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Literature Review

A Thousand Twangling Instruments: Racial and Ethnic Political Identities in Modern Latin America

…Sometimes a thousand twangling instruments
Will hum about mine ears; and sometime voices
That, if I then had waked after long sleep,
Will make me sleep again; and then in dreaming,
The clouds methought would open, and show riches
Ready to drop upon me, that when I waked
I cried to dream again.

-   William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*

"The history of subaltern social groups is necessarily fragmented and episodic. There undoubtedly does exist a tendency to (at least in provisional stages) unification in the historical activity of these groups…It therefore can only be demonstrated when an historical cycle is completed and this cycle culminates in success."

-   Antonio Gramsci, *The Prison Notebooks*

<u>Introduction</u>

Peoples of indigenous and African descent are anything but newcomers to the political scene in Latin America. However, social movements and political constituencies and parties based on racial and ethnic identities have been assuming increasing importance across the region in recent years. While there are many labels for the varied theoretical approaches to this field, this paper groups them into the broad categories of "institutionalism" and "social movement theory." Many researchers argue that due to the complementariness of their respective analytical strengths and weaknesses, this topic is best studied from both angles.

Another important aspect of this review is that it includes the study of "black" or Afro-Latino movements as well as indigenous movements. Many authors focus on a set of similar cases – such as Rice (2012), Madrid (2005a, 2005b, 2008), and others, who focus on indigenous movements in the Andean countries. This paper seeks to draw a comparative connection between indigenous and other ethnic and racial political cleavages by including an analysis of Afro-Latino movements in Colombia and Brazil within the context of a more general picture of ethic politics and social movements in the region.

This paper seeks compare and combine existing literature utilizing the two theoretical approaches named above in order to illuminate the factors most salient to the emergence of ethnic and racial movements as well as their effects on local and national politics and the outlook for the future. First, it will briefly review the theoretical foundations of each school and their general approach to the topic. Then, making use of insights from both perspectives, it will analyze the causes and effects of the successes and failures of ethnic movements in various Latin American countries.

Competing Explanations

Institutionalism

The "institutional" approach focuses on explaining the development of ethnic movements in the context of the historical patterns of incorporation of African and indigenous populations into a political and economic system controlled by a "white" elite of mostly European heritage. In cases like Bolivia and Ecuador, where black and indigenous peasants and workers were incorporated in a clientelistic fashion with economic and political elites during the era of import substitution industrialization, vertical ties were eroded under neoliberalization causing disaffection and protest centering on issues of privatizations (especially of natural resources) and cuts to social programs. In these cases, indigenous groups often organized electoral vehicles in response to their lack of representation in highly fragmented electoral systems, with varying degrees of success (Madrid, 2008). Alternatively, as in the cases of Peru, Chile, and Mexico, indigenous peoples had been incorporated into leftist parties that were repressed by authoritarian governments or collapsed after the end of the Cold War (Lucero 2011, Rice 2012).

The opening of electoral competition that came with neoliberalization created political space for indigenous parties and movements to fill by combining a critique of the system with a nationalistic cultural twist. This school explains the political opportunities and constraints indigenous groups have faced in their attempts to achieve goals such as sanctioning of "traditional" legislative and judicial processes, language rights, land rights (or even territorial autonomy), and other culturally-based demands. However, it generally omits discussion of the evolution of these "ethnic" identities and demands in racially fluid Latin American societies.

Social Movement Theory

The "social movement" perspective highlights the ability of racial and ethnic movements – and social movements more generally – to construct a strong identity (what some authors call a "mystique" [see Issa in Stahler, et al., 2008]) around which to mobilize as a key factor for political success. Urban-rural family, community, and cultural linkages as well as national and transnational non-governmental organizations played a key role in shaping identities for communities and societies formerly organized into economically-based class systems.

This school focuses more heavily on demographic and geographic conditions to explain the development of ethnic identities and the political ideologies behind them and it also examines the conflicts between globalization and traditional cultures, sometimes referred to as the "paradox of neoliberal multiculturalism," in which groups that are demanding rights from the state are often claiming the right to collective autonomy in certain areas such as those mentioned in the section above. The decline in organized labor and peasant movements after neoliberalization led to the need for new forms of identification that did not run along class lines, and in certain cases this has created exclusionary "ethnicist" branches that have alienated or hampered the construction of a broad base of support, while religious and other ideological factions also cause division within these movements. However, in contrast to the institutionalist view, this school tends to view protests and direct action as well as local organization by these movements as equally – if not more – important for their political success than their ability to work within the national electoral system.

