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Introduction

Bolivia under Morales

National Agenda, Regional Challenges, and the Struggle for Hegemony

by

Benjamin Kohl and Rosalind Bresnahan

On January 22, 2010, Evo Morales began his second term in office as the first president eligible to serve consecutive terms under the new constitution approved in a 2009 referendum. His first electoral victory in 2005 had made him Bolivia's first indigenous president and represented a watershed in Bolivian politics, ending a peculiar form of Andean apartheid. Even though the majority indigenous people¹—who are estimated to account for from 60 to 70 percent of the country's population—had finally gained the right to vote after the 1952 Revolution, they were still socially and culturally subordinate and largely excluded from formal participation in government. As discussed by Postero (2010) in the previous issue, Morales's Movimiento al Socialismo (Movement Toward Socialism—MAS) merged indigenous activism with opposition to neoliberalism from socialist and populist sectors in support of an "indigenous nationalist" agenda advocating indigenous rights and economic and popular democracy.

Having spent much of his first term consolidating political power, Morales entered office in 2010 controlling the majority of the new "Plurinational Legislative Assembly." This issue, the second to examine Bolivia under Morales, analyzes the country's historic struggle focusing on the new phase heralded by his inauguration in 2006.² Dominant classes do not give up privilege without a fight, and Morales's first term was marked by their struggle to maintain their power. Opposition came largely from the old dominant political classes represented by conservatives centered in the Media Luna (Half Moon), the country's four eastern departments of Santa Cruz, Tarija, Beni, and Pando (Figure 1).

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Figure 1. Bolivia

These departments, which had benefited from the neoliberal policies that had dominated the country since 1985 (von der Heydt-Coca, 2009), mobilized against the MAS program by promoting demands for regional autonomy to expand their control over the region's oil and gas and to enhance their ability to resist transformative policies such as land reform.

This opposition is drawn largely from the same 20–25 percent of the population that supported former dictator Hugo Banzer (1971–1978), whose later term as an elected president (1997–2001) was noted for its subservience to the United States and international financial institutions as he militarized coca eradication. Popular resistance to neoliberalism had consolidated the coca growers under Morales as the forefront of opposition in the 1990s, a role they

ceded in 2000 to the social movements involved in the Cochabamba water war that forced the reversal of water privatization. This victory for popular forces proved to be a turning point in Bolivian history (Olivera, 2004; Kohl and Farthing, 2006).

The issue opens with a photo essay by James Lerager, who shares a personal view of Morales and his relationship with supporters during the 2005 campaign. The first article, introduced by a July 2009 interview by Linda Farthing, is a theoretical essay by Vice President Álvaro García Linera. Writing in 2008, during the intense political conflict triggered by Morales's victory, García Linera, a prominent Bolivian intellectual as well as a political leader, considers the problems of consolidating state power. He points out that Morales's ascent to the presidency in 2006, which marked a shift in Bolivian political structures and power relations, was highly contested through 2008. He draws from Ilya Prigogine's work (Nicolis and Prigogine, 1977) the idea of a point of bifurcation, a moment in which an unstable structure goes through a qualitative change and comes to a new, although impermanent, equilibrium. Technically, the bifurcation point is the point where branching occurs. The idea, used formally in physics and mathematics, has been adapted (often loosely) by social theorists. In this context it suggests the boundary or "moment" at which the future is still indeterminate and after which a new constellation of social forces achieves a new equilibrium. In his discussion of the state in transition, García Linera uses slightly different definitions of bifurcation point at different places in the essay. At one point he refers to a single event that marks the ascendance of one political bloc over another, such as the 1986 miners' March for Life, which marked the end of labor's effective resistance to the imposition of neoliberal policies. In this context he is referring to a qualitative change rather than a branching of a process, as the term is used in chaos theory. At another moment he refers to political processes that are unstable and not determined and often cannot even be identified until the system returns to a new equilibrium (although the configuration of powers may still be contested).

At the time he wrote the essay, García Linera was predicting that Bolivia was approaching a bifurcation point. While not all analysts are able to identify a specific defining moment, the combination of events in 2008 and 2009—Morales's victory in the recall referendum in August 2008, the national and international condemnation of the September 2008 massacre of pro-MAS peasants in Pando, the approval of the constitution in January 2009, and Morales's reelection in December 2009—suggest that Bolivia has passed the point of bifurcation and achieved a new balance of power.

