leader is certainly incapable of autonomous political agency):

"the word democracy does not exist in either Aymara or Quechua, the languages of the Mallku [the Aymara leader] and Evo [Morales, the cocalero leader]. Neither they, nor the external forces who are controlling and financing them even know how to pronounce it" (Rueda Peña 2000c).

An anonymous writer in **El Diario** further merged language and subversion, complaining that the "Mallku and Evo have become integrated—both speaking the same language of sedition and subversion, though one is Aymarist and the other is Quechuist—with suspicious links to narco-terrorism [...]. It appears that they are in serious negotiations to convert Bolivia into another Colombia" (ED 10/3/2000). With such commentaries, all that was seen as indigenous was cast as an anti-modern threat with biological and racial undertones. Fortunately Bolivia was not in the midst of a racial war. Nonetheless, the movements would cost the lives (at the hands of the military) of more than fifteen coca growers and Aymara protesters and over 100 wounded. Peasants defending themselves with sticks and slings would inflict wounds on some troops as well. Two or three military officers were killed. Rightist elites in Santa Cruz—including the neo-fascist Santa Cruz Youth Union—began what looks to be the roots of paramilitarism, declaring their intention to violently break the coca growers' blockade and resist the invasion of the Aymara "kollas." The U.S. government even stoked the flames by declaring via State Department spokesman Peter Romero that there was evidence that Venezuelan president Chavez was supporting "violent indigenous movements" in Bolivia and in Ecuador (**Miami Herald**, December 8, 2000).

**Temporary Resolutions**

Both leaders eventually reached separate agreements with the government—though both agreements went unfulfilled and each would mobilize again in the following months. On the Aymara side, the state promised significant investments in infrastructure and investment in the Mallku's Omasuyos region in the form of a 26-million-dollar project funded by Japan, including one thousand new tractors (a populist demand, as yet undelivered). The state also promised to grant new lands in the lowlands for Andean colonization and to revise the INRA law, both of which sparked protest from CIDOB. Rearranging (or reacknowledging) the continued salience of the "peasants," the Vice Ministry of Indigenous and Original Peoples' Affairs (VAIPO) was reformed into a ministry (MACPIO) with the return of the 'C'-word, campesino. Attempting to assuage CIDOB as well, a Guarani leader from the lowlands was named to the position of vice minister. For his part, Quispe announced the formation of a new indigenous party called the 'Pachakuti Indigenous Movement' (MIP).

The coca growers appeared to receive much less. The eradication continued as planned, although construction of the new military base was postponed. The government suggested that with coca eradicated, there was no need to speak to Morales and that there were no longer any "legal" coca-growers' movements in the Chapare. Morales and the Cochabamba civic committees sought to rejuvenate their protest with another march on La Paz the following year and intermittent conflicts continue. The surprise resignation of Banzer and his imminent death see new tensions arise. In February 2002 the government ceded to cocaleros' defense of regional coca markets (against U.S. wishes), though Evo Morales was removed from Congress under accusations of sedition and instigation of violence. Morales would eventually announce his candidacy for president under the MAS banner.

**Conclusions: Interpreting Indigenous Politics**

What might be the deeper relationships between these events and the sectoral reforms that have characterized neoliberal interculturalism in Bolivia? With respect to bilingual education, it would appear that these regional movements have little relation. In the midst of these conflicts, leaders of the Educational Councils of the Quechua and Aymara "nations" continued meeting with educational experts to work on curricular development and language standardization. Nonetheless, editorialists turned their racially charged pens against bilingual education as well. Rueda Peña argued that bilingual education was a waste of time since languages like Aymara were "without grammar" and "notably inferior to Spanish" (Rueda Peña 2001). "As in Chiapas" it would only serve to disintegrate a "national unity" built on the Spanish language (Rueda Peña 2001b).
In relation to municipal decentralization these mobilizations could be seen in various perspectives. Were the movements led by Quispe and Morales desperate attempts to maintain supra-local legitimacy in the face of an increasing localization of politics? Quispe himself blamed "popular participation" for the weakening of katarismo and the resegregation of power. In his terms decentralization meant the "national level for the whites" and the "local level for the Indians" (LR 10/4/00). Nonetheless, Quispe's regional MIP party may make its strongest move via the electoral process at both municipal and national levels. The coca growers had already used municipal elections to their advantage while maintaining a supra-local unity, albeit one dependent on a crop destined for eradication. In the lowlands, indigenous leaders with more localized constituencies continue to contest municipal offices, many now under the MAS banner of Morales. It is clear that decentralized municipal governance is not leading to the end of pan-local movements.

