

**Human Development Report Office**

**OCCASIONAL PAPER**

**Background paper for HDR 2004**

**Citizenship and Ethnic Politics in Latin America**

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**2004/16**



# **Citizenship and Ethnic Politics in Latin America<sup>1</sup>**

## **Working Paper for UNDP 2004 Report Building Inclusive Societies**

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Final Draft: December 2003**

Citizenship is at the core of democracy. It is also at the core of many ethnic struggles around the world. Indeed, debates over the boundaries and content of citizenship have often given rise to ethnic based movements, parties, agendas, and at times, violence. Broadly speaking, these ethnic struggles have taken two broad forms. First, in their most extreme and exclusionary form, social and political movements have formed to redefine the *boundaries* of citizenship by *restricting* membership to a given ethnonational group. Informed by nationalist ideas and international rhetoric about self-determination, groups in Eastern Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Middle East have mobilized in multiethnic/national polities to construct nation-states where membership is allocated along ethnonational lines. This program has often had destructive consequences as non-nationals have been excluded, often violently, from the polities that they once identified as theirs. These concerns have dominated studies of ethnic conflict (Sri Lanka, Rwanda, Ireland, Israel/Palestine) and studies of genocide (Germany, Rwanda, the former Yugoslavia). In both cases, struggles to restrict citizenship along ethnonational lines have commonly resulted in violence.

While we are perhaps most familiar with these violent conflicts, not all struggles over citizenship have resulted in violent struggles over national boundaries. A second form has occurred over the *content* rather than boundaries of citizenship in multiethnic settings. We have found that indigenous groups, in particular, have mobilized (once again) in recent years to demand a redefinition of citizenship that would maintain their rights as citizens of a polity but also accommodate their community-based demands to local autonomy. These struggles have most often been discussed in studies of multiculturalism and have tended to focus on the more established democracies, including the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and even India.<sup>2</sup> However, these non-violent movements to redefine the content of citizenship are not restricted to these older democracies. Indeed, during the last part of the twentieth century, these movements also started to emerge in the new democracies of Latin America.

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<sup>1</sup> This working paper draws heavily on Yashar (1998, 1999, and forthcoming).

<sup>2</sup> Multiculturalism has come to mean many things. It is used here to refer to public *policies* that recognize ethnoracial diversity and that allocate some goods/resources along those lines. It is *not* used to describe a diverse society or to refer to individuals whose parents come from different ethnoracial backgrounds.

This working paper addresses the intersection of citizenship and ethnic politics. But rather than focus on the most familiar cases of ethnic violence in new democracies or multiculturalism in the established democracies, it casts its gaze on the least likely region: Latin America. Latin America has developed a reputation as an anomaly in studies of cultural pluralism, ethnic conflict, and multiculturalism. In several classic cases, it is described as the region where ethnic identities have had little political salience. Ethnic cleavages are comparatively weak; violent ethnic conflicts are rare, isolated, and small; and assimilation and miscegenation have been described as giving way to a new cosmic race, a racial democracy, or at the very least a melting pot.<sup>3</sup> Consequently, efforts to allocate or redefine citizenship have been understood as issues of democratization rather than issues of ethnic politics – whether viewed from the perspective of ethnic conflict or multiculturalism. In other words, citizenship is understood as civil and political rights – independent of any particular ethnic content or conflict. Indeed, with the transition to democracy, Latin American constitutions granted to all individuals (independent of ethnic origins) the right to participate as citizens with relatively few formal political restrictions.<sup>4</sup> Compared to other regions, this equalization and universalization of citizenship is noteworthy. For whereas democratization in much of Africa, Asia, and Eastern Europe resulted in the activation and/or intensification of ethnic violence – as different ethnic groups vied for power and/or sought to carve out new nation states – Latin America democratized with no apparent ethnic hitches – no ethnic violence; and no challenges to carve up the nation-state.<sup>5</sup>

Most analysts, therefore, assumed that ethnicity and citizenship were nonpolitical issues in the new Latin American democracies. By the end of the twentieth century, however, the entire landscape of Latin American politics shifted as indigenous movements formed in one country after another to contest contemporary citizenship. Vocal and increasingly powerful indigenous movements have emerged throughout the region. We have seen a rise in movement organizing and protest in countries as diverse as Ecuador, Mexico, Brazil, Bolivia, Guatemala, Nicaragua and beyond. Unlike the other

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<sup>3</sup> Ethnic relations in Latin America have played out historically in quite different ways from African and Asian countries. Latin American countries gained independence more than a century earlier than Africa and much of Asia. Latin American independence and national liberation movements in the nineteenth century referred to European settlers who subsequently set out to construct a nation-state coincident with the ethnicity of the conquerors. In Africa and parts of Asia, where many countries maintained colonial status through the 1950s and 1960s, independence movements developed within indigenous communities against settler populations. National liberation movements set out not only to capture state power but also to refashion a "truer" national identity. Following independence any semblance of national unity within many African countries broke down and gave way to ongoing conflict between ethnic groups, as in Nigeria, Rwanda or Burundi. Hence, while pluri-ethnic states compose both Latin America and Africa, ethnic relations and conflict have played out on different terrains. In Latin America, ethnic cleavages have tended to occur between horizontal groups (white/mestizo groups that effectively occupy the state and indigenous groups that do not). In Africa, excluding important examples such as South Africa and Eritrea, ethnic cleavages since independence exist between more vertically integrated groups competing, when democratic conditions prevail, to gain political power.

<sup>4</sup> Yet democratization does not everywhere achieve these consequences; for as Snyder (2000) has argued, democratization in the context of weak institutions can result in ethnic violence rather than stable democracy, inclusion, and peace.

<sup>5</sup> Gurr (2000:Ch.2) highlights that whereas ethnopolitical conflict generally increased in the post World War II period and peaked in the early to mid-1990s, Latin America followed a different path. In Latin America, there has been little ethnopolitical conflict although there was a rise in ethnic protest in the 1990s.

new democracies in Africa, Asia, and Eastern Europe, these new movements did not mobilize to redefine the *boundaries* of citizenship and did not spiral into ethnic conflict (or genocide). Rather, the newly formed indigenous movements mobilized. But they did so to redefine the *content* of citizenship, in ways that paralleled but cannot be reduced to the multicultural struggles found in the older democracies of North America, Australia, and New Zealand.

This working paper analyzes the emergence and consequences of this striking wave of indigenous organizing in Latin America. While this paper will draw on the region as a whole, it will focus its comments on the five cases with the largest indigenous populations as a percentage of the total population: Mexico, Guatemala, Bolivia, Ecuador, and Peru (see Table 1).<sup>6</sup> Where appropriate, it will also refer to the Afro-Latin population, with particular emphasis on Brazil, home to the largest population of Afro-Latins in the region.

The paper is organized as follows. Part I provides an introductory overview of ethnicity and race in Latin America – sketching out the fluid meaning of these terms and the reasons why Latin American ethnic politics were deemed comparatively exceptional. Part II turns to analyze how changing citizenship regimes affected indigenous communities – first through corporatist policies and later through neoliberal ones; while the former demanded that ethnic identities give way publicly to class-based ones, the latter presumed that individual identities would supercede collectives ones. Unwittingly, the former depoliticized indigenous identities while the latter politicized them, for reasons that are explored in Part II. Part III turns to the interplay between indigenous demands for a postliberal polity and different state policies that have recently opened up the possibility of increasing indigenous representation before and within the state. Part IV addresses the challenges posed to indigenous movements by democratic elections and participation. And the conclusion ends by briefly highlighting additional policy areas that must be addressed to include indigenous people in meaningful, credible, and sustainable ways.

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<sup>6</sup> While the percentage of indigenous people in Mexico is notably smaller than in four other cases, the absolute number of indigenous people in Mexico is the highest of all.

**Table 1**  
**1978-1991 Estimates of Indigenous Peoples**  
**in Latin America<sup>7</sup>**

|                                  | Estimated % of Total Population |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <hr/>                            |                                 |
| <b>Populations Over 10%</b>      |                                 |
| Bolivia                          | 60-70                           |
| Guatemala                        | 45-60                           |
| Peru                             | 38-40                           |
| Ecuador                          | 30-38                           |
| Mexico                           | 12-14                           |
| <br><b>Populations b/w 5-10%</b> |                                 |
| Belize                           | 9                               |
| Panama                           | 4-8                             |
| Chile                            | 4-6                             |
| <br><b>Populations under 5%</b>  |                                 |
| Guyana                           | 4                               |
| Surinam                          | 3                               |
| Honduras                         | 2-3                             |
| Paraguay                         | 2                               |
| El Salvador                      | <2                              |
| Colombia                         | <2                              |
| Nicaragua                        | < 2                             |
| Argentina                        | < 2                             |
| Venezuela                        | < 2                             |
| French Guyana                    | < 2                             |
| Costa Rica                       | < 1                             |
| Brazil                           | < 1                             |
| Uruguay                          | 0                               |

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<sup>7</sup> There are no agreed upon figures for indigenous peoples. The table presented here, therefore, should be read as a general indicator of differences among countries rather than a precise indication of how percentage of indigenous people living in each country. Indeed, the estimated though not terribly reliable figures in Table 1 do not reveal the ways in which indigenous communities have changed with respect to the meaning, content, scope, and form of identities, practices, or goals of indigenous peoples. Nor do these figures intend to stipulate a shared identity among indigenous peoples; indeed, the very idea of an "indigenous people" is predicated on the arrival of "settlers" against whom indigenous peoples identify themselves and are identified. Hence there is a dual image that needs to be kept in mind. While indigenous peoples differ substantially among themselves -- with respect to primary identities, practices, etc. -- often leading to conflict or competition, they have often shared common opposition to those who have tried to dominate them as a people.

**PART I**  
**Ethnicity in Latin America:**  
**Categorical and Comparative Exceptionalism?**<sup>8</sup>

“What has an extremely long lifespan is the sequence of poverty, injustice, plunder and violation in which, since the sixteenth century, live the Indians who are peasants and the peasants who are Indians.”<sup>9</sup>

The literature on cultural pluralism has historically and commonly identified Latin America as the exception. It was singled out as the region where indigenous and racial groups do *not* mobilize politically; where ethnic pluralism does not give way to sustained ethnic violence; where states do not explicitly target ethnic groups and pass ethnic legislation. One might wrongly suspect that ethnic groups in Latin America have historically been fully incorporated, with roughly comparative economic and social standing in their respective national communities. And indeed, with the third wave of democratization, political rights have been extended to all peoples, with no restrictions based on ethnicity, class, or literacy.<sup>10</sup> However, as Gurr notes, one cannot equate political equalities with socioeconomic ones; for in many regions, including Latin America, political elites have been more apt to extend political rights than to erase socioeconomic inequalities (Gurr 1993:41-42). Indeed, Gurr (1993:66) found, in his vast minorities at risk database, that Latin American indigenous people and Afro-Latins exhibit the greatest economic inequalities and economic discrimination, when compared to the dominant white and mestizo groups in Latin American countries (the myth of Brazilian racial democracy notwithstanding).

A smaller proportion of this region's [Latin America's] population (11 percent) is at risk than in any other Third World's region. But that proportion ... experiences the greatest economic differentials and most severe economic discrimination to be found in any world region... Ecological stress is the highest observed in any world region... Cultural differentials also are very wide, especially between Native Americans and the dominant Europeans, while political differentials and discrimination also are above the global averages (Gurr 1993:66)

The prevailing pattern of attitudes and policy towards minorities in most Latin American societies is discrimination and denial. Few formal discriminatory barriers exist anywhere in Latin America, and Latins of European descent often

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<sup>8</sup> Stavenhagen is really the academic doyenne of studies of the nation state and ethnic identities in Latin America. See his extensive writings on this topic for a more detailed discussion of how states sought to forge homogeneous nation states and what this meant of the region's indigenous peoples.

<sup>9</sup> Carlos Fuentes, writing about the Mayas in Chiapas, Mexico. *New York Times* op-ed article reprinted in *Boston Globe*, January 11, 1994.

<sup>10</sup> With the transition from authoritarian rule, literacy restrictions for voting were lifted in Ecuador and Peru. Historically, these restrictions prevented large numbers of indigenous people from voting given low literacy rates, as a whole.

express pride that they are color blind.” But in fact, indigenous peoples and blacks are consistently the poorest and least empowered groups in these societies.  
(1993:66)

Indeed, if we look at estimated poverty levels in four countries with among the largest indigenous populations, we can see that three of the four have national averages that are higher than the regional average – and in Mexico, where the poverty levels are closer to the regional average, indigenous people are a significantly smaller *percentage* of the national population. More dramatically, we see in all of these countries in Table 2, indigenous people have poverty levels that clearly exceed that of the non-indigenous population – striking, by the widest margin of all in Mexico, 80.6% compared to 17.9%. While Ecuador is not included in this table, and while poverty measures vary across report, all poverty assessments in Ecuador concur that indigenous people are indisputably the worst off on any economic score of poverty; poverty rates are higher in rural areas and disproportionately higher for indigenous peoples (Larrea et al 1996; World Bank 1995a & b).

Table 2: Poverty Levels in Latin America

|                      | <u>Below Poverty level</u> |            | <u>Below Indigence</u>          |
|----------------------|----------------------------|------------|---------------------------------|
|                      | national                   | indig. pop | non-indig pop. Level            |
| <u>Bolivia*</u>      |                            |            |                                 |
| 1989:                | 50                         |            | 22                              |
| 1992                 | 48                         |            | 18                              |
| p/p**                |                            | 64.3       | 48.1                            |
| <u>Guatemala</u>     |                            |            |                                 |
| 1980                 | 65                         |            | 33                              |
| 1986                 | 68                         |            | 43                              |
| p/p***               |                            | 86.6       | 53.9                            |
|                      |                            |            | indigenous: 61<br>non-ind: 25.3 |
| <u>Mexico</u>        |                            |            |                                 |
| 1977                 | 32                         |            | 10                              |
| 1984                 | 34                         |            | 11                              |
| 1989                 | 39                         |            | 14                              |
| 1992                 | 36                         |            | 12                              |
| p/p                  |                            | 80.6       | 17.9                            |
| <u>Peru</u>          |                            |            |                                 |
| 1979                 | 46                         |            | 21                              |
| 1986                 | 52                         |            | 25                              |
| p/p                  |                            | 79.0       | 49.7                            |
| <u>Latin America</u> |                            |            |                                 |
| 1970                 | 40                         |            | 19                              |
| 1980                 | 35                         |            | 15                              |
| 1986                 | 37                         |            | 17                              |
| 1990                 | 39                         |            | 18                              |

SOURCE: Psacharopoulos and Patrinos (1994:207); and Helwege (1995:102-103,107).

\* Bolivia's national level status for poverty and indigence level are confined to urban areas.

\*\* p/p stands for Psacharopoulos and Patrinos (1994:207) from whom these figures are taken based on a compilation of 1989/1991 reports. As they note, indigenous poverty data is extremely difficult to calculate and should be taken as a first approximation -- given problems of determining identity before it is correlated with poverty.

\*\*\* Indigence levels for Guatemala are cited in Steele's (1994:100) chapter in Psacharopoulos and Patrinos (1994).

In other words, Latin American ethnicities are “ranked” – to use Horowitz’s (1985) verbiage; ethnic and class cleavages coincide. Therefore, to be indigenous is generally to be poor (usually part of the rural poor but increasingly part of the urban poor). There are relatively few professional, medical, or legal indigenous people; indigenous professionals like Víctor Hugo Cárdenas, Nina Pacari, Luis Macas, and Demetrio Cojti are the exceptions that prove the rule. Those who rise in rank, as discussed next, have tended to publicly shift ethnic “identities.”