A number of the articles in this issue suggest that the consolidation of power is a multidimensional process rather than determined in a single moment. Some of the "process" (*el proceso*)—as the broader political transformation is referred to in Bolivia—is couched in terms of the decolonization of the state, which was addressed in the previous issue in articles by Johnson (2010) on health policy and Howard (2010) on language, culture, and the media as contested terrain.

During its first term the Morales government spent much of its time responding to the mobilizations organized by powerful groups from the Media Luna, an area largely untouched by the 1953 agrarian reform (Healy, 1983) that

stripped the traditional landed elites of their land in much of western Bolivia. Local elites in the Media Luna still control land and labor and, in some cases, maintain semifeudal relations with the indigenous inhabitants. Decolonization as embodied in land reform required the assertion of government authority over powerful landowners who had assumed statelike authority. Agrarian reform became a necessary part of the project of state consolidation and the establishment of a new political equilibrium.

Bret Gustafson considers the interrelationships between decolonization and competing claims to de facto and de jure territorial sovereignty between the MAS government and local elites in the Alto Parepetí area of Santa Cruz Department, where some Guaraní still live under conditions of quasi-slavery on large estates. He describes Guaraní struggles to reclaim land there as part of the process of the “refounding” of the Bolivian state, which can also be seen as a continuation of the uncompleted 1952 Revolution. He also details the tactics of local elites—whipping and public humiliation not only of poor Guaraní but also of government officials—to defend their often illegally held land and the privileges of their social class. The MAS determination to implement land reform is conceptualized as a reconfiguration of sovereignty, a set of social and political, not merely legal, relationships. Gustafson analyzes the primary government response to elite violence, which included showing the marks left on abused indigenous bodies via the media and investigations by international human rights agencies to make social relations visible (the photograph in his article that shows whip marks from one incident is typical of these images). This ideological offensive challenges elites’ self-legitimation as modernizing, productive leaders by redefining them as brutal, retrograde social forces. Gustafson proposes that in using these tactics rather than coercion, the state under Morales was adopting the practices of social movements to construct or “seat” a new form of sovereignty that allied the national state with traditionally subordinated indigenous groups. Delegitimizing the exploitative social relations imposed by local elites became crucial for consolidating state power and reclaiming the sovereignty essential for moving forward with the MAS program of decolonization and social transformation.

The April 2008 Alto Parapetí ambush that Gustafson discusses was just one of a series of attacks during Morales’s first term in which regional elites used increasingly violent tactics to counter the MAS agenda. The three best-known incidents include the violent clashes between middle-class and indigenous groups in Cochabamba in January 2007 (*El Deber*, January 12, 2007), the public humiliation of campesinos in Sucre documented in a powerful video by Cesar Brie (2008), and the massacre of indigenous people in northern Pando on September 11. We would suggest that the Pando massacre marked a turning point in the delegitimation of the opposition to the process of state consolidation. Video footage of paramilitaries shooting unarmed campesinos as they attempted to escape profoundly shocked the nation. Public humiliation might have been tolerated; cold-blooded murder was not. At that point Morales dispatched troops and arrested the prefect of Pando, who proceeded to run an unsuccessful campaign for vice president from his jail cell. Violence by the right has proven counterproductive because it has created moments of crisis that have aided the MAS in pushing its decolonizing agenda forward.

As does Gustafson, Gabriela Valdivia examines agrarian social relations in Santa Cruz in a study that highlights the discourse of the landed elites who lead its autonomy movement. Santa Cruz is now the center of Bolivian agriculture, particularly large-scale soy production. As the agricultural frontier expanded during the 1960s and 1970s in the eastern part of the country, government officials, mostly under military governments, rewarded friends, family, and followers with massive land grants. The MAS agenda seeks to address this historical inequity.

Framing the autonomy conflict in terms of hegemony, Valdivia analyzes relations of dominance and resistance within Santa Cruz's agrarian and socio-cultural structures. Morales's agrarian-reform Law 3545 (*Ley de Reconducción*), passed in 2006, threatened latifundistas with expropriation of land if (1) it had been obtained illegally, (2) it did not fulfill a "social and economic function," and (3) workers were not treated according to labor law. Landowners responded by embracing regional autonomy.