Synthesis

Due to the "top-down" view of the former and the "bottom-up" method of the latter, combining these two schools provides a more complete picture of contemporary ethnic politics in Latin America. To again draw upon the author whose work is referenced in the title of this essay, "All the world's a stage and all the men and women merely players." Extending the theatrical metaphor to these theoretical considerations, the institutionalist view seems best suited to set the stage upon which the drama of ethic movements has played out. It explains the political conditions that allowed or prevented the rise of ethnically based parties and movements whereas the more constructivist social movement perspective provides the dialogue and blocking, delving into the underlying motivations of the "players" and the specific actions they took.

Obviously, "ethnic" movements depend on the construction of an "ethnic identity" for their existence. However, the potential of these movements to achieve their goals depends largely on their ability to frame them in a way that is compatible with those of other actors in the political system, or to frame them as an alternative that is preferable to the status quo. "Pressure politics," direct actions, and electoral mobilization can each help indigenous groups redress their grievances, but Van Cott (2007) and Madrid (2005b) both intimate that the polarizing, exclusionary, and often contentious nature of ethnic politics can have poor consequences for democracy on the whole. The first section of this essay will deal with the development of various ethnic identities in Latin America as well as their objectives, while the second section will explore the political conditions by which they were mobilized and constrained.

Identity Formation

Overview

Following Rice and Van Cott (2006) – in an interesting fusion of institutionalism and social movement theory – "favorable institutional, demographic, and political conditions…optimal indigenous population…[combined with increased] poverty and inequality" brought on by neoliberal structural adjustments created the best opportunities for indigenous mobilization. Quoting Yashar (1998), they argue that the ""combination of political liberalization, neoliberal economic reforms and preexisting social networks served to trigger the politicization of indigenous identity in the region. Democratization created the political opportunity for indigenous peoples to mobilize in response to market reforms that had severed their corporatist ties to the state and undermined their well being.""

Bolivia

Many authors, including Van Cott (2009) and Rice (2012), point to the case of Bolivia as an example of indigenous groups achieving political success by linking the struggle for minority rights with an anti-neoliberal, redistributive agenda. Susan Spronk and Jeffery R. Webber (in Stahler-Sholk, et al., 2008) show that the gas and water "wars" of 2000s that brought down Lozada and Mesa differed from anti-austerity "IMF riots" of the 1980s because these "new" movements "articulated a clear link between accumulated popular grievances and an identifiable set of government policies that was able to sustain coalitions of indigenous movements, workers, peasants, and the urban poor around a unitary national project." This is similar to Luna and Kaltwasser's (forthcoming) argument regarding Latin America's "left turn," namely that "[w]hile pro-market reforms…did not precisely foster economic redistribution, the very institutionalization of electoral competition allowed leftist

parties and actors to win office by articulating social grievances and calling for economic change."

Paz-Estenssoro's harsh neoliberal reforms in response to the debt crisis of 1985 and subsequent hyperinflation caused a decline in public sector employment and union membership. Disemployed miners brought the organizational skills learned in the mining sector to coca growing operations in rural areas. In 1996, the Law on Capitalization and the Hydrocarbon Law reversed a 60-year trend of government ownership of gas industry and, with the entry of foreign firms, royalties were slashed. This led to a massive increase in budget borrowing by the government as foreign firms took on international development capital to develop energy resources. This was accompanied by social spending cuts and increases in regressive taxes. As Spronk and Webber (2008) point out, "[t]he first major social force in the…[retaliatory] insurrection was the largely Aymara indigenous peasantry in the Altiplano and Lake Titicaca regions." They argue that this activism "radiated out to countrywide solidarity mobilizations and marches."

Rice (2012) highlights the fact that while both groups were weakly incorporated through state corporatist ties, the lowland Quecha groups promoted an ideology known as "Katarismo" – an ethnically Indian political culture that incorporates a leftist class critique – as opposed to the highland Ayamara whose more radical "Indianismo" stressed total separation and autonomy from the political system. Road blockades and strikes were initially met with force but after large-scale hunger strikes and public protests, Lozada ran for exile, paving the way for the subsequent overthrow of his vice-president and the victory of Evo Morales's in 2005. Perhaps unsurprisingly, while the radicalism of the Altiplano kick-started the nationwide movements, the lowland Quecha were able to achieve more sustainable results through cooperation with NGOs and political parties like the MAS (Madrid, 2005a).

