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Diversity and Democracy in Bolivia:

SOURCES OF INCLUSION IN AN INDIGENOUS MAJORITY SOCIETY

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I. INTRODUCTION

Bolivia is a country of ten million people, of whom over half speak one of 36 indigenous languages— either instead of or in addition to the national language of Spanish. Despite economic expansion in recent years, high levels of poverty and economic inequality persist. The legacies of colonialism shaped a contemporary history of neo-colonial nation building that institutionalized exclusion of the largely indigenous, largely labouring majority along ethnic, racial and linguistic lines. Despite complexities of identity categories and a heterogeneous array of middling classes, this pattern yielded a social and conceptual distinction between wealthier, lighter-skinned *criollo* Bolivians and the less prosperous urban and rural populations of predominantly indigenous origins. Lines of economic inequality were further reinforced by institutional and discursive racism; elite antipathy toward indigenous languages and cultural forms;

and an inherently unstable system of political incorporation—sometimes democratic, often not— that relied on institutionalized subordination of a large segment of the population.

In 1994, during a period of liberalizing economic reforms, the political parties of the traditional ruling elite responded to rising social mobilization of subordinated groups by reforming the Constitution to recognize the "pluricultural" reality of the country—a reality, until then, that was largely denied. Part of a wider "multicultural" or "intercultural" turn in Latin America, this official recognition of difference began to unsettle conventional idioms and structures of exclusion. In the 2000s, various social movements mobilized to deepen this transformative turn, paving the way for the election of the country's first president of indigenous origin in 2005. Four years later, in 2009, the new government of Evo Morales oversaw the writing of an entirely new constitution.

Beyond multicultural recognition, the new Constitution spoke of "decolonization" and included broad-based assertions of cultural rights, indigenous rights, social and economic rights and protections against discrimination. Even so, implementation of these progressive and inclusionary laws and policies has proved challenging, as Bolivia's long-standing dependence on natural resource extraction and export complicates the real politics of rule.

This pluralism change case traces the past and present struggles over exclusion and inclusion in Bolivia. After a general historical overview, the case examines the gradual opening of the "multicultural era", the ongoing challenges of the "decolonizing" project and the limits posed by the country's resource-based economic model. While Bolivia is a unique country with its own historical imperatives, an effort is made to highlight lessons learned from this case, with a particular focus on the possibilities and limits of using the law as an instrument of change as well as strategies for social movements and practitioners.

II. STATE, PEOPLE AND NATION: ORIGINS AND RESPONSES TO DIVERSITY

Pre-colonial Era

For many thousands of years prior to the Spanish invasion, the Andes was home to populations of Quechua and Aymara peoples numbering in the several millions, as well as to other Andean peoples who had developed complex agricultural and political systems. At the time of the Spanish invasion much of the Andes was incorporated into the expanding Inca Empire. In the Amazonian and Chaco lowlands, several other groups of indigenous peoples, speaking myriad other languages, lived in more and less complex societies. The most populous included the Guaraní of southeastern Bolivia, the Besiro (or Chiquitano) peoples in eastern Bolivia and the Moxeño peoples of the Amazon, an Arawak group.

The Spanish invasion came from two directions. The first wave, from the north, spread south through the Andes of Peru into what is now highland Bolivia, absorbing Andean (Quechua and Aymara) peoples into regimes of labour, tribute and colonial production. The colonial mining economy predominated and silver wealth from famous mines like Potosí in Bolivia helped build Spain and Europe. The second wave came from the south and east, up from Buenos Aires and surging onto the plains of what is now southeastern Bolivia. The colonial system relied on slavery, warfare and the *encomienda* (indigenous land and labour allotments) to subjugate people and

control territory in largely agrarian economies. As elsewhere in Latin America, indigenous populations declined drastically due to the violence of conquest, beginning a slow recovery only by the late eighteenth century.[1] The colonial foundations of extractivism (mining) and large-scale agriculture remain central to the Bolivian economy today—and to its dynamics of inclusion and exclusion.

Colonial Origins and the "Coloniality" of Power, 1500s–1800s

To understand Bolivia's current political struggles, one must first understand the colonial forms of rule that have left their imprints on contemporary Latin American society. An institutional and discursive regime of racialized labour control underwrote colonization. The category of *indio* (Indian) was a legal designation for those who had forced labour obligations and limited rights and a racial designation. *Indio* were understood to be biologically (by blood) distinct from, as well as inferior and subject to, *criollo* (locally-born Spaniard) or *español* (Spaniard born in Spain), both of which were legal and social designations. *Negros* (Blacks), another legally designated group, were subject to outright slavery. Many new racial categories quickly emerged from rape and inter-marriage, leading in some cases to designations of *mestizaje* (understood as "mixing" between Spanish and Indian peoples) or *mulataje* ("mixing" between Spanish and Black peoples).[2] There were, to be sure, some elite accommodations between indigenous populations and the colonial leadership strata, given the regime's dependence on native labour. But for the most part, colonial rule rested on legally codified hierarchies of race and gender, and rights,

obligations and violent technologies of control were distributed accordingly. Colonialism's legacies—from institutionalized racism to implicit forms of exclusionary incorporation, such as differential schooling—continue to shape contemporary struggles for inclusion today.

Independence Era, 1780s–1940s

Cycles of indigenous rebellion were an intrinsic component of resistance in the colonial period, as were emergent forms of accommodation and adaptation by indigenous social formations and leadership structures. Yet accommodation and adaptation never implied the dismantling of the core of colonial rule. The colonial structure of power consistently reasserted itself against indigenous efforts to carve out autonomous spaces of self-rule. The most notable of these revolts were those of Tupac Amaru in Peru and Tupak Katari in what is now Bolivia, which swept the Andes in the 1780s and nearly toppled the colonial regime.[3]

The indigenous rebellions of the 1780s signaled a deeper crisis of colonial rule. Yet when *criollo* elites waged an armed struggle for independence from Spain between 1809 and 1825, these wars had little impact on the status of indigenous peoples. Independence played out as a struggle between *criollo* interests against Spanish rule. This struggle led to the creation of Bolivia, a territory carved out between the old Spanish jurisdictions of Peru and Argentina. Although indigenous peoples had, in some cases, joined these *criollo*-led armies both as recruits and as semi-autonomous forces, the rupture with Spain did not result in independence for the region's labouring indigenous population. Instead,

the new Republic of Bolivia transformed *indios* from labouring subjects of the Crown into labouring subjects of the new state. The economies of mining (centred in the Andes) and hacienda agriculture (in the valleys, the high plain, or Altiplano, and originally in the Bolivian east) remained as the basis of the "national" economy. Though no longer under Spain's direct control, colonial practices of forced labour for indigenous communities in mines and on plantations continued. This *de facto* racial apartheid was reaffirmed in law by limiting rights of citizenship to white male elites who owned property and had Spanish literacy. Since independent Bolivia was an oligarchic state, in practice little more than 30% of its people held some claim to citizenship, while 70% continued to be treated in law and practice as working subjects.[4]

A series of violent ruptures and schisms characterized the turbulent century of "nation building" that followed independence. These included a war with Chile and subsequent territorial loss of direct access to the sea (1879–83).[5] The so-called "civil war" between Liberal and Conservative elites (1898–99) was followed by the quashing of the Aymara rebellion led by Zárate Willka.[6] More territory was lost in a war with Brazil (1899–1903). Throughout this period, Bolivian "nation building" actively excluded peoples designated as *indio* or Indian. This tactical exclusion—a significant factor for understanding the current Bolivian moment, at least until Evo Morales took office in 2006—reflected a new colonial form of politics after independence. Although conflicts and arrangements between *criollo* elites – and between these elites and foreign economic and political interests—often played out violently, maintaining the subjugation of

the labouring indigenous population was a shared concern.