The INRA law and the issue of land were directly linked to the shaping of these conflicts and will continue to be a source of contention in the foreseeable future. A "Land Summit" in November 2001 was attended by key actors in this milieu, marking older and newer organizations indigenous and peasant movements: the CSUTCB, CIDOB, the new Landless Movement (MST), and the Council of Markas and Ayllus (CONAMAQ) (www.inra.gov.bo).

One might argue that these events were merely side effects of cyclical electoral gambits and the U.S.-backed drug war. This is certainly a possibility, although I have pointed out shifting foci of mobilization and alliances that are leading to new configurations of "indigenous" and inter-ethnic politics within and beyond official interculturalism. As the 1990s development boom fades, indigenous movements are seeking new forms of sustaining their institutionality that do not signal mere acquiescence to state models. This will entail engaging party politics, acquiescing to some dependence on state, Church, or NGO projects, or seeking some benefit from multinational resource extraction. For example, the Guarani are in the midst of bilateral negotiations with the gas transport consortium Transredes, whose pipelines move gas from Bolivia to Brazil across Guarani country. On the other hand, the Chiquitanos, with the help of environmental NGOs, have been struggling against the pipeline crossing their lands—now embroiled in the Enron debacle.

I have argued that we pursue interpretations of indigenous issues and state reformism through consideration of historical patterns of variegated statecraft and current variations in "indigenous" political locations. This decenters our discussions and problematizes dualist notions of "states versus Indians." This also means interrogating official interculturalism (or 'liberal indigenism') at different levels and sites, and also means questioning our use of the overarching term neoliberal for defining state processes. I use the term with some reluctance. It signals, yet also reifies, an imagined hegemony that is only part of what defines Bolivian statecraft. International financial regimes (and the U.S. military apparatus) have significant sway in shaping Bolivian politics and cultural idioms—and the respatializing effects of neoliberalism on contestatory politics are certainly real—we should neither cast neoliberalism as all-powerful hegemony, nor reduce Bolivian politics to the expression of the "Washington Consensus." Contradictory institutional processes and political agency disputed across multiple fields must be understood as sites wherein power is disputed both regionally and nationally. Resuscitating the cry of neoliberalism has been useful to indigenous movements and has framed several analyses of the nature of the indigenous challenge (Yashar 1998; Nash 2001). However, indigenous movements do not represent any uniform response to neoliberalism as a set of governing logics, logics in any case far from seamless in their manifestations. Rather, indigenous movements are sophisticated, multi-layered actors simultaneously engaging an array of international, national, and regional processes. Our analyses should steer clear of dualistic framings which find echoes in popular racial discourse. Neoliberalism itself may have its days numbered in Bolivia. Notwithstanding the multiple sites of contestation discussed here, events like the rise of natural gas as the newly imagined "tin" of Bolivia may signal a new era of dependency and clamor for rebuilding the patronage state. The technocrats' utopia of "free" markets, "good" (party-mediated) governance, and trickle-down equity is far from a reality in Bolivia. This utopia is unsettled by highly visible crises like that of Enron (entangled in Bolivian gas) and Argentina (the failed "model" right next door), the specter of a re-militarization of politics, and other utopias still circulating in the country. In terms of the highly fragmented state and the multiple sites of indigenous and other forms of social mobilization I discuss here, Bolivia's experiment with the new era of interculturalism is only beginning to hint at some of its possible outcomes, one of which emerged in the presidential elections of 2002.
The 2002 Elections