Political decentralization and agrarian reforms in the 1990s had provided some recognition and autonomy to indigenous populations, along with concessions such as provisions for bilingual education. Still, indigenous people were politicized by the major parties' failure to deal with the issues of coca eradication, natural resource privatizations, poverty and inequality, and repressive violence from the state. According to Rice and Van Cott (2006), "[t]he disarticulation of traditional class-based collective action and the crisis of the political Left as a result of the shift toward neoliberal economic policies… created a void in popular sector interest representation out of which new, identity-based political parties [emerged]."

Van Cott (2009) argues that "[i]n the absence of viable leftist parties…indigenous vehicles most often succeeded as the fulcrum of alliances bringing together weak, fragmented, popular organizations and leftist political parties." However, she is ambiguous about the effects of this development on the prospects for democracy, pointing out that it in the case of Bolivia's Movimento al Socialismo, indigenous electoral mobilization comes at the price of "peasant-union discipline," which has weakened the democratic credentials of the Morales government.

In his subnational analysis of ethnic cleavages and electoral volatility in Bolivia, Madrid (2005a) notes that on a national level, Bolivia's electoral volatility is close to that of Peru, Ecuador, and Brazil – all countries with politically significant ethnic populations. Madrid argues that after indigenous citizens in Bolivia gained suffrage in the wake of the 1952 revolution, the MNR incorporated them as peasants through state-union cooptation whose ties were eroded under the subsequent military dictatorship. The continuing legacy of contestatory/concessionary politics means that main parties are used to giving concessions to large and directly active indigenous populations in a top-down fashion without modifying

their platforms to adequately address indigenous concerns. In the region as a whole, some indigenous voters who formerly supported indigenous parties like the MAS are shifting to what Madrid (2008) calls "ethnopopulist" parties, which are generally less stable than more moderate and inclusionary parties, generating electoral volatility fostered by ethnic cleavages (Madrid, 2005b; see also: Meléndez in Luna and Kaltwasser, forthcoming; Kaufman in Levitsky and Roberts, 2011).

Ecuador

In Ecuador, the formation of CONAIE brought together highland and lowland groups and presented a plan for the nation as whole, contingent upon collective action and the participation of popular sector (Rice, 2012). Keucker (in Stahler-Sholk et al.) writes that increases in poverty during the economic tremors of 1990s along with influence of liberation theology, ecological and anti-globalization movements, and traditional community values helped indigenous movements, especially CONAIE, to form linkages that promoted a broad anti-neoliberal political agenda. Through grassroots mobilization, they achieved national political success - for example in bringing Gutierrez to power in 2003 and then ousting him in 2005. CONAIE was again instrumental in the election of Rafael Correa, but Correa's PAIS party has since taken the anti-neolberal political space of the CONAIE and the Pachakutik party. Both of the latter originally had broad-based support, but recently "ethnicist" currents are growing stronger and alienating allies (Rice 2012, Van Cott 2009). In Lucero's (2011) estimation, once Correa learned he could use revenues from extractive industries to govern clientelistically and essentially without indigenous support, the PAIS-indigenous alliance collapsed. This is similar to the case of the MAS in Bolivia, which shares

a comparable history and demographic makeup (Madrid, 2008; Cerrutti and Bertoncello, 2003).

Like Morales, Correa has shown willingness to compromise with the establishment, but stresses the importance of continued indigenous political pressure to keep their demands on the agenda (Fernandez, 2008). Madrid (2005b) argues that in Ecuador and elsewhere, indigenous parties increase indigenous turnout and support for democracy, which may have reduced political violence, but Ecuador's party system remains highly fragmented like Bolivia's – a trend furthered by the continued radicalization of the Patchakutik party. Still, as in Bolivia, direct action by indigenous groups has played a unique role, especially in organizing around issues of neoliberalization and extractive industries.