Amidst renewed expansion in the early twentieth century of Bolivia's extractive industries—in this case, oil—came the bloody fratricidal Chaco War with Paraguay (1932–35).[7] By creating conditions for a rupture in the dynamics of exclusion and the instrumentalization of Bolivia's indigenous peoples, the Chaco War is often viewed as a watershed moment in the disintegration of the established order.[8] In the late 1930s, the war left in its wake a shifting national consciousness and social landscape marked a new phase of mobilization by the country's largely indigenous underclasses, many of whose members had fought and died for a nation that still refused to see them as equals.

Revolutionary, Corporatist and Military States, 1950s–80s

After the Chaco War, indigenous soldiers returned to the Andean urban peripheries to find their service in the war forgotten, their skin colour stigmatized and their presence rejected by the *criollo* elites.[9] At the same time, some *criollo* intellectuals of the Chaco War generation were reshaping the political landscape. Fueled in large part by the radicalization of urban labour movements, they dismantled the hegemony of the mining elite.[10] Arising from their internecine political battles was a political party—the Nationalist Revolutionary Movement (MNR, *Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionaria*)—which led the country to a relatively bloodless revolution in 1952. The structural transformations that followed were limited, but some gains were achieved. Indigenous participants, small farmers

and peasants pushed the *criollo* leadership to advance land reform across the Andes. Workers and the revolutionary leadership unified to advance the nationalization of mines and the ouster of mining barons. The vote was finally extended to all peoples of the country, offering, after 450 years, equal citizenship of a sort. And public education, *albeit* at a snail's pace, would slowly be expanded across the country.

As with past and future cycles of upheaval and state transformation, the revolution of 1952 also opened new fissures in the system, and new ways to delimit the widening of inclusion and equality evolved. Ostensibly, racism was attacked, but only by doing away with the category of "indigeneity" altogether. Those previously stigmatized and excluded as *indios* (Indians) were re-designated as *campesinos* (peasants). Despite this shift from race to class, racial hierarchies were reasserted in other ways. The national education system, for instance, was divided between urban (whiter space) and rural (indigenous space) institutions, with separate budgets, teachers and schools. Education policy was intensely assimilationist. Schools everywhere deployed violence in the classroom to eliminate the use of indigenous languages in favour of forging a Spanish-speaking *mestizo* (mixed) citizenship. Land reform was accompanied by the formation of a peasant union structure that sought to organize and contain the *indio*—now peasant—at the bottom of a corporatist pyramid of state control. Thus, openings to inclusion such as the right to vote, were paralleled by adjustments to historical forms of exclusion, such as the bifurcated educational system, the deepening of linguistic domination and the narrative of *mestizaje* (mixing) as a form of racial improvement.

While the structure of "class" came to have primary significance, the logic of "race" persisted as the underlying justification for rule by a few over the many.

From Race to Culture: Neoliberal Multiculturalism, 1980s–2000s

During the Cold War, scarcely more than a decade after the revolution, the regime shifted rightward and a series of military governments reverted to an exclusionary form of rule. The return of democracy in 1982 sparked new aspirations for a restoration of a populist-inspired social transformation. Three years later, in 1985, the once-revolutionary MNR returned to power. Now less revolutionary than before, and building on the closer relationship with the United States forged by the military regimes, it embraced the Washington Consensus for economic liberalization known as "neoliberalism."[11] Through a series of policy shifts—weakening of labour regimes, privatization of national industries, opening of borders to capital investment and repatriation—the MNR and other elite parties sought once again to transform the country, this time by pushing for the primacy of the "market" in Bolivia's economy.

Inclusionary openings and limits

In terms of cultural pluralism, the neoliberal turn initially had little to offer, and scholars have pointed out that the liberalization policies contributed to rising inequality and unemployment while dismantling structures of participation, chiefly the large unions.[12] By the 1990s, amidst the push for "second wave neoliberal reforms" and heightened mobilization of social movements, a somewhat

reluctant Bolivian elite followed other Latin American countries and embraced the global turn toward cultural recognition. In 1994, the Congress reformed the Constitution to recognize Bolivia as a "pluricultural" nation.[13]

The state's embrace of "culture" appeared to mark a substantive shift away from the colonial mode of subjugating the *indio* through the category of race, and the corporatist mode of containing indigeneity through class-based institutions. Indeed, President Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada enlisted an Aymara intellectual, Victor Hugo Cárdenas, to be his vice-presidential candidate.[14] Even so, some critics charge that the government's cultural turn in the 1990s was an attempt to shore up support for its increasingly unpopular neoliberal economic policies.[15] Even so, from the social movement perspective, the constitutional adjustment—minor as it was—met a long-standing demand for recognition, a concession won through decades of struggle. But as in the past, the change heralded a cycle of rupture and containment, with recognition counterbalanced by the paradox between a citizenship policy that invoked equality and a set of economic policies that exacerbated inequality.

This period of contradiction and tension between neoliberal reformers, on one side, and indigenous and peasant movement struggles, on the other, is known in Bolivia as the era of "neoliberal multiculturalism."[16] The re-emergence of "culture" as a legal and discursive category set the stage for new tensions between inclusion and exclusion. Although the 1994 constitutional reform recognized pluriculturalism as a national reality and Article 171 spoke of indigenous "cultural" rights, the 1967

Constitution remained largely unchanged. No new provisions were made to recognize the social and economic rights of any citizens. Of more significance were a series of policy shifts through which the discourse of "pluriculturalism" was translated into forms compatible with the modernizing project of neoliberalism. These policy shifts included decentralization, collective land recognition and bilingual education.

Decentralization: Decentralization of certain administrative roles and budgetary controls was implemented at the municipal level. This included allowing the direct election of mayors and councils, the creation of participatory budgeting and oversight mechanisms, and the inclusion of neighborhood and indigenous organizations as legitimate participants. The policy—called "popular participation"—was relatively popular. Yet decentralization sought to increase indigenous political participation without redressing the conditions of indigenous exclusion—such as access to land, underemployment and so on. In some contexts, where indigenous peoples were in the majority, decentralization created new power bases. In fact, Evo Morales and the Movement to Socialism (MAS) party took advantage of the process to extend their political base in the central coca-growing region. But in contexts where indigenous people constituted a local minority, the benefits of decentralization were slim to nil.[17]

Collective land recognition: The wider struggle for economic and political inclusion in Latin America is characterized by indigenous and peasant demands for land reform.[18] Since the late 1800s, the growth of liberal regimes of property rights and

the onslaught of the *criollo*-controlled mining and agrarian economies have deeply affected collective indigenous territories. Since the 1960s and 1970s, demands for land and collective territorial rights to self-determination have formed the centerpiece of indigenous and peasant movements. In the 1980s and 1990s, neoliberal reformers—committed to the ideology of private property, yet confronting the realities of mass mobilization—found a middle ground, which we might refer to as collective land recognition. As with the case of "culture", territorial recognition marked a rupture with the past with significant political implications, but several factors and political priorities limited its impact. After a series of long marches by indigenous protestors to the capital city, the government passed a law that sought to "modernize" Bolivian land markets while recognizing some geographic spaces as indigenous or "Original Community Lands" (TCO, *tierras comunitarias de orígen*). The word "territory"—with its deeper implication of political rights—was avoided in the TCO law and it offered no new legal rights for economic control or political self-rule. Similarly, the design of TCOs disrupted no municipal boundaries, nor did land recognition as a TCO remove third party claimants on the property or result in radical land redistribution. The major achievement of the law was in geographic demarcation and the protection of TCO lands against the assault of the markets, as they could not be bought or sold. Embraced by many despite its limits, the TCO law set into motion a conflictive process of demarcation that continues, in some cases, into the present day. Again, although greater inclusion of a sort was achieved, the changes came with new challenges to overcome.