Indeed, ethnicity and indigeneity are commonly understood as fluid categories in Latin America.<sup>11</sup> In general, indigeneity is commonly understood to refer to someone whose ancestors lived in the Americas prior to the conquest, who speaks an indigenous language, who wears indigenous clothing, commonly works the land (or whose family works/ed the land), and who maintains “indigenous” customs and practices. While one cannot claim to be indigenous if one does not have indigenous ancestors, one can choose to stop identifying as indigenous by changing some or all of these public markers and adopting those markers associated with the “mestizo” or “ladino” (ethnically mixed) population. One does not have to have “mixed-race” progeny to switch identities, one “simply” has to change public behaviors. Indeed, twentieth century Latin American states have encouraged indigenous people to assimilate through educational policies, indigenous institutes, and the like, as discussed at greater length below. And in fact, it was presumed by policymakers and social science scholars alike that these assimilationist policies were in fact steadily “working,” until the 1980s when indigenous movements started to publicly embrace, declare, and defend their indigenous identities. Indeed, scholars and policymakers had assumed that indigenous people who had forsaken their cultural markers had, in fact, replaced their ethnic identity with a class-based peasant one (as discussed further below). This simplistic and dichotomous way of thinking about identity was mistaken, as it assumed that a) states could “do away” with ethnic identities and b) that identities were dichotomous and mutually exclusive. Neither was true.

For the Afro-Latin population, there has also been a more fluid understanding of race; there is no black-white dichotomy but in fact race is understood to be a continuum. In Brazil, for example, there are multiple categories for racial identity that are tied to the self-identified color of your skin; hence the same nuclear family can include people who

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<sup>11</sup> From a comparative perspective, it is also important to highlight that colonialism ended in the first part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century for most of Latin America, and the late 19<sup>th</sup> century for Brazil and parts of the Caribbean. Independence, however, meant independence for the new colonizers from the colonial powers; it did not mean independence for Latin America’s indigenous people who throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first half of the twentieth, were subject to serious economic exploitation (slavery in some cases) brutal military violence (in Argentina, Uruguay, Chile and, to a lesser extent, Brazil (Maybury-Lewis 1991), and ongoing discrimination. Given the timing and content of independence, it has had a different meaning for national minorities than in national liberation experiences in much of Africa, Asia, and the Middle East.



identify as members of a different racial category. And in Brazil, much has been made of the possibility for whitening (via miscegenation) and social mobility – commonly referred to as a racial democracy, particularly when compared to the United States. However, recent studies have highlighted the *myth* of racial democracy and the fact that the circumstances of people of color is categorically worse than those experienced by whites.<sup>12</sup> Hence, while identities might be fluid, economic circumstances appear to be more rigid (suggesting that perhaps racial categories are more fixed in terms of social interactions and discrimination, than commonly suggested). What most analysts can agree on, then, is that it is hard to discuss racial demography in Brazil – with some preferring a large spectrum of racial categories (to reflect the diversity of color and self-identification in Brazil) and others preferring a more limited set (to reflect the fact that color diversity aside, sociologically speaking, many darker Brazilians are treated/discriminated against equally and share common socioeconomic conditions).

Strikingly, the myths of assimilation and racial democracy were supposed to lead to a harmonizing, “civilizing,” whitening process. And as noted at the outset of this section, the absence of ethnic and racial violence in the region is striking and laudable. However, these were not fully inclusive societies. Rhetoric aside, indigenous and Afro-Latin communities were the targets of discrimination and consistently ranked at the bottom in terms of basic social indicators – poverty, education levels, land titling, access to social services, etc.

Having highlighted the common fluidity of ethno-racial identities and yet the rigidity of socioeconomic conditions, we cannot assume that indigenous and Afro-Latin populations therefore have similar sorts of claims. Indeed, this is not the case given widely divergent types of local political economies – with indigenous people historically more tied to land and Afro-Latins more tied to labor.<sup>13</sup> Indeed, indigenous people primarily see their longstanding identities as historically tied to the *land*. While increasingly indigenous people are moving to the cities and away from farming, there is an underlying sense within most indigenous movements that indigenous people have a prior and deep-seated historical right to the lands on which they live; this refers not only to titles to the land but also for political and cultural autonomy within and over that land. Afro-Latins, by contrast, have no prior claim to territoriality and no widely-made claims for autonomy. Rather, Afro-Latin movements, like indigenous movements, revolve around demands for recognition, socioeconomic opportunities, and political voice – with the specific terms of those claims varying by movement and across countries. While social movements have emerged among both indigenous and Afro-Latin communities, then, their claims and constituencies have varied. The rest of this paper, focuses on the former. The specific historical claims made in Part II do not neatly travel to the Afro-Latin American community, which has been discussed and analyzed in several very important books, including work by Hanchard (1994), Marx (1998), and Nobles (2000).

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<sup>12</sup> See Fontaine 1985; Hanchard (1994); Marx (1998); and Nobles (2000).

<sup>13</sup> Of course, this general statement must be complemented by the observation that, in fact, indigenous people of course have had to sell their labor – at times under circumstances of debt peonage. However, indigenous people have historically tended towards a land-based economy, when given the choice. Similarly, many Afro-Brazilians, particularly, in the northeast, have worked the land.

## PART II<sup>14</sup>

### From Corporatist to Neoliberal Forms of Citizenship: State Efforts to Remake Indians into National “Peasants” and “Individuals”

The Latin American anomaly has yet to be explained. Why were ethnic cleavages weak in Latin America despite dramatically high levels of social and economic inequality? Why did this trend reverse course at century’s end, as indigenous mobilization proliferated throughout the region? And why have consequential regional and national movements emerged in all cases, but Peru? Part II addresses the contemporary and yet uneven emergence of indigenous movements in Latin America by analyzing the five cases with the largest indigenous populations: Ecuador, Bolivia, Guatemala, Mexico, and Peru. I compare these cases cross temporally and cross nationally.

Part II highlights the role of citizenship regimes vis-à-vis existing social cleavages and uneven state penetration.<sup>15</sup> I argue here that different types of citizenship regimes first diffused and then activated different ethnic cleavages. These earlier citizenship regimes unintentionally enabled indigenous communities to carve out spaces of local autonomy, with limited interference from the state in matters of local governance. Subsequent citizenship regimes, however, threatened the autonomy that had been secured and, consequently, politicized ethnic cleavages. To make sense of the politicization of these ethnic cleavages and the *motive* for organizing, therefore, we must trace the comparative historical arc of citizenship regimes and the associated patterns of state formation. Where autonomy was possible, ethnic cleavages were weak. Where autonomy was subsequently challenged, ethnic cleavages became more salient.

This comparative historical discussion of citizenship regimes explains why ethnic cleavages have become more politicized in the contemporary period but were comparatively weak in earlier periods. But this variable alone does not explain when and where those cleavages translated into indigenous organizations. To explain when and where these movements emerge, it is essential to consider two other factors. For as theories of social movement and collective action have made clear, motives do not automatically translate into activity but require that we also look at the *capacity* and *opportunity* for organizing.<sup>16</sup> One must therefore ask not only why indigenous people would want to organize along indigenous lines, but also when they confronted the opportunity to do so, and where they had the capacity to mobilize accordingly. In Latin America, the preexistence of social networks among communities provided the capacity

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<sup>14</sup> Part II draws on Yashar (1998 and forthcoming: Chapter 3).

<sup>15</sup> I borrow the phrase “citizenship regime” from Jenson and Phillip (1996). They use the term to refer to the varying bundles of rights and responsibilities that citizenship can confer. In particular, I analyze it in terms of whether states extend the Marshallian trilogy of rights: civil rights, political rights, and social rights. As discussed in the text, contemporary Latin American states have not explicitly extended/restricted these rights along ethno-racial lines (although literacy restrictions did effectively serve this function, historically speaking). However, the *content* of citizenship rights has shifted over time, with striking consequences for Latin American indigenous people, as discussed in the text.

<sup>16</sup> See Tarrow (1994); and McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald (1996); and Gurr (2000:ch.3).

to organize while political associational space (freedom of association and expression) essentially provided the political opportunity to organize.

Only where these three factors (changing citizenship regimes that challenged local autonomy, social networks, and political associational space) came together did indigenous movements emerge. For where local autonomy was challenged and where Indians could capitalize on preexisting networks and take advantage of associational space, indigenous communities tended to mobilize to defend local autonomy. As Figure 1 lays out, these three factors concatenated in Ecuador, Bolivia, Guatemala, and Mexico by the end of the twentieth century (but were absent earlier in the century). These three factors did not appear together in Peru, where political association spaces were elusive and community networks were weak – thereby working against indigenous organizing beyond the local level. This paper develops the three-pronged comparative historical argument against the five most densely populated indigenous countries in Latin America.

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#### IDENTIFYING THE MOTIVE: CHANGING CITIZENSHIP REGIMES, STATES & AUTONOMY

The politicization of ethnic cleavages and the motive for organizing resulted from the shift in citizenship regimes and the challenge to local autonomy that ensued. Latin America essentially experienced an arc of citizenship regimes that moved from corporatist citizenship regimes towards neoliberal ones. While corporatist citizenship regimes advanced civil and social rights (and at times political rights) alongside class-based forms of interest intermediation, neoliberal citizenship regimes advanced civil and political rights alongside pluralist forms of interest intermediation.

Both corporatist and neoliberal citizenship regimes profoundly and intentionally reshaped state institutions and resources, as well as the terms of public access to them. Because of the uneven reach of the state, however, they had unintended consequences. Thus, in attempting to restructure society into class-based federations with social rights, corporatist citizenship regimes unwittingly provided autonomous spaces that could shelter rural indigenous communities from state control. And for their part, neoliberal citizenship regimes, setting out to shatter corporatism's class-based integration and social rights and replace them with a more atomized or individuated set of state-society relations, in fact challenged the indigenous local autonomy that corporatism had unintentionally sheltered. As such, corporatist and neoliberal citizenship regimes had foundational projects for state and society that were consequential but unevenly institutionalized. From the top looking down, these projects restructured society in radical ways. From the bottom looking up, however, these new projects of state formation and interest intermediation have been contested at many steps along the way. This section juxtaposes the formal goals and the unintended consequences of these two citizenship

regimes as a way to explain both why ethnic cleavages were once weak and why they subsequently became politicized.

#### Corporatist Citizenship Regimes and Local Autonomy:

It is commonly acknowledged that Latin American politicians, in both democratic and authoritarian regimes, set out to address the social question in the mid-twentieth century with corporatism. As the working class and peasantry started to mobilize for resources, inclusion, and justice, political parties and the state sought to capture political support and to control the masses with the creation of new modes of interest intermediation and social rights. Corporatism did not necessarily grant free and universal suffrage. But it did create and/or promote labor and peasant associations that (1) structured, and often monopolized, official representation, (2) received state subsidies, and (3) were controlled by the state.<sup>17</sup> A new type of state-society relations, therefore, was adopted that a) institutionalized a new mode of class-based interest intermediation and b) that extended social rights through the extension of social policies designed to provide a modicum of social welfare (including education, health, credit, subsidies, and the like).<sup>18</sup> In other words, at mid-century, Latin American countries started to institutionalize corporatist citizenship regimes.

Less commonly explored, or even questioned, are the ways in which indigenous peoples were affected by the corporatist project. Yet, corporatist citizenship regimes unwittingly institutionalized autonomous spaces for indigenous peoples.<sup>19</sup> One finds that relatively unmonitored local spaces were created where indigenous people could sustain their local indigenous identities and forms of governance. So too they gained institutional mechanisms to access the state and its resources. As such, many indigenous communities survived and grew beyond the de facto reach of the state. How so?

The new modes of interest intermediation and the new social programs fundamentally changed the terms of state-Indian relations. Labor laws freed Indians from slave labor, debt peonage, and other forms of repressive labor control. Accordingly, these laws provided Indians with a degree of freedom previously denied them. As such, the

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<sup>17</sup> Collier (1995) notes, that the degree to which corporatism actually structured, subsidized, and controlled these federations varied significantly among cases and over time. State commitments to class-based federations, for example, weakened under the authoritarian regimes of the 1970s. And these federations were stronger in Mexico than in most other cases.

<sup>18</sup> For classic perspectives on Latin American corporatism, see Malloy (1977). For a seminal comparative analysis of Latin American corporatism, see Collier and Collier (1991). Also see Munck (1993) and Foweraker and Landman (1997:237-239).

<sup>19</sup> Some scholars working on social movements and oppositional consciousness have underscored the importance of “free spaces” (see, in particular, Evans and Boyte (1986). A more recent round of scholarship has emphasized, in particular, that physical segregation and the capacity to talk in unmonitored spaces can ironically provide the free spaces for oppositional consciousness and mobilization (see, Morris and Braine 2001:30-31; Groch 2001). This general idea maps onto the argument developed here. Indigenous people were removed from the centers of power but were also alienated from it. As such, they had the spaces to maintain and develop ideational and political autonomy. While this argument broadly parallels the ideas about “free spaces,” I have chosen not to use this term, which was developed for the United States and presumes a context of commitment to democracy (which I did not find) rather than autonomy (which better describes the de facto practices found in many indigenous communities).

laws recognized indigenous peoples as candidates for citizenship rather than objects of local control. Land reforms alongside other social programs, moreover, granted indigenous communities land titles and social services and, in the process, provided them with a basis for securing a basic standard of living (i.e., social rights) – and as explored below the geographic space to secure cultural practices and political autonomy. And peasant federations, as the primary mode of interest intermediation, provided Indians with institutional avenues for accessing and interacting with the state.

Land reforms in Mexico (1934), Bolivia (1953), Guatemala (the short-lived reform of 1952), Ecuador (1964 and 1973), and Peru (1968), for example, weakened landed elites' control of the countryside, redistributed significant tracts of land, and provided incentives for Indians to register as peasant communities.<sup>20</sup> This registration reorganized the countryside along state-regulated corporatist lines, with many peasant communities joining peasant federations in hopes of gaining access to land and the state. These corporatist reforms brought with them the creation and expansion of social services in the areas of agricultural support, infrastructure, education, and health. Access to land and these services were often gained through corporatist associations.

In other words the corporatist citizenship regime recognized Indians' freedom from elite control, recatalogued Indians as peasants, and as such, granted them rights and access previously denied them. The state and union organizations imposed a peasant identity on Indians as the ticket for political incorporation and access to resources. With the distribution of land, extension of agricultural credits and provision of agricultural subsidies, peasants developed a new relationship with the state, one that subordinated them into official channels in exchange for clientelistic rewards. While the actual implementation of these reforms was quite uneven within and across countries, they generated political ties with those rural sectors that had gained (or hoped to gain) access to land and the state.<sup>21</sup>

The registration of peasant communities and the growth of peasant federations, in particular, fostered the fiction that the state had turned Indians into peasants and stripped indigenous ethnicity of its salience. Official political discourse promoted assimilation into mestizo culture and extended resources to rural citizens insofar as they identified and organized as peasants. Until recently, studies of corporatism highlighted the strong reach of these corporatist institutions and their capacity to control and remake these social sectors. Latin American corporatist states presumably centralized state-society relations.

Yet this enterprise was compromised by the absence of a rationalized bureaucracy, the failure to establish authority, and a lack of monopoly on the legitimate use of force. For in contrast to Weber's classic definition of the state, many of Latin America's central political institutions remain weak, commitment to those institutions

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<sup>20</sup> See McClintock (1981:61) and Eckstein (1983) for comparative land reform data.

<sup>21</sup> Even after the Mexican, Bolivia, Ecuadorian and Peruvian states reformulated rural development policy to the advantage of agricultural elites, the states kept the older legislation on the books and maintained institutional ties with the peasantry – fostering the rural poor's dependence on the state for (piecemeal) access to land, credit, and services. See Grindle (1986: 113-115, 137, 158).

remains questionable, and the territorial scope of those institutions remains ambiguous.<sup>22</sup> This is nowhere more apparent than from the vantage of the countryside. From that perspective, it is difficult to argue that there is a single human community (as opposed to many), that the state claims a monopoly on the legitimate use of force, or that the territory is clearly defined. National identities, borders, and legitimacy are all in question and often in flux.<sup>23</sup> Indeed, Latin America remains very much in the throes of state formation, where the identities, borders, and legitimacy of the state are highly politicized and contested processes, particularly in the countryside. Even in Guatemala, where the military state of the 1970s and 1980s was presumed omnipotent and omnipresent, the state was unevenly institutionalized, thereby leaving spaces for autonomous action.<sup>24</sup>

Hence, despite official statements and institutions of corporatist control, large areas of the country operated beyond the reach of the state. Authoritarian enclaves were dominated by patronage and clientelist networks. Caudillos and landlords at times deployed their own paramilitary forces, created their own political rules, displayed greater allegiance to subnational politics than to national politics, and/or deployed state institutions for their benefit.<sup>25</sup>

The weak reach of the state had implications for both those areas that were targeted by corporatist citizenship regimes (the Andean and Mesoamerican highlands) and those that were not (the Amazon). Studies of the Amazon have long noted the failure of states to govern the Amazon—leaving large swaths of territory and significant numbers of Indians beyond the political and military control of the state. States did not actively seek to harness the Amazon region until the latter part of the twentieth century. Prior to that they had mapped out boundaries that de facto included Indians as members, though not necessarily citizens, of the given state.<sup>26</sup> With this de facto policy of disregard, Indians did not gain access to state resources but they did maintain substantial, if not complete, political autonomy from the state – leaving indigenous authorities and practices to govern social, political, economic, and cultural relations therein. And while colonization schemes beginning in the 1960s (which in some places coincided with land reforms) did pose a threat in some places, these schemes hardly changed the circumstances for most indigenous communities in the Amazon, which remained beyond the reach of the colonists or who resettled in areas not yet claimed by them. In short, while corporatist citizenship regimes granted access to the state and social rights, the uneven reach of the state de facto undermined the centralizing program and allowed for local authorities – indigenous and otherwise – to act autonomously (to some degree or another).