In her analysis, Valdivia focuses on the role of ideology in the construction of hegemony. Agrarian elites justified their autonomy demands with a discourse that legitimated their political, economic, and social dominance. Drawing on extensive interviews with leaders of opposition organizations such as the *Cámara Agropecuaria del Oriente* (Agricultural Chamber of Commerce of Eastern Bolivia—CAO), she identifies the central elements of this ideological offensive. The discourse presented large agrarian capitalists as productive entrepreneurs who succeed through uncommon skill and hard work, commercial agriculture as a technical issue divorced from the social relations of production, and agrarian producers of all sizes as sharing interests that require sectoral unity. This discursive construction obscured the dispossession and exploitation that underlie Cruceño agriculture as well as the active role of first a military and then a neoliberal state in facilitating the consolidation of land and power by the agrarian elite. This created conditions for the pro-autonomy leadership to present the Morales administration's land reform program as a dangerous politicization of agriculture and a threat to continuing prosperity. Valdivia argues that these ideological constructions, while self-serving, are not simply cynical efforts to justify the status quo. She describes elite discourse as the product of "selective memory" and social "amnesia" that produce a deeply felt although highly skewed set of understandings that stoke the zeal of the pro-autonomy leadership.

Illegal land appropriations by large-scale soy producers in rural Santa Cruz did not proceed without resistance. Five years before Morales's election, landless campesinos in the Gran Chaco area of Tarija formed the *Movimiento de los Sin Tierra* (Landless Workers' Movement—MST), inspired by the well-known Brazilian movement. The MST advocated an agrarian revolution from below rather than the state-led reform that had proven illusory under neoliberal regimes. The organization and its tactic of land occupations quickly spread to Santa Cruz and other departments.

Nicole Fabricant draws on fieldwork with two MST groups in Santa Cruz to examine the way in which the historical Andean *ayllu*, based on communal landownership and reciprocal obligations among community members, has been used as a basis for identity formation and mobilization in the MST. She notes that most MST members have no direct experience with an actual *ayllu*

but instead frame their activism in terms of an imagined and activist ayllu that serves as an ideal of collective action and participatory democratic relationships. While not an official part of the MST charter or declaration of principles, this imagined ayllu has been used effectively by MST leaders to mobilize members in pursuit of territorial claims and more horizontal forms of community organization. Fabricant considers it a utopian concept that “holds the prospect of real political and economic advancement independent of the agribusiness community.”

“The romance of the ayllu” often clashes, however, with individualism fostered by material conditions, personal ambitions, and the internalization of neoliberal logic that leads some members to question and sometimes reject the goal of communal ownership and collective production. Fabricant attended decision-making meetings of two MST groups and describes tensions between the ayllu ideal and actual practice. In one group, production on newly titled land was to be organized around an agro-ecological model that prioritized food self-sufficiency, sustainability, and meeting the needs of all members, including the sick and elderly. However, she found that the pressure to overcome poverty in individual households sometimes conflicted with the commitment to community solidarity. A second MST community experienced an even greater individual-collective divide. After nearly a decade of occupying contested land and waiting to obtain legal title, some frustrated members advocated replacing the collective MST organization with a union that would allow for individual land titles that could then be sold. She describes a heated debate between advocates for collective and individual ownership, the former mobilizing the ayllu ideal in support of the position that ultimately prevailed.

Fabricant points to the importance of the communal meetings in which members can hold leaders accountable and discuss issues until consensus is reached. She argues that these tensions and “daily tugs-of-war” are productive because they stimulate democratic debate and allow creative solutions to be devised that adapt historical forms to new locations and circumstances. She concludes that “only through such friction can individual identity be incorporated into a broader transformative agenda.”

The discussion illuminates some of the contradictions between official state discourse that imagines the resurgence of a class of socialist campesinos according to an idealized Andean model and the aspiration of some campesinos to individual ownership within a liberal market economy. These debates are not new to development practice in Bolivia. Visions of Andean socialism spread in the 1980s with nongovernmental organization (NGO) development projects that prioritized Andean traditions of collective work. Yet the NGOs that worked in the altiplano confused *minka*, which commonly refers to the work that community members do together to construct public infrastructure, with *ayni*, which includes other forms of labor exchange. The result is that projects to develop community infrastructure were often successful; projects to develop collective production often were not. Fabricant describes how this plays out in practice, showing that landless peasants are clearly able to work together to achieve a common goal—access to land—although it is not clear whether this will translate to the development of communal productive activities.

Valdivia, Fabricant, and Gustafson highlight the importance of ideology and identity as a central terrain in the struggle for hegemony from

opposite ends of the political and social conflict. Joshua Kirshner approaches the struggle in Santa Cruz from the perspective of an often-overlooked group, internal migrants from both the highlands and lowlands, and focuses on how different social positions and identities affect receptivity to autonomist appeals.

