Introduction: Neoliberal Multiculturalism in Bolivia

> The reforms [of the 1990s] just changed a few things, but it wasn't enough. It was a change in name only. They, the politicians, made the changes among themselves, the authorities. They never consulted with the people [*el pueblo*]. . . . So, the people arose, they got mad, they kicked out Goni [the president, Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada].
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> —Anacleto Supayabe, secretary of land and territory, Cordinadora de Pueblos Étnicos de Santa Cruz (CPESC, Council of Ethnic Peoples of Santa Cruz)

> The third millennium is the epoch of the original peoples, no longer that of the empire; it is the epoch of the struggle against the [neoliberal] economic model.
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> —Evo Morales, president-elect of Bolivia

On December 18, 2005, Evo Morales was elected president of Bolivia, the first indigenous person to lead the country since the arrival of the Spaniards more than five hundred years ago. On the night of his victory, Morales, who is Aymara, proclaimed, "Indigenous comrades, for the first time we are presidents!" ("Compañeros indígenas, por primera vez somos presidentes!") (La Razón 2005e). The nearly delirious crowd burst into even louder applause. "Next year," he promised, "begins the new history of Bolivia" (ibid.).

Indigenous people and social movements have been organizing for decades, seeking cultural recognition and more inclusive representation. Yet Morales's election is the culmination of a striking new kind of activism in Bolivia. Born out of a history of resistance to colonial racism, and developed in collective struggles against the postrevolutionary state since 1952, this kind of activism has crystallized over the past decade, as poor and Indian Bolivian citizens have engaged with the democratic promises and exclusions of neoliberal multiculturalism. Now, armed with the language of citizenship and the expectations of the rights it implies, this emerging public is demanding radical changes in the traditional relationship between state and civil society, calling for an end to the structured inequalities that mark Bolivian society. I call this form of social engagement "postmulticultural citizenship." The social convulsions of the tumultuous period from 2000 to the present—during which popular protests have toppled two presidents and paralyzed the country on numerous occasions—intimated how strong this new social formation might be. The 2005 election of Morales, who campaigned against the neoliberal economic model and promised instead to nationalize the country's natural resources for the benefit of all Bolivians, demonstrates that Bolivia's most marginalized people can challenge fundamental ideas about the nation, multiculturalism, neoliberalism, and democracy.

The "Gas War"

The shift to this postmulticultural social formation became particularly evident during the so-called gas war of October 2003, which forced the resignation of then president Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada. Poor, urban Aymara Indians, who make up the majority of the population in the satellite city of El Alto, above the capital city of La Paz, began the demonstrations. They objected to the president's proposal to allow foreign corporations to export natural gas from Bolivia's eastern lowlands via a pipeline through Chile to processing plants and markets in the United States and Mexico. They were soon joined by peasants, students, the unemployed, teachers, and miners from around the highlands. Carrying signs claiming "*el gas es nuestro*" ("the gas is ours"), protesters demanded the nationalization of transnational gas concessions and an end to "*el modelo*" ("the model," referring to the neoliberal or free-market economic model that had been dominant in Bolivia since the mid-1980s).

After six weeks of violence and popular outrage, and more than eighty deaths, the president fled to Miami. The insurrection had powerful results. The new president, former vice president Carlos Mesa, promised novel forms of direct democracy, including a referendum on gas export policies (held in July 2004) and an assembly to rewrite the constitution. The constitutional assembly had been a long-held demand of indigenous and labor sectors, who argued that the state's current model denied representation to the people, allowing politics to be run by the traditional elite. This demand became more salient as a result of the uprising, when debates about the effects of neoliberal economic and political restructurings, especially the privatization of public decision making, filled the public sphere.

These activists were essentially arguing for a different vision of development for their country. Perhaps the most important result of the insurrection, however, is the growing political power of indigenous and popular social movements whose continuing mass mobilizations have forced the rest of

Bolivia to reckon with them as important political actors.[1] If the power of these social movements was still in doubt after the gas war, however, it was publicly acknowledged in June 2005. While the parliament dragged its feet in setting dates for the *asamblea constituyente* (the constitutional assembly), two months of strikes forced a second popular impeachment and President Mesa resigned to make way for new elections.

An Indian Uprising?

Was the 2003 gas war an " Indian Revolution," as the international media has portrayed it? Was the 2005 election of Morales as president evidence that the Indians of Bolivia have finally risen? Commentators have suggested that given the conditions under which many Bolivian Indians live, such a revolution would certainly be understandable. In a country that is considered the poorest in Latin America, the approximately 60 percent of Bolivians who consider themselves to be native peoples are significantly poorer than the rest of the population (Psacharopoulos and Patrinos 1994).[2] A World Bank 2005 study showed that 52 percent of Bolivian indigenous people live in extreme poverty. Their condition appears relatively untouched by efforts to combat poverty. For example, between 1997 and 2002, extreme poverty rates began to fall for nonindigenous people (from 31 percent to 27 percent), but they remained constant for indigenous people. Even more stunning was the finding that in rural areas, poverty actually increased for indigenous peoples (from 65 percent to 72 percent) while decreasing slightly for nonindigenous people (ibid.).

The economic status of Bolivian Indians reflects a historical fact: native populations in Bolivia have been dominated and exploited since the Spanish conquest in the 1500s. In the colonial era, native Andean peoples (the Aymara in the highlands around Lake Titicaca and the Quechua-speaking peoples in the valleys to the east) were lumped together as " Indians," put to work in the silver mines, and forced to pay tribute to the Crown. The many smaller groups of Indians in the Amazonian basin were treated as dangerous savages and killed or forced into servitude during the rubber boom. The Guaraní peoples of the southern mountains and Chaco desert area were gradually overrun by the expansion of the cattle-ranching frontier. Across the country, Indian resistance was eventually put down through several centuries of military force, religious indoctrination, and economic exploitation.