Bilingual education: Perhaps the most ambitious step toward explicit cultural recognition and pluralism in the neoliberal era was the national education reform and its bilingual education plan.[19] The policy introduced indigenous languages into public schools that had previously operated as Spanish-only spaces, often through the threat of violence. Tepidly embraced by the government and funded by the World Bank, bilingual education had the potential for challenging the symbols and structures of official exclusion linked to linguistic difference. Indigenous organizations were broadly supportive of the policy, yet the public response was mixed. Teachers opposed it for being part of a wider "neoliberal" model. Many parents were skeptical of state intentions. On the ground, bilingual education was plagued by technical difficulties and the lack of teachers trained to implement a radically new pedagogy. As the neoliberal period of multicultural experimentation unraveled, many elites withdrew their support, seeing bilingualism as a threat to the unity of the state and to elite political claims based on Eurocentric identities.

All three policies were undergoing complex and uneven processes of implementation when the era of neoliberal multiculturalism came to an abrupt end in 2003.

III. EMERGING IMPACTS OF AN INDIGENOUS PRESIDENT AND A PLURINATIONAL CONSTITUTION

Evo Morales and Plurinationalism, 2000s–Present

In 2003, a series of public marches, blockades and protests—focused on the nationalization of gas and the unpopularity of the neoliberal regime—forced the resignation of President Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada. Upwards of eighty unarmed civilians were killed by the army before the crisis was resolved. Known as the Gas War, these popular mobilizations paved the way for a new era in Bolivia marked by the political mobilization of civil society. Indigenous and popular (labour-based) movements, as well as feminists, middle-class progressives and other critical intellectual networks, joined together to demand new elections and the drafting of a new constitution. In 2005, the leader of the coca-growers, Evo Morales, was elected to the presidency at the head of a party called the Movement to Socialism (MAS).

The election of Morales and MAS is emblematic of a definitive rupture with the past on multiple levels. The MAS government promised to dismantle neoliberalism with a new economic project that would combine nationalism, indigeneity and socialism. The government nationalized gas and pushed through a new constitution, much of which challenged the neoliberal orientation of the prior decades. A second rupture was to be with the colonial legacy of the country. The phrase "decolonization" was advanced to signal a break with the comparatively tepid "multiculturalism" policies of the neoliberal period. Despite ongoing battles with reactionary conservatives,[20] by 2007, the government had laid the foundation for a national constitutional assembly and, in 2009, a new constitution was approved. Moving beyond multicultural recognition, the new constitution spoke of "decolonization." Though somewhat abstract, the introduction of this term suggested the need to reorder territories, jurisdictions, political forms, public symbols and languages. The new constitution also included broad-based assertions of cultural rights, indigenous rights, social and economic rights and protections against discrimination.

The rewriting of the Constitution was originally imagined by MAS supporters to be a radical moment for the re-founding of the country. The rejection of the old political order was so widespread that proponents fought for the Constitutional Assembly to be elected on the basis of civil society organizations (social movements, unions, peasant and indigenous organizations) rather than *via* the political parties. Here the tensions between social movements and political parties came to the fore. The assembly, it was imagined, would be a truly "originary" moment of re-founding. In contrast to a discredited political class, the social movements considered themselves to be the moral and political core of the country. Yet the new interests of the rising MAS party and its leader, Evo Morales, created an incentive to maintain the pre-eminence of party-based representation and negotiation. The MAS government pushed forward

with a party-based constitutional assembly—the first of many retreats from the radical aspirations of Bolivia's grassroots social movement actors. Amid raucous, sometimes violent outbursts and efforts to delegitimize the process, the Assembly proceeded, ultimately yielding a radically new document to replace the one written in 1967 and reformed only modestly in 1994 during the neoliberal period. In terms of inclusion and recognition a few components of the new constitution merit particular discussion.

The first six articles mark out a dramatic redefinition of the country. No longer a "republic", it designates Bolivia as a "plurinational" and "communitarian" state, "founded on plurality and political, economic, juridical, cultural and linguistic pluralism." Article 2 recognizes the "precolonial existence" of and "free determination" guarantees (including "autonomy" and "self-government") for the "Indigenous Peasant and Originary Peoples and Nations"—that is, those defined as Bolivians "whose existence is anterior to the Spanish colonial

	1967 Military Dictatorship	1994 (revision of 1967) Neoliberal Multiculturalism	2009 (rewritten 2007) Plurinational State
Indígena indigenous	0	3	130
Pueblos peoples	0	1	67
Plurilingüe plurilingual	0	0	6
idioma/s language/s	1 citizenship without distinction of *"idioma"*	1 citizenship without distinction of *"idioma"*	10 rights to, and obligations for use of 36 official indigenous languages
lengua language	0	1 right to translation in courts	0
lenguas languages	0	1 right to languages	3 use in universities and autonomous regions
cultural	11 popular culture, national culture	11 popular culture, national culture	72 wide domain of state oversight and rights
inter/ pluri-cultural	0	1	26

Figure 1. Presence and quantity of key terms related to cultural rights and regimentation in Bolivian Constitutions, 1967–2009.[22]

invasion". Article 3 asserts the nation is made up of all Bolivians (importantly, both feminine and masculine forms of the words are used), and states that the "Indigenous-Originary Peasant Peoples and Nations, and Intercultural and Afrobolivian communities, that, together, constitute the Bolivian People."[21] Article 4 states that Catholicism is no longer the official religion of a state that is now "independent of religion." Article 5 names all thirty-six indigenous languages and declares them official alongside Spanish, with government functions to be carried out in at least two official languages, depending on the region. Finally, in a move that made those nostalgic for colonialist and Eurocentric symbolism tremble, the indigenous *wiphala* flag—long a symbol of anti-colonial resistance—was adopted as an official symbol of the Plurinational State.

Seeking to deepen the constitutional recognition of indigenous rights, the new document includes many articles and an entire chapter referring to the rights of "Indigenous-Originary Peasant Peoples and Nations". In various domains, from land to media, the new constitution makes explicit reference to cultural and linguistic rights, as well as to inter-culturalism and pluri-culturalism as categories of subjects, rights and state action. Compared to prior constitutions, the outlay of legal verbiage is quantitatively impressive, as Figure 1 shows.

The combination of explicit recognition of pluralist cultural rights and guarantees (to language use, knowledge, cultural forms) with a series of broad-based social rights and guarantees (to health, basic services, energy) marks a difference from the era of neoliberal multiculturalism. Nearly 10 years on, scores of analyses have been written—from left,

right and indigenous perspectives—examining alleged flaws and failures of the Constitutional Assembly and the limited implementation of the document.[23] A detailed analysis is beyond the scope of this case, except to observe that two key issues related to political and economic self-determination for indigenous peoples were restricted in the final text.

The first relates to the idea and possibility of indigenous autonomy. As detailed by Fernando Garcés, the indigenous organizations, unified in their participation in the Assembly, demanded a robust recognition of territory with political rights. The final version of autonomy adopted was greatly watered down and the legal procedures to attain autonomy made so difficult to traverse that the demand has receded from the political horizon of many indigenous organizations.[24]

Territory—and the land reform efforts needed to secure it for indigenous peoples and small-holder peasants alike—was the second key issue. Various social movements had lobbied for the imposition of limits on large-scale speculative property holdings (*latifundia*) and for a retroactive and redistributive effort to return ill-gotten and unused lands to the rural poor. Much to the disappointment of supporters of the MAS in the social movements, the constitution approved in the Assembly was later "corrected" in separate negotiations between MAS leaders and representatives of the eastern Bolivian agro-industrial elite. Leaders of the social movements had proposed to limit land ownership to 5,000 hectares (ha), a move that would have put a structural and political block to increasing land inequality and would have sparked widespread land redistribution. The number was even approved

in a national referendum. Yet in backroom negotiations the government made a deal with the agro-industrial elite to include two new phrases in the constitution: first, the limits would not apply to lands already held prior to the adoption of the constitution; and second, the limits would not apply to groups of "associates" so that corporations could own vast amounts of land if held by separate internal entities. With this changes, the possibility of robust and aggressive land redistribution was crippled.