Internal migration has significantly shaped the political forces that led to Morales's election. In the western part of the country, migration strengthened the forces that became the MAS base, notably in El Alto, a majority-Aymara city that separated from La Paz in 1985, and in the Chapare zone of Cochabamba. The situation was different in the eastern lowlands, especially in the departmental capital cities that have been the centers of economic growth and hotbeds of autonomist sentiment. In the rapidly growing city of Santa Cruz, whose 1.5 million residents constitute half of the department's population, *collas* (indigenous highlanders), who suffered discrimination, mixed with lowland migrants. Although internal migrants accounted for over 25 percent of the population in Santa Cruz and Tarija Departments and even higher percentages in the departmental capitals, they failed to become the kind of cohesive, pro-MAS political force found in El Alto and the Chapare. Kirshner's study of the political attitudes and participation among migrants to the city of Santa Cruz sheds light on the obstacles that limit the political role of migrants there.

Drawing on 50 qualitative interviews from a purposive, nonrandom sample of migrants in six city districts, Kirshner finds that migrants' political views and participation vary sharply by class and geographic and ethnic origin. In his sample, poor highland migrants tend to oppose autonomy and support Morales and the MAS, whereas the opposite is true for migrants from the lowlands. Skilled highlanders (migrants with postsecondary degrees) occupy an intermediate position, with a significant percentage holding mixed views on both issues. Despite their antiautonomy, pro-MAS views, most of the poor highlanders avoided an active role in the conflict, citing experiences of discrimination and fear of greater marginalization or even violence if they expressed their views publicly.

In contrast, poor highland and lowland migrants were approximately equally likely to join neighborhood associations (*juntas vecinales*) that worked to improve local infrastructure and services, whereas the more affluent skilled highlanders rarely got involved. In some cases, common class interests on neighborhood issues overcame ethnic tensions between poor highlanders, lowland migrants, and Cruceño natives. In other cases, divisions on national issues were so great that the opposing sides formed competing neighborhood organizations.

Although Kirshner's primary focus is not on identity formation, the study is consistent with others in this issue that analyze identity as a multidimensional construct that is lived within a changing material and ideological context whose dominant element at any given time affects the outcome of political struggles.

In the previous issue, Robert Albro (2010) discussed the emergence of what he terms the "plural popular," exemplified by mestizos in the fast-growing city of Quillacollo, in the Cochabamba valley. Here mestizos found common ground with indigenous migrants in their shared identity as people of "humble origins" who work together in local associational life in ways that transcend

dichotomous visions of identity. Although the population mix in Santa Cruz differs from that in Quillacollo, Kirshner's finding of some similar cooperation grounded in common efforts to meet needs at the local level suggests that with the decline of the autonomy movement, the polarization it fomented may give way to new urban relationships and identities in Santa Cruz, at least among poor residents of the urban periphery, regardless of their ethnicity or geographic origin. The formation of more complex identities with a stronger class component would also seem to favor the Morales government if it becomes increasingly able to deliver the concrete benefits envisioned in its National Development Plan.

Kirshner also notes the "catchall" character of the call for autonomy. His respondents expressed a variety of understandings of what it would mean in practice, including some mistaken notions, such as needing passports to travel to and from the department. The intentional ambiguity of autonomy as a political rallying cry is analyzed theoretically by Claudia Peña, who applies Ernesto Laclau's (2005) work in *On Populist Reason* to Bolivia. According to Laclau, populism is defined not by a specific political content but by a political logic that involves the simplification of political space into a dichotomy between opposites whose poles remain imprecise but unifying. This polarization brings together multiple specific conflicts into a single antagonism such as state-region on the right or nationalism-neoliberalism on the left. In particular, Peña draws on Laclau's use of the concept of the "empty signifier" to describe a specific demand or position that through a chain of equivalences comes to stand temporarily for all the others that it binds together. The ambiguity of the empty signifier is a precondition for it to play this unifying role—to serve as the basis for constructing a political identity in which one's own group is represented as the oppressed but legitimate "people" whose demands represent the welfare of society as a whole but who are excluded from power. In this way, the antagonism expressed in the empty signifier is transformed into the fundamental antagonism people-power.