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<sup>22</sup> Weber (1946:78) argued in his classic definition of the state: “The state is a human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory.” In Latin America, however, as in most of Africa, Asia, and the Middle East, this standard is still largely unmet.

<sup>23</sup> State formation is a process of political mapping. As Scott (1998) has argued, it requires a situation of mutual intelligibility. The state must be able to read, identify, and defend the territory it governs. Those governed should be able to identify (with) and depend on the state for basic functions.

<sup>24</sup> Yashar (1997a).

<sup>25</sup> Fox (1994a and 1994b); Hagopian (1996); Joseph and Nugent (1994); and Nickson (1995).

<sup>26</sup> See Ruiz (1993); Santos Grandero (1996). Smith (1996).

But the uneven reach of the state also had an impact on the capacity of Latin American countries to incorporate those areas most affected by the corporatist citizenship regimes. For in agricultural highlands of Bolivia, Peru, and Ecuador as well as the rural areas in Mexico and Guatemala, the state could not assert the pervasive control that the overwhelming majority of studies of corporatism have tended to assume.<sup>27</sup> To the contrary, indigenous communities managed to carve out a degree of local autonomy that remained beyond the reach of the corporatist institutions themselves. Indeed, due to labor laws, land reform and credit programs (fundamental components of the corporatist citizenship regimes in the countryside) Indians secured the spaces in which they could institutionalize indigenous community practices at the local level.<sup>28</sup> In more ways than one, the distribution of inviolable communal lands to registered peasant communities provided Indians with the physical space not only for farming (cum social right) but also for securing governance by traditional indigenous authorities and the public expression of cultural ties. In this way the legal registration of communities and granting of community-based property created a legally defined, state-sanctioned geographic area that allowed for the growth and/or maintenance of politically autonomous local enclaves, indigenous culture, and political practices. Otherwise stated, land reforms (which extended social rights in the countryside) masked the maintenance of indigenous autonomy and in some cases even engendered the (re)emergence of indigenous leaders, the (re)constitution of communities, and the expression of (evolving) indigenous identities at the community levels.

In Mexico, for example, the land reform accompanied the creation of a national peasant federation, the CNC, and distributed property in many forms. Of these, the distribution of *ejidos* (communally owned land) unwittingly provided the greatest latitude for local indigenous autonomy—they were community based, inalienable, and, while regulated, often beyond state control.<sup>29</sup> In Bolivia the national revolutionary governments of the 1950s and the subsequent military governments between 1964 and 1974 also incorporated Indians into the state as peasants. As in Mexico, they depended on alliances and pacts with peasant federations, which were expected both to deliver votes to the government and to control the local communities. Contrary to the hopes of politicians and military officers, Bolivia witnessed the maintenance of *ayllus* (kinship groups governed by a set of local-level indigenous authorities) in several regions in the Bolivian Andean countryside.<sup>30</sup> In Ecuador the 1937 community law and later the 1964 and 1973 land reforms defined indigenous men and women as peasants and gave them access to the state insofar as they represented themselves as peasant communities and/or unions. Greater state penetration, land reforms, and freedom of movement often increased indigenous peasant independence from local landlords and, moreover, enabled indigenous

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<sup>27</sup> Rubin (1997), for example, highlights how corporatism in Mexico much more porous than commonly portrayed and that alternative spaces for organizing were therefore present for social movement formation and political contestation.

<sup>28</sup> In Eugen Weber's classic (1976) study of nation building, he illuminates how the French state turned peasants into Frenchman. I suggest here that Latin American efforts to turn Indians into peasants in fact created the space in which they could defend and develop a local indigenous identity.

<sup>29</sup> Rubin (1997); Harvey (1998); Napolitano and Leyva Solano (1998); Fox (1994a); Mattiace (1997).

<sup>30</sup> Rivera Cusicanqui y equipo THOAS (1992); Ticona, Rojas, and Albó (1995); and Ströbele-Gregor (1996).

communities to strengthen and (re)construct local public spaces for community authority structures and customary law.<sup>31</sup> Indeed, the number of registered peasant communities skyrocketed in the 1960s and 1970s.<sup>32</sup> However, at the local level, many indigenous communities continued to maintain some form of indigenous practices and institutions.<sup>33</sup> These clientelist and corporatist arrangements were most advanced in Mexico and Bolivia, followed by Ecuador; the broad outlines of these arrangements endured in these three countries until the 1980s. Short-lived state efforts to incorporate the peasantry also occurred in Guatemala (1944-1954) and Peru (1968-1975). While abruptly reversed, these populist policies had an enduring impact on community memories about rights.

Corporatist citizenship regimes, therefore, created a dynamic dualism, with identities shifting according to the locale. Before the state, Indians assumed identities as peasants – thereby gaining access to the social services and goods (in other words social rights). Within the community, peasants assumed their identities as Indians – thereby securing local cultural enclaves.<sup>34</sup> Location therefore mattered for the expression of identity. Where the state incompletely penetrated local communities (nowhere more evident than in the Amazon), Indians sustained and asserted varying degrees of political autonomy by retaining authority systems and customs.<sup>35</sup> For even if states did not respect indigenous jurisdiction in these communities, indigenous communities often did.

#### Shifting Citizenship Regimes and Challenging Local Autonomy.

This particular balance in state-society relations, however, would not survive the century. Military and economic elites did not necessarily accept the rising power of class (including peasant) federations, and economic constraints made it difficult for states to sustain social programs that had extended the host of social programs associated with the corporatist citizenship regimes. Moreover, states increasingly responded to economic pressures to open up markets that had protected or ignored indigenous lands. As elites started to erode corporatist citizenship regimes and to try to gain command of national territories, they politicized ethnic cleavages by challenging the two types of autonomy that had developed: 1) among the peasantized and corporatized areas of the Andes and Mesoamerica and 2) within the Amazon.

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<sup>31</sup> Guerrero (1993).

<sup>32</sup> Zamosc (1995).

<sup>33</sup> A similar pattern emerged following land-reform programs in Guatemala (1944–54) and Peru (1968). See de Gregori (1993) and Yashar (1997a). Given high levels of repression, however, corporatist policies and institutions were undermined and dismantled shortly after they were created. Nonetheless, the general outline of this argument remains. While states promoted national ideals, indigenous communities found ways to shelter their right to sustain and develop ethnic identities and ties.

<sup>34</sup> This duality is captured by disciplinary differences in the social sciences. Political scientists working on this period have highlighted the centrality of class, the peasantry, and corporatist organizations, as if they displaced community autonomy and ethnic identities. Anthropologists have historically focused on the local level and, in turn, have highlighted community autonomy and ethnicity, often at the expense of broader patterns of state-society relations.

<sup>35</sup> Corporatist citizenship regimes barely penetrated the Amazon. Amazonian Indians rarely formed part of peasant federations and states did not have the resources to control them. Consequently, Amazonian Indians had even more autonomy than Andean and Mesoamerican Indians.



The erosion of corporatist citizenship regimes began as early as 1954 in Guatemala and culminated throughout the region with the replacement of corporatist citizenship regimes with neoliberal citizenship regimes in the 1980s and 1990s. Indeed, by the end of the twentieth century, citizenship regimes had changed radically as neoliberal ideas came to define the rights of citizens and the predominant mode of interest intermediation. With the third wave of democracy and the economic crises of the 1980s and 1990s, in particular, politicians throughout the region started to advocate individual autonomy and responsibility, a program based on granting individual political and civil rights (but not necessarily social rights), the emasculation of corporatist organizations, and the promotion of free markets in land and labor. The last of these amplified the challenge to local autonomy that had begun in earlier periods and provided the language that movements would use to challenge neoliberalism and to articulate a postliberal challenge. The rest of this section lays out how changing citizenship regimes politicized ethnic cleavages and provided the motive for organizing in two regions differentially affected by the state.

*Eroding Corporatist Citizenship Regimes and Politicizing Ethnic Cleavages in the Andes and Mesomerica.* One wave of ethnic politicization occurred in the very areas that had been explicitly targeted by the corporatist citizenship regimes: the Andes and Mesomerica. In these areas – which had been formally granted labor freedoms, social rights in the form of land and social services, and peasant-based representation – Indians eventually confronted the erosion of corporatist citizenship regimes and a corresponding challenge to local autonomy. In some cases this was a slow process (as in Ecuador, Bolivia, and Mexico); in others it was a sudden reversal (as in Guatemala and Peru). But in all cases, it eventually resulted in the political project and economic “imperative” associated with the neoliberal citizenship regimes of the 1980s and 1990s.

In Ecuador, Bolivia, and Mexico the weakening of rural peasant programs was a slow and steady process. The military government in Ecuador and the PRI in Mexico initially extended these corporatist rights but subsequently backpedaled on their promises. In Ecuador, this happened shortly after the military government had declared the land reforms in the 1960s and 1970s. In Mexico, it was a slow process that occurred over decades as the state decreased its commitment to the land reform program initially passed in the 1930s. In Bolivia, the military governments of the 1960s sought to reassert control over the peasantry in the “peasant-military pact,” which essentially imposed leaders on peasant federations and, and imposed stabilization packages during the 1970s.

In each of these cases, there was a steady erosion of corporatist citizenship regimes – which resulted in the steady weakening of state-sanctioned peasant federations, the slowing down of land reform commitments, and increasing efforts by the state to control local politics. And in each case, Indians started to organize along ethnic based lines – with particularly important organizing efforts in each case in the 1970s.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Indigenous movements did not emerge immediately following the motive provided by the changing citizenship regimes. As argued here, two other variables (networks and political associational space) were also necessary as they provided the *capacity* and *opportunity*, respectively.

Neoliberal citizenship regimes were implemented in Ecuador, Bolivia, and Mexico in the 1980s and 1990s and delivered the final coup de grace against corporatist citizenship regimes, in general, and local autonomy, in particular. While neoliberal citizenship regimes did not cause indigenous mobilization in the first place, they catalyzed additional mobilization in the second place (and shaped the political agendas that emerged). How so? Neoliberal citizenship regimes were put in place, in particular, by stabilization and structural adjustment measures.<sup>37</sup> that resulted in reduced ministerial budgets for ministries of agriculture; social services; and economic programs, including protection of peasant lands, access to credit, and agricultural subsidies. Real wages in the agricultural sector steadily declined from the 1980s and by 1992 had declined by thirty percent in Latin America as a whole.<sup>38</sup> And by the mid-1990s, land reforms had been proposed to privatize land markets in Mexico (1991 – with the decision to dismantle the constitutional protection of communal held lands, *ejidos*), Ecuador (1994 – with the land reform proposal), and Bolivia (1996 – with the land reform proposal) – all designed to make previously inalienable lands open for sale. In short, indigenous communities definitively lost their interlocutors with the state, land security, and social resources. Under these circumstances the ability to maintain local autonomy and secure a stable relationship with the state seemed increasingly remote.

In Guatemala and Peru (in contrast to Ecuador, Bolivia, and Mexico), the overthrow of corporatist citizenship regimes did not occur slowly but took place suddenly in counter-reform coups in 1954 and 1975, respectively. In post-1954 Guatemala and post-1975 Peru, militaries repressed peasant unions, weakened and even reversed land reform distribution, and weakened social programs that had granted social rights to this sector. In other words they reversed the corporatist citizenship regimes that had incorporated Indians into the polity and promised to support indigenous communities as economically viable entities. With the turn to civilian rule in the 1980s and 1990s (an uneven and torturous process in both cases), these two states neither recognized social rights from earlier periods nor supported the formation of corporatist peasant federations. To the contrary, they enacted reforms that further cut state-run social programs – except for targeted safety net programs – and delimited the spaces for class-based organizing. Neoliberal reforms, in particular in Peru, further inserted instability into the countryside as poverty and inequality rates soared in the 1980s and 1990s. In Guatemala and Peru, local autonomy was challenged not only by the reversal of state reforms in the 1950s and 1970s, respectively, but also by subsequent civil wars that ravaged the countryside in both countries through the 1980s and part of the 1990s.

Both the slow (Ecuador, Bolivia, and Mexico) and sudden (Peru and Guatemala) reversal of corporatist citizenship regimes have had significant consequences – not least

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<sup>37</sup> These measures were adopted following the debt crisis and ensuing economic crisis that dominated the 1980s, often referred to as the “lost decade.” While the United States, IMF, and World Bank all placed pressure on Latin American countries to implement various stabilization and structural adjustment policies, *not* all countries followed suit – at the very least, not at the same time, not to the same degree, and not with the same consequences. In other words, the global context (often referred to as the “Washington Consensus”) mattered greatly but did not dictate outcomes entirely. In this regard, we must be careful to analyze the domestic political coalitions that came together to try to embrace, subvert, or reinterpret the mandates being articulated at the international level.

<sup>38</sup> Wilkie, Contreras, and Komisaruk (1995: Table 3107, 990); Conaghan and Malloy (1994); Urioste (1992); Lustig (1995); de Janvry et al (1994); Morley (1995).

for indigenous peoples. In sum, class-based federations have lost political and social leverage throughout the region, and consequently Indians have lost their formal ties and access to the state.<sup>39</sup> Most dramatically for Indians, states have slowed down (in some cases reversed) land reforms, privatized land markets, liberalized agricultural prices, eliminated agricultural subsidies, and diminished credit programs.<sup>40</sup> The reforms threaten a communal land base that the state had once made inviolable.<sup>41</sup> In other words, they have threatened the social rights that had been extended with the earlier corporatist citizenship regimes.

In all five cases, the weakening of corporatist modes of interest intermediation and the dismantling of rural programs (including land reforms, credit programs, and the like) has further increased uncertainty about property regimes among peasants in Mesoamerica and the Andes. Liberalizing states have made it clear that they will not maintain (in Mexico, Ecuador, and Bolivia) or reestablish (in Guatemala and Peru) special forms of property rights, credit, and subsidies for peasants. Consequently, the contemporary period challenges the poor's access to the state and its resources. In all five countries, one's status as a peasant now provides limited political purchase – as peasant programs are dismantled and peasant organizations weakened. Rural organizing and protest responds to this material uncertainty, as peasants fear indebtedness, declining incomes, and the loss of land. The *indigenous* character of the contemporary movements, however, extends beyond material concerns for land as a productive resource. The potential loss of land also affects the *viability* and *autonomy* of local indigenous political institutions that had operated in and assumed a relatively well-defined and stable geographic space.

In this context of reduced spaces for local autonomy and access to the state, ethnic cleavages have been politicized and indigenous movements – particularly those that mobilize in the countryside – have protested the restrictions that state reforms have placed on the inalienable community rights and de facto local autonomy that they had secured during the earliest days of the corporatist citizenship regimes. Indigenous movements, in short, have come to demand that the state officially recognize indigenous communities. In Mexico as well as Guatemala, we find separate efforts to negotiate autonomy for the Mayan populations residing on either side of the border.<sup>42</sup> In Bolivia, indigenous activists at the end of the 1990s and early 2000 worked to recognize, reconstitute and/or register the *ayllus* (communal organizations) that have dotted the Andean countryside;<sup>43</sup> through the *Ley Inra*, this has become possible and more

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<sup>39</sup> Several states did have national indigenous institutes. However, these rarely if ever served as interlocutors between Indians and the state.