Keucker (in Stahler-Sholk, et al., 2008) cites a prime example of social movement theorists' contention that direct action by ethnic groups can have major political effects. In June of 1997, a group of aggravated indigenous people in the remote town of Intag, Ecuador tore down a Mistubishi-owned mining camp by hand and burned it to the ground, after which the corporation pulled out of the site. Keucker claims this represents the struggle between indigenous groups and global capitalist markets over "who has the power to decide." In Keucker's view, mining is "perfect statement of the neoliberal project for Ecuador: it has the obligation to destroy its greatest asset, biodiversity, in order to pay off its greatest liability, an unpayable foreign debt." If indigenous movements can make the opportunity cost of doing business high enough through direct action or other methods, they can achieve their goals by altering the market incentives rather than by participating in formal political process. Movements that seek "power over" rather than "power to" – that is, the power of autonomous local decision making as opposed to a radical anti-hegemonic agenda – are generally more successful in constructing a narrative alternative to neoliberalism

that does not advocate the overthrow of the system, but rather its reform from within. He claims that indigenous groups' "agrarian-based environmental ethic" that values "community above profit" has resonance with many voters who oppose neoliberalism's other negative effects.

The importance of the urban-rural connection should not be understated. Bolivia and Ecuador are comparatively less urbanized than other, more developed countries in the region (Cerrutti and Bertoncello, 2003). The cultural and familial linkages between the urban poor and working-class, who were suffering the effects of privatizations and cuts to social spending, and their rural indigenous counterparts, seeing the ecological devastation of their local territories by transnational corporations were essential to the ability of indigenous parties to "connect the dots" between neoliberalization and the subjugation of indigenous identities and values (Yashar, 1999).

Political Incorporation

Overview

Van Cott and Rice (2006) conclude, "In Peru and Chile, legacies of class-based partisan organizing by the Marxist Left continue to politically overshadow ethnic cleavages." Unlike Bolivia and Ecuador, Chile lacks national-level organizations and parties advocating what they call an "ethno-cultural" agenda. According to Van Cott and Rice, this is because "in countries where leftist, class-based organizing predominates, autonomous patterns of popular-sector mobilization create class identities that may impede the articulation and mobilization of ethnic identities to the extent that where indigenous peoples mobilize politically, they do so as workers or as peasants and tend to vote for leftist rather than ethnic parties." Their "programmatic appeal…is based on their rejection of the neoliberal economic

model and their emphasis on poverty alleviation" as opposed to ethnic identification, which lies on a less defined continuum than class cleavages and territorial divisions.

Peru

According to Rice (2012), the 1968 coup reconstituted most Peruvian Indians as peasants within the dominant mestizo culture, but this incorporation failed to penetrate the Amazon region. This left the door open for Marxist guerillas like the Revolutionary Vanguard and Sendero Luminoso to mobilize and organize rural indigenous populations. Ties between these groups and urban labor and student movements encouraged peasant-labor-shantytown linkages and activism. This consolidated left-wing support at the grassroots rather than electoral level. Nevertheless, the contentious, classist discourse of these leftist groups largely failed to take ethnic identity and traditions into account (Madrid, 2008). Also, the more militant factions suffered heavy repression from the state, causing dispersion and fragmentation, resulting in a lack of coordination.

The economic crisis of 1970s and the debt crisis of the 1980s as well as the failed heterodox economic experiment under Garcia led to substantial public support for Fujimori's "no shock" neoliberal agenda, which fell apart after unsatisfactory results and a corruption scandal in 2000. Rice (2012) argues that new movements have filled the post-collapse vacuum left by organized labor, which had been nearly completely dismantled under Fujimori. This has produced "geographically segmented" protests and violent clashes between indigenous groups and security forces over privatizations. In some instances, religious and environmental organizations and other NGOs organizing in Amazon region – an area where parties and guerillas have generally failed to gain traction – have been

successful in organizing anti-extraction and anti-coca eradication protests, but electoral vehicles that are especially sensitive to indigenous-specific issues have not emerged.

Similarly, Lucero (2011) shows that heavy state repression and guerilla wars in the 1990s were accompanied by limited concessions to indigenous communities such as land rights and provisions for bilingual education. Nevertheless, claims to mining rights by multinational corporations have skyrocketed, a large number of which are in indigenous-majority areas. Concerns over environmental disasters and displaced communities have been impetus for mobilization among indigenous populations. As Lucero (2009) puts it, "Indigenous identities in Peru, as elsewhere, are able to articulate multiple urban and rural identities and connect with broader transnational networks," but this has not necessarily translated into electoral success at a national level.