Peña argues that in Bolivia the basis for populist politics appeared first for the forces that would become the MAS. The water war in 2000 marked a point of rupture in which the existing institutionality of pacted democracy was perceived as incapable of resolving the demands of the forces opposed to neoliberalism. For Cruceño elites, the resignation of President Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada in October 2003 amid mass protests constituted the rupture, and their loss of power at the national level initiated the populist process organized around the antagonism *camba-colla* (Cruceño-highlander), with regional autonomy as the empty signifier. The election of Morales, portrayed as the embodiment of *colla* interests and identity in Cruceño discourse, merged the *colla-camba* dichotomy with the antagonism central state-region.

Peña stresses the discursive and symbolic work needed to maintain the central antagonism and prevent the chain of equivalences from breaking apart. She argues that while elements of oppositional discourse have evolved over time and other demands have sometimes taken precedence over the call for autonomy, the evocation of "being Cruceño" has been a constant that involves the mobilization of regional symbols, culture, and linguistic particularities. In Cruceño discourse, defining the opposite pole of the state-region antagonism has involved the discursive construction of Morales as an

overarching “enemy”—a “condensation” or focal point for regional grievances. On the opposite side of the antagonism, for Morales’s supporters he symbolizes the accumulated grievances of historically subaltern Bolivia.

Peña concludes that in the medium to long term, tendencies on both sides of the state-region antagonism may reduce the degree to which politics takes this populist form. Although her analysis is specific to populism in Santa Cruz, the analytical framework of populism can also be applied to the other regional autonomy movements.

Although Santa Cruz spearheaded the drive for regional autonomy, conflicts between the government’s agenda and regional interests extended to other areas as well. The articles by Denise Humphreys Bebbington and Anthony Bebbington and by Miguel Centellas analyze the complex interplay of ethnic, class, and regional interests and identities that fueled anti-MAS autonomy movements in Tarija and Chuquisaca respectively. Both articles argue that the autonomist appeals activated resentments against the central state that predated Morales’s election and that regionalism, even if deliberately mobilized by elites in defense of class interests, is not an artificial issue but one with historical roots that can be just as powerful as class and ethnicity in motivating political action.

Bebbington and Bebbington highlight the role of resource grievances in their examination of the regionalist movement in Tarija. They argue that historical patterns of resource extraction have created grievances at both departmental and interdepartmental levels. Whereas the former are directed at the central government, the latter involve claims by the provinces against the departmental government, most notably by the gas-producing province of the Gran Chaco, where widespread support for subregional autonomy exists and some argue that the province should secede from Tarija and form a new department.

The Bebbingtons argue that individuals concurrently inhabit multiple identities (most relevant for this analysis, ethnicity, class, and region) and that these are “being simultaneously created and contested at the level of province, territory, department, and nation.” As a result, “the hegemony of any one of them is never stable.” Analyzing the recent rise of regionalist sentiment requires going beyond recognizing it as an elite-driven response to the Morales program to identify contributing factors in the political economy of resource extraction that provide the material frame within which identities are constructed, experienced, and acted on.

Pre-Morales conflicts over gas revenues had created a reservoir of “resource regionalism”—the demand that hydrocarbon rents be controlled by the department in which the resources are located. When the Morales government supported calls by other departments for a more equitable distribution of gas revenues and proposed using part of the direct hydrocarbons tax to fund pension payments to senior citizens, resource regionalism intensified, and Tarija raised the banner of autonomy along with the other Media Luna departments. Although the pro-autonomy forces won the autonomy referendum as well as presidential and prefect recall elections in 2008, the vote totals are deceptive. Autonomist sentiment was much stronger in urban than rural areas, with support focused in the city of Tarija. A vote to confirm departmental prefect Mario Cossio (pro-autonomy) in the recall election did not necessarily translate into a vote against Morales. That many voters supported ratifying both officials,

with apparently contradictory votes, suggests that identity does not in itself determine voter behavior.

Another indication of the complexity of autonomist sentiment is tension between the city of Tarija and the province of Gran Chaco. Chaqueño support of departmental autonomy was not reciprocated by departmental support for greater provincial autonomy; Tarijeño leaders refused to recognize a provincial referendum that would allow the election of local officials. Adding another intradepartmental fissure, indigenous groups advanced their own collective claims for resource control on communal lands. Bebbington and Bebbington conclude that proponents of departmental autonomy were motivated by a variety of resource-related grievances, some of them in conflict, with the result that the unity of the pro-autonomy bloc was unstable. Although gas will continue to be at the center of politics in Tarija, political alliances may shift, prompted, for example, by the Morales government's support of key Chaqueño demands.