IV. THE DRIVERS OF PLURALISM: SOURCES OF INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION

The table below, organized using the Global Centre for Pluralism's "pluralism lens" framework, summarizes the key sources of inclusion and exclusion in the Bolivian case.

Livelihoods and Wellbeing: Sources of Inclusion

Poverty reduction and redistribution

Critics on the left suggest that the MAS has made insufficient progress in the "real" restructuring of the economy, focusing on the unemployment crisis among youth and the large percentage of the population dependent on the vagaries of the

Pluralism Lens	Sources of Inclusion	Sources of Exclusion
Livelihoods and Wellbeing	Poverty reduction & redistribution Land reform law (2006) Public sector growth Social mobility	The limits of the extractive economy The agro-industrial pact
Law, Politics and Recognition	Constitution (2009) Anti-Racism Law (2010) Education Law (2010) Language Rights Law (2011)	The *de facto* law of extraction and the sacrificial Indian
Citizens, Civil society and Identity	The micro-shifts of daily life The official critique of "mestizaje" Intellectuals and social movements Modifications of elite discourse	The conservative alternative The durability of racialist patriarchy
Regional and Transnational Influences	Amelioration of intra-national regional tensions	Influence of transnational processes and actors (US, Brazil)

"informal" economy.[25] Critics from the right have acknowledged the government's fiscal stability, yet critique expansive fiscal and social policies dependent on the high price of commodities, which are now falling. Critics on both sides of the political spectrum converge in their concern for over-dependence on commodity exports.[26] For their part, government supporters continue to emphasize the redistributive impacts of gas-led economic growth. These impacts include those tied to government policies of cash transfers, which now exist for the elderly without pensions, expectant mothers and schoolchildren. They also include the indirect economic effects of more cash circulating in the economy. Other measures include a fuel subsidy (although the government is trying to find a way to reduce it) and a year-end bonus for workers. Justified by the country's high rates of growth, the *doble aguinaldo* decreed for all salaried workers in the formal economy means that, at year's end, every worker receives two extra months of salary. Based on these redistributive policies and on the general economic growth that has characterized the past decade, government statistics point to a decline in urban poverty, from 51% in 1998 to 30% in 2013. In rural areas, largely indigenous, the rates have gone from 84% to 60% over the same period, with the national average declining from 63% to 51%.[27] Higher poverty rates have long been associated with indigeneity—that is, the more indigenous and rural populations are the poorest. These general trends point toward increased social inclusion.

In addition, the government has made significant investments in infrastructure (roads, hospitals, schools, transportation) and embarked on a credit policy that encourages low-interest home purchases for families with modest incomes. These policies, which mark a difference from neoliberal predecessors, are broadly inclusionary. Infrastructural works include large-scale projects—known as mega-projects—as well as more local initiatives, such as the installation of domestic natural gas lines and community sponsored work projects. The government has allowed local communities to propose local and small-scale infrastructure improvements, which act as a kind of emergency employment and local improvement measure. In the cities, the government installation of gas lines marks a historic shift in the forms of using firewood or bottled natural gas (LPG) for cooking in urban areas. In all of the country's major cities the government has embarked on an aggressive expansion of access to buried gas lines. Of clear benefit to householders, despite the fact that this still largely excludes most of the country's rural population, the policy is also aimed at shoring up support for ongoing gas-centric development. From political and economic perspectives, this very real consumption-based strategy of inclusion into the national economy has great significance. Despite critiques of its limitations for longer-term structural transformation, this strategy has garnered significant support for the state.

Land reform

As described above, the constitution and the MAS government of Evo Morales proclaimed their support for a new "agrarian revolution" focused on deepening and radicalizing the 1954 land reform and its 1994 successor—two measures associated with governments of the center-right MNR. Social movements hoped for a radical redistribution of

lands in the eastern half of the country, currently dominated by large-scale agro-industrial interests. Indigenous peoples hoped for a deepening and consolidation of the territorial recognition set in place in 1994, with possibilities for increasing access to land and attaining a modicum of political self-governance. Both the social movements and the MAS shared the view that the neoliberal government had been more committed to promoting a free market in land than enabling land redistribution as over a decade of neoliberal "land reform" led to the titling of only 9.2 million ha. In late 2006, the MAS government passed a new agrarian law to "redirect" agrarian reform and within three years had titled over 28 million ha.[28] A key component of the law was the stipulation that land had to fulfill a "socio-economic function". If lands were not being used productively, they could be subject to expropriation. In practice, these instruments have been used rarely.

Public sector growth: occupation of state spaces

The expansion of the public sector since the election of Evo Morales has been criticized as a reflection of the populist and clientelistic logic that sustains the MAS in power. State largess is distributed through the public sector. New institutions such as the indigenous universities or language and cultural institutes also enable the state to make direct contact with local movements. Given that clientelism has deep Bolivian roots, what is novel about the current moment is the sense—real and perceived—among those long excluded darker-skinned Bolivians that the state is now "ours". Many lighter-skinned Bolivians may now suggest, as one colleague did, that "we are too white to get a state job". The longer-term implications of this shift and

its empirical dimensions are as yet unclear. There are still tensions in the police and military given that officer ranks are largely "whiter" than those of non-commissioned officers. The corporate power structure, such as it is, is still by and large "white". Yet for the purposes of legitimacy, and as a mode of inclusion that has material and redistributive consequences, the inclusion of new state (public sector) actors is significant.

Social Mobility

The rise in consumption that has accompanied the gas/mineral economic boom has created pockets of important indigenous social mobility that have been highlighted by government supporters as key signs of economic and social inclusion. Two of these are illustrative. The first is in the city of El Alto, the sister city of the country's capital, La Paz. El Alto is largely Aymara. The city hosts small and large-scale industry, booming markets in food, clothing and appliances, and is a crossroads for commerce coming to and from the country via La Paz. Much ado has been made of the growing significance of a new Aymara middle class or bourgeoisie sector— that is, those who have become relatively wealthy through factory ownership or, more frequently, the movement of goods, contraband or otherwise from markets abroad, across Chile and into Bolivia. The rise of a new architectural style, the Andean "cholet" (after the once derogatory term *chola*) has even drawn the attention of international observers, as have the traditional festivals in which increased Aymara wealth and economic success are put on display.[29]

A second key site of indigenous social mobility has been the rise of quinoa production in the western Andes, which has increased income in parts of the once impoverished rural Andes. Though now running the risk of reducing internal quinoa consumption, the quinoa boom reflects Bolivia's entry into northern markets seeking healthier foods. Similar micro-regional cases can be found elsewhere in the country, where indigenous and small-holder populations have gained greater access to land (usually) to produce a good with a stable market. It would be naive to omit the case of coca-growers, whose crop has both a robust national market and a robust illicit international market. Although the government has maintained efforts to contain the narcotics economy, an important subset of small-holders in the coca-growing region benefit directly and indirectly from the production of cocaine paste for export. This consumer-based inclusion, whether of goods, quinoa, or coca, has generated a new middling class whose origins are distinctly Indigenous, but whose aspirations cannot be reduced to more conventional notions of indigeneity, rural agrarian territoriality and the like.[30] This new social stratum cannot be said to be a direct outgrowth of the policies of the MAS government, but its growth and visibility have certainly increased in the context of the state-led mineral and gas boom.