In the eighteenth century, after independence from Spain, liberal Republican governments instituted legal reforms that made communal property — the central organizing structure of indigenous communities — illegal. This paved the way for massive expropriation of Indian lands and the creation of the *latifundio* system, in which Indians served as labor for white or mestizo landowners. The 1952 revolution addressed some of these injustices, with an agrarian reform program that gave land to Indian peasants. Nevertheless, Indians continued to suffer widespread economic and political discrimination. In the 1970s and 1980s, Indians began organizing, and by the 1990s a powerful national indigenous movement had emerged, mounting demonstrations demanding cultural recognition and territorial rights. In the mid-1990s, the government of Sánchez de Lozada instituted a series of constitutional and legislative reforms that purported to expand citizenship to all Bolivians, especially its indigenous population.

Despite these " multicultural" reforms, however, the faces on the front lines of the 2003 demonstrations were overwhelmingly indigenous, especially in El Alto, where most of the violence occurred. Indian pride in the results of the gas war was palpable. One Aymara protester in El Alto described his participation in the demonstrations. Flexing his biceps muscles, he said: " That's what I felt like . . . I feel the Aymara nation has exerted itself finally and stood up for its rights. I feel that we are strong now and can never go back to being pushed around and ignored and neglected" (Hispanicvista 2003). Such assertions and their representations in the media resonated with centuries of Indian domination and resistance. Many white and mestizo residents of La Paz perceived the blockade of the city by indigenous peoples from the highlands and El Alto as a reenactment of the Indian insurrections of 1781, when Aymara leader Túpac Katari laid siege to La Paz, leaving half the urban population dead.[3]

Yet a closer look shows that characterizing the October uprising as simply an " Indian" uprising misses the complexity of the situation. Although many of the protesters identified themselves as Indians, this was not a protest on behalf of Indian rights and recognition like those protests that made history in the 1990s. Rather, this was a strikingly new social formation by which the protesters made objections on behalf of " the Bolivian people." Besides a resolution of the gas issue, the protesters also demanded clarity in coca eradication laws, rejection of the Latin American Free Trade agreement, rejection of harsh national security laws, and a raise in basic wages.[4] Thus, although racism and marginalization continue to be central issues for Bolivian Indians, these demands were about development and distribution of national resources, commonly referred to as the *patrimonio* (patrimony) of the Bolivian people. This is because neoliberal reforms have reinforced the racialized inequalities long existing in Bolivia, laying bare the continued monopoly of power held by dominant classes and transnational corporations (Rivera Cusicanqui 2004: 22). This combination laid the stage for the uprising and for the new forms of politics that are currently emerging in Bolivia.

Thus the 2003 gas war marked an important new stage in Bolivian politics. Its protagonists blended indigenous activism with a renewed populist notion of the nation, reflecting the fact that the majority of Bolivians are both indigenous and poor. Since the 1952 revolution, indigenous people and the poor have organized their demands against the state primarily on the basis of class. Even when there was a strong cultural or ethnic component to these demands, such as the Aymara-led Katarista movement, they tended to be articulated through class-based corporate organizations, such as workers and peasants unions. Over the past several decades, however, indigenous social movements have characterized their demands more on the basis of ethnic difference and recognition.

This process was shaped, in part, by international nongovernmental organization (NGO) funding and a global discourse that made "indigenousness" and indigenous rights central tropes of social movement organizing in the 1990s. The multicultural reforms passed under the Sánchez de Lozada administration reflected this transition, as the Bolivian state specifically recognized ethnic difference. The October uprising showed that social movements have begun to integrate ethnic difference with issues of class. In the process of the contests over gas and neoliberalism, a new Bolivian public was being formed that presented the state with demands based on experiences of race *and* class discrimination.[5] Yet, as this book shows, this is not just a return to the class-centered politics of the previous era. Instead, this emerging public is raising its demands in the language of citizenship, rights, and democracy, reflecting both Bolivians' positive experiences and their frustrations with the neoliberal and multicultural reforms of the 1990s.

How and why did this transition occur? And why is this important? Most analyses of the October uprising and the social chaos surrounding it point to the terrible costs neoliberal restructuring has imposed on Indians and the poor in Bolivia. Although this is certainly an essential proximate cause of the unrest (as I detail in chapter 7), a critical contribution of this book is to point out that the new social activism is not just a response to increased poverty under neoliberalism. These costs have been borne by the poor of many countries, including Bolivia, for years without this kind of response. Why is this moment in Bolivia different? I argue that this novel protagonism was formed in relation to the regime of citizenship that I call neoliberal multiculturalism. Under Sánchez de Lozada's administration (1993–97), the constitution was changed to recognize Bolivia as a "multiethnic" and "pluricultural" nation, and a whole series of legal reforms were passed that promised to alter radically the position of the country's indigenous peoples. The three most important were the Ley de Partícipación Popular (LPP, Law of Popular Participation), a form of political decentralization that named indigenous peoples as actors in municipal development decisions; the Ley INRA, an agrarian reform that instituted collective titling for indigenous territories; and the Intercultural Bilingual Education Law, which promoted the teaching of indigenous languages and culture in schools.