As this volume went to press, Bolivia went to the polls. Following another series of coca-grower protests, and yet another divided CIDOB march on La Paz in mid-2002, indigenous and peasant movements have definitively staked a claim on national political power. In the elections, coca-grower leader Evo Morales and his MAS party gained stunning support, taking second place with 20.92 percent of the vote, edging out millionaire newcomer Manfred Reyes (20.91 percent), and only slightly trailing the center-right MNR (22.45 percent). The Aymaran leader Felipe Quispe and the new MIP party took fifth place with 6 percent—even beating the now decaying party of General Banzer. Banzer himself passed away with little fanfare as his party squabbled itself into deterioration. It appears that the MNR and Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada will retake the presidency, guaranteeing some continuity of liberal and neo-indigenist reformism. Nonetheless, the presence of indigenous and peasant leaders in congress is overwhelming. MAS and the MIP together polled more votes than any other party, and MAS will have eight out of twenty-seven senators (including a number of long-time radical miners’ and coca-growers’ leaders), and 27 out of 130 deputies (including Evo Morales himself). Quispe’s MIP will also have six deputies. Andean surnames like Auca, Huanca, Mamani, Condori, and Colque now find themselves occupying space among the Macleans, Sánchez, Paz, and Justinianos. Chiquitano leader Josué Baiabla Parapaino, who followed Apaza led a failed siege of La Paz following the Tupac Amaru rebellion in the late 18th century; Aymara caudillo Zárate Willka supported liberal elites during Bolivia’s turn of the century civil-war, but was later executed when he began to demand rights for the Aymara who followed him.

Notes

1 The analysis of events in this chapter draws on Bolivian newspaper sources collected between April 2000 and January 2002. Background information on state reforms draws on recent research by anthropologists and policy analysts as well as the author’s fieldwork (1993–1999) on indigenist politics and bilingual education in the Guaraní region and in Bolivian policy-making arenas. Analysis of the CIDOB event draws on recent conversations with indigenous leaders of CIDOB and CPESC. My thanks to Jordi Beneria and Derrick Hindery for their dispatches on the CIDOB march, and to Jordi Beneria for his first-hand insights. Discussion with the other authors in this volume and with María Elena García, Luis Enrique López, Tony Lucero, Kathleen O’Neill, and Claret Vargas was helpful. The interpretations are the author’s responsibility and should not be taken as representative of indigenous positions nor of those consulted during the writing of this chapter.

2 Toque de a degüella, figuratively “sound the attack,” refers to the downward swoop of a sword, i.e., “signal the beheading.” This and following translations by the author.

3 Mallku means “condor” in Aymara and Quechua. It is also a designation of traditional ceremonials leadership. Apaza led a failed siege of La Paz following the Tupac Amaru rebellion in the late 18th century; Aymara caudillo Zárate Willka supported liberal elites during Bolivia’s turn of the century civil-war, but was later executed when he began to demand rights for the Aymara who followed him.

4 For example, former Aymara vice-president Victor Hugo Cardenas, congresswoman Remedio Lozas, and the congressman Evo Morales, among others. In a wider sphere of cultural politics Aymara and Quechua are also taken up in spheres of debate as varied as native language education, where the idea of “nationalities” is circulated (infra); in music and folklore, where hybrid expressions of indigenness are invented and reshaped through spectacle and performance (Gustafson 1992); in urban indigenous intellectual networks (Albo 1994, THOA 1998, Chachaki 2000); and in populist politics, where a range of raced and gendered substratas intersect public performances of cholo and indigenous identities as broadly “popular” (Albro 2000). At the risk of reproducing an erroneous stereotype that seeks to contain the “indigenous” in “rural” places, in this chapter I will focus primarily on expressions of the indigenous as they relate to regional, mostly agrarian-based mobilizations.

5 VAIP (2000).


7 The terms “indigena” and “indio” are seen as derogatory by some An-
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The technocrat reformers rejected proposals to allow for independent candidates to run for local office. Thus any candidate—indigenous or otherwise—would have to seek the support (or be sought out) by one of the nationally approved parties. See Van Cott (2000a) for a rich narrative description of these discussions. The carefully managed opening to local “participation” reflects a substrate of technocrat discourses wary of the loss of “authority” (autoridad)—a fear constructed at least partly on ideas about the indigenous “racial” threat and natural proclivities toward disorder held by uneducated masses. Decentralization was cast as a process of “educating” and “capacitating” the people. The restriction on participation to nationally controlled parties also aids in the reproduction of centralized “authority.” Thus Bolivian municipal politics is technically less democratic than notoriously authoritarian Guatemala, where local civic groups and indigenous networks can organize independent committees to run for municipal office, (e.g., Maya-dominated Xel-Ha in Quetzaltenango). This political party monopoly on local politics is currently under debate in Bolivia.

Policy makers and political analysts (and some indigenous leaders as well) reproduce this dichotomous language of cleavage between “Western liberalism” and “indigenous communitarianism” in their official documents and empirical research (R. Calla 1992; Van Cott 2000a). Like other binaristic framings, this is a reductionist political position rather than a reflection of anything empirically discernible at the ground level where the state and indigenous peoples have long centuries of interdependent existence.