Miguel Centellas uses the election of the indigenous woman and former MAS supporter Savina Cuéllar as prefect (governor) of Chuquisaca in June 2008 as the starting point for an exploration of the success of regionalist appeals in that department. These centered on the demand to restore the city of Sucre to its former role as national capital. The issue resonated strongly enough with Sucre residents to move the city from a significant pro-MAS majority in 2006 to an opposition stronghold by 2008, in contrast to the rural areas of Chuquisaca, in which support for Morales increased. Although Centellas recognizes that Sucre elites promoted demands for the return of the capital as a wedge issue, he argues that the appeal was successful only because it tapped into historical grievances against the central state. While the Constituent Assembly met in Sucre in 2006–2007, residual resentment over the move of the capital from Sucre to La Paz in 1899 flared into active demands for restoration and was incorporated into the broader ideological frame of internal colonialism. Appropriating the argument of indigenous groups against their subordination, regional elites recast it to portray the non-Andean regions as the “humiliated” victims of the central state. Changing the dominant line of cleavage from class and ethnicity to region undercut the political basis for supporting the MAS and favored the opposition at least temporarily.

Centellas argues that when ethnic, class, and regional identities conflict, it is essentializing to expect that indigenous identity will necessarily be privileged and that Cuéllar's abandonment of the MAS and fervent adoption of the demands for the return of the capital represents “the multidimensionality of Bolivia's indigenous-popular actors.” Sucre is a majority-indigenous city, and Cuéllar could not have achieved her sweeping victory without considerable indigenous support. Centellas contends that her election as an indigenous advocate of regionalism reveals that analysis of Bolivian politics as traditional elites vs. indigenous-popular social movements is an oversimplification. He proposes that a more nuanced way to understand contemporary Bolivia is as a “struggle in the public sphere between competing imaginaries, whether defined in socioeconomic, ethnic, or regionalist terms.”

However, as in Tarija, the regionalist opposition to Morales was predominantly an urban phenomenon. Although Cuéllar won 73 percent of the vote in Sucre, she carried only 3 of 27 rural municipalities. The MAS gained support

among rural voters in Chuquisaca, who are poorer (90 percent poverty rate) and somewhat more likely to be indigenous (66 percent overall) than the Sucre electorate (61 percent), indicating that indigenous people cannot be considered a single block. Centellas suggests that the issue revealed not a departmental identity but a city-specific one in which the grievance activating Cuéllar's Sucre supporters lacked mobilizing power in rural areas despite its embodiment in an indigenous candidate. He notes a similar phenomenon in La Paz, where support for Morales rose among middle-class voters mobilized to oppose Sucre's drive to deprive La Paz of capital status. Just as in Tarija, subregional identities in Chuquisaca carry more weight than department-based regionalism.

One can accept the sincerity of Cuéllar's political conversion and still argue that the elites promoting the restoration of Sucre deliberately masked class interests with regionalist rhetoric. Whether the selection of Cuéllar to stand for office represented an attempt at ethnic reconciliation by elites, who had engaged in racist attacks, or a cynical elite ploy to lure Sucre's indigenous voters away from the MAS is open to debate. Whichever interpretation one adopts, the challenge for Morales and the MAS remains the same—to counter the success of regionalist appeals by translating its call for decolonization into concrete material improvements in the lives of most Bolivians.

Urban support for regional movements weakened in the 2009 presidential election, when Morales won with 64 percent of the vote nationally. In Sucre support for the MAS increased from 33 percent in the 2008 recall referendum to 40 percent in the 2009 presidential election (Zandivliet, 2010). Cuéllar did not run for prefect in the April 2010 elections, in which the MAS regained control of the prefecture 18 points ahead of its closest rival. This continues the trend graphically documented with a series of election-results maps by Fernando Oviedo (2010) in the previous issue.

Part of the challenge of establishing a new equilibrium includes managing a state with a relatively limited capacity. Clayton Mendonça Cunha Filho and Rodrigo Santaella Gonçalves describe the National Development Plan, which provides a broad-brush picture of the way in which the MAS's overarching goal of "decolonization" will take concrete form. The National Development Plan: A Dignified, Sovereign, Productive and Democratic Bolivia to Live Well (GOB, 2007) lays out Morales's fundamental agenda in four areas: human development and social justice, international political and economic relationships, restructuring the state and expanding political participation, and economic development. It emphasizes that economic growth is not an end in itself but a means to "eliminate the deep inequality and inhuman exclusion that oppresses the majority of the Bolivian population, particularly those of indigenous origin." The critical concept here, according to members of the Ministry of Planning, is "living well," which they differentiate from "living better," which implies the constant need for more. That said, the concept of living well is vaguely defined in practice. In some discussions with planning officials in 2009, the concept varied from simply having basic housing and enough to eat to having the ability to live up to one's full potential within a framework similar to that described by Amartya Sen in *Development as Freedom* (1999).