<sup>40</sup> Conaghan and Malloy (1994); Urioste Fernández de Córdova (1995); de Janvry et al. (1994); Morley (1995).

<sup>41</sup> These reforms (particularly efforts to privatize land markets and to privilege the individual over the corporate unit) echo late 19<sup>th</sup> century Liberal reforms that were incontrovertibly detrimental to indigenous peoples. In both cases, reforms threatened communal land base that the state had once made inviolable.

<sup>42</sup> For discussions of autonomy debates in Mexico, see Ojarasca (1995); Díaz-Planco; Stephen (1997); and Mattiace (1997).

<sup>43</sup> Ayllus often claim sovereignty over discontinuous land bases. This geographical spread poses a challenge to Western ideas of state formation, which generally assume that continuous areas coincide with a single political administration.

prevalent.<sup>44</sup> In Ecuador, this public discussion is incipient, as indigenous movements and NGOs have started to dialogue and initiate projects to strengthen and/or reconstitute systems of elders that have receded in importance over the years.<sup>45</sup>

*Promoting Development and Politicizing Ethnic Cleavages in the Amazon.* A second type of indigenous movement occurred in areas that had fallen beyond the scope of corporatist citizenship regimes. In the Amazon, as noted earlier, the state has historically been weak – with limited impact on policy, social services, infrastructure, government access, or institution building. Corporatist citizenship regimes did not find significant institutional expression in the Amazon. While the state expanded in the three decades after World War II in the Andes, the Amazon remained relatively marginalized from contemporary politics, the market, and the state's role in each.

Colonization programs and development agencies in the 1960s, however, altered this relationship between the state and the Amazon. Ecuador passed colonization laws in 1964 and 1977; Bolivia passed a colonization law in 1966; and Peru passed a 1969 Ley de las Comunidades Nativas y Desarrollo Agrario de las Regiones de Selva y Ceja de Selva. These laws and associated programs set out to increase state regulation of the area, to title these vast lands (in part as a means to relieve land pressures in the Andes) and to generate new growth opportunities. Accordingly, colonization by both small and large landholders increased, particularly from the 1960s on. Indeed, many Andean peasants (who came to be known as *colonos*) moved from the tighter land market in the Andes to the Amazon, where land seemed more abundant and fertile. So too, domestic entrepreneurs interested in large landholdings for cattle grazing and logging set up shop in the Ecuadorian, Bolivian, and Peruvian Amazon – particularly following additional legislation that made it easier to exploit natural resources, like Bolivia's Ley Forestal (1974), Ley Fauna y Vida Silvestre, and the Ley Minera; or Peru's Ley de Promoción y Desarrollo Agrario (1992). As a whole, the ensuing patterns of colonization led to significant waves of internal migration and titling that pushed indigenous communities off lands that they used (i.e., for hunting, fishing, gathering, etc) but to which they did not have title or "proof of use" (since they did not necessarily cultivate and farm these lands).

In turn, indigenous communities in Bolivia and Ecuador, in particular, started to mobilize against national migrants and entrepreneurs (particularly the latter), as they were moving in on what was seen as indigenous territory and therefore was a challenge to their material, political, and social autonomy. The Shuar of Ecuador and the Izocéños-Guaraníes of Bolivia were among the first to mobilize to defend their local autonomy from this encroachment; they each became models for other Amazonian peoples in their country. Indeed, the first, most prevalent, and widespread indigenous organizing in the

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<sup>44</sup> Several interviews with each of the following people between May-August 1997: Constantino Lima, Aymaran nationalist activist since the 1970s; Carlos Mamani, María Eugenia Choque Quispe, and Ramón Conde, researcher-activists at THOA; and Ricardo Calla, former-director of TAIPI. Also see Molina and Arias (1996), Albó and Ayllu Sartañani (nd).

<sup>45</sup> Based on several interviews with José María Cabascango of ECUARUNARI, several interviews with Luis Maldonado of CEPCU, 3 interviews with Fernando Rosero Director of the United Nations Volunteers (3/11/97, 3/18/97, and 5/7/97), and 1 interview with Congressman Luis Macas (5/6/97) all between February and May 1997.

Amazon has been against these domestic actors and companies that moved into the Amazon.

If Amazonian indigenous protest has most clearly been against domestic actors, so too it emerged quite clearly against international companies that moved into the Amazon; no where has this been more apparent and visible than in Ecuador. With the 1967 discovery of large oil reserves in the Ecuadorian Amazon and the 1982 changes to the ley de hidrocarburos, the law that opened up (once again) areas for exploration, foreign oil companies started to return to the Ecuadorian Amazon (Kimmerling 1993:13, 19, 21). Unlike the earlier round of colonization, oil exploration did not require title to vast tracts of land, per se. Oil companies had a primary interest in subsoil rights and infrastructure (roads, pipelines, etc.), consequently their claims were apparently more targeted and less intrusive than the vast agricultural colonization efforts that had occurred previously. The state, indeed, was selling/renting public subsoil rights to the oil companies. “According to Ecuadorian law, all petroleum reserves are state property, regardless of who owns topsoil rights” (Kimmerling 1996:35 – my translation). The state however rarely regulated the oil companies to assure that they lived up to environmental and civil code regulations (Kimmerling 1996, 13-143). As would become apparent, the oil companies actions would also have a detrimental environmental impact on the surrounding forests, rivers, lands and, therefore, people (Kimmerling 1993). As the environmental consequences became apparent, indigenous communities were increasingly politicized – seeking to defend their communities and to secure better relationships with the state. Organizations also emerged among the Cofán and Siona-Secoya in Napo and among the Quichua, Achuar, and Shiwiar in Pastaza. USAID has reported on the linkage between oil companies highway building and the increased colonization of these areas. By the early 1990s, the former had built an estimated 500 kilometers of highways and roads that have facilitated colonization of some one million hectares of tropical forests (Kimmerling 1993:56). The issue of oil companies continues to mobilize and divided indigenous communities in Ecuador, as most recently reported in the *New York Times* (December 10, 2003, A1).

Overall, state-sanctioned development plans sparked significant waves of agricultural colonization, cattle grazing, logging, and oil exploration, all of which resulted in non-indigenous claims to lands that had previously been used by indigenous communities. These developments (both national and international) posed a clear threat to indigenous material and political autonomy and survival. Indigenous organizations emerged to combat what was seen as predatory and environmentally destructive land grabbing. To do so, they used legal measures affiliated with the land reform and other state statutes to form rural organizations and to gain legal title to the land. These Amazonian movements assumed particular visibility in the 1980s and 1990s when states accelerated programs to promote more open land markets in the Amazon. Not only were region wide Amazonian movements created in both Bolivia and Ecuador, but Amazonian movements in each country organized marches to the national capital in Ecuador (1992) and Bolivia (1990) – marches that captured the imagination of the national press and sparked significant debate about indigenous rights.

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Throughout Latin America (including Peru), therefore, the contemporary period has challenged the space for indigenous local autonomy secured during the prior corporatist citizenship regimes and its associated developmentalist state. In Mesoamerica and the Andes, the state has supported the dismantling of corporatist forms of representation, agricultural subsidies, and protection of communally and individually held lands. In the Amazon, the state has increased its presence and promoted colonization by Andean nationals and foreign companies. In both cases, the state's challenge to land tenure and use has challenged material livelihoods and indigenous forms of autonomous local governance – both of which had depended on more stable property relations. In this context, indigenous movements are asserting the right to new administrative spheres with a certain degree of political autonomy at the local level. This is not just a call for more land, although that is certainly a core component of the demands. It is also a demand that the state recognize and respect autonomous indigenous political jurisdiction and authority over the communities that inhabit that geographic space.

These movements gained momentum in the context of neoliberal citizenship regimes. They were not caused by them but they were spurred on by them. For as Richard Chase Smith wrote, in the years prior to neoliberal hegemony:

The issues of land and ethnic identity coalesced the ethnic federations. In each case, a particular group felt its collective land base and identity threatened by both state policies of colonization and integration and by the expanding capitalist market economy. Virtually every ethnic federation began as a meeting of headmen or representatives of different settlements of a particular ethnic group who were looking for common strategies to defend the land and their nationality Smith (1985:17).

Smith was insightful and prescient. For while he was talking about the Amazon in 1985, his observations have rung true throughout Latin America as a whole.

#### THE CAPACITY: TRANS-COMMUNITY NETWORKS<sup>46</sup>

Movements, however, do not emerge mechanically as new needs and motives present themselves. They must build (upon) organizational capacity to initiate and sustain a movement. Organizational capacity must be demonstrated (rather than assumed), particularly for indigenous communities, which are often separated by great distances, and for indigenous identities, which have historically been more clearly defined by and embedded in local communities. In other words, even though indigenous communities might want to defend challenges to local autonomy, in the absence of ties between and among communities, it is extremely difficult to scale up demands, to organize, and to launch protests.

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<sup>46</sup> I want to thank Arang Keshavarzian for his insight into networks and questions about my argument, not all of which I have been able to incorporate.

Networks provide this organizational capacity. They fostered the communication and cooperation that was essential for transcending geographic dispersion, language barriers, and cultural unfamiliarity (and in some cases hostility). In doing so, networks provided the forum for future indigenous leaders to meet, share common experiences, develop a common language, identify common problems, and articulate common goals. In turn, indigenous men developed ethnic identities that referred not only to their local Indian communities but also to a more trans-community indigenous identification. This “indigenous” identity was a product more than a cause of the first generation networks that were in place. It did not necessarily include a close national identification with all indigenous communities. Indeed, Andean and Amazonian indigenous movements in Ecuador and Bolivia (and even Peru) formed separately and did not necessarily or easily translate those regional ties into national ones. For significantly different historical experiences had resulted in very different cultural norms, understandings of autonomy and land, and styles of negotiation. Without networks, it was impossible to bridge these divides.

Networks, therefore, constitute a second part of the explanation about indigenous movement formation in Latin America insofar as they provided the organizational capacity necessary to build indigenous movements.<sup>47</sup> I take networks to refer to the repeated exchanges and resulting relationships that are constructed among individuals or social units by formal and informal institutions. Networks can take many forms. The one distinguishing feature that proved essential for indigenous movement formation was geography. Only where *trans*-community networks were in place could and did indigenous communities possess the organizational capacity to forge broad indigenous movements. The existence of these networks more than their organizational features (vertical or horizontal; coercive or cooperative; social, political, economic, cultural, and/or religious; etc.), proved key to explaining *where* indigenous leaders possessed the organizational capacity to build indigenous movements.<sup>48</sup>

The state, unions, churches, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have played a crucial role in this regard.<sup>49</sup> While pursuing their respective missions, these institutions (often unwittingly) provided institutional links that have become a basis for forging translocal (and subsequently transnational) indigenous identities and movements. The state, for example, attempted to mobilize support and control rebellions within peasant communities, as part of the corporatist and populist developmental policies just discussed. With the passage of land reforms, states attempted to construct a loyal national peasantry, to weaken more localized ethnic identities, and to forge a nation-state. In Mexico and Bolivia, where these processes were most advanced, peasant unions were linked to corporatist state-parties that promised access to land, economic support, and social services. In Ecuador,

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<sup>47</sup> See, for example, Granovetter (1995); Tarrow (1994); McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald (1996); McAdam (1982 and 1988); Putnam (1993); and Varshney (2002).

<sup>48</sup> These other organizational features of networks do not explain movement emergence, although they probably do provide insight into the, *types* of movements that did emerge. Further work is needed to explain why some networks lead to unified movements in a given area and why others lead to competitive ones. In this regard, the discussion of networks still requires further analysis. Polodny and Page (1998:73) also note that more work is needed to explain why and how networks generate trust.

<sup>49</sup> See Brysk (2000) for a discussion of the transnational dimensions of these networks.

the state agrarian reform program promoted rural organizing, resulting in a significant increase in the registering of rural comunas, cooperatives, and associations. This state-sanctioned rural organizing in Mexico, Bolivia, and Ecuador engendered cross-community networks that were later used in these countries to organize indigenous movements – in some places tied to and in some places autonomous from the peasant unions.

Guatemala's democratic regime (1944-1954) and Peru's military reform government (1968-1975) also passed land reforms and encouraged peasant organizing, but subsequent counter-reform governments in Guatemala (1954) and in Peru (1975) undermined this process. As a consequence, the Guatemalan and Peruvian peasantry of the 1980s and 1990s has not sustained trans-community peasant networks as a result of patron-client ties with the state, as in Mexico, Bolivia, and Ecuador. The Guatemalan and Peruvian states have been hostile to peasant demands and have attempted to localize, disarticulate, and repress rural organizing efforts. Consequently, Peru has never really achieved and sustained a national peasant network – except briefly (if then) during the Velasco government (1968-1975).<sup>50</sup> In the absence of sustained political liberalization and a more sustained developmentalist state in the Peruvian countryside, it has been difficult to construct a national peasant movement. And in the absence of these kinds of networks, it has been difficult to construct an indigenous identity and organization that transcends its more localized referent. Guatemala, unlike Peru, did subsequently organize an opposition peasant movement on the basis of networks constructed by the Catholic Church.<sup>51</sup> In Guatemala, many post-Vatican II clerics and lay persons organized CEBS in the countryside. Many members of CEBS subsequently forged a new peasant movement and used the base communities to reconstruct inter-community networks that had been repressed by the military.

In Latin America, more broadly, churches have helped to construct and strengthen rural networks between communities not only in Guatemala but also in Mexico, Bolivia, and Ecuador.<sup>52</sup> Churches often provided the means of communication, the locus of interaction, and literacy skills that linked one community to another. So too, church leaders inspired by liberation theology created christian base communities (CEBs) that encouraged activism and created lay leaders that could travel between communities to address local and national problems. Catholic and protestant churches played a crucial role in constructing networks in Chiapas, Mexico. Bishop Samuel Ruiz, for example, organized indigenous fora, brought resources to indigenous communities, and encouraged more active forms of localized organizing. In Bolivia and Ecuador, a more heterogenous church presence – Salesians, Franciscans, Protestants, Summer Institute for Linguistics, etc.<sup>53</sup> – also played a particularly important role in the Amazon in bridging significant differences between communities, in addressing literacy, providing radio services, and organizing against land invasions.<sup>54</sup> Again, while the Church was active in Peru, it never

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<sup>50</sup> Cotler and Portocarrero (1969); Handelman (1975); McClintock (1981); and Seligmann (1995).

<sup>51</sup> See Peña (1995). Little has been written on the impact of liberation theology and theologians in the Peruvian countryside.

<sup>52</sup> See Chojnacki (1995); Floyd (1995); Brown (1993); Santana (1995: chs.6-7).

<sup>53</sup> See Castro Mantilla (1996:20) for a chart of the presence of the Summer Institute of Linguistics in Latin America – including where they began working, contracts, ministries, etc.

<sup>54</sup> In Bolivia, we find that Church influence largely occurred through the creation in earlier centuries of missions that created nuclear settlements; these settlements became the centers of indigenous organizing in



managed to sustain trans-community ties – in large part, as we shall see, because of the repression that ensued in the countryside.

In short, states, unions, churches, and more recently, NGOs (particularly in Bolivia) have provided networks that enabled indigenous communities to transcend localized identities and to identify commonly trusted leaders. In some cases these networks were internationally inspired and supported – increasingly so; in many they were not. In all cases, however, these networks built literacy skills and cross-community social capital that enabled indigenous leaders to move between communities, build support, and develop frames that resonated within and across communities. In turn, indigenous leaders gained access to information and resources that enabled them to communicate with the state. When confronted with changing rural-state relations that threatened property relations and local autonomy, these networks provided the organizational bases for coordinating significant indigenous mobilizing from the 1970s-1990s.

#### THE POLITICAL OPPORTUNITY:<sup>55</sup> POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONAL SPACE

If state reforms politicized indigenous identity and networks provided the organizational capacity, indigenous movement organizing would still only emerge in the presence of one more variable: political associational space. The need for associational space is painfully obvious (particularly for scholars of social movements) but often overlooked in discussions of ethnic politics, as it is all too common to assume that ethnic cleavages naturally translate into political organizations and protest. Political associational space (in conjunction with changing citizenship regimes and transcommunity networks), however, proved crucial to the emergence and growth of indigenous movements.<sup>56</sup>

So what is political associational space? Political associational space refers to the de facto existence of freedom of association and expression. It is not reducible to regime

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the 1970s and 1980s. In Ecuador and Peru, Church influence occurred much more clearly through boarding schools, where future indigenous leaders met one another and acquired leadership and communication skills that were later used to organize indigenous regional indigenous organizations in the Amazon. In both cases, churches along with NGOs provided the networks, resources, and skills for indigenous organizing the region. I thank Diego Iturralde and Sergio Delgado for first bringing these patterns to my attention in an interview held in La Paz, Bolivia on October 20, 1995.