Government avoidance of the more politically charged term “territory” is not coincidental, though I have heard indigenous leaders use the term territory when describing TCOs.

The coca-growers’ longer heritage as descendants of highland miners (mestizo, Quechua, and Aymara) and the highly multiethnic shaping of the coca region complicate ascription of anyone ethno-linguistic identity to the coca-growers. Compare this with the discourse of the cocalero movement in Colombia, where the identity of colonos is somewhat more sharply opposed to that of the indigenous (Ramirez, this volume). Although they are usually labeled “Quechua” by urban commentators, the coca-growers are a heterogeneous population, and, like the followers of Quispe, do not represent all Quechua or Aymara subjects. Evo Morales was labeled “Quechua” by the press—a convenient way of lumping both labels into the wider mass seen as “violent” and “Indian”—though he is in fact also often labeled Aymara (www.aymaranet.org). In any case he hails from Challapata, Oruro, a Quechua-Aymara bilingual region. These facts further suggest the need to consider critically the political meanings of deployment of one or another label. It is not my intention to ascribe (or question) the “indigenous” identity of the coca-growers or other protagonists, but rather to consider how and why these issues are spoken of in certain ways in public politics.

The dialogues were partially linked to the debt-relief granted to Bolivia as an HIPC (Highly Indebted Poor Country) in 2000, through which the monies were to be distributed to favor the poorest municipalities of the country.

The INRA law deems land unproductive if it does not fulfill a social and

dean leaders who consider that the heritage of the Inka empire marks a higher level of political organization than that historically obtained by the lowland “churchos” or savages (Chumira, personal communication). On the other hand, the term “campesino” is taken as a marker of contrarian syndicalism and party tutelage by some CIDOB leaders, who prefer the territorial imaginary and autonomy evoked by the notion of “indigenous people.” “Original peoples” is somewhat of a mid-point. As pointed out by numerous observers and the other authors in this volume, the tug-of-war between “class” and “ethnicity” is central to the indigenous question in Latin America. It most often leads to agglomerations of terms which all seek to contain indigenous identities within a space defined by rural agrarianism, albeit for different interests. The syndical organizations have also pursued this “rural agrarian” unitv through usage of phrases like “peasant-indigenous” in their research and manifestos (e.g., Albó and CIPCA 1999).

This boom in indigenous-centered development is spreading across the Andes and lowlands in other countries as well (cf. Ramos 1998). The spread of talleres (training workshops) has led some of my Guaraní colleagues to jokingly complain of talleritas, “workshop-itis” and contributes to a mode of conflict as leaders compete through “per-diem politics” and invitations to national and international events. Nonetheless, NGO and state meetings and workshops indirectly subsidize movement reproduction (by bringing leaders together) and directly reproduce movement legitimacy in the wider public sphere. This dependence on transnational resources runs parallel to the foreign dependence of the Bolivian state political system itself, and should not be taken as a sign of inauthenticity or artificiality of the indigenous movement.

See Willis et al. (1999) for a review. There has been a boom in research on Bolivian decentralization too immense to cite here (see citations below).

The technocrat reformers rejected proposals to allow for independent candidates to run for local office. Thus any candidate—indigenous or otherwise—would have to seek the support (or be sought out) by one of the nationally approved parties. See Van Cott (2000a) for a rich narrative description of these discussions. The carefully managed opening to local “participation” reflects a substrate of technocrat discourses wary of the loss of “authority” (autoridad)—a fear constructed at least partly on ideas about the indigenous “racial” threat and natural proclivities toward disorder held by uneducated masses. Decentralization was cast as a process of “educating” and “capacitating” the people. The restriction on participation to nationally controlled parties also aids in the reproduction of centralized “authority.” Thus Bolivian municipal politics is technically less democratic than notoriously authoritarian Guatemala, where local civic groups and indigenous networks can organize independent committees to run for municipal office, (e.g., Maya-dominated Xel-Ha in Quetzaltenango). This political party monopoly on local politics is currently under debate in Bolivia.
economic function (or if no taxes are paid on it). Such lands are then available for appropriation with and without indemnification, for redistribution as indigenous TCOs. INRA bureaucrats had sought to introduce a loophole—with no public consensus—which would exempt properties of less than 500 hectares (thus potentially allowing large landowners the opportunity to divide ownership among individual family members and avoid expropriation). CIDOB’s demands opposed this change.