Degregori (in Agüero and Stark, 2008) points to Peru's path to democratization as the major cause of the weakness of the incorporation of ethnic identities in Peruvian politics. The most vociferous demands for citizenship came from middle-class mestizos as the lowest levels of the socioeconomic hierarchy were eroded during neoliberalization (in Degregori's words, "nobody wanted to be an Indian"). Mestizo actors appropriated bits and pieces of indigenous culture but they adopted a mostly class-based critique of leftist parties throughout the 1970s and 1980s, largely ignoring demands specific to indigenous groups. As Madrid (2005b) shows, this has left a legacy of high levels of distrust among some indigenous populations for democratic institutions.

Chile

In the case of both Chile and Peru, elites extended some socioeconomic rights to disenfranchised populations in efforts to diffuse indigenous protest, but the sociopolitical

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scene remains highly unequal. As in Peru, indigenous movements in Chile are geographically segmented, having barely survived the legacy of Pinochet's brutal repression of labor strikes and the country's deeply entrenched neoliberal policies (Rice, 2012). As in other countries, indigenous groups, such as the Mapuche, have focused on opposition to extractive industries and other aspects of neoliberal globalization with a highly local impact. Anti-terrorism laws put in place after the 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States have been used to repress the Mapuche activists who opposed dams, logging, and other industrial projects in their proximity. When protests occur, the government is usually able to increase social spending to placate the protesters. However, in the Mapuche case, their demands are political, so economic incentives are not as seen as effective redress and suppression is the more often used remedy (Rice, 2012). Ethnic rights are codified in the Chilean constitution, but as in Peru, the party system is well-established and contentious politics like those used by the Patchakutik in Ecuador can be seen as undemocratic (Van Cott 2009).

Mexico

Mexico is another case where a history of state violence and repression and a heavily institutionalized party system led to a radicalization of indigenous groups. Mariana Mora (in Stahler, et al, 2008) considers the 1994 Zapatista uprising an example of an indigenous-based group combining ethnic and class politics to critique the left using strong elements of anti-capitalism and indigenism. Like ethnic movements in other countries mentioned thus far, Mexico's Zapatistas rally around the issues of "biopiracy" and resource privatization as well as poverty and inequality.

Judith Adler Hellman (in Stahler-Sholk, et al.) traces the path of Mexico's indigenous movements back to the ejidal system of the 1960s and the formation of linkages between

slum dwellers lacking municipal services and farmers lacking agricultural inputs with the PRI, which provided these goods on a clientelistic basis. The legacy of Echeverria's "apertura democrática" of the 1970s was carried on by López Portillo into the 1980s. The 1977 Law on Political Organizations and Electoral Processes consolidated PRI power but opened elections to "minority parties," allowing the right-wing PAN to gain in strength. Still, the PRI attempted repression more often than cooptation where indigenous movements fell outside of the reach of the major parties. Under Salinas in the 1990s, the one-party system allowed him to coopt some social movements by offering funding for their pet projects in return for acquiescence to neoliberal "modernization" policies. De la Madrid largely ignored indigenous demands and used revenues from privatizations to funnel benefits to supportive rural and urban sectors (Adler Hellman, in Stahler-Sholk, et al., 2008).

Organization and mobilization has been hampered by a lack of resources, as Zapatistas often encourage their supporters to opt for complete autonomy from the state and to reject all state funding, even from programs such as Oportunidades. According to Mora (in Stahler-Sholk, et al., 2008), government recognition of indigenous rights has been "cultural," not political or territorial, yet "cultural" rights mean little in a context of "mestizo universalism" and neoliberal globalization. Adler Hellman points to the paradox of working within the system: essentially, if indigenous movements achieve their objectives by electoral participation, they further legitimize the very system they are critiquing.

Stalher-Sholk (in Stahler-Sholk, et al.) argues that social movements in Mexico did not necessarily spring up against "neoliberalism" itself, but rather against its manifestations in society, or as he puts it, "Zapatistas organize [against neoliberalism] in newly contested spaces created paradoxically by neoliberal globalization itself." New social movements are distinguished by their "emphasis on autonomy, participatory process, and solidarity around

perceived collective identities." A major issue for indigenous movements is the "fethishism

of autonomy" – an excessive fear of being coopted – which can be counterproductive to

achieving success within the establishment as it has been in Mexico.