<sup>55</sup> See McAdam (1996: 27). McAdam lays out four dimensions that constitute political opportunity structures: the degree of political opening; elite alignments; presence of elite allies; and the state's capacity and propensity to use repression. In the case of Latin America's indigenous movements, elite alignments and access to elite allies do not uniformly play a role in movement formation -- even if they do affect policy success. I emphasize here the first and fourth dimensions identified by McAdam.

<sup>56</sup> One might point out that where political associational space has been closed off, innovative activists have been known to create them (see, for example, Navarro 1998; Tarrow 1998; Keck and Sikkink 1998; Tilly 2002 ms). They have used “non-political” forum to engage in political activities; and/or they have built alliances with domestic elites and/or international activists to overcome political obstacles. This exceptional heroism on the part of some activists is incontrovertible. However, the examples are noteworthy precisely because they have been the exception. In general, closed political associational spaces have worked against movement building – particularly in indigenous rural areas where activists could not organize, speak out, and mobilize without incurring repression against them and their communities.

type; it is not equal to democracy.<sup>57</sup> To the contrary, political associational space can exist (to varying degrees) in different political contexts, including the following: where states are virtually or largely absent (as in the Amazon); in democratic regimes where states protect civil rights *in practice*; and in transitional regimes where authorities initiate a process of political liberalization that includes a decline in repression and a corresponding increased respect for civil rights.<sup>58</sup> The common denominator in these three contexts is that the state does not trample on the capacity to associate and to speak out.

It is also important to make clear that associational space is *not* the same as networks. The former refers to the political opportunity to organize while the latter refers to the existing capacity to do so. These two variables can affect one another but do not necessarily covary. For during times of political closure networks can persist (as with military-dominated corporatist associations and churches). Moreover, associational space does not necessarily translate into the existence or growth of social networks, a point that Putnam (2000) has emphasized in his much debated book about the United States and declining social capital.

Empirically speaking we can see how political associational space has mattered in both its *de facto* and *de jure* forms. In the Amazon, where the state has historically been weak (in some places relatively absent), a generalized associational space existed independent of changes in the national political regimes. For even if national governments deployed repression in other areas, this rarely affected the Amazon in a direct way. In this regard, associational space existed *de facto* and was relatively constant in the Amazonian regions.<sup>59</sup> Amazonian indigenous communities had the opportunity to organize transcommunity movements (although they often confronted local forms of oppression from landlords and churches) absent state regulation, control, and repression. Indigenous activists (confronted with challenges to local autonomy and drawing on social networks) capitalized on the *de facto* existence of freedom of expression and organization (both a consequences of low levels of state penetration and corresponding low levels of state repression) to organize.

In the Andean and Mesoamerican regions, where the state had incorporated and penetrated the highlands to a greater degree than that found in the lowland areas of the Amazon, political associational space has been more variable. It fluctuated in tandem with periods of national political closure and political liberalization. During periods of political closure and militarization, states restricted freedom of association in these regions and, therefore, closed off opportunities for legal organizing among communities. This type of

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<sup>57</sup> As commonly noted, political liberalization is not synonymous with democratization, for democratization can coincide with political crackdowns – as in Peru and Guatemala in the 1980. Moreover, political liberalization can occur independently of democracy – as in Brazil during the *distencao* period and Mexico in the 1990s. Empirically speaking, while political liberalization has provided the political opportunity for movement organizing in the Andes and Mesoamerica, the same cannot necessarily be said of electoral or formal democracy, *per se*. See Eisinger (1973) for a discussion of the curvilinear relationship between democracy and protest. Eisinger noted that protest is least likely where democracy is both foreclosed and fully achieved. It is in the spaces in between, where democracy fulfills only part of its promises, that social groups are most likely to find reason to protest. And see Davenport and Armstrong (2002) for a statistical analysis of the relationship between democracy and repression.

<sup>58</sup> See Davenport (nd) for a description of indicators of political violence versus political restrictions.

<sup>59</sup> Again, Peru is a partial exception in this regard and is discussed at greater length in Part III.

closure occurred in Bolivia in the 1970s; Guatemala from 1954 through the mid-1980s and again in the 1990s; Peru from the mid-1970s through the end of the twentieth century (with a brief opening at the end of the 1970s and early 1980s). During these periods of political closure, indigenous organizing did not emerge or simply dissipated. Indeed, Jenaro Flores of Bolivia and Demetrio Cojti of Guatemala, both prominent indigenous leaders who helped to co-found indigenous movements in their respective countries, commented on separate occasions that political closure preempted incipient efforts to organize indigenous movements and weakened those that had started organizing during earlier and more open times.<sup>60</sup> Where, however, political liberalization legally and practically resulted in the freedom to organize, there was greater opportunity to mobilize along indigenous lines. For political liberalization refers here to the extension of an associational space that legally and practically entails freedoms of association and expression.

In the Andean and Mesoamerican regions, we see that a strong correlation exists between indigenous organizing and the extension of political associational space. National political associational space was extended the furthest in Bolivia (late 1970s and early 1980s) and Ecuador (late 1970s); and it is in these two countries that we find the two strongest movements in the region. National political associational space was extended the least in Peru (with an ongoing and violent civil war for much of the 1980s and 1990s) and it is here that indigenous movement organizing was largely foreclosed. Guatemala and Mexico pose intermediate cases of indigenous movement organizing, with indigenous movements emerging in a context of rather uneven processes of political liberalization. In Guatemala, a staggering history of repression in the 1970s and early 1980s gave way to the extension of some political associational space in the mid-1980s and mid-1990s; indigenous movements emerged in these periods of relative political opening, although their growth and strength has been hampered by a rise in political violence in the late 1980s and again the late 1990s. Mexico, too extended political associational space in the 1990s, although it did so against a less repressive background than in Guatemala. In 1995, 1996, and 1997 research trips, indigenous leaders generally stated that political liberalization had created a more propitious environment for organizing. And indeed, the establishment and growth of indigenous movements largely coincides with or follows the increased respect for civil liberties.

It is in this context of associational space that national indigenous movements emerged (including CONAIE in Ecuador, CSUTCB and CIDOB in Bolivia, COMG in Guatemala, and the EZLN in Mexico). Each of these movements built on pre-existing dense social networks that allowed for both the construction of trans-community ties and the creation of pan-ethnic movements (as illustrated by quadrants II and IV in Figure 3). Where these networks did not exist, it was close-to-impossible to organize beyond the local community level – particularly when combined with nonexistent or limited associational space. Where, however, widespread repression continued and freedom of association was foreclosed, political closure preempted indigenous movement formation.

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<sup>60</sup> Several interviews in 1995 and 1997 with Jenaro Flores in La Paz, Bolivia and one interview in February 1996 with Demetrio Cojti in Guatemala City, Guatemala.

Peru falls into this latter category. Several anonymous 1997 interviews in Peru also commented on the insurmountable obstacles that authoritarian rule and civil war, in particular, posed for indigenous and peasant organizing. The violent civil war closed off avenues for freedom of organization and expression. Moreover, it destroyed existing organizations and obstructed the formation of trans-community networks that have proved so important elsewhere (Stern 1998). In this context, sustained regional and national indigenous organizing has proved elusive in all but some isolated locations in the Peruvian Amazon.

**Figure 3**  
**Contemporary Latin American Indigenous Movements**  
**in the Context of Contemporary Challenges to Local Autonomy**

| <i>Pre-Existing Networks</i>                                      |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <i>Political Associational Space</i>                              | <b>Low</b>  | <b>High</b>  |
| <b>No: Closure/<br/>Militarization</b>                            | No Indigenous Mobilization<br>Peru (Andes)                                    | Pan-ethnic mvmts but underground<br>Bolivia '70s (Andes)<br>Ecuador '70s (Andes)<br>Guatemala '70s-'80s<br>Mexico '70s-'80s  |
| <b>Yes:<br/>Amazon: Rel. Constant<br/>Andes: Pol Liberaliztn.</b> | Localized and Mono-Ethnic Mobilization<br>Occurs in isolated Cases everywhere | Peru/Amazon<br><br>Pan-ethnic Regional/<br>National Mobilization<br>in Bolivia & Ecuador<br>(Andes and Amazon)<br>Guatemala '90s<br>Mexico late '80s <sup>61</sup> |

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In short, shifting citizenship regimes challenged local autonomy and politicized ethnic cleavages. Social networks provided the capacity to organize beyond local communities and to scale up efforts into regional and national indigenous organizations. And political associational space provided the necessary political opportunity for doing so.

<sup>61</sup> Mexico does not fit neatly here. Mexico has experienced national political liberalization, as noted in the text. However, political associational space remains quite uneven—with increased (although fluctuating) political associational space at the national (and international level) and increased and ongoing political closure at some local levels.

For these reasons, the existence and interplay among these three causal factors best explains the contemporary and uneven emergence of Latin America's indigenous movements.

Viewed together these indigenous movements pose fundamental challenges that Latin America's democracies are beginning (or will need) to tackle. They are forcing Latin America's new regimes to confront the limited reach of prior rounds of state formation, to address the indeterminacy of the current round of democratic institution building, and to consider how new democracies might reform states more effectively to accommodate plural identities, political units, and administrative heterogeneity. We turn next to a discussion of the implications of these movements for democracy and the postliberal challenge.

### **Part III The Postliberal Challenge<sup>62</sup>**

Indigenous movements have grown in numbers and strength throughout much of Latin America. Part II focused on explaining the contemporary and uneven emergence of these movements in the region – addressing both why indigenous identities have become *politically* salient in the contemporary period and why they have translated into significant political organizations in some places and not others. The question remains: what kinds of demands have these movements made for the *content* and *terms* of political inclusion? As I suggest below, Latin American indigenous movements have come to take on more than the defense of their collective rights – as one would expect if one analyzed the origins of the movements alone. Indeed, they have *also* come to demand inclusion and equal treatment as individuals in the democracies that are now in place.<sup>63</sup> As such, these movements are challenging the homogenizing impulse of both the corporatist and neoliberal citizenship regimes, which had promoted the collective and individual, respectively.

Part III outlines the ways in which indigenous movements have come to challenge the contemporary terms of citizenship. As discussed below, I suggest that Latin American indigenous movements are posing a “postliberal challenge” that encompasses a dual demand: that states recognize their collective rights to indigenous autonomy *and* that states ensure their individual rights to be treated equally in the existing democracies.<sup>64</sup> These

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<sup>62</sup> Part III draws on Yashar (1999 and forthcoming: chapter 7).

<sup>63</sup> In this regard, the agenda charted below (for collective autonomy and individual equality) cannot simply be read off of the causes of the movement, although neither is it wholly divorced from it. For agendas are strategic positions that balance between collective memories (which are always socially constructed but are understood as historic fact or primordial) and the contemporary context (which shapes who is targeted). In turn, they can change over time and can reconstitute the identities of movements in the process. For fascinating discussions of the tension between memory and strategy, see Radcliffe (2001:28-29); Uehling (2000:262); Rappaport (1990); and McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly (2001).

<sup>64</sup> These proposals parallel the theoretical arguments for a differentiated form of citizenship, as articulated by Young and Kymlicka (although from very different perspectives). Young (1995) argues that liberal democracies profess to represent all individuals equally but, in fact, privilege certain dominant voices over others. She calls for a differentiated form of citizenship, one in which social groups are granted spaces for representation, participation, and voice. While indigenous peoples have not necessarily read Young, their claims in fact parallel hers when they indicate that Indians should gain additional and different rights alongside individual ones. Kymlicka (1995a) also argues for differentiated citizenship – although he does

demands require that we do more than rethink citizenship as a set of *rights* (a la T.H. Marshall), as is commonly done these days in discussions of democracy and social policy. It requires that we also think about citizenship as encompassing heterogeneity rather than homogeneity in terms of *who* is a citizen and in terms of *how* citizenship is mediated. This heterogeneity, in turn, requires us to reconsider the kinds of states or political sites (the *where*) that might accommodate these multiple terms of citizenship.

Viewed as a whole, the postliberal challenge compels us to consider the coexistence of multiple national identities associated with national citizenship, multiple modes of interest intermediation, and multiple institutional sites formally vested with political power and jurisdiction. For indeed, indigenous movements challenge the idea that there is one overarching political culture (be it national or civic) for each state, that there is one unit of societal representation, and that there is one kind of state that can/should regulate state-society relations. These challenges are more akin to the multicultural challenges found in the advanced industrial democracies than the ethnic conflicts found in other parts of the developing and post-Soviet world. In this regard, the postliberal challenge elaborated below elucidates the ways in which indigenous movements are pushing the democratic envelope in a multicultural direction. To this we now turn.

#### CHALLENGING NATIONAL HOMOGENEITY: RECOGNIZING A DIVERSE CITIZENRY

*In the modern world, talk about citizenship sometimes presupposes, as a background assumption, an idealized (and misleading) conception of the nation-state as an administratively centralized, culturally homogenous form of political community in which citizenship is treated primarily as a legal status that is universal, equal, and democratic. In this idealized conception, the nation-state is the only locus of political community that really matters and citizenship just means membership in a nation-state. Everyone in the world is supposed to belong to one such state and only one. Although the state may delegate its authority to sub-units, it retains ultimate authority because it exercises a legitimate monopoly of violence over the territorially based society that it governs. This picture of citizenship is inadequate in many respects ...If the conventional understanding is inadequate, how should we think about membership in political communities? What does it entail? How do people belong to a political community? How should **they** belong?* (Carens 2000:161-162).<sup>65</sup>

Indigenous movements in Latin America are effectively challenging prevailing

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so within the liberal tradition. Carens (2000:177) notes that Charles Taylor refers to differentiated citizenship as “deep diversity” – “an arrangement in which many aboriginal people would have a self-governing aboriginal community as their primary locus of political identity and participation while still being Canadian citizens.”

<sup>65</sup> Carens (2000) presents a different although compatible way of angling into the multiple memberships that define citizenship. Both the postliberal challenge and Carens (2000) argue that citizenship cannot be reduced to a formalistic and homogenous definition, but must take into account the multiple and changing practices that one finds in different contexts.

cultural norms of *who* is and can be a citizen. Latin American countries have extended citizenship on the basis of *jus soli* (granting/recognizing membership on the basis of birth in a given territory). This principle of citizenship might initially suggest that Latin American states have not equated citizenship with the nation (at least not in the essentialist sense presumed by the principle of *jus sanguinis*). However, this would be a superficial reading of a more nuanced political history.<sup>66</sup> For Latin American regimes found other ways to restrict citizenship along ethnic lines and to identify citizenship with national projects.

Indeed, Latin American rulers have *not* historically embraced and accepted their ethnically diverse populations as full members or citizens of the polity. To the contrary, they have historically delimited the principle of *jus soli* by restricting citizenship along various lines (literacy, property, gender) – a measure that commonly excluded indigenous peoples from practicing full citizenship rights. And when those restrictions were (slowly) lifted in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Latin American regimes found other ways of identifying citizenship with the nation. Throughout the region, state officials and intellectuals of all political stripes advocated assimilation policies with the hopes of constructing a unified nation based on mestizaje and “whitening.” Most politicians and scholars assumed that the existing state was legitimate and that what needed fixing was the construction and identification of primary identities – be they around the mestizo nation and/or class.<sup>67</sup>

As part of this national project, Latin American governments promoted corporatist citizenship regimes, as discussed, that were designed to turn Indians into *national* peasants. Latin American politicians complemented these incorporating measures with educational programs to promote assimilation.<sup>68</sup> These policies were

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<sup>66</sup> Rhetoric aside, the history of ethnic relations in Latin America has been one of violence, subordination, denial, and assimilation. As revisionist historians have so clearly illustrated, the arrival of Columbus and the ensuing conquest by Spanish and Portuguese settlers occurred at the expense of many indigenous communities which were subsequently subordinated to the political authority of newly created Latin American states and the spiritual authority of the Catholic Church (Mallon 1992; Maybury-Lewis (1991); Stern (1992). Military expeditions against the indigenous population were particularly brutal in Uruguay, Argentina, and Chile and, to a lesser degree, in Brazil (Stavenhagen 1988:29; and Maybury-Lewis 1991). These same countries, like many others in Latin America, enacted legislation to attract European immigration, arguing that this would improve the racial composition and, therefore, the economic and political prospects of the new states. Latin American nation-states treated indigenous peoples as heathens, a threat to security, an impediment to economic development, and a source of cheap, if not free, labor. The various states enacted corresponding, if at times internally contradictory, policies to address these fears, perceptions, and goals. They killed those perceived as a threat to an emerging nation-state, isolated and/or denied the existence of those in remote areas, coerced populations for their labor, and/or promoted a policy of assimilation.