Livelihoods and Wellbeing: Sources of Exclusion

Dilemmas of a narrowly-based extractive economy

Both in the constitution and the rhetoric of the government, it would appear that Bolivia is indeed a state undergoing a radical process of social, political and economic inclusion through various policy initiatives and discursive shifts. In the current moment, Bolivia has become somewhat of a darling of the international financial classes. Against predictions, it did not take a radical socialist turn. Nor has it embodied anything approaching an "ethnicist" or "indigenist" fundamentalism. On the contrary, astute political maneuvering, the saving of foreign reserves and an aggressive negotiation with foreign companies has left the country in a good fiscal situation. Financial companies are eager to buy Bolivian bonds, and the World Bank, the Inter-American Bank and the International Monetary Fund have each gushed about the government's administration. Similarly, the Russian and Chinese governments are investing in the country and offering credit. Yet this boom, and the embrace of multinational capital sources which once scorned Evo Morales, and which he continues to demonize, is all dependent on the extractivist economy—that is, a resource-dependent (minerals and hydrocarbons) model of export-led growth. While the MAS government has made great improvements, especially in assuring that capital stays in the country and is redistributed, albeit in limited ways, this narrowly based dependence on commodity exports offers no long-term prospect for broad-based equality and employment.[31]

This commodity-based economy is capital intensive and labour extensive, and it is producing few long-term jobs. Access to managerial and technical strata in these fields is still limited to urban Bolivians of the middle and upper classes. Outside of the state, the private sector—save for the story of the Aymara business class—is still, in abstract terms, "white".

The unemployed and under-employed youth of the cities, originating in the rural and urban underclasses, have rising expectations but limited economic opportunities.

Bolivia's problematic dependence on a commodity-based economy is compounded by the government's overtures to the agro-industrial elite, which have led to a virtual abandonment of widespread agrarian reform, much less the restructuring of agrarian society as a tool of poverty reduction and social inclusion. In many indigenous regions land scarcity persists. In the highly mechanized soy and cane sectors, peasant labourers are just as often displaced by large agro-business as they are offered new opportunities in medium or small-scale agricultural efforts.[32] While agrarian reform cannot alone solve the problems of rural poverty, as is often imagined, the alternative model—a highly mechanized capital and chemical intensive agriculture—does little to address them either. The "industrialization" of hydrocarbons is often spoken of as a measure that the government is working toward. Yet there again, the creation of fertilizer or petrochemical plants offers only a limited elaboration of primary goods. Though many social tensions are mediated by the government's symbolic and legislative gestures at inclusion, new social and political fissures will likely emerge if the economic boom takes a downward turn.

In reality, in a resource-dependent economy such as Bolivia, the necessities of extractive capital may run counter to the prospects for a broad dispersal of economic wellbeing. As was the case in the neoliberal period, despite symbolic and legislative gestures toward redressing the grievances of previously marginalized groups, the government may find itself sacrificing social inclusion to meet the needs of foreign investors for a favourable investment climate, with the result that social exclusion along racialized lines may harden once more. Already it is clear that the unfinished effort to decolonize the state has done little to equalize the economic relations between those who previously benefited from the extractive economy and those who did not.

The agro-industrial pact

The largely indigenous and small-holder rural sector also confronts new obstacles to effective inclusion and wellbeing. Despite the land reform and its gains in indigenous territorial recognition, the MAS government has more frequently titled existing claims and has not redistributed large amounts of productive land. On the contrary, the government's pact with agroindustry—sealed first through the constitution and then deepened through new commitments to the growth of the soy frontier in eastern Bolivia—suggests that rural displacement of the poor will continue.[33] This displacement is compounded by other contributing factors to rural poverty. Much of the land titled for indigenous and small-holder families is agriculturally marginal land, yielding the creation of a semi-proletarian rural labour force rather than the base for economic self-reproduction. In the rural area, some small-holders are able to reproduce themselves and accumulate a relatively comfortable existence. Yet studies have shown that in some cases up to 30% of the rural population exists at a below-subsistence level because of lack of access to land.[34] While the current boom has attracted rural migrants to urban

areas, the current model of urbanization does not offer long-term supports for well-being. Rural migrants often go from under-employment in the rural sector to under-employment in the urban sector because, structurally speaking, the current economic model may have already surpassed its capacity to absorb these populations. While some right-leaning economists view under-employment (the informal economy) as a kind of positive and temporary cushion in the face of a downturn in the export sector, urban and rural underemployment appears to be a more durable structural component of the extractive economy that reproduces broader patterns of exclusion. [35] The stalled land reform is thus a crucial obstacle to more robust inclusionary economy.

Law, Politics and Recognition: Sources of Inclusion

Anti-racism legislation

While the multicultural era (1994–2003) opened a series of cracks and fissures in the dominant discourse of racialized exclusion, critics noted that in official discourse the "cultural" turn evaded the problem of institutionalized racism and the experience of racism in daily life. Following the election of Evo Morales, activists associated with networks like the *Observatorio del Racismo* began to work actively to insert the category of race into public discourse, make racism more visible through public events, and to move toward the adoption of anti-racist legislation.[36] These mobilizations were spurred not by government initiative, but by the violent, rightist attacks on the government and its supporters in the administration's early

years.[37] These attacks and the emerging claims to regionalist separatism coming from eastern Bolivian elites were accompanied by an intense and explicit anti-indigenous (specifically anti-Andean) racism. Street violence against the MAS saw peasant and indigenous supporters targeted for humiliation, physical abuse and racist dehumanization. Against this backlash against the MAS government, activists began to speak openly about racism. Through research initiatives, conferences, and public forums, the discourse on inter-culturalism gave way to a more critical analysis of structural and institutional racism and its links to patriarchal violence. By the time legislation was drafted, debated—and publicly attacked—forty-eight civil society organizations had joined the activist push for legislative approval.[38]

Spurred on by both the political opening represented in the MAS government and the violent attacks coming from the right, civil society activists were instrumental in pushing for this legal transformation. Opposition sectors also rooted in civil society objected, characterizing anti-racism as a form of reverse racism or as a political instrument to attack the freedom of the press (notoriously, the media in Bolivia was a key site for the reproduction of racist discourse and racialist symbolism). The passage of the law was a key victory for anti-racist civil society activists, for it has helped to move the *tablero,* or the playing field, in respect to acceptable ways of speaking about racial and cultural difference in the country.

Education Law

The government's education law of 2010 sought to redesign the Education Reform Law of 1994, which was a hallmark of the neoliberal reform era. The

1994 Education Reform, designed in large part by the World Bank, responded to the then dominant paradigms of structural adjustment, which sought to weaken teachers unions, implement systems of evaluation, improve basic educational quality and encourage the introduction of market mechanisms in secondary and higher education. Pressure from indigenous movements and international—particularly European—donors and supporters also pushed the government and the World Bank to introduce "bilingual intercultural education", which sought recognition for the utility of native languages in the classroom.[39] The new constitution deepened the right to indigenous language education, expanded the use of these languages and sought to invest education with a more socially progressive meaning, highlighting its role in "decolonization" through the inclusion of indigenous knowledge and histories. In 2010 the government passed an education law to put these ideas into practice.