These multicultural reforms were an integral part of Sánchez de Lozada's implementation of neoliberalism, the form of government that proposed to minimize and streamline the state to allow the unfettered operation of the market. As indigenous actors embraced the democratic potentials of the reforms and contested the exclusions inherent in them, they forged alternative repertoires of representation, participation, and leadership that they are now putting into effect at the national level. Thus this case goes beyond the simple explanations found in the international media in which Indians are acclaimed as "dragon slayers" resisting all forms of neoliberalism (Hispanicvista 2003). I argue instead that the current forms of challenge combine historical struggles against racism with new indigenous subjectivities and rationalities forged precisely through contested engagements with neoliberal multiculturalism.

What does this mean for Bolivian democracy? Can the Bolivian case be seen as a forerunner for other emerging democracies where questions of multiethnicity are central? Politicians, activists, and academics in the 1990s hailed "indigenous politics" as the key to a new phase in democracy across Latin America. This book shows that although the politics of difference was an important step in the democratizing process, the particular version of multiculturalism enacted by the neoliberal Bolivian state proved insufficient for real democratic participation in Bolivia. It did not sufficiently alter the structural inequalities that continue to plague the country, especially as they pertain to race. In fact, neoliberal reforms often reinforced the structures of exclusion that keep Indians poor and powerless. My argument is that because of this failure, poor and indigenous Bolivians are moving past neoliberal forms of multiculturalism — and indeed "indigenous politics" — to a new era of citizenship practices and contestation focused on redefining the state and popular access to it.

This new stage of political activism is forcing radical changes in the meaning of citizenship, what we can think of as the relation between the state and its members. First, new protagonists are drawing attention to the ways Indians and the poor have been excluded from political participation in Bolivia's multiethnic society. Although the political reforms of the 1990s promised to make access to political institutions easier for all Bolivian citizens, this book demonstrates how the legacy of racism was recontextualized but not erased by those reforms. Racism continues to structure and limit participation, making it impossible for many Bolivians to exercise their political rights. Second, Bolivia's new activists are pushing beyond traditional notions of substantive rights to rethink what they consider their rights to be. Central to this is an understanding that the political arena must be redefined to include not only questions of access to power, but also contestations over cultural meanings embedded in the unequal and hierarchical organization of social relations (Dagnino 2003: 4). Bolivian activism has already had significant effects on Bolivian democracy: popular claims for change have led to profound questioning of neoliberalism as the appropriate model for Bolivia's development, to rethinking political representation (as Morales's election showed), and to a reformulation of the very role of the state (as the 2006–7 constitutional assembly shows).

Indigenous peoples across Latin America eagerly watched the Bolivian multicultural reforms of the 1990s, hailed as a revolutionary reversal of centuries of exclusion and domination. The lesson this book tells is that Bolivia's neoliberal multiculturalism was no panacea. Instead, it was a site of articulation and contestation with unexpected results: postmulticultural citizenship. As other countries with multiethnic populations experiment with forms of multiculturalism and neoliberalism, they might do well to ask whether Bolivia is a bellwether for changes in other parts of the world.

The Guaraní Indians of Zona Cruz

To tell the story of the Bolivian experience of neoliberal multiculturalism, I focus on one group of Bolivian indigenous people, the Guaraní of Santa Cruz, and their leaders. In doing so, this book highlights the importance of the eastern lowlands, called the Oriente. Most literature focuses on Bolivia as an Andean country, yet since the early 1970s, the Oriente has become a center of economic development through massive colonization projects for the poor from the highlands, the development of agribusiness, and the exploitation of rich natural gas reserves. In the 1980s, responding to the invasions of their lands and the devastating impacts on their livelihoods, lowland indigenous people began to organize. In 1990, indigenous activists marched from the tropical lowlands over the Andes to La Paz to demand recognition of their culture and territories. The highly publicized March for Territory and Dignity pushed the issue of indigenous rights onto the national agenda and provided a sudden urgency for the multicultural reforms of the 1990s. Although the struggle for Indian rights has a long history in the Bolivian highlands, the tensions between race, nation, and neoliberal development are being played out in a specific way in the Oriente.

Neoliberal market-led strategies have had especially harsh impacts on indigenous groups in the Oriente. Many of the oil and gas exploration and development zones overlap with indigenous territories, bringing environmental damage and political battles. The experience of the Guaraní of Santa Cruz, migrants to the large boomtown, shows another side of the effects of export-led growth. As the city expands, it has engulfed many rural communities like the Guaraní village I call Bella Flor in this book (the subject of chapter 3). What does multiculturalism mean when "traditional indigenous" lifestyles are recognized by the constitution but swallowed up by the economic realities of rapid urbanization or resource exploitation? The Guaraní case, then, offers a unique perspective, far from the well-studied Andean highlands, in the heart of Bolivia's most dynamic growth zone.

Indian leaders, as anthropologist and historian Thomas Abercrombie has shown, are often guardians of tradition, but they are also important agents of change. Indians' cultural survival is the result of their active engagement with the power-infused cultural programs of the state, and Indian leaders are critical mediators in this process (Abercrombie 1998: 23, 85). The meanings and functions of indigenous leadership have also undergone tremendous change over time. Leadership is a contested relationship between authorities and their followers, in which leaders win, maintain, and lose the right to represent their followers in material and symbolic struggles. Such struggles respond to and produce tensions within communities and render visible the differing interests among community members. Thus this ethnography of Guaraní leadership is based on a study of both individual leaders and the people in the communities and organizations they lead. Steering a course through profound discursive shifts in "multicultural" Bolivia of the 1990s, Guaraní leaders negotiated a complex cultural politics that involved them and their people in national indigenous activism, neoliberal political reforms, internationally funded development projects, and radical economic change.