Cunha Filho and Santaella Gonçalves situate the National Development Plan within two possible strategies to replace neoliberalism—neo-developmentalism

and twenty-first-century socialism—and find that its emphasis on a direct productive role for the state and, more important, on expanded democratic participation place it closer to the latter. They also highlight that the plan seeks to go beyond replacing a neoliberal model with a statist one—to transform the overall development pattern or strategy by diversifying the economy and ending its historical dependence on natural-resource exports. They compare the plan's goals with its implementation and find, not surprisingly, mixed results. There has been greater progress in changing the structural pattern of development than in bringing about structural transformation, with economic diversification presenting a greater challenge than reinserting the state into economic activities. Implementation is more or less on target with goals in some areas, whereas other objectives remain more aspirational than material. While in-depth consideration of the obstacles to implementing specific elements of the National Development Plan is beyond the scope of this article, several contributions to the previous issue offered detailed analyses of the challenges facing the Morales government in energy (Kaup, 2010), science and technology (Centellas, 2010), and health (Johnson, 2010).

Linda Farthing and Benjamin Kohl report on the Morales administration's efforts to implement new coca policies. During the past 20 years coca has been one of the issues that have defined Bolivia's relationship with the international community. While coca has been cultivated for thousands of years and remains central to Andean social life, the leaf, considered a gift from the gods, is also the agricultural precursor to cocaine.

Drug trafficking, minimal until the 1970s, took off during the military government of Hugo Banzer. The continuing expansion of coca production to supply growing external demand for cocaine occurred as the country underwent two shocks—one natural and one economic—in the 1980s. Drought in the altiplano in 1982 and 1983 and the closure of the state mines and other state-owned enterprises under the neoliberal structural-adjustment plan introduced in 1985 propelled a massive internal migration. While most migrants flowed into the country's main cities, tens of thousands of people moved to the Chapare, currently home to an estimated 45,000 families. Coca became the most important agricultural commodity, and the coca growers' unions assumed many of the functions of the absent state. The union, which assigned land, levied labor for community construction projects, and resolved disputes, was also the focus of opposition to the "war on drugs."

Morales, as leader of the coca growers in the Chapare (a position he still holds), gained national prominence as he was able to connect the demands of coca growers to broader demands of social movements for social justice in the valleys and highlands. He was elected to the lower house of Congress in 1997, when Bolivia introduced a mixed proportional representative system that uses a combination of parliamentary-style electoral lists and territorial districts to determine the makeup of that body. As the country's president, however, Morales must address drug trafficking not only in response to international pressure but also because the MAS recognizes the social and environmental threats posed by cocaine production.

Farthing and Kohl describe a new approach of the Morales administration—coca yes, cocaine no—that builds on local organizations to limit cultivation of the coca leaf through a combination of cooperation and coercion. "Social

control” has two fundamental principles that differentiate it from previous programs. First, it distinguishes between coca and cocaine and recognizes the cultural importance of coca. Second, it allows campesinos to grow a *cato* (between 1,600 and 2,000 square feet) of coca and links their right to do so with the promise that they will internally police communities to ensure that no one grows more than the amount permitted. While the *cato* agreement provides a guarantee that many growers will be able to produce coca for legal markets, it does little to attack drug trafficking directly. However, during its first administration the Morales government achieved record levels of confiscation of cocaine—almost 22 tons in both 2008 and 2009, twice what had been confiscated by previous governments (VDS, 2010).

Policies that promote women’s rights provide another example of how a progressive administration such as that of Morales can make a difference with significant, albeit reformist, changes. In the area of gender equality, while Bolivia remains a highly sexist society, fully half of the cabinet that Morales named at the start of his second term is made up of women, although it could be argued that the “more important” ministries (presidency, government, hydrocarbons, defense, foreign relations, economy and finance) are all controlled by men, whereas women head ministries such as justice, labor, health and sports, rural development, and culture.