The government's commitment to robust, quality education with cultural and linguistic inclusion runs deep on paper. But in practice, change in the school house is slow in coming. The attacks on the teachers' unions that characterized the neoliberal era have slowed. There are still yearly battles over wages, but the unions have by and large been incorporated into the MAS agenda. Critics suggest that this is a surefire way to maintain institutional inertia in the school system, as many teachers are wedded to an older style of schooling. The MAS has maintained the prior era's policy of bilingual education, despite its numerous technical difficulties in practice. Indigenous educational councils (CEPOS) continue to work with and within the state to advance efforts to diversify curricula, articulate

educational processes with indigenous visions for social and territorial transformation and maintain language revitalization efforts.[40]

The MAS government has made much of its creation of indigenous universities in three regions—a provision of the new constitution. More technical and vocational schools than universities, these institutions have nonetheless started to create special modes of access and support for indigenous youth in the Quechua and Aymara areas of the Andes and the Guarani area of the lowlands.[41] Youth in these regions receive training in technical fields relevant to the regional economy (hydrocarbons, fisheries, forestry and agro-veterinary in the Guarani region; agriculture, textiles, food processing and agro-veterinary in the Aymara and Quechua institutions). Although short-term evidence for the actual impacts of these institutions on youth employment is not yet available, in symbolic and political terms they have obtained the support of indigenous organizations. Because existing state universities maintain formal "autonomy", the federal state in Bolivia has not yet attempted affirmative action programs such as those implemented in Brazil's universities.

Language rights legislation

The constitution elevated the country's thirty-six indigenous languages to official status and proclaimed their obligatory use in public functions and domains of public concern, such as the media. Building on this foundation, in 2011, the legislature passed the Law of Linguistic Rights, which requires all state functionaries, whatever their identity, to learn at least one native language. The new law also created indigenous language and cultural institutes

to promote the revitalization and use of indigenous languages, and to provide a pedagogical framework for expanding learning by adult non-speakers. Given the challenges experienced with school-based education in indigenous languages—which have been stigmatized by centuries of colonial exclusion—this effort to expand indigenous language use to new speakers is ambitious. Nonetheless, the move has sparked an employment boom for native intellectuals working in the area of indigenous language education and grudging acceptance that public functionaries should be able to communicate in the native language of their region.[42] Whether this renewed government support for indigenous language education is sufficient to counteract either *de facto* discrimination or continued language loss remains to be seen. What is apparent is a gradual revalorization of native languages and a spreading public visibility (and audibility) of indigenous languages in the public sphere.

Law, Politics and Recognition: Sources of Exclusion

*The **de facto** law of extraction and the "sacrificial Indian"*

The state's efforts to recognize indigenous peoples, and to redistribute resources and benefits to the historically marginalized, has afforded the government broad-based legitimacy, at least for the moment. From the indigenous perspective this particular government has made great strides in cultural pluralism. In a country where public performance and symbols are crucial legitimators of identity and inclusion, the importance of these recent legislative shifts and new modes of occupying

state power should not be underestimated.

Nonetheless, there is rising evidence that the country's ongoing dependence on extractive industries (hydrocarbons and minerals), which represent upwards of 70% of export income, poses a deep *de facto* challenge to the country's inclusionary turn. The extractive economy exerts a structural limit on the possibility for broad-based employment and market-based redistribution. At the same time, the legal arena created to sustain the extractivist apparatus can exert a less tangible though often visible impact. In this respect, observers point to the conflicts that have arisen between the government and (primarily) indigenous organizations around the question of territorial rights and the right to prior consultation (enshrined in the Bolivian Constitution and in the International Labor Organization Convention 169, and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples). The case of the Isiboro Sécure National Park and Indigenous Territory (TIPNIS) highway drew international attention and concern when police violence was used against a peaceful protest. Similarly, at the time of writing, new tensions are emerging in the gas producing southeastern region, where Guarani organizations are demanding rights to consultation and resisting state efforts to explore for gas and oil in protected areas.

Citizens, Civil Society and Identity: Sources of Inclusion

The micro shifts of daily life

With limited impact, the multicultural turn of the neoliberal period sought to address Bolivia's

racialist colonial heritage by reframing inter-group relations in cultural terms and by calling for mutual recognition, exchange and harmony. When Evo Morales was elected in 2005, a much faster and more radical upheaval unfolded, one in which the Eurocentric, lighter-skinned elite party structure was all but destroyed, and a broad-based sense that the time of the darker-skinned *pueblo* had come. Early observers on the right raised an unfounded and irrational fear that Evo Morales would represent merely his ethnicity (as Euro-centric Bolivians had done for centuries). Yet Evo never whole-heartedly embraced Aymaraness (for which he is sometimes critiqued by his adversaries) or "Indianness". Although he periodically invoked these identity positions, he continually returned to a broader framing of his constituency. After a decade, Bolivians remark that the most significant shift brought about by the government of Evo Morales has been the end of day-to-day racism. Racist epithets are no longer launched at *chola* women on the buses. Lighter-skinned Bolivians, it seems, no longer assume they have an implicit right to move to the front of the queue. While certainly not extended to the deeper structural inequalities that are still largely marked by racial lines, this abrupt upheaval in the racist undertones of daily life has been significant.

The official critique of **mestizaje**

The complexities of identity ascriptions and the historical discourse of *mestizaje* have entered a new phase under the government of Evo Morales. In Bolivia, the category of *mestizaje* evolved to accommodate the "mixing" between Spanish and Indian peoples, either through rape or inter-marriage. The idea in its dominant expression has implicit racialist and biological connotations, embedding within it assumptions about indigenous and Black inferiority within a colonial European construction of national identity. Although critiques of some formations of *mestizaje* are well developed in the academic arena, in Bolivia of late, the category of "mestizo" has found some new proponents, especially from those on the conservative side of the political spectrum who seek to counter the claims of an indigenous "majority" by reasserting a racialist economy of identity founded in white supremacy. Perhaps not surprisingly, the government of Evo Morales has taken steps to supplant the racialist *mestizaje* narrative with a more inclusive one.

Bolivians have defined themselves in different ways depending on the identity choices offered. In 1996, a poll conducted by the United Nations Development Program, which asked people to choose between labels like "mestizo" and "white", yielded the conclusion that Bolivia is a "majority mestizo" country—suggesting a mixed race heritage.[43] But in 2001, when the census used ethnolinguistic labels, such as Quechua, Guaraní, Aymara and others, 62% of Bolivians described themselves as indigenous. The MAS government takes the view that mestizo is not an identity and did not include the category in the 2012 census.[44] Instead, the vice president, Alvaro García Linera, has proposed the idea of "Bolivianness" as an umbrella for all of the country's identities—which are all composites of one sort or another. Whether or not this inclusive framing of national identity will take hold in intellectual and popular discourse remains to be seen.

Civil society: intellectuals and social movements

Non-governmental intellectuals and social movements have played a key role in re-crafting popular discourses about national identity. Intellectuals—generally those who may have once been or still are sympathetic to the progressive turn reflected in the MAS rise to power—remain important critics of government actions. Working independently or based in non-governmental organizations (NGOs), these critics highlight key gaps in government policy, point out ongoing contradictions—such as the racist and chauvinist language that characterizes some of the government's own cadre—and the limits in the government's recognition of indigenous rights. The government has responded by taking an aggressive stance toward NGOs. However, international pressure and local disdain for such heavy-handedness appears to be keeping this critical space open.

In addition to intellectuals, social movements for women, indigenous peoples and urban dwellers are key sites for making visible, and seeking to transform, the gaps and contradictions between inclusion and exclusion; however, a number of social movements have been coopted or absorbed into government structures. The "Indianization" of the state has political risks. Yet others have fissured or divided in the face of government pressure, with some supporting the MAS and others taking a more autonomous line. Feminist organizations such as *Mujeres Creando* have played a key role in calling out the government on questions of femicide, transgender issues and abortion. At the risk of persecution, indigenous organizations that have broken with the government have highlighted the abuses being carried out in the name of gas- and mineral-led growth. Myriad local and neighborhood groups, especially in the larger cities, maintain constant and ongoing projects and practices of cultural and political critique, a vibrant tradition in Bolivia. While the MAS pursues hegemony through absorption of this grassroots energy, Bolivians also tend to reject long-term leadership and heavy-handed imposition, which suggests a capacity for sustained critique of ongoing exclusions.