This book focuses on Guaraní leaders at several institutional levels. In chapter 2, I introduce the leaders of the regional federation, the Capitanía Zona Cruz (CZC), an organization born and developed during the height of the multicultural 1990s. Chapter 3 describes the local leaders of one Guaraní village, Bella Flor, which faced a terrible crisis of leadership and representation as urban Santa Cruz encroached on the community. In chapter 4, we see local Guaraní leaders engaged with the most important of the political reforms, the LPP. Under this new legal structure, community leaders represented their people in municipal budget meetings and negotiated with powerful political elite. Finally, in chapter 5, I follow a group of young Guaraní activists as they received training from an NGO about how to develop leadership skills necessary to exercise their new citizenship rights under the LPP.

The struggles and frustrations of Guaraní leaders at the local, municipal, and regional levels are at the heart of this book. Their lives and work—as they participated in the national Indian federation, as they lobbied local politicians for resources for their communities, as they negotiated with NGOs for development projects, and as they tried to enact traditional leadership roles in changing contexts and community conflicts—provide a lens onto the multicultural reforms and the neoliberal logics underlying them.

Indians, Race, and Nation: The Sediments of History

> This [national identity] card, and the registration papers for the federation, are like birth certificates. Before we had them, we were savages, we were like animals, not people. Now we are citizens. [*Ahora somos ciudadanos.*]
> —Pablo, a Guaraní resident of Bella Flor

For Pablo, citizenship in multicultural Bolivia—evidenced by possessing a new national identification card—promised a radical break with the past and a wholly new relation with the state. His diachronic framing of indigenous citizenship (*before* we were animals, *now* we are citizens) points out the hold that history has on the present. Conflict between Indians and the state is not new; it has been at the center of Bolivian politics since colonial times. To understand current struggles for Indian rights, it is therefore critical to understand the historical sediments, the outcomes of past conflicts that determine current distributions of power and influence. Bolivian historian Ana María Lema has called this sedimentation the *huella* (the footprint or traces) of the past, which she sees as the starting point for understanding the present (Lema 2001).

In Bolivia, as elsewhere in the Americas, ruling classes have debated the "Indian Question" since the conquest: how best to control and use the labor, land, and resources of the native populations. In each era, there have been different answers to this question relying on specific discourses of Otherness and corresponding forms of contestation that troubled the answers. Following the work of Italian Marxist writer Antonio Gramsci (1971), we can describe this as a process of hegemony in which interlocking political, economic, and cultural forces operate to order society and subordinate certain social classes. As literary critic Raymond Williams has made clear, however, hegemony is carried out not just through coercion, but rather through "a whole lived social process as practically organized by specific and dominant meanings and values" (Williams 1977: 109). The result is that domination and subordination are experienced through "a saturation of the whole process of living—not only of political and economic activity, nor only of manifest social activity, but of the whole substance of lived identities and relationships," which ultimately come to be felt as "simple experience and common sense" (ibid.: 110).

I begin this book by examining the historical struggles through which meanings and values about race and Indianness have saturated Bolivian life.

Chapter 1 traces the status of Indians since the colonial period, through the Republic and the 1952 revolution, to the neoliberal reforms of the 1990s. Central to this account are the ways in which Indians have been included and excluded by the state through various regimes of race and belonging. Whether it be the dual republics of the colonial order, the liberal Republican regime engaged in nation building, or the 1990's neoliberal multicultural project, such regimes provided a framework for Indian-state relations. It is important to note, of course, as the history of Bolivian Indian struggles amply underscores, that hegemonic processes are characterized by contention and argument. What these regimes construct, as historical anthropologist William Roseberry so elegantly put it, is " not a shared ideology, but a common material and meaningful framework for living through, talking about, and acting upon social orders characterized by domination" (Roseberry 1996: 80).

Such " languages of contention" are the foundation for state policies and institutions, but they are also the basis for identity formation. Race and ethnicity are not natural categories of difference that precede social relations. Rather, they are formed precisely by and in contested and historically contingent relations of power. Thus they are part of technologies of domination, especially within the context of state formation (Wilmsen 1996; Comaroff 1996). State practices are enormously important in the construction of such subject positions, by defining acceptable cultural forms and images of social activity and individual and collective identity (Corrigan and Sayer 1985: 3).

In Bolivia, the category of " Indian" reflects and constitutes these historically constructed and power-laden political relations. In colonial times, for instance, the *casta* system classified and ranked colonial subjects by blood purity: Spaniards, Indians, mestizos, Blacks, mulattos, and so on. Even then, however, such categories were manipulated, modified, and sometimes resisted. The same person might be classified differently depending on whether she lived in the city or the country, how she dressed, whom she married, and what kind of work she did (Cope 1994). Despite the slippage in the categories, though, colonial authorities maintained this system of social control through a combination of economic and cultural policies. Ultimately, as anthropologist Olivia Harris has pointed out, " Indian" became fundamentally a fiscal category by which the obligations of the native population to the colonial state were defined. Thus those who lived in native communities, paid tribute, and provided labor to the Crown were considered Indians (Harris 1995: 354).

Both highland and lowland native peoples in Bolivia were called *indios*, or Indians, until the 1952 revolution. Then, through the agrarian reform advocated by the newly organized *sindicatos campesinos* (peasant unions), the state tried to assimilate Indians into the national economy as farmers rather than Indians (Gordillo 2000). In the process, highland peoples were referred to by the term campesinos (peasants), and the term indio was abandoned as a vestige of the past. Campesino identity and membership in class-based peasant unions became a central part of the lived experience of rural highland people. Nevertheless, many campesinos continued to practice their native customs, languages, and religion. This reflects what sociologist Leon Zamosc and I have argued is the continuing ambiguity between class and ethnicity. For many Bolivians, being indigenous and being peasants may simply be two aspects of a lived identity (Postero and Zamosc 2004: 12). For many others, however, Indian identity was blurred, and in some cases erased, through assimilation, *mestizaje* (the emergence of non-Indian sectors from miscegenation and cultural syncretism), and integration into national markets.