Throughout Latin America the state is the self-proclaimed owner of subsoil resources (oil, gas, minerals), a fundamental obstacle to indigenous territorial claims (and potential economic influence, thereby political autonomy).

While this is hearsay I have gathered from indigenous participants and the press, it is well within the realm of imaginable practice.

While a specifically Andean, and especially La Pazean phenomenon, the intimate racisms between the Aymara and the q’ara (mestizo or criollo) tend to predominate in highly centralized “Bolivian” politics. Aymara women largely constitute the urban labor force in mestizo households, Aymara-descended “cholos and cholas” control much of the market in basic goods and contraband, and the ever-growing city of El Alto near La Paz is largely viewed as an Aymara threat to urban Hispanic La Paz (cf. Gill 1994; 2000). Even lowland Hispanics of Santa Cruz have made comments to me such as, “I can put up with a Quechua, but the Aymara I can’t stand” (Anonymous). Such proximity to the centralized state and the racist imaginary explains, I believe, the intensely felt fear of Aymara leaders like Felipe Quispe, as well as the complexly negotiated rapprochements between such leaders and the white political class. This is a long historical relationship between the Aymara and the Hispanic-Bolivian state which is by no means new to the multicultural era. This centralization of both Andean Aymara intelligentsia and peasantist movements at the heart of state power certainly contributes to the deceptive success of “Bolivian” indigenous movements (compare with Gelles’ discussion of Peru in this volume), but is in fact a highly regionalized Aymara phenomenon of ten provinces near La Paz.

These are not the poorest nor most culturally “traditional” Andean regions. Quispe’s Omasuyos area is relatively prosperous and thoroughly integrated with international trade, urban migration, schools, and national party politics.

For a comparative case of racial and gender ideologies mediating anti-indigenous violence, see Stephen (1999).

The tenuous support for bilingual education by some progressive-minded elites takes on new significance in such a highly anti-indigenous context.

Aymara protesters beat one military officer to death in revenge for the shooting deaths of two Aymara in April. As the urban press reacted against these “violent Indians,” Quispe would respond, “it’s a crime to kill a white or a mestizo, but killing an Indian is like killing a bird here. There is no justice.” (LR 4/17/00). In the Chapare two soldiers were kidnapped and killed, although it is unclear who was responsible. One army sergeant killed in the Chapare (allegedly by coca-growers) was an Aymara from Achacachi, the Mallku Quispe’s center of support (compare here Schirmer’s description of military strategy and inter-indigenous violence from the Guatemalan case).

As Abercrombie (1991) emphasized in a review of Bolivian indigenous politics a decade ago, local heterogeneity belies any attempt to conclude that “Indians” and “Indianness” is any one identity in the country (cf. Bigenho 1999). Gelles (this volume) discusses perspectives on “Andeanism” and the limitations of the category “indigenous.”

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Acronyms

ADN  Acción Democrática Nacionalista, Nationalist Democratic Action
APG  Asamblea del Pueblo Guarani, Guarani People's Assembly
CSUTCB  Confederación Sindical Única de Trabajadores
CAMPESINOS de Bolivia, Unified Syndical Confederation
of Peasant Workers of Bolivia
CIDOB  Confederación Indígena de Bolivia, Indigenous Confederation
of Bolivia
COB  Confederación Obrera Boliviana, Bolivian Workers' Federation
CONMERB  Confederación Nacional del Magisterio de la Educación
Rural de Bolivia, National Teachers' Confederation of
Bolivian Rural Education
CPESC  Coordinadora de Pueblos Etnicos de Santa Cruz, Coordinator
of Ethnic Peoples of Santa Cruz
EIB  Educación Intercultural Bilingüe, Bilingual Intercultural
Education
FSC  Federación Sindical de Colonizadores, Syndical Federation
of Colonists
INRA  Instituto Nacional de Reforma Agraria, National Agrarian
Reform Institute
LPP  Ley de Participación Popular, Popular Participation Law
MAS  Movimiento al Socialismo, Movement to Socialism
MIP  Movimiento Indígena Pachakuti, Pachakuti Indigenous
Movement
MIR  Movimiento Izquierda Revolucionaria, Leftist Revolutionary Movement
MNR  Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario, Nationalist
Revolutionary Movement

SECTION IV

Lowland South American Countries