"Mística"

Brazil

Htun (2004) argues that the Brazilian history of racial hierarchy is related to

socioeconomic inequalities, which historically have been reinforced mostly informally and

based on the notion of a "racial democracy" akin to the "mestizaje" ideologies of other

contemporary regional governments. Like Htun, Johnson (2008) notes Brazil's history of

weakly denominated racial identification based on appearance rather than ancestry, but

points out that black "religious, recreational, cultural, and political" groups of the 1970s and

1980s complemented the efforts of the MNU by injecting the "black agenda" into other

aspects of politics like labor, education, neighborhood associations, and the like.

Mikevis and Flynn (2005) relate the myth of racial democracy to the fact that blacks

were the last workers to be incorporated into the labor market, preventing organization and

mobilization along class lines. The repression of civil society by the state under the military

dictatorship, especially the briefly resurgent black movement in 1960s, led to a proliferation

of ethnically-focused NGOs and other manifestations of "black culture" in the 1990s after

democratization opened spaces for these and other social movements. Ethnic groups

articulated a class-based rhetoric, arguing that structural inequalities and other problems

affect black people most due to their historical socioeconomic exclusion (Mikevis and Flynn

2005). However, there are continuing arguments over the effectiveness of policy measures

such as racial quotas for employment and education. Some argue that these reproduce

economic inequalities by helping middle and upper class blacks, and that economically determined quotas would be more effective. (Sansonne, 2004)

In contrast to Madrid's general position, Wampler and Avritzer (2004) argue that the mobilization of civil society groups does not necessarily "stress and destabilize new and agile democratic systems." Rather, popular organizations have helped create a culture of participatory democracy that allows for new methods of political engagement by groups that have traditionally been politically excluded. Participatory budgeting at the municipal level (especially in Porto Alegre) has subverted the back-room deals and exchanges typical of Brazil's historically clientelistic political system. However, participatory budgeting depends on institutionalization through an alliance between civil society organizations and political actors. In the case of Recife, the shortcomings of participatory budgeting resulted from a rightist political coalition combined with low levels of political activism by the local population (Wampler and Avritzer, 2004).

Carter (2010), like Wampler and Avritzer, argues that "contentious" edge of Brazil's Movimento Sem Terra highlights important role of public activism and that the movement helps extend basic citizenship rights, fostering sense of hope for long-term democratization, but it can be vulnerable to cooptation. Still, as Carter writes, "Mobilization capacity, flexible organization, strategic creativity, financial independence, resourceful allies, education, mystique and discipline" are a "cost effective" way of achieving recognition and representation (Carter, 2010).

Issa (in Stahler-Sholk, et al.) looks at the MST through the unique lens of the "mística," which she defines as "the representation through words, art, symbolism, and music of the struggles and reality of this social movement," describing it as a unique and "distinctive charcteristic of the Landless Movement. Mística is also used to refer to the more

abstract, emotional element, strengthened in collectivity, which can be described as the feeling of empowerment, love, and solidarity that serves as a mobilizing force by inspiring self-sacrifice, humility, and courage." A "mística" is a "ritualistic", but not "institutionalized" ceremony. It is very "Brazilian" – informal, emotional, quasi-religious – with roots in both African traditions and liberation theology. The MST is still vaguely Christian, but nonsectarian. In Issa's words it is a "Gramscian hegemonic alternative" with the act of a "mística" as its Marxist "praxis." This is similar to the way the Zapatistas, the Patchakutik, and other "contentious" actors articulate their political demands in a cultural context. Black social movements in Brazil are arguing for a "reinterpretation of 'racial democracy"(Guimarães, 2003) that includes recognition of their cultural uniqueness and their political rights.

Colombia

Dixon (in Stahler-Sholk, et al.) situates Afro-Colombian movements within the context of the "broad demand for recognition of collective rights in an era when the liberal individualistic concept of citizenship was proving unable to met basic needs," pointing out that already marginalized communities tended to suffer most from the effects of neoliberalisation. Hooker (2005) similarly focuses on the "social exclusion" of indigenous and Afro-Latin populations – what she describes as their "inability of social group to fully participate in the social, political, cultural, and economic spheres of society." Like Madrid (2005b), she claims that political decentralization has not led to greater inclusion of ethnic and racial minorities in the formal political process but rather a distrust of governments by indigenous peoples and Afro-Latinos.