For these people, ethnicity was encompassed by class as the most salient basis for political organizing. It is important to note that the significance of ethnicity tends to differ widely between the highlands and lowlands as a result of differing historical trajectories. Highland people have been engaged with colonizing religious, political, and economic institutions for centuries. Beginning with Spanish silver mining, the large highland populations were forced to provide labor, food, and resources for state and private exploitation schemes. In the lowlands, where populations were smaller and fewer mineral riches were found, indigenous groups escaped these forms of assimilation for much longer (although many people suffered violence in missionary reductions or rubber boom plantations). Consequently, contemporary lowland people tend to have more a homogenous ethnic identification (ibid.: 13).

This brief genealogy of ethnic categories demonstrates that the frameworks giving meaning to Indianness are in constant evolution. That is because indigenousness — like any identity — is not an uncontested category of domination, but a contingent category negotiated by individual and collective subjects. Bolivian social scientist Álvaro García Linera (who is now vice president under Evo Morales) has suggested that identity formations are " enunciations of meaning that demarcate social boundaries and that invent a sense of authenticity and otherness, with the practical effect of developing the subject thus constructed. But they are also discursive constructions that work on the basis of material supports, on facts, and in the tracks of practical action" (García Linera 2004: 78).

This was clearly demonstrated in the 1980s and 1990s, as the discourse of multiculturalism linked citizenship and political representation to ethnicity rather than just to class. This articulation produced a new lexicon. Previously, the terms *indio* and *indígena* had derogatory connotations. One common insult, for instance, is to say " Te salió el indio," meaning roughly, " Your Indianness is showing." As the discourse of multiculturalism and indigenous rights gained ground, however, many lowland and Amazonian Indians began to identify as *pueblos indígenas* (indigenous peoples), and highland groups began using the term *pueblos originarios* (original peoples). These terms were also adopted as part of the state-sponsored multicultural reforms; a government vice ministry was created called the Vice Ministro de Asuntos Indígenas y Pueblos Originarios (VAIPO, Vice Ministry of Indigenous and Original Peoples Affairs). Thus " indigenous" took on a specific meaning in the context of the times.

Yet one example illustrates how complex and contested these categories remain. During my first summer's research with the Guaraní in 1996, I interviewed two teenaged brothers in an urban neighborhood of Santa Cruz where about ten Guaraní families lived. Seventeen-year-old Esteban kicked his soccer ball around as we talked. " Are you Guaraní?" I asked. " Are you kidding?" he replied, shaking his head vehemently. " No, I am a Cruceño [someone from Santa Cruz]. Just because I was born there [in a rural village in the Cordillera region] doesn't mean I am Guaraní. I don't speak the language, and I have never been back there. I don't know anything about it, and I don't want to, either. I am from here." His younger brother, Jaime, sixteen, looked on. " And you?" I asked him. " Oh yes, I am Guaraní. I was born there [in the Cordillera], and my family is all Guaraní. It is in my blood and my flesh, I can't run away from it. I don't speak the language very well but I am Guaraní and always will be."

Obviously for these two brothers, being a Guaraní was not something to be taken for granted. I argue that " Guaraní-ness," like " indigenousness," is a category that can only be understood in the context of the political, economic, and social relations that produce it—where these young men lived and what it meant for them at that moment. When I recounted this conversation to the leaders of the Guaraní federation, the CZC, they frowned and shook their heads. Don Álvaro Montero, the capítan grande, said, " What a shame [*Qué vergüenza*]. Whether they like it or not, both of those boys are *indígenas*. They should both be proud of their identity!"

Don Álvaro also made it clear that in multicultural Bolivia of the 1990s, being " indigenous" carried enormous material consequences. International NGOs gave funding to indigenous people for *etnodesarrollo* (ethnic development projects). In rural areas, membership in indigenous groups could mean access to land and the resources on it. In the cities, indigenous organizations had the right to make demands on municipal funds under the new popular participation law. So, for Don Álvaro and the leaders of the federation, cultural identity was both a set of strongly held feelings about being Guaraní as well as a set of strategic representations and practices.

But because these terms of identification have such important political and material consequences, there exists wide variation in terms for native people in Bolivia, depending in part on the claims being made by their users. Besides *indígena* and *pueblo originario*, some groups prefer to use *nativo*, while still others use *indio*. Some highland groups and scholars now use the term " indigenous campesinos" to point out the polyvalent nature of their identities or to emphasize the class basis of their organization (see Albó 2000). Others eschew such terms and identify themselves simply as Aymara, or Quechua speakers. In this book, where possible, I use the terms that the people I am discussing use to describe themselves. The Guaranís with whom I worked in Santa Cruz usually refer to themselves as either Guaraní or indígena. Otherwise, I use the general terms " Indian" and " indigenous" to describe those people who self-identify as indigenous.[6] I use these terms interchangeably, although I follow the tendency to refer to lowland people as indigenous and highland people as Indians.

Multiculturalism: Recognition or Redistribution?