<sup>67</sup> Latin American elites of European descent viewed mestizos in the nineteenth century as low life, just a rank above Indians in the nineteenth century. By the twentieth century, however, intellectuals had created a mythology around the mestizo who came to symbolize the Latin American nation in countries with multi-ethnic populations.

<sup>68</sup> For example, Latin American regimes created Indian Institutes to study indigenous populations – much as one would analyze national folklore – and to create the mechanisms to assimilate them into the national (read modern mestizo) population. While Brazil formed an Indian office in 1910, other Latin American countries founded these offices in the 1930s and 1940s (Stavenhagen 1988:105; and Maybury-Lewis 1991). Moreover, in 1940, the first Interamerican Indigenista Congress was held and led to the founding of the Interamerican Indigenista Institute.

designed in places like Mexico, Guatemala, Peru, and Bolivia to incorporate people perceived as backwards into the ranks of a new, and presumably more civilized nation.<sup>69</sup> States encouraged indigenous men and women to discard any public display of indigenous identity, encouraged the adoption of mestizo identities, and, consequently, publicly encouraged miscegenation to "whiten" the population. According to positions articulated by state officials and intellectuals, mestizaje allowed for social mobility as one's ethnic status changed from indigenous (other) to mestizo (us); this process presumably depoliticized ethnic cleavages.<sup>70</sup> In short, nineteenth and twentieth century Liberals in Latin America engaged in nation-building projects that sought to create national unity—a policy that legitimated both the assimilation of indigenous peoples and attacks on indigenous communal lands. With the principle of *jus soli*, they advocated a citizenship that would be accorded to all those residing in a given territory. Where nationals did not exist, they would forge them; if not in this generation, then the next. These nation building projects were more than ideological exercises. They were codified in national constitutions in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and shaped political behavior towards indigenous peoples.

Against this backdrop, indigenous men and women seem to disappear, responding passively to the incursion of new states (as well as markets and clerics) whose very purpose to undermine the political structures, economies, and cosmologies of indigenous groups remains unchallenged. Yet, these assumptions regarding the passivity and obsolescence of indigenous peoples have been repeatedly challenged, particularly over the last two decades of the twentieth century.

Indeed, the Latin American indigenous movements that have emerged at the end of the twentieth century have come to challenge these projects of nation building and assimilation that were associated with nineteenth-century liberal parties and that have been inscribed in Latin American constitutions since then. For while many indigenous men and women outwardly assimilated into mestizo culture (leading to an official decline in the absolute numbers of self-identified indigenous peoples), self-identified indigenous communities have survived – albeit as with all communities, they have changed over time.

But the challenge is more than a question of demography and numbers. It is a question of organized resistance and agenda setting. For with the third wave of democratization, indigenous movements in Ecuador, Bolivia, Mexico, Guatemala, Colombia, and Brazil have demanded constitutional reforms recognizing the *multiethnic*

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<sup>69</sup> See Stavenhagen (1992) and Wade (1997) for an overview of Latin America. See Mallon (1992) for a discussion of the varied contexts and forms that this policy took in Mexico, Peru, and Brazil. This attempt to create a more homogenous population contrasted with United States history where more rigid social lines were drawn between Indians, Blacks and the white population.

<sup>70</sup> Yet, if ethnic identity became fluid, states and landlords often continued to repress these same communities (when rebellious in the face of state colonization, development plans, and repressive rural labor relations) according to a rigid understanding of the appropriate class status of the heretofore "indigenous" population. Consequently, economic mobility of the newly assimilated rarely improved beyond a certain ceiling. Fontaine's (1985) volume on race relations finds a common pattern for Afro-Brazilians.



*and plurinational composition of their countries.* These demands highlight the endurance of many ethnic communities (even while the content of those identities has surely changed) despite nation-building projects. For as Varese (1992) has noted, the emergence of indigenous movements and their denunciation of assimilationist policies challenge the conception in Latin America that a mestizo nation does or should correspond to the existing states. Indeed, indigenous movements want to expand the idea of the *nation* to reflect a more ethnically and culturally heterogeneous citizenry.

As part of this effort, indigenous movements have appealed to norms, laws, and organizations operating in the international arena.<sup>71</sup> In particular, indigenous movements have lobbied Latin American states to ratify the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries. Convention 169 outlines the rights of indigenous peoples and the responsibilities of multiethnic states toward them. At a minimum, it calls on states to recognize ethnic heterogeneity where states had advanced nationalist aspirations of mestizo homogeneity. The following Latin American states have ratified ILO Convention 169: Mexico (1990), Bolivia (1991), Colombia (1991), Costa Rica (1993), Paraguay (1993); Peru (1994), Honduras (1995), Guatemala (1996), Ecuador (1998), and Argentina (2000).<sup>72</sup> Ratification provides a mechanism for advocating constitutional reforms to accommodate ethnically diverse populations; it should not necessarily be seen as a prelude to secession.<sup>73</sup>

While these Latin American states have yet to live up to the terms of the convention, they have discussed constitutional amendments that recognize the multiethnic and pluricultural makeup of each country, as in Mexico (1992), Bolivia (1994), Ecuador (1998), and Colombia (1991).<sup>74</sup> These reforms are an important symbolic victory for indigenous peoples who have worked to change myths of national unity – as a basis for understanding political identities and membership. Indeed, the constitutional recognition of ethnic heterogeneity in some Latin American states has opened up possibilities to discuss and debate other kinds of democratic institutions that can accommodate a diverse citizenry, as discussed next.<sup>75</sup>

#### CHALLENGING UNIT HOMOGENEITY:<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Brysk (1994, 1996, and 2000); and Wilmer (1993). As these authors note, the international arena has provided a new discourse, funds, and forums that have often shaped debates about indigenous rights.

<sup>72</sup> <http://ilolex.ilo.ch:1567/cgi-lex/ratifce.pl?C169>. As of March 2002, fourteen countries had ratified Convention 169, including Denmark, Fiji, the Netherlands, and Norway.

<sup>73</sup> The call for constitutional recognition of multiethnic and plurinational populations has elicited vitriolic reactions from politicians who fear that this recognition of different “peoples” will provide Indians with the leverage to appeal to UN laws that sanction the right of all peoples to self-determination and, by implication, to their own state.

<sup>74</sup> Dandler (1996) and Van Cott (2000:265-268). In a striking May 1999 Guatemalan referendum the voting population (18 percent of the eligible electorate) *rejected* proposed reforms to amend the constitution and acknowledge the multiethnic composition of the country (as outlined in the peace accords).

<sup>75</sup> Discussions include competing institutional proposals: consociationalism, identity-based electoral institutions, ethnic political parties, federalism, decentralization, and the like. For foundational texts on these issues, see, Lijphart (1977); Lustick (1997); and Horowitz (1985).

<sup>76</sup> “Unit homogeneity” refers here to the unit of political representation and intermediation. It is not meant to evoke the standard meaning of the term used by methodologists.

## MULTIPLE MODES OF MEDIATING BETWEEN CITIZENS AND STATES

*... representation mediates between individual and state by the way in which it aggregates citizen preferences for the purposes of responsiveness. No matter how individualistic the premises of a political system, all political representation is group representation, insofar as legislators represent constituencies and constituencies are defined by some shared characteristic, that is, as a group. (Williams 1998:25).*

This demand for multicultural recognition is the first step toward making claims that Indian cultures cannot be reduced to individual identities and rights, as liberal theory and neoliberal citizenship regimes would have it, but in fact also rest on primary and collective sets of identities, organizations, and rights – as communitarians would presume. Accordingly, indigenous movements have challenged the effort to homogenize and individualize the appropriate unit of political representation and interest intermediation.<sup>77</sup> They want to be recognized as individuals and collectivities.

As we have seen, Latin American regimes have tended to assume unit homogeneity. Whereas Latin American regimes once privileged corporatist forms of interest intermediation, they now privilege individuals as the primary unit. Latin American politicians of the 1980s and 1990s have contended that the central political unit is and should be the individual. The individual chooses to vote, to join political parties, to participate in organizations, and to hold government accountable. In short, the individual is the foundational unit of rights and responsibilities in a polity presumed to be moving toward a more liberal democracy. Policymakers have voiced concern about equalizing treatment before a state that engaged in indiscriminate repression and torture and, to that end, advocate paying closer attention to the rule of law. In a context where dissidents were killed or jailed, indigenous people were excluded and/or repressed, and regions were controlled by local bosses, the call for a universalizing set of norms and institutions to protect individuals is an important normative step toward deepening democracy.

Given the democratizing intentions of the third wave, it is striking that indigenous movements in the region are *cautious* about the drive to promote the individual as the primary political unit of democracy. The constitutions of Latin America, in fact, do not directly and explicitly discriminate against Indians as individuals. However, legislation has historically often treated Indians as wards of the state. For example, despite comparatively liberal Brazilian legislation, indigenous men and women have been discussed in statutes referring to legal minors and the juridically handicapped.<sup>78</sup> For example, “In 1988, Brazil’s constitutional reform shifted Indians from a tutelary and assimilationist regime to an enfranchised and protected minority group” (Brysk (2000:260). But this is not the kind of legal outcome sought by the overwhelming number

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<sup>77</sup> This section does not elaborate on the *fairness* of competing forms of representation. Rather, it discusses the *perceptions* and *goals* articulated by a broad range of indigenous movements in Latin America. For a very interesting discussion of the *fairness* and *justice* of different systems of representation, see Young (1995), Williams (1998), among others.

<sup>78</sup> See Stavenhagen (1988:344-345) and Maybury-Lewis (1991:218-226).

of indigenous movements. For as stated by Pedro Balcúmez, a Mayan Indian leader with the Consejo de Organizaciones Maya: "We do not want protection but effective participation in society and the economy."<sup>79</sup>

Yet even where legal equality is granted, equal treatment often remains a distant hope. Stavenhagen (1988:23,95) notes that while the constitutions of many Latin American countries have stipulated the juridical equality of its citizens, that in fact, indigenous men and women do not experience a continual respect for human rights. These human rights abuses obviously mock the rights constitutive of democracy. In other words, where the dominant political discourse suggests the advance of individual rights, indigenous communities often foresee, at best, no change at all and, at worst, an infringement on indigenous autonomy and resources. Because indigenous communities have rarely experienced the full complement of civil and political rights associated with liberal democracy, they have little reason to believe that the contemporary wave of democratization will necessarily fulfill these promises now. Indeed, as stated boldly by CONAIE, Ecuador's largest and most prominent indigenous movement: "In Ecuador the fundamental principles of democracy—equality, liberty, fraternity, and social peace—have not been achieved."<sup>80</sup> Throughout the region indigenous leaders have made similar points. They recount the ways in which individuals' rights have been dismissed—in voting booths, courts, and schools—and argue that the state should do more to uphold and protect their individual rights.<sup>81</sup>

Hence, despite a neoliberal discourse of individual civil and political rights, states remain incapable of protecting them.<sup>82</sup> The state's inability to secure individual rights makes many indigenous communities even more wary of the restrictions that neoliberal citizenship regimes would place on the inalienable *community rights* and de facto *local autonomy* that they had secured during the prior corporatist citizenship regime. For as communitarians have long argued, individual rights at times cannot be pursued absent a prior respect for collective ones. This is, at the very least, the perspective advocated in documents and discourse emanating from Latin American indigenous movements. In his work on federalism, Stepan (1999) also notes,

In multinational polities ... some groups may be able to participate fully as individual citizens only if they acquire, as a group, the right to have schooling, mass media, and religious or even legal structures that correspond to their language and culture. Some of these rights may be described as group-specific collective rights. Many thinkers in the liberal tradition assume that all rights are individual and universal and view any deviation from individualism and universalism with suspicion, but this assumption is open to question. (Stepan 1999:31).

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<sup>79</sup> Latin American Weekly Reports 2 February 1993.

<sup>80</sup> CONAIE (nd:6).

<sup>81</sup> Based on more than a dozen anonymous small-group discussions conducted by the author in Ecuador, Bolivia, and Peru during the course of 1997, and repeated in most 1995–97 interviews with indigenous leaders in Ecuador, Bolivia, Peru, Guatemala, and Mexico.

<sup>82</sup> Stavenhagen and Iturralde (1990); Dandler (1996); Torres Galarza (nd).

... while individual rights are universal, it is simply bad history to argue that in actual democracies all rights have been universal. Frequently, the struggle to reconcile the imperatives of political integration with the legitimate imperatives of cultural difference has led countries to award certain minorities group-specific rights, such as those given to French-speaking Quebec in Canada, to cultural councils in Belgium and to Muslim family courts in India. The key point is that it is the obligation of the democratic state to ensure that no group-specific right violates individual or universal rights. (Stepan 1999:32).

In this context, contemporary indigenous movements have brought into sharp relief the tense interplay between the contemporary celebration of the individual and indigenous community practices.<sup>83</sup> Indigenous movements generally argue that the individual should not be the only unit of representation, nor should it be privileged. They demand that the state uphold equal rights and responsibilities for Indians as individuals and in this sense are calling for the fulfillment of liberal ideals. But they argue as well that the state should recognize indigenous communities as a historically prior and autonomous sphere of political rights, jurisdiction, and autonomy. These demands range from the call for community or supracommunity autonomy to the call for designated representation in legislatures, ministries, state offices, and constituent assemblies.<sup>84</sup> The demand is not to identify these communities as historic relics confined to *local* politics but as contemporary, capable, and representative units that can both take care of local politics *and* act before and within the state.<sup>85</sup>

If we look at a series of indigenous movements in Ecuador (CONAIE), Bolivia (CIDOB and CSUTCB), Mexico (EZLN), Guatemala (COMG), and Peru (AIDSEP), we find that their strategies have differed. In some cases they have taken up arms (Mexico); in others they have organized marches for recognition (Ecuador and Bolivia); in others they have negotiated directly with the government for new laws that recognize communities (Mexico, Guatemala, Bolivia); and in others they have used existing administrative laws that map out local political units to secure a *de facto* space in which indigenous communities can indirectly act as a political unit (Peru). But despite these differences, we find each movement demanding that the state simultaneously protect members' individual civil and political rights *and* recognize indigenous communities as a political unit. This position is forcefully articulated in several movement documents,<sup>86</sup> as well as in interviews with leaders from each of the movements.<sup>87</sup> At the time of this writing, this

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<sup>83</sup> See Mayer (1996); Stavenhagen (1996).

<sup>84</sup> For a discussion of representation in constituent assemblies and representation designated by constitutions, see Van Cott (2001) and Andolina (1997). For a discussion of representation in state ministries and state agencies, see Lucero (2002).

<sup>85</sup> As noted in Part II, states did recognize communities during colonial and corporatist periods. However, these were not formally perceived as an active and integral mode of interest intermediation. In the twentieth century, there were often seen as ways of accommodating historic relics – which would ultimately give way to assimilation and therefore incorporation into a broader national project devoid of indigenous identities.

<sup>86</sup> CONAIE (nd: 11–12; COMG (1995); Servicios del Pueblo Mixe, A.C. (1996).

<sup>87</sup> These statements were made in 1997 author interviews with indigenous leaders: from Peru, with Evaristo Nukguaj and Bonifacio Cruz Alanguía; from Bolivia, with Marcial Fabricano and Román Loayza; and from Ecuador, with Luis Macas, Leonardo Viteri, César Cerdas, and Valerio Grefa. Similar statements were

issue of indigenous peoples and their political representation/participation as individuals versus communities is being hotly debated and negotiated throughout the region – even in Peru.