The electoral law passed in April 2009 guaranteed an increase in the number of women serving in the legislature as well. Sixteen of the 36 senators and 30 of the 130 representatives in the lower house are women. Differences in electoral procedures for the two houses explain the much higher percentage of women elected to the Senate. The country has a mixed-member proportional system similar to that found in Germany and New Zealand. In Bolivia the president, senators, and 53 members of the lower house are elected from slates of candidates from party lists. A vote for Morales, in this case, results in support for the entire list. The new electoral law requires political parties not only to include women on the lists of candidates but also to alternate the gender of candidates in the order in which they appear on the lists. As a result, women won 44 percent of Senate seats. Seventy members of the Chamber of Deputies are elected in territorial elections (similar to congressional districts in the United States or ridings in Canada) and 7 are elected from special indigenous districts. In both of these races parties are not required to include women candidates. The much lower representation of women in the Chamber of Deputies reflects their lower representation among candidates in both uninominal (single-member) and indigenous districts. Even with the advances for women made during Morales’s first administration, Bolivia still must confront issues of sexism.

In the previous issue, Katherine McGurn Centellas (2010) described the leading role of women in the biological sciences but also noted that this reflected the equating of science laboratories with kitchens as feminine spaces. Paul Dosh and Nicole Kligerman provide a comparative perspective on gender in their examination of women’s roles in four activist organizations (two in El Alto and two in Ecuador) in which women had taken on frontline roles during the mass protests over gas and water policies. In El Alto they studied the Federación de Juntas Vecinales (Federation of Neighborhood Organizations—FEJUVE) and the Central Obrero Regional (Regional Workers Central—COR) and in Ecuador Ecuarrunari, a national largely indigenous

organization, and the three-organization coalition Foro Urbano, in which the women's group Mujeres por la Vida (Women for Life—MPLV) is the most important. They found differences in the degree to which women's activism led to increases in women's voice (the power to speak, set agendas, and dictate discourse) on the organizations' executive councils and examine the impact on voice of five variables: societal sexism, leadership and training opportunities, presence (holding positions on the national executive committee), status (the importance or power of the positions women hold), and the organization's decision-making process. Their interviews reveal that sexism is an obstacle to women's advancement in all the organizations except MPLV and takes a variety of forms such as ignoring or disrespecting women who attempt to speak and excluding women by holding meetings in bars.

Despite the persistence of sexism, the presence of women in leadership positions increased in all the organizations, sometimes impressively (400 percent for the FEJUVE), although this was not necessarily accompanied by an increase in status and voice. Dosh and Kligerman found that formal training programs for women, lacking in the FEJUVE and the COR, played an important role in increasing women's voice in Ecuarrunari and Foro Urbano. The advances for women leaders in Foro Urbano were also a product of the group's horizontal decision-making process in contrast to the hierarchical processes and "old boys' networks" of the other organizations.

While overcoming societal sexism is a long and challenging process, it is clear that progressive social organizations' internal policies can make a significant difference in women's participation and influence. The implications for the Morales administration are clear: to speed up the integration of women into government, formal training opportunities may supplement mandates for inclusion. The government can also encourage MAS members in popular organizations to combat sexism, democratize decision making, and initiate leadership schools for women. They have undertaken these tasks in a number of ministries and vice ministries from planning and development to decolonization and intercultural affairs. More difficult will be advancing gender equality in everyday life.

At this writing, at the start of Morales's second term, Bolivia faces the challenge of implementing its decolonizing model of social and economic development and remains, as discussed by Kohl (2010) in the previous issue, "a work in progress." Although the political crisis continued through 2008, the approval of the new constitution with the support of 61 percent of voters in January 2009 marked a turning point for Morales and the broader MAS agenda. The right was largely ineffective throughout 2009 in mobilizing opposition and failed to mount an effective campaign against Morales in the December presidential election. The opposition, which still accounts for around one-third of the population, is, at least temporarily, on the defensive, in part because it has neither a single articulate, powerful leader nor a unified set of demands. It has also suffered the effects of the self-limiting tendencies of opposition movements based on regional issues and narrow sectoral appeals.

Even as Morales is criticized from the left for failing to implement a revolutionary rather than reformist agenda (Webber, 2010) and from indigenous movements for not responding to indigenous demands for territory (Regalsky, 2010), 64 percent of those who went to the polls supported him. Many of the

challenges to the MAS agenda come from the hybrid nature of the party. Its dependence on Morales's leadership may slow efforts to create the second and third tiers of MAS activists that are needed to implement change. In addition, because the MAS grows out of social movements, the challenge of building a state with the capacity to implement the necessary changes in policy and