Indigenous groups in Colombia began to achieve some collective rights in the 1990s, but Afro-Latino groups struggled to get similar protections despite similar population sizes. Hooker posits that this difference results from the lack of cultural self-identification of Afro-Latin groups – they would rather be included in the "mainstream" political process as opposed to being singled out as a group with its own cultural identity. Still, Dixon points out that linkages with transnational NGOs have been instrumental in extracting certain concessions from the government, especially where territorially based communities articulate a unique ethnic identity.

Conclusions:

Major Themes

In geographical areas that states have a difficult time penetrating (or willfully ignore and antagonize), groups that cannot achieve their desired results in the political system will resort to direct community action – what Leeds (1996) calls "parallel politics." Whether the reasons for state failures are geographical, cultural, institutional, or otherwise, the solution to socioeconomic and political inequalities does not lie simply in better representation of indigenous interests but rather in a better democracy for all citizens. It takes participatory action to combat socioeconomic exclusion, but the most effective way to do this is through broad-based, inclusionary movements that focus on equality and representation for all.

This leads to the rather unsurprising conclusion of this essay, namely that where indigenous groups were highly active and able to form cross-class and or cross-border linkages with anti-neoliberal actors, including political parties, they were more likely to succeed at achieving their goals – especially when they could construct a strong ethnic identity around which to mobilize. However, this examination suffers from a lack of

consideration for countries with smaller ethnic populations, each with their own unique characteristics and challenges. It has also neglected to look at right-wing mobilization of indigenous groups over territorial and other issues, but these generally are the exception rather than the rule.

Indigenous movements are unique in that, unlike movements formed around identities such as gender and sexual orientation, ethnicity in Latin America tends to be a much more malleable and multifaceted social construction. As Yashar (1999) writes, land reform and credit programs "emancipated" indigenous populations and provided a physical space in which to develop new governance mechanisms ("Indians assumed their identity as peasants, and peasants assumed their identity as Indians.") In her opinion this has led to a "postliberal challenge" (the "paradox of multiculturalism) where demands for individual civil and political rights are often at cross-purposes to demands for collective rights and group political autonomy.

While a region-wide movement for indigenous and ethnic rights is an unlikely development, the seeds of a global movement toward more progressive, participatory politics have been seen in recent years in the "Arab Spring" uprisings in the Middle East, "Los Indignados" and others in Europe, "Occupy" movements in the United States, and various emerging social movements in Asia, Russia, Eastern Europe and other regions around the world that are all challenging the neoliberal status quo and demanding better representation and fairer treatment by their governments especially when it comes to global markets. Considering the long history of progressive politics in Latin America, it is likely that if such a movement were to emerge on a global scale, Latin America would certainly have something to contribute to it.

While this essay has only touched on some of the major themes of this field, it has not taken into consideration the variety of other ethnic movements in the region, especially in smaller, less developed, and less urbanized countries, each with its own distinct ethnic social and political scene. This analysis would benefit from both a deeper exploration of the theoretical variants of social movement theory as well as a political and economic analysis of countries such as Nicaragua, Venezuela, Uruguay and smaller Caribbean nations.

Gürcan (2010) points to the theory of "new regionalism" and developments such as the ALBA union, MERCOSUR, and other progressive regional initiatives as outgrowths of a general movement toward a "regional" identity that includes elements of themes common to indigenous movements: "community above profit," anti-"Western imperialism", pride in multiculturalism, and concerns for economic and ecological sustainability. While these movements are occurring in other regions around the globe, "in contemporary Latin America, transformative regionalism aims at forming a close alliance of strong states and vibrant civil societies for the democratic transformation of the top-down structure of neo-liberalism." (Gürcan, 2010) However, Gürcan warns that, as in other region, especially Africa and the Middle East, "some components of identities forged during the post-Cold War period could involve certain reactionary elements such as religious and ethnic fundamentalism."

In short, Indigenous movements are just one section in the symphony of "a thousand twangling instruments" that comprise the social movement scene in Latin America. The present period seems may be like the cacophony on before the concert as the

musicians separately tune their instruments. When capable "maestros" like political parties, transnational organizations, and broad-based movements can step up and coordinate the musicians to play together, these groups have much more success at making themselves heard than when they are all playing their own tune.

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