Citizens, Civil Society and Identity: Sources of Exclusion

The conservative (neoliberal) alternative

The political opposition to Evo Morales and the MAS is comprised largely of right-leaning political parties that represent, directly or indirectly, the United States-backed political elite associated with the country's neoliberal turn. Aside from the limited experiment with inter-culturalism during the 1990s, these political sectors have demonstrated little interest in advancing strong proposals for cultural inclusion. Party platforms for the main opposition parties in the last election made little mention of indigeneity or policies such as bilingual education. Nonetheless, starting from a different ideological position, these right-leaning opponents of the Morales government have sought to address historic racialist hierarchies and economic exclusions through the idea of the "entrepreneur" (*emprendedor*), which connects identity to individualized economic opportunity. For the most part, the targets for their message are representatives of the indigenous urban classes

whose support for a more business-oriented model of economic growth they seek to mobilize.

This approach has found some significant support. The city of El Alto is a case in point. Largely Aymara El Alto's citizens were on the front lines of opposition to the neoliberal regime in 2003, when sixty-seven civilians were killed by the army, most of whom were Aymara. Support here for the MAS was strong. Yet the 2015 national elections for regional governors and mayors resulted in a huge MAS defeat. In El Alto, the winning candidate was an Aymara political figure associated with the party of the neoliberal cement magnate, Samuel Doria Medina, whose campaign underscored his identity as a self-made entrepreneur. Observers suggest that both exhaustion with MAS corruption and the appeal of the notion of the individual entrepreneur were important. Observers are now left to explain why a city that outsiders either stigmatized as being too Indian or romanticized as being intrinsically revolutionary has now turned away from the supposedly Indian president to embrace the language of individualism as a path to inclusion. Perhaps less surprising is the (white) conservative *criollo* elite's use of the language of entrepreneurialism as a lever to engage indigeneity in way that minimizes the impact of indigenous majority politics.

The durability of racist patriarchy

Government discourse and policy has made great strides in critiquing and dismantling the language and practice of racism. Yet the challenge of imagining and reordering identities in both private spheres and public realms is ongoing. The new constitution sets out a legal terrain that allows for a range of collective claimants on rights, even if in practice the possibilities for exercising these rights are rather restricted. In daily life, the successes of Evo Morales have made even staunch racists and former opponents into allies of the MAS. Yet, despite some advances, day-to-day racism persists. Exclusion, understood broadly as socio-economic inequality along any lines, relies on a more durable matrix of racialized patriarchal orders that privilege whiteness and a certain form of aggressive masculinity while exercising real and symbolic violence on feminized subjects presumed to be "more Indian."[45] These gendered modalities of exclusion are intensified in relation to youth underemployment and access to jobs, as well as ongoing characterizations of indigenous feminine sexuality as being a legitimate target of masculine power and the sublimation of a certain kind of white femininity as having economic and biological value. These processes and phenomena can be seen in the disturbing rise in femicide in the urban areas; in the perpetuation of a beauty and folklore industry— booming in the gas economy—that privileges lighter-skinned femininity; in the resistance, even in the supposedly socialist and revolutionary sphere of the MAS, to demands for women's rights over their bodies; and in the proliferation of human and sex trafficking of marginalized urban populations. Feminist and anarchist critics continue to highlight the ways in which the apparent boom of the gas economy, which has privileged consumerism and commodification, is sustained by a political structure that has been relatively unchanged from prior regimes. It is still dominated by a male-led party apparatus in which decisions are largely played out in backroom contexts of "old-boy" deal-making, and marked increasingly by real and

symbolic violence that continue to fall inordinately on women (and feminized subjects) of colour.

Regional and Transnational Influences: Sources of Inclusion

Within a wider region characterized by similar problems of structural racism, exclusion of Afro-descendant and indigenous peoples and deep inequality, Bolivia in many ways remains an exceptional case. The work of its social movements—that is, the progressive sectors of civil society—have become a reference point for other countries. Within Bolivia, the progressive sectors of civil society have confronted a more conservative, at times reactionary, set of forces associated primarily with the regionalist elites of southern and eastern Bolivia. As detailed in various points above, the regional dynamic in Bolivia was for a moment on the verge of splitting the country in two. These were lines imagined to be as much racial as geographic, despite the absurdity of the proposed split. Yet they expressed a deeper tension in Bolivia between the formerly powerful political nucleus in the Andean west and the newly rising economic and political power of the agrarian and hydrocarbon rich east and south. The government of the MAS, at first besieged by these reactionary opponents, worked to both weaken and ameliorate the regionalist schism. Key actors of the reactionary right were confronted in legal terms, while key concessions—as discussed in the section on land reform—diffused some of the agrarian elite's demands. Regionalism, expressed as it was in a language of racial superiority, has the latent potential to be a key pivot point or factor of exclusionary politics in the future.

Regional and Transnational Influences: Sources of Exclusion

Transnational actors, including Brazil, Argentina and the United States, have at times contributed to the sources of exclusion in Bolivia. During the early years of the MAS government, for instance, the government of the United States was blamed for exacerbating regional tensions by showing support for that segment of the eastern Bolivian elites who sought rights and separation using explicitly racialist language. Of greater significance are the shared economic and political interests linking Bolivia's mining and hydrocarbons industries with those in the neighbouring Andean countries of Peru and Ecuador, and those linking agro-industrial elite interests with their counterparts in Brazil and Argentina. Regional interests continue to promote these extractive and agro-industrial economic models, whether justified by right-leaning models of economic growth practiced in Peru or the so-called "progressive" model of inclusionary extractivism pursued by Bolivia and Ecuador. The regional impact of agro-industry exerts a similar regional effect in relation to the production of soy and sugar. These crops are linked by a highly technological, input-intensive and large-scale agriculture. The conservative rural lobby—known as the "Republic of Soy"—is a major factor in future political and economic developments linking Brazil, Argentina, and Bolivia. Within this regional constituency, there are already signs of the intensification of cross-border opposition to Evo Morales rooted in a shared discourse of regional particularity and "whiteness" against a perceived indigenous threat, as well as solid opposition to redistributive land reform in all three countries. As long as agrarian inequality

and urban underemployment remain as key factors of exclusionary social realities, this cross-border network of powerful extractive and agro-industrial interests will continue as an exclusionary factor in Bolivia.

V. EMERGING LESSONS: TOWARD A PLURALISM LENS

As the Global Centre for Pluralism observes, the Bolivian case is a useful window into the interplay of diversity and democracy in an indigenous majority society. The case highlights two key levers of inclusion: the importance of recognition and the importance of redistribution. Widened recognition occurs on several levels. Discursively, state discourse and symbolic practices are vital but without legislative transformations of substance—about who is a citizen and what constitutes the nation—these symbolic gestures will have limited impact. In turn, recognition of rights—ranging from linguistic to territorial to political—enables the exercise of citizenship and fosters practices of recognition. Similarly, widened economic benefit is also vital. Redistribution that promotes both structural reforms and sustainable opportunities for employment are needed.

Bolivia's transition toward a more inclusionary society that recognizes the rights and claims of indigenous peoples and seeks to redress social inequalities through redistributive policies and practices has, predictably, met with resistance. Racism persists as a daily experience for indigenous peoples, pointing to the durability of cultural norms.

Such norms have deep historical roots that point to the importance of historical reconciliations as well as contemporary dialogue. Institutional inertia is another continuing axis of exclusion, given the interdependence of the state with an economic model that concentrates capital in the hands of a historic ethno-cultural elite. Finally, fostering consumerist inclusion without the structural changes needed to generate sustainable employment remains a challenge.