In the previous sections, I have referred to discourse of multiculturalism as well as a series of multicultural reforms passed by the government. Here let me explain what I mean by the term " multiculturalism" and lay out what is at stake. " Multiculturalism" is used in many ways. It can refer to the multiethnic makeup of a place or a society — that is, the " hybrid co-existence of diverse cultural life-worlds" (Zizek 1997: 46). More often the term refers to the efforts of liberal democratic governments to accept and embrace these ethnic differences (Kymlicka 1995a, 1995b; Bennett 1998; Povinelli 2002). There are various phrases for these efforts: " multicultural constitutionalism" (Van Cott 2000), " liberal multiculturalism," " pluralism," or the term widely used in Latin America, " interculturality" (García 2005; Rappaport 2005). While " multiculturalism" implies recognition and respect of numerous cultures, " interculturality" signals a more interactive process of mutual influence among bearers of cultural and especially linguistic difference. Thus this term has been used to describe the goals of programs of bilingual bicultural education that accompanied the other reforms described in this chapter. Although it might have been better to use here the phrase commonly used by Bolivians, NGOs, and indigenous people, I prefer to use the more precise term " state-sponsored multiculturalism," which calls attention to the fact that I am not studying a utopian goal but a project promulgated by the government. Thus I use this phrase to describe the constitutional and legislative reforms directed by the state with the intention of granting cultural and political rights to Bolivia's indigenous populations. I use a second term, " neoliberal multiculturalism," to draw attention to the relation between those state-sponsored political reforms and the neoliberal philosophies that underlie them.[7]

Most forms of multiculturalism specifically recognize formerly marginalized groups, ensuring their individual rights as citizens, and in some cases granting collective rights as groups. In Latin America, eight states have adopted various forms of multiculturalism since the mid-1980s in an effort to expand the participation of indigenous people and to remedy past histories of ethnic and racial domination (Seider 2002: 4; see also Maybury Lewis 2002; Van Cott 2002; Postero and Zamosc 2004).[8] Nevertheless, there is a wide-ranging debate about how such protection should best be afforded. Is this a wrong that can be remedied through state intervention? That is, can minority cultures or ways of life be sufficiently protected by legal structures that ensure individual rights, or do they need special group protection or rights (Goldberg 1994; Bennett 1998; Okin 1999)?

One axis of difference in this debate is between those advocating a politics of recognition and those arguing for a politics of redistribution. The first group focuses on the cultural or symbolic nature of injustice, arguing that injustice is " rooted in social patterns of representation, interpretation, and communication" (Fraser 1997: 14). In this view, cultural domination, nonrecognition, and disrespect are forms of oppression that require state intervention (Honneth 1992; Taylor 1992). Such views favor identity politics and urge the state to privilege diversity and grant special treatment for disadvantaged groups (what legal philosopher Iris Marion Young has called " differentiated citizenship") (Young 1996). Critics of this position, like political scientist Seyla Benhabib, argue that it is based on static and bounded notions of culture, which end up balkanizing social groups and making true deliberative democracy impossible (Benhabib 2002). Other scholars point out the danger of invoking culture to solve problems previously in the province of economic and politics (Yúdice 2003: 1). A second perspective focuses on injustice as socioeconomic, rooted in the political economic structure of society (Fraser 1997: 13). These critics argue for a politics of redistribution, suggesting that true equality can only be found in transforming the political economic structure of society (Rawls 1971; Dworkin 1981). For this group, a focus on cultural rights rather than economics is a dangerous trap that diminishes the ability to resist the status quo (Almeida Vinueza 2005).

Of course, such analytical oppositions do not accurately reflect reality. In practice, as political philosopher Nancy Fraser has forcefully argued, economic and cultural injustice are fundamentally related: discursive categories and practices are underpinned by material supports, and economic institutions operate through culturally meaningful frameworks (Fraser 1997: 15). The Bolivian case described in this book shows that efforts to bring about social justice in a multiethnic society must take into account the ways cultural and economic forms of domination and resistance are co-constituted and mutually reinforcing. Simply recognizing cultural pluralism or promoting tolerance of difference in a managed multiculturalism is insufficient if there is little lasting change for the dominated group (see Bennett 1998; Goldberg 1994; Hale 2002).

This becomes clear from my analysis of the LPP, which established new forms of idigenous participation at the municipal level. The LPP fulfilled some of the functions of a policy of recognition in that it addressed centuries of discrimination by naming indigenous people as citizens and in the process fueled their expectations of participation. This remained mostly symbolic, however, because the LPP did not produce a meaningful redistribution of resources or radically challenge the structured inequalities of power. As chapter 4 demonstrates, the law was not part of a democraticizing effort intended to benefit the poor. Rather, it was part of an overarching strategy on the part of a neoliberal government that intended the reforms as a palliative for the larger structural adjustments it imposed. I argue that frustrations with the failures to make substantial changes in the distributive structures of Bolivian society are a key component to the current social upheavals in Bolivia.

Neoliberal Multiculturalism

If, as I contend, Bolivia's multiculturalism was not sufficiently transformative, why not? This cannot be understood without analyzing the relation between multiculturalism and neoliberalism, the form of government that gained dominance in Bolivia since the mid-1980s. Where neoliberalism is the key organizing principle of government, it acts to define citizen participation in accordance with its logic.

I take neoliberalism to be a philosophy about the relation between the state, the market, and individuals. Neoliberalism, like its classical ancestor, liberalism, privileges the individual and holds the market to be the guarantor of social good. Unlike liberalism, which saw some state interventions as necessary to facilitate citizens' freedoms, neoliberalism (reflecting its central critique of the post–World War II welfare state) characterizes the state as an inefficient, often corrupt actor that only encumbers the market's neutral and unselfish actions (Gill 2000: 3). Proponents of neoliberal philosophies criticize state entitlements, saying they weaken political participation by making citizens dependent on the state. In essence, this argument questions the " passive" nature of citizenship rights and urges citizens to take more individual responsibility for their own welfare. In this view, the state's functions should be minimized and its role as guarantor of rights abandoned.[9] Governments following this rationale often made radical cuts in state spending, privatized state-run enterprises, and encouraged foreign capital investments. In this context, the market is posited as an efficient bearer of liberty for responsible individual citizens, and citizenship is increasingly understood as individual integration into the market (Ignatieff 1995: 29; Dagnino 2003: 4–7).