#### CHALLENGING ADMINISTRATIVE HOMOGENEITY: THE WHERE(WITHAL) OF POLITICAL AUTHORITY

*One important obstacle to the project of aboriginal self-government has been the hegemony of the unitary model of citizenship, the widespread view that any form of differentiated citizenship would be incompatible with the inclusion of aboriginal people in a Canadian political community in which they were full citizens and all citizens were treated equally. (Carens 2000:177).*

Many indigenous movements have also come to challenge basic normative assumptions about the desirability of universal administrative boundaries within the state. These administrative designs assume neutrality, fairness, and equality. But the *experiences* of indigenous peoples have been anything but that. Rejecting state-formation projects that have sought to centralize or decentralize political institutions according to a single blueprint, indigenous movements throughout the region have demanded that the state recognize administrative boundaries that are unique to indigenous peoples. In this regard, it is not enough to promote municipalization, decentralization, and accountability as a means of increasing the representation, accountability, and transparency of local governments. Indeed, indigenous movements have increasingly demanded that the state recognize territorial boundaries (even, or particularly, where they cut across municipal or provincial boundaries) in which social relations are regulated by indigenous authority systems and customary law. These movements have articulated these demands as autonomy claims. In other words, they are arguing that a differentiated citizenship should coincide with differentiated administrative boundaries.<sup>88</sup> These multiple sites of administration would theoretically accommodate political allegiance to the state (national law) and local communities (customary law).

Demands for territorial autonomy have been particularly significant in the Amazon. As states have actively promoted development and governance in the Amazonian region, they have challenged the physical spaces in which indigenous communities lived – catalyzing a move by the latter to defend their local spaces (including the right to work and govern that land). Challenging national stereotypes of the Amazon as virgin territory and national patrimony, indigenous communities and organizations have forced discussions about indigenous territories. Indeed, indigenous organizations in the Amazon have been surprisingly successful at negotiating various forms of autonomy. In Ecuador, for example, OPIP placed territorial demands on the

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made in an author interview in the United States with Guatemalans Manuela Alvarado, Alberto Mazariegos, and Juanita Bazibal Tujal, May 3, 1998.

<sup>88</sup> References to country-specific demands for differentiated administrative boundaries follow. For a comparative overview of the current state of legal pluralism and autonomy regimes, see Dandler (1996); Assies and Hoekema (1994); Van Cott (2000:ch.9) and (2001); Smith (1999).

political map with a thirteen-day, two-thousand-person march from Puyo to Quito in 1992. The government eventually conceded 19 different territorial blocs that totaled 138 legally recognized communities and 1,115,475 hectares.<sup>89</sup> In Bolivia the main Amazonian indigenous organizations have also won territorial autonomy.<sup>90</sup> Demands were first articulated during the 1990 March for Territory and Dignity, organized by CPIB. The president responded by issuing presidential decrees that recognized four indigenous territories. In 1996 the government finally passed a new agrarian reform that provided indigenous communities with the legal basis for appealing for territorial recognition—including the right to vast expanses of land and the political autonomy of indigenous authorities. By August 1997 the state had recognized seven distinct territories totaling 2.6 million hectares, and it was processing thirty-four more demands totaling about 20 million hectares.<sup>91</sup> Demands for territorial autonomy in Bolivia have been complemented by efforts to establish indigenous districts; with the 1994 Bolivian Law of Popular Participation (largely a municipalization and decentralization law), indigenous communities gained the right to request indigenous districts – albeit with mixed results.<sup>92</sup> According to internal documents from the Secretaría de Participación Popular (Dirección Nacional de Organización Territorial Administrativa), there were 127 such districts by April 1997.<sup>93</sup> In the 1991 Colombian Constituent Assembly, moreover, indigenous peoples also negotiated reforms that granted territorial autonomy.<sup>94</sup> The 1991 Colombian constitution referred to indigenous lands as Territorial Entities in Article 286; according to this Article, existing political authority structures assume governing

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<sup>89</sup> Two author interviews each, in Ecuador, with Leonardo Viteri, César Cerdas, and Gonzalo Ortiz Crespo between February and May 1997. Also see Selverston (1994:146 and 2001:45). See Chapter 4 for further elaboration.

<sup>90</sup> May–August 1997 author interviews with indigenous leaders Marcial Fabricano and Ernesto Noe of CIDOB, with researchers Zulehna Lehm and Wilder Molina at CIDDEBENI, and with lawyer Carlos Romero Bonifaz of CERES. See Libermann and Godínez (1992); Navir Ribera (1996); Molina (1997); Van Cott (1999, 2000 book; 2000 article on legal pluralism).

<sup>91</sup> Author interviews conducted in Bolivia with Isabel Lavadenz, former national director of the National Institute of Agrarian Reform, and Jorge Muñoz, researcher at UDAPSO, 1997. See also Muñoz and Lavadenz (1997). See Chapter 5 for further elaboration.

<sup>92</sup> The terms of these indigenous districts in Bolivia are underspecified. The law creates the possibility (but neither the obligation, terms nor the mechanisms) for establishing these districts. Consequently, indigenous districts are hard to negotiate and are not autonomous administrative units; they might, but do not necessarily, institutionalize the right to customary law, bilingual education, communal property, state resources, etc. The future and fate of these municipal districts depends on the mayor who has the power to recognize (or not) these districts, to determine resource allocation; s/he has no legal obligation to do one or the other (Interview with Alcides Vadillo on 11 June 1997). According to Luz María Calvo, the former head of SAE, these districts have not emerged unblemished. To the contrary, most have confronted significant problems due to poorly delineated legal rights and limited skills within the community. Interviews with Luz María Calvo on 9 July 1997; and George Gray Molina 4 June 1997). Moreover, it should be noted that the law does not delineate the precise terms of the relationship between the municipality and a hypothetical indigenous district. Indeed, the financial and political relationship is largely up for negotiation between those proposing the indigenous district and the individual municipality. For example, it is up to the good will of the municipal government to decide if they will transfer any financial and social resources (and if so, how much) to the indigenous district; indeed, the municipal government has no legal responsibility to distribute part of the co-participation *tributaria*, to pay local official's salaries, or to cover administrative costs. See Balslev (1997:35-41, 53-58, 86).

<sup>93</sup> Also see Balslev (1997, particularly Annex 2, 117-121).

<sup>94</sup> Clavero (1999:187-189); Van Cott (1999 and 2000a and 2000b).

capacity, including criminal and civil jurisdiction, in these territories; moreover, the territories are responsible for determining their own development strategy and for administering public resources as if it were a municipality. We also find states recognizing some version of autonomy regimes (reserves) in the Amazonian Basin in Brazil.<sup>95</sup> While concessions of territorial autonomy in each country have not all been actualized, they constitute a significant symbolic and legal precedent for indigenous movements as a whole.

Beyond the Amazon as well, there are now demands for state recognition of indigenous communities as politically autonomous units, further challenging the hegemonic idea of administrative homogeneity. In Nicaragua, Miskito Indians fought a civil war to secure autonomy from the Sandinista regime (Hale 1994). In Bolivia, in particular, there is a push to recognize, reconstitute, and/or register *ayllus* (communal kinship organizations) that dot the Andean countryside.<sup>96</sup> Bolivia's 1997 agrarian reform law makes this recognition possible.<sup>97</sup> In Ecuador this public discussion is incipient, as indigenous movements and nongovernmental organizations have started to engage in dialogue and initiate projects to strengthen and/or reconstitute systems of elders that have receded in importance over the years.<sup>98</sup> Mexico and Guatemala have seen separate efforts to negotiate or proclaim autonomy for the Mayan populations residing on either side of the border.<sup>99</sup> In Mexico, the EZLN/Zapatistas have demanded that the state recognize the autonomy of indigenous communities, which was incorporated into the Accords of San Andrés (signed in 1996). The Accords were not implemented. The government's stance led to a historic march from the state of Chiapas to Mexico City, where the Zapatistas restated their autonomy demands before the Mexican legislature in early 2001. The legislature subsequently did pass a law, which was denounced by the EZLN as devoid of any effective autonomy for indigenous communities. Finally, Guatemala signed a historic 1995 Accord on Identity and Rights of Indigenous Peoples and a 1996 Peace accord that granted autonomy to indigenous communities; this has, however, not been implemented in any meaningful way, at the time of this writing.

Hence, indigenous movements throughout the Americas are claiming their right to new administrative spheres that have a certain degree of political autonomy at the local level. This is more than just a call for more land, although that is certainly a *core* and *necessary* component of the demand. Rather, it is a demand that the state recognize

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<sup>95</sup> See Brysk (2000:261).

<sup>96</sup> *Ayllus* often claim sovereignty over discontinuous land bases, in contrast to Western ideas of state formation that generally assume/advocate that continuous areas coincide with a single political administration. Robert Andolina, Sara Radcliffe, and Nina Laurie are completing a project that looks at the *ayllus*.

<sup>97</sup> Author interviews conducted in Bolivia between May and August 1997 with former Aymaran leader Constantino Lima; Carlos Mamani, María Eugenia Choque Quispe, and Ramón Conde, researcher-activists at THOA; and Ricardo Calla, former-director of TAYPI. See Molina and Arias (1996); and Albó and Ayllu Sartañani (forthcoming).

<sup>98</sup> Author interviews conducted in Ecuador between February and May 1997 with indigenous leaders José María Cabascango, Luis Maldonado, and Luis Macas.

<sup>99</sup> For examples of autonomy debates in Mexico and Guatemala, see *Ojarasca* (1995); Díaz-Polanco (1997); the 1996 Guatemalan Peace Accords; the 1995 Guatemalan *Acuerdo sobre identidad y derechos de los pueblos indígenas* (1995); and Sieder (1998).

indigenous political jurisdiction over that land, including the right of indigenous legal systems and authorities to process and adjudicate claims. In this regard, diversified state structures would coincide with some form of legal pluralism.

These calls might support federalism and/or decentralization but cannot necessarily be reduced to either one or the other.<sup>100</sup> Federalism and decentralization are generally designed to grant greater local sovereignty over local issues; federalism and decentralization tend to assume an important degree of administrative homogeneity – although Stepan has demonstrated that there is perhaps greater variation (with notable institutional asymmetry in some cases) than commonly assumed.<sup>101</sup> It is often assumed that an entire country will be defined by federal and/or municipal administrative boundaries. Each administrative unit (whether the state and/or the municipality) ideally governs with the same understanding of the dividing line between federal/national and local jurisdiction. Many indigenous organizations support this idea insofar as it provides additional entry points for participation as both electors and elected. And indeed, with decentralization, the level of indigenous participation in elections has grown; in Bolivia, for example, the number of elected indigenous officials has increased noticeably.<sup>102</sup>

Demands for local autonomy, however, actually challenge the administrative homogeneity entailed in decentralization and most types of federalism. Indigenous organizations assert that their collective identity—which is historically prior to the formation of each Latin American state—entitles them to special jurisdictions that crosscut, transcend, and are distinct from homogenous state administrative boundaries. They want not only more local autonomy but also more expansive jurisdiction for Indian communities—an arrangement that would not necessarily be accorded non-indigenous communities, whose local jurisdiction might be much more restrictive vis-à-vis the federal or national state. Hence, regardless of whether a country is defined by federal units, indigenous movements are demanding that the state recognize political and juridical spaces that are primarily occupied and administered by indigenous communities. These proposals would in fact result in a more multilayered conception of the polity, the state, and its citizens, one that would promote inclusion and autonomy simultaneously.

These are not demands for secession but for institutional pluralism in multiethnic settings. Nonetheless, demands for recognition as a people have raised legal eyebrows, for fear that recognition as a people is the first step towards secession and/or a threat to the power of the national state. This might be the case among a few groups; but it appears to be uncommon. Miguel Sucuquí, a Mayan organizer in the governing board of CERJ, a largely indigenous human rights organizations, said,

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<sup>100</sup> For the differences between territorial autonomy, federalism, and decentralization, see Lapidoth (1996:50-52).

<sup>101</sup> Stepan (1999) notes that contrary to common perceptions, there are in fact two types of federalism: symmetric and asymmetric federalism. The latter could conceivably accommodate the types of autonomy demands being put forth by indigenous movements insofar as it grants “different competencies and group-specific rights to some states” (21). As examples of asymmetric federalism, he cites India, Belgium, Canada, and Spain (31).

<sup>102</sup> See Ministerio de Desarrollo Humano, Secretaría Nacional de Participación Popular (1997).



So our most immediate task is organization and unification, and this must be done on the basis of our culture and our traditions. With that unification, we Mayans would have an enormous capacity to build our own life within the Guatemalan state. *We are not forming a state within another state* -- we want that to be well understood. But were there freedom of organization, of expression, of religion, the Mayan people could unite, strengthen ourselves, and create the proper institutional expressions for sustaining our lives as a people.<sup>103</sup>

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In short, indigenous movements are posing a postliberal challenge. They challenge the homogenizing assumptions that suggest that individuals unambiguously constitute the primary political unit and that administrative boundaries and jurisdictions should be uniformly defined throughout a country. And they call instead for more differentiated forms of citizenship and political boundaries, ones that grant individuals rights as citizens but that also grant collective rights and political autonomy. Finally, in calling for the constitutional recognition of pluriethnic and multicultural states, they challenge the idea that the state (democratic or otherwise) should correspond to a presumed homogeneous nation. In this regard, they challenge claims of ethnonational homogeneity and assert the political salience of ethnic diversity. By advocating a differentiated kind of citizenship, they are pushing to redefine democratic institutions in dramatic ways. And where states have already incorporated these claims formally into constitutions, legislation, and statutes, they are working to implement and enforce these changes so that they are more than symbolic achievements.<sup>104</sup>

Lest we conclude that these are political battles peculiar to Latin America, we should cast a comparative glance once again around the world. For we see that postliberal challenges emerge as a subtype of the multicultural struggles found in other “immigrant” countries in the United States, Canada, New Zealand, and Australia. In all of these cases, we find that indigenous peoples are demanding not only the right to be citizens of their respective countries but also the right to local autonomy. For the postliberal agenda formally seeks to secure collective and individual rights. In this sense it is both a historically looking and future-oriented project. It is historically oriented insofar as indigenous movements seek to recapture the collective right to identity, respect for their communities, and the right to some autonomy that was understood as once theirs. It is forward looking insofar as it seeks to complement these demands with the right to form part of the existing liberal polities – with equal individual rights before and in the state. Here is where political agenda setting meets the unknown. For it remains unclear how to harmonize these different systems in a coherent, democratic, and sustainable way.<sup>105</sup> It is

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<sup>103</sup> Reported in *Report on Guatemala* (September 1993), emphasis added.

<sup>104</sup> See Brysk (2000: Chapter 6) and Van Cott (2000: Chapter 9) for a discussion of the important changes ways in which states have advanced indigenous rights. Van Cott provides a very useful chart of constitutional changes. Brysk also discusses changes at the international level. Both authors acknowledge that policy changes have not easily translated into implementation.

<sup>105</sup> Indeed, scholars of multiculturalism have analyzed this dilemma within political theory, as discussed in Yashar (forthcoming: chapter 2). Empirically speaking, however, they have not found an institutional mechanism to consistently accommodate the norms of such diverse paradigms of citizenship and governance. This is no where more apparent than when we analyze the question of local autonomy. For

perhaps all the more remarkable than that the recent politicization of ethnic cleavages has not unleashed ethnic conflict but has led to an explicit effort to accommodate a diverse ethnic population in a more plural form of democracy.

#### **Part IV**

### **The Democratic/Electoral Challenge**

Thus far, indigenous movements have primarily articulated this postliberal agenda through social movement politics – in the streets, in protests, in documents, and in international fora. And they have achieved some notable political successes – including the negotiation of territorial autonomy, bicultural education, a chance to help run state offices, and a voice in public debates. In other words, key demands have found their way into policy (although rarely solely because of indigenous mobilization) – even while indigenous movements eschewed party politics, electoral campaigns, and the like.