What, then, are the pivot points between inclusion and exclusion in the Bolivian case? How can democracy become a pathway to pluralism? In the Bolivian case, the role of civil society was critical. Intellectuals, non-governmental organizations and social movements over time coalesced to form a unified voice for change making use of social mobilization and available legal levers—suggesting both the importance of even incremental steps toward full recognition and the importance of civil society as an incubator of a change leadership. But embedded within this change case are several risk factors: the uncertain social and political position of youth, the risk of dilution of the change experience through political negotiation and the limits and still uneven impacts of the country's economic model. In the balance between inclusion and exclusion, only time will tell in what direction will Bolivia go.

In February 2016, Bolivia held a referendum that would have allowed for a change in the constitution to enable a possible third re-election bid for President Evo Morales. The referendum vote narrowly failed.[46] While some critics may see in this failure a possible opening for reversing the movement toward a more inclusionary citizenship in Bolivia, this conclusion seems shortsighted,

for it fails to recognize the durability of the shift in public consciousness, especially outside of the *criollo* elite. The outlines of legal and institutional change discussed in this change case will remain a significant impediment to reversal as well as a foundation for pursuing a more robust and egalitarian pluralism in the future.

MORE RESOURCES

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20 Bret Gustafson (2006), "Spectacles of Autonomy and Crisis: Or, What Bulls and Beauty Queens Have to Do With Regionalism in Eastern Bolivia," *Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Anthropology* 11 (2): 351–79. While the first years of the MAS government were occupied by efforts to maintain regime stability amidst a rightist-putsch and externally-backed destabilizing efforts, the constitutional reform was pursued despite outbreaks of violent opposition, much of it saturated with racist, anti-Indian discourse.

21 See CPE (2009), Constitución Política del Estado de 2009, 7 de febrero de 2009, accessed 14 July 2014, http://www.lexivox.org/norms/BO-CPE-20090207.html. The phrase "las naciones y pueblos indígena originario campesinos, y las comunidades interculturales y afrobolivianas" is an index of the complex historical articulations between indigenous and popular (class-based) struggles in Bolivia. At its centre are collective subjects: "nations and peoples" (*naciones y*

pueblos) and "communities" (*comunidades*). The former are characterized by a tripartite descriptor: indigenous (*indígena*); aboriginal or native (*originario*); and peasant (*campesinos*). This does not suggest three types of nations and peoples, but rather offers an umbrella characterization. The latter (communities) are either "intercultural" or "AfroBolivian." These phrasings, often of difficult translation, attempted to articulate myriad social formations, some organized as peasant unions, some identifying as "originary peoples" (primarily in the Andes), others as "indigenous peoples" (primarily in the lowlands), all aspiring to political recognition as nations (thus *naciones*). AfroBolivians also demanded rights as collective entities, but were labeled "communities" alongside new social formations, mainly in areas of resettlement that were of many origins. These latter communities were deemed "intercultural." Some English translations render this as the "native indigenous peoples and nations" (erasing the "peasant"), and eliding the complexities of AfroBolivian and intercultural communities. Though outside the scope of this essay, in practice this has led to often contradictory claims; for instance, between resettled "intercultural" communities and native "indigenous" peoples. Yet its deeper significance was the juridical inscription of rights-bearing collective subjects reduced neither to the individual, culture-bearing or otherwise; nor to racial ascriptions or categories; nor to a singular notion of ethnicity, indigenous or otherwise.

22 From Gustafson (in press), "Oppressed No More? Indigenous Language Regimentation in Plurinational Bolivia," *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*.

23 Unless otherwise specified, this section draws on the in-depth analysis of Salvador Schavelzon (2013), *El nacimiento del Estado Plurinacional de Bolivia: Etnografía de una asamblea constituyente* (Buenos Aires: CLACSO), accessed 15 March 2016, http://www.clacso.org.ar/libreria-latinoamericana/libro_detalle.php?id_libro=754.

24 Fernando Garcés (2011), "The Domestication of Indigenous Autonomies in Bolivia: From the Pact of Unity to the New Constitution," in *Remapping Bolivia: Resources, Territory, and Indigeneity in a Plurinational State*, edited by Nicole Fabricant and Bret Gustafson (Santa Fe: SAR Press). See also, Bret Gustafson (2009b), "Manipulating Cartographies: Plurinationalism, Autonomy, and Indigenous Resurgence in Bolivia," *Anthropological Quarterly* 82 (4): 985–1016.

25 Carlos Arze Vargas (2014), "Industrialización en el proceso de cambio: la modernización populista del MAS," (La Paz: CEDLA), accessed 15 March 2016, http://www.cedla.org/sites/default/files/libro_industrializacion_0.pdf.

26 Juan Antonio Morales (2016), "La economía nacional: entre el aterrizaje suave y la desestabilización," accessed 15 March 2016, http://www.fundacion-milenio.org/Articulos/la-economia-nacional-entre-el-aterrizaje-suave-y-la-desestabilizacion.html.

27 Based on 2013 figures calculated through the National Institute of Statistics, http://www.ine.gob.bo/indice/EstadisticaSocial.aspx?codigo=30601.

28 http://www.pagina12.com.ar/diario/elmundo/4-134071-2009-10-25.html and http://www.ftierra.org/index.php/tierra-y-territorio/106-ley-n-3545-de-reconduccion-comunitaria-de-la-reforma-agraria-modifica-la-ley-n-1715-inra.

[29] Andres Schipani (2014), "Bolivia's Indigenous Peoples Flaunt their New-Found Wealth," *Financial Times*, 4 December, http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/9265426c-7594-11e4-a1a9-00144feabdc0.html#axzz430f4wca8. Lest this attention to the rise of an indigenous middle class be over-stated, one must situate this in relationship to the rural poverty figures discussed above.

[30] Miriam Shakow (2014), *Along the Bolivian Highway: Social Mobility and Political Culture in a New Middle Class* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press).

[31] George Gray Molina (2005), "Crecimiento de base ancha: entre la espada y la pared," *T'inkazos* 15:95–101.

[32] See Fundación Tierra (2015).

[33] On the struggle with the agro-industrial elite in the context of the Constitutional Assembly, see Schavelzon (2013). On the racism and exclusionary model of cultural production associated with the agro-industrial society, see Gustafson (2006).

[34] Chumacero (2015).

[35] On the struggles of the un- and under-employed, see Silvia Escobar de Pabón et al. (2015), *Los jóvenes y trabajo en el municipio de La Paz* (La Paz: CEDLA), accessed 15 March 2016, http://www.cedla.org/sites/default/files/libro_jovenes_%20y_trabajo_en_la_paz_dic_2015_pdf.pdf. On the right's vision of the informal economy, see Morales (2016).

[36] I thank Pamela Calla for insights related to this section.

[37] Gustafson (2006).

[38] http://www.somossur.net/bolivia/socio-cultural/el-poder-detras-de-los-medios/485-ley-contra-el-racismo-y-toda-forma-de-discriminacion.html.

[39] Gustafson (2009).

[40] http://www.cepos.bo.

[41] http://www.utupakkatari.edu.bo; http://unibolguarani.edu.bo.

[42] Gustafson (in press).

[43] Responses: 16% indigenous, 67% *mestizo* and 17% white. This section draws on the introduction to Nicole Fabricant and Bret Gustafson, eds. (2011), *Remapping Bolivia: Territory, Resources, and Indigeneity in a Plurinational State* (Santa Fe: School for Advanced Research Press).

[44] García Linera (2014).

[45] I discuss the intersections between racism and differential understandings of indigenous sexuality in Gustafson (2009) and Gustafson (2006). See also Andrew Canessa (2012), *Intimate Indigeneities: Race, Sex, and History in the Small Spaces of Andean Life* (Durham: Duke University Press).

[46] For a brief assessment of the referendum's significance, see Bret Gustafson (2016), "Bolivia after the 'No' Vote," *North American Congress on Latin America (NACLA)*, 7 March, accessed 15 March 2016, https://nacla.org/news/2016/03/07/bolivia-after-no-vote.

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