As neoliberal economic strategies promoted by powerful multilateral financial institutions took hold across Latin America, these notions of state-citizen relations also gained ground, profoundly changing what it means to be a citizen. My analysis of the Bolivian political reforms of the 1990s demonstrates a corollary to this neoliberal turn: at the same time that the state offered fewer services and funding, it also passed on the responsibility for much of governance from the state to private individuals and groups (see Yashar 1999, 2005). "A sustainable government," said Fernando Romero Moreno, Bolivia's minister of human development, must foster "shared responsibility," which is "the essence of citizen participation" (Romero Moreno 1996: 30). This sort of reorganization of responsibility (discussed further below) is not the same thing as a policy of redistribution, despite the rhetoric to the contrary. Instead, the LPP encouraged a specific form of civil society participation intended to make the economic system run more efficiently and with less conflict. Rather than fighting the national government over large issues of resource allocation, civil society organizations were encouraged to engage in decisions over small development projects at the local level, with limited or shared funding.

This point echoes what anthropologist Charles Hale has argued: that neoliberalism includes a seductive cultural project. It does not merely encourage individualism; rather, it urges citizens — be they individuals or organized into collective groups — to take on the role of solving the problems in which they are immersed in collaboration with nonstate civil society entities like NGOs (Hale 2002: 496). This valuing of civil society can be compatible with some facets of indigenous cultural rights — but only as long as there are no fundamental threats to the productive regime or to state power. The bottom line is that successful neoliberal subjects must govern themselves in accordance with the logic of globalized capitalism. The result — what Hale has termed the "menace" of neoliberal multiculturalism — is that those Indians who conduct themselves within this logic and are appropriately "modern" and "rational" are rewarded and empowered. He calls these individuals "*indios permitidos*" ("authorized Indians"). Unruly, conflict-prone Indians, however, are condemned to the racialized spaces of poverty and social exclusion (Hale 2004).

But the Bolivian case is quite different from that in Guatemala, where Hale does his research. Although the role of the indio permitido can certainly be alluring, as my analysis in chapter 5 demonstrates, Bolivian Indians and their allies in civil society have pushed beyond the limitations of such roles. Many Indians are vigorously contesting neoliberal notions of multiculturalism as well as the model of the state. Throughout *Now We Are Citizens*, I show how indigenous citizens in Bolivia have taken advantage of political openings that the LPP offered, in many cases by assuming many of the rationalities of neoliberalism. In an interesting turnabout, however — and this is the crux of my book — these indigenous citizens are using them to pose important challenges to the workings of global capitalism. National Indian leaders, neighborhood associations, and workers organizations — strengthened in part through the institutions created by the neoliberal reforms — have questioned the framework on which those reforms are based. For instance, chapter 6 describes how neighborhood groups organized according to the LPP formed the backbone of the October 2003 uprisings in El Alto, which ultimately deposed the president. Political organizing for municipal elections, also made possible by the LPP, was key to the growth of the Movimiento al Socialismo party (MAS, Movement Toward Socialism), which in 2005 won the presidency with the election of Morales. These social movements have used institutional channels to demand that decisions about energy be taken out of the privatized realm of the market and reinserted into the public arena, where the citizenry can participate. They are also demanding a constitutional assembly to rethink the model of the state in public deliberations. Morales's election is evidence that these demands may bear fruit.

Here I offer a contrast to most characterizations of the effects of neoliberalism, which tend to generalize about its negative or positive effects without examining the complexity of how subjects engage with it. On the one hand, many critics of neoliberalism argue that its institutions and practices frame subjects more and more as consumers, forcing a coerced (or enchanted) compliance with neoliberal agendas (Comaroff and Comaroff 2000; Schild 2000). On the other hand, advocates of neoliberalism promote free trade and political decentralization as the most efficient mechanisms for delivering the economic and social development desperately needed by the poor. They argue that local community groups with strong social capital are able to pressure the state and the private sector to deliver goods and services, contributing to good governance (Putnam 1993, 1995; World Bank 2004). I find more compelling those analyses that note the strength of neoliberal discourses while also documenting the often surprising responses its subjects produce. Hale's 2002 and 2004 analysis is one example. Anthropologist Suzana Sawyer's analysis of indigenous activism in Ecuador's Oriente is another. She has argued that the neoliberal reforms which sought to create economic and political stability "backfired," jeopardizing the little credibility the state held and producing transgressive political subjects who were able to mount challenges to the state's oil and lending policies (Sawyer 2004: 15). Anthropologist Daniel Goldstein's excellent study of an urban barrio in Cochabamba, Bolivia, describes how neoliberal reforms prompted "spectacular" actions by barrio residents, such as attempted lynchings of thieves. He characterizes lynchings as ritual expressions of belonging that act to render the actors visible to the state and call attention to the neoliberal state's neglect of their rights as citizens (Goldstein 2004).

Like these authors, I seek to show that the subjects of neoliberalism find in it a number of resources and tools. This is because neoliberalism is not an all-encompassing or hegemonic paradigm that dominates society but rather a philosophy that is expressed in various policies, practices, and institutions that are constantly being conserved and/or contested. In *Now We Are Citizens*, I focus on three aspects — or moments — of neoliberalism in Bolivia: the political reforms of the 1990s, the diffusion of neoliberal rationalities, and the policies and costs of economic restructuring. Each of these aspects competes with other discourses and interests and engenders articulations and resistance. That is, Indian and popular actors actively engaged with each of these sites of neoliberal practice, taking advantage of the potentials and contesting their exclusionary or negative sides. The result was a new form of protagonism that both incorporates and challenges the underlying philosophies of neoliberalism. Thus, although this analysis shares much with such authors as Goldstein and Sawyer, who focus on the agency of neoliberal subjects, this book describes a new stage in the study of neoliberalism: the shift to postmulticultural citizenship.