With their mobilizational successes, however, several indigenous leaders have rethought their exclusive mobilizational strategy. They have begun to move into electoral politics. That is to say, they have chosen to run for office, form political parties, and engage in partisan alliances. This is a striking development since so many indigenous leaders initially rejected the electoral process itself, as discussed for Ecuador and Bolivia.<sup>106</sup> Nonetheless, as indigenous movements, in both of these countries and elsewhere, achieved political successes, they have rethought this position. With increasing overtures by existing political parties (concerned to tap a mobilized indigenous constituency), and with electoral reforms in many countries that decreased barriers to entry (Van Cott 2003), it also became more pressing and feasible to enter the electoral races. In this context, by the end of the 1990s, indigenous leaders were participating in executive, legislative, and local level races.

There have been notable electoral success stories here. First and foremost among them was the election of Víctor Hugo Cárdenas as vice-president of Bolivia. But important indigenous leaders were also elected to legislatures and local offices in Bolivia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Colombia, Venezuela, and beyond. A significant part of the historic leadership in Ecuador's CONAIE has taken part in elections and since 1996 has successfully fielded several candidates, including Luis Macas, Miguel Llucio, Nina Pacari, among others. So too, their leadership won ten percent of the seats in the Constituent Assembly (1997-1998). And

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local autonomy can increase the possibility for local participation. It could also tend toward illiberal politics at the local level. The recognition of local autonomy could provide traditional authorities with the means to carve out their own fiefdoms with few outside checks on the exercise of that power—thereby inhibiting the democratization of local life within indigenous communities. Moreover, traditional indigenous practices could disadvantage groups in society—limiting their voice, access to indigenous and nonindigenous resources, and individual autonomy—by charging that their concerns threatened the sanctity of local autonomy and tradition. Women in particular have historically been excluded from public political spheres, where the male head of household often speaks for the family unit, where women are often denied equal access to education and social services, and where battered women often have little legal recourse within the community. Consequently, the postliberal challenge could simultaneously increase local autonomy (a liberal good) and decrease local tolerance (an illiberal outcome).

<sup>106</sup> I am not saying that these movements were apolitical before. Obviously, all social movements are political – insofar as they seek to shape political discourse and effect political change. Here I am highlighting a different point: the decision to enter electoral races and back political candidates.

Brysk (2000:255) reports local electoral successes following the 1996 election: “almost a dozen indigenous mayors and scores of council members have assumed power in some regions.” In Bolivia, as well, we have seen significant electoral gains, in the mid-1990s, particularly by indigenous leaders in the CSUTCB, in general, and the coca movement, in particular – including Evo Morales, among others.

But these successful electoral campaigns have not all translated into the growth and strength of indigenous movements as a whole. For despite early optimism and fanfare, electoral participation has posed some (perhaps short-term) challenges to the existing indigenous movements – just as the broader literature on social movements and democracy would caution.<sup>107</sup> Political parties, interactions with state officials, and reform policies can undermine movement organizations that were once vibrant organizers of protest – as their struggles are subsumed by or displaced by these formal institutions and sites of political negotiation, as noted by Piven and Cloward (1979) and Tarrow (1994). Accordingly, Latin American social movements have historically voiced concern about the destructive impact that political parties and alliances with state officials can have on movement autonomy and integrity, as noted by Hellman (1992) and Foweraker (1995:ch.4).<sup>108</sup>

At this early stage in the game, it would be foolhardy to draw conclusions about the fate of Latin America’s indigenous movements and their decision to take part in elections. For indigenous movements are just beginning to move into electoral and party politics. Moreover, we should be wary of simple generalizations for the Latin American indigenous movements as a whole given varied national contexts: different histories with democracy, clientelism, party systems, electoral rules, and the like. For as Eckstein (2001) has stated,

The relationship between democratization and social movements is, in essence, historically contingent. If and when political parties get the upper hand, social movements tend to lose their vitality; however, if they do not or before they do, political parties and social movements may nurture each other. (Eckstein 2001:398)

This contingency requires a greater span of time in which to observe these relationships. For democracy, in general, and electoral participation, in particular, can pose both opportunities and constraints for social movements, in ways aptly delineated by Eckstein (2001:398-400).

That said, a few cautionary observations are noted here about the challenges that electoral participation (taken to mean the decision to run in elections) can pose for the unity and integrity of the movements themselves. Four dynamics are highlighted, the last of which is likely to pose the most severe challenge to Latin America’s indigenous movements.

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<sup>107</sup> For a discussion of the social movements and democracy in Latin America, see, in particular, Escobar (1992) – particularly chapters by Hellman and Canel; and Eckstein 2001). For a more general discussion of movement cycles (including their demise) see Piven and Cloward (1979) and Tarrow (1994).

<sup>108</sup> There is also a significant literature that has analyzed what has become of anti-authoritarian movements in post-transition settings. Alvarez and Escobar (1992), Canel (1992), and Schneider (1992) have noted that democratization (and the decline in human rights abuses) can take away the *raison d’être* of movements that once defined their mission as anti-authoritarian movements. Schneider also notes that different kinds of political parties can displace these movements once they regain the ability to negotiate in the political sphere.

*First, as indigenous leaders are elected and appointed as political officials (bringing along with them an advisory staff) they often leave relatively new indigenous movements with less experienced leadership to take their place.* For relatively young movements, this can be a particular problem. While this would not necessarily be a problem if movements were better institutionalized, in the short run it has challenged movements to identify new actors who can assume the leadership of these movements and to institutionalize the mechanisms for doing so. This challenge was particularly noteworthy in Ecuador as the key executive leadership (which had visibly dominated the movement since the 1980s) chose to run for seats in the legislature, beginning in 1996.

*Second, those indigenous movement leaders who are elected to political office confront a Herculean task.* Given their small numbers, it is nearly impossible for them to deliver on major demands once made as movement leaders; for obviously, legislative action requires numbers; it cannot just be mandated once in office. In this context, elected indigenous leaders are confronted with what appears to be a choice between a) maintaining their ideological purity and hence appearing ineffective (because they cannot achieve concrete goals) or b) working to deliver on some issues via legislative compromise, logrolling, and coalition building – potentially appearing to betray the ideals of the movement. The ability to navigate these two extremes is no easy task – particularly in a context of prevailing economic crisis, weak party systems, and patronage politics. This in turn can have negative consequences for the movement from which these leaders emerged.

*Third, as indigenous leaders engage in partisan politics, indigenous movements are more likely to fall prey to partisan competition, thereby exposing themselves to the kinds of political cleavages that can divide movements.* This kind of partisan competition is likely to happen anyway in a competitive electoral system. But as indigenous leaders search for partisan affiliations or coalitions, they accelerate latent partisan divides within a given movement. As indigenous movements did not take a formal political stance, it was possible for the same movement to house multiple partisan affiliations. Where and when movements formally decided to forge and/or ally with a given party, however, these political divides were made manifest (as with CSUTCB and CIDOB in Bolivia, and CONAIE following its decision to take part in elections in 1996).

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In short, democracy has not only extended political associational space (a requisite of sustained legal political organizing) but also tested the indigenous movements that have chosen to take part in the game of representative democracy and electoral politics. This is an observation that is as relevant for the indigenous movements of the region as it is of other social movements in Latin America and beyond. For the PT in Brazil, Causa R in Venezuela, and the Greens throughout Europe, have all witnessed serious challenges to the unity and integrity of their movements following the decision to enter electoral races.

This challenge is particularly severe in Latin America given what is commonly seen as a crisis of democratic representation and institutions – particularly in those countries with significant indigenous populations, among other countries. While this crisis is, on the one

hand, a function of weak competitive party systems in the five countries discussed at greatest length in this paper,<sup>109</sup> it is perhaps more profoundly a function of the weak reach of the state. For as we have seen, even laudable political reforms have been compromised by the inability of the state to implement them, the resistance of authoritarian social forces, and the weak ability and presence of the state (in particular in the countryside). In this context, indigenous movements and leaders confront particularly high hurdles to gaining office, maintaining their positions, and effecting widespread and longstanding reforms.

It is in this context then that efforts to organize within civil and political society are so striking and so necessary – even if at times they appear quixotic. For while electoral politics has created some political turbulence (at least in the short run) for Latin America's indigenous movements, the counterfactual must be posed: would indigenous movements be more effective in promoting the postliberal challenge absent an effort to engage directly with political parties, to take part in the legislature, and the like. The educated guess is “no.” For while particular indigenous movements and indigenous political officials might not survive the short-term, it is clear that their mobilization in *both* realms has solidified indigenous peoples as political actors whose interests are at least now part of the national dialogue; other political parties must at least take a stance on some of the issues associated with the postliberal agenda. While we cannot be so sanguine about the degree to which the postliberal challenge will or will not be institutionalized, we can be certain that it has highlighted that indigenous peoples are *part of* the citizenry and electorate and that their political issues (diverse as they are) must at least form part of the political dialogue. Hence, as with the civil rights movement in the United States, one cannot see it as an absolute success – when measured against the survival of the movement and the ability to achieve all of its stated goals. But nor can one imagine calling it a failure. For it fundamentally changed the national terms of identifying, debating, and promoting diverse interests that had until then largely been sidelined. The same can be said of Latin America's indigenous movements and their postliberal agenda. For with the politicization of ethnic cleavages, the organization of indigenous movements, and their entry into partisan debates, Latin American societies have had to confront competing visions of how to accommodate a multiethnic citizenry in a democratic polity.

## CONCLUSION

The last two decades of the twentieth century are a cautionary tale for Latin America – weaving optimistic trends with uncertain social ones. Authoritarian regimes that once dominated the region have given way to formal democratic regimes in North, Central, and South America. Highly repressive regimes in Argentina, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Chile witnessed transitions to democracy, as did more moderate authoritarian regimes throughout the continent. These dramatic regime changes have

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<sup>109</sup> Mainwaring and Scully (1995) observed that Ecuador, Bolivia, Peru (and I would Guatemala) have inchoate party systems. They are neither institutionalized nor stable. Mexico, by contrast has had (until recently) a hegemonic party system – preventing effective and meaningful forms of competitive democratic participation. Scholars of these cases commonly refer to a crisis of representation – particularly in the Andean cases.

been widely celebrated as militaries have retreated to the barracks (in some cases more than others) human rights abuses have declined dramatically, and civil and political rights have been restored. So too, indigenous demands for inclusion have met some success some notable and important institutional changes that respond to demands for collective recognition and autonomy as well demands for increased representation in the formal institutions of the new democracies. Having referred to many of these changes in the body of the paper, I briefly enumerate some of the most notable here:

- Several countries have begun by *recognizing the diversity* in their countries – not only in international forum by signing ILO Convention 169 but also in their home constitutions (Mexico, Bolivia, Ecuador, and Colombia).
- So too there have been *increasing entry points to the democratic polity* via decentralization policies, in particular in Bolivia, Ecuador, Colombia, most recently Peru, among other places.
- Remarkably, some states have also recognized (although not fully implemented) some degree of *territorial autonomy* – i.e., Ecuador, Bolivia, and even Mexico (although the EZLN is far from satisfied with the content of the autonomy recognized by the Mexican state). Others, as in Guatemala, Brazil, and Bolivia, have set up land institutions to address the morass of incomplete/contradictory land titling and the challenge of land reform; although, these institutions have not been able to fulfill their mandates, at least not yet.
- *Bicultural education* is part of the policy debate, with most notable advances in Ecuador and Guatemala.
- *Organized indigenous participation* in political parties and political office has also increased.

These are striking changes – although many of these announced changes now meet the equally thorny challenge of implementation. I note these changes without commenting on their impact, since too little time has passed to evaluate their real-world implications for building more inclusionary polities for indigenous people. What seems probable, however, is that absent coterminous projects to strengthen state institutions and alleviate unacceptable levels of poverty, indigenous people as a whole will remain severely disadvantaged.

Indeed, significant challenges remain. For while noteworthy macro-institutional changes have ushered in a categorically democratic Latin America, the quality of the democracies in place are uneven, at best. Many of the newer democracies face seemingly insurmountable problems of weak state capacity, clientelism, corruption, weak party systems, and high levels of inequality and poverty.<sup>110</sup> These political conditions are obstacles to democratic inclusion and representation – particularly when one analyzes democratic inclusion and representation along ethnic and racial lines. Indigenous people, in particular, continue to suffer from institutional discrimination in many of their formal

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<sup>110</sup> The celebrated democratic trio of Costa Rica, Venezuela, and Colombia, has given way to a lonely universe of one. Costa Rica's democracy still scores very high in terms of basic democratic indicators. The same cannot be said, however, of Venezuela and Colombia. The latter two have experienced increasing political violence and political instability. Moreover, even during their politically stable years, the democracy was highly regulated by restricting political office to two political parties that alternated in power.

interactions with state officials and institutions. I end, then, by noting three underlying policy challenges that remain. This three-fold list is far from exhaustive. But I would contend that these three areas are necessary (although not sufficient) to strengthen the quality of democracy and, in turn, to institutionalize more equitable and meaningful opportunities for indigenous people.

*State Capacity:* Building inclusive societies means building up capable states (and weakening military prerogatives in places like Guatemala, Colombia, and parts of Mexico). As Linz and Stepan (1996) have stated so clearly: no state, no democracy. I would add, derivatively: no state, no meaningful inclusion. The effort to include ethno-racial groups on more equitable grounds should not be limited to ethnically targeted policies, alone. Indeed, building state capacity, that most basic of political tasks, needs to be taken seriously. Its consequences will make for a more predictable polity, which will be of value to indigenous people and Afro-Latins in profound ways. Central areas of concern are subordinating (para)military and police forces to civilian rule and creating an ethic of upholding and defending human rights; strengthening the rule of law and determining if and how legal pluralism will actually work in those areas that have recognized territorial autonomy; and building a professional bureaucracy that is not captured by social forces and that treats citizens equally, independent of perceived ethno-racial background.

*Poverty Alleviation and Land Issues.* Poverty and inequality remain. They continue to be of monumental importance – both for the region, as a whole, and indigenous and Afro-Latin peoples, in particular. As we focus on building the political institutions that recognize cultural diversity and promote new forms of local and national political inclusion, one must not forget that basic economic indicators remain problematic, particularly for the region's indigenous people. If we are committed to building inclusive societies, we need to think about the kinds of state policies and private initiatives that can address the severe poverty alleviation that has led to unacceptable levels of malnutrition, associated health problems, inability to provide basic resources for households, inability to accumulate capital to invest in more productive enterprises, etc. While these sorts of discussions were shelved for much of the 1980s and early 1990s (as part of the neoliberal response to the severe economic crisis), these “second-order reforms” are now once again part of the debate – although we still lack policies that adequately address these issues. Microfinance is all the rage; and this is an important policy response. However, it cannot be the only one in cultural communities who so strongly identify with the land, work the land, have historic claims to the land, and yet lack titles, acreage, and resources necessary for a productive and sustainable farm. States need to consider (again) how they can deal with the conflict over land – learning from past failures and successes – particularly if they are committed to building an inclusive polity that respects cultural diversity. In a context where land is contested (now not just with domestic landed elites but also multinational companies), this is a complicated task to say the least. But shrinking away from issues of land reform (along with

discussions of access to other natural resources, credit, and infrastructure) is not the answer. Rather, a discussion of land and its relationship to local communities is at the heart of the issue.

*Education: Building Human Capital and, perhaps, Social Capital.* Finally, indigenous people need better access to and quality of education – not just bicultural education but education in general. This is not just a question of increased funding but also of quality of design and implementation. Rural schools are impoverished – in some cases they are simply a one-room structure with no books, resources; indeed, at times even teachers appear to be vanishing commodities, with rather erratic attendance in their own rural classrooms. This has obviously disadvantaged rural indigenous children, in particular. Inclusion requires that the state provide better education. This will increase human capital and possibly the kind of social capital that can expand opportunities for individuals (and hopefully communities as well). The actual *content* of that education will, of course, be highly contested as multiculturalists push state agencies to move away from the assimilationist, homogenizing norms of the past. But what few will dispute is that no education is the worst outcome of all. Primary and secondary education has to be the focus. However, fellowships need to be made available to indigenous youth prepared for a college education. Only then will indigenous communities generate *more* individuals who in the best of circumstances could serve as interlocutors with other social forces and the state.

In short, Latin America remains a continent where ethnic violence remains low and yet equality of opportunity (not to mention outcome) for most indigenous peoples remains out of reach. The challenges of building an inclusive society are therefore at the heart of ethnic politics in the region.



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**UNDP HDR 2004**  
**October 2003**

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