I argue that postmulticultural citizenship will be pivotal to Bolivia's developing democracy. Furthermore, its development and continuing enactment may offer insights to scholars and activists in other multiethnic societies. To help readers understand this new phenomenon, I describe its history, its political and economic context, and the discursive formations that give it meaning. But the heart of this account is an analysis of how the political and cultural formations of the past — from the colonial era to the multicultural 1990s — have contributed to create current social relations. As an anthropologist, I begin with the words and practices of the indigenous people I work with and know. Thus this book is about the Guaraní's experience with neoliberal multiculturalism. Yet the work of anthropology is to compile a social history, by building on the stories of the people we study with our own analyses. To that end, I also provide readers with data and analytical tools to interpret the social history of contemporary Bolivia.

A Word about the Author

My interest in Bolivia's neoliberal multiculturalism was informed by my previous occupations: ten years as a lawyer and four as a radio journalist. I spent the 1980s practicing criminal defense and immigration law in

Tucson, Arizona, an hour north of the United States–Mexico border. In the 1990s, I left law to find a different perspective (and methodology) on the questions of human rights, politics, and justice. From 1990 to 1994, I was part of a team of radio journalists producing documentaries that were aired on National Public Radio. From our base in Costa Rica, we traveled across Latin America, covering the relations between development, environment, and culture for our series, *Vanishing Homelands* and *Searching for Solutions.*[10] It was in this context that I first worked in Bolivia. My partner and I reported about one of the last nomadic indigenous groups to be contacted, the Yuquí Indians of the Chapare region, and the New Tribes Missionaries who persuaded the Yuquí to come live in their settlement (Tolan and Postero 1992). During that trip, we first met the *cocalero* (coca growers) leader Evo Morales as part of our investigation into the effects of neoliberal reforms and the growth of the informal market.

My experiences as a journalist in Latin America, and especially in Bolivia and Ecuador, brought me back to the questions of cultural differences and human rights that I had confronted as a lawyer on the border. In both of those countries in the early 1990s, indigenous groups were becoming important political forces pushing the state to recognize them. What role would they assume? With such questions in mind, I returned to graduate school in anthropology and to Bolivia for my fieldwork. Bolivia had just embarked on its experiment in multiculturalism, and the nation's indigenous people were among the most organized on the continent. I began the research for this book in the summer of 1995 and returned again in 1996 to work with the CZC doing a survey of urban Guaraní communities. Then in 1997 and 1998, I carried out long-term fieldwork in Santa Cruz and the surrounding communities. I continued research during the summers of 1999, 2000, 2002, and the spring of 2003. In 2004, I expanded my research to the highlands to better understand the events of October 2003.

I describe my methodology throughout the following chapters, but let me note here how grateful I am to the Guaraní leaders who authorized and collaborated in my research. From the beginning, I sought to do an investigation that would prove helpful to the organization and the community in which I lived. I developed my research topics through multiple discussions with the Guaraní. I reported my results to the organization, translating sections of my data and dissertation into Spanish for them, and holding community meetings to discuss the implications. That said, I want to be clear about my own motivations in this research and to draw the connections between my previous work and the ethnographic project that *Now We Are Citizens* represents. Part of the reason that I left law was because I grew tired of the dualisms inherent to it. Although I respect the merits of the adversary system, I do not feel it is the best way to think about such complex issues as race and politics. I changed my career to journalism and then to anthropology precisely to find more nuanced ways of thinking about these issues.

Yet trading the role of advocate for that of scholar is not an easy solution. As has been amply demonstrated elsewhere, anthropologists do not inhabit a neutral or objective place outside the power relations we study (Clifford 1986; Nelson 1999; Warren and Jackson 2002). I could not avoid the privileges and limitations that my identities as a white, female, and (relative to my Guaraní friends) rich North American provided. I do not deny my sympathies and affection for the Indians I worked with, nor for the indigenous movement as a whole. But I do not consider my work advocacy in the standard definition of the word. Understanding that all identities (including the observer's) are mutually constituted, I believe that critiques of power must go beyond binaries (good-bad, Indian-white, leaders-followers, observer-observed, and so on) to examine the processes by which those binaries are produced (Nelson 1999). Thus this is not a romantic picture of Bolivian Indians; rather, it is an attempt to recount the ways Indianness and neoliberal citizenship are constructed, experienced, and used strategically by all involved. This book documents the complex and dynamic manner in which Bolivian Indians advocate and represent themselves. I believe that the best contribution I can make to Bolivia is my analysis about how and why this is occurring.

Names

Throughout this book, I use pseudonyms for individual indigenous people as well as for the villages in which they live. This is not for fear that the individuals will face any danger should their identities be exposed, but to protect their privacy. All the people I interviewed were advised of the purposes of my research and gave me their permission to interview them and to use their words in my writing. Nevertheless, the Human Subjects Protection program of the University of California required that I keep all my notes hidden and my sources confidential. I have therefore invented names for all of the Guaranís of Zona Cruz and the urban leaders in El Alto. The names of the Guaraní villages are also invented, although the organization name, the Capitanía Zona Cruz, is real. The name of the NGOs with whom the Guaraní worked are also real, but the names of the individual NGO workers are pseudonyms. Finally, I include information from interviews with several indigenous congress members. Because they are public figures, I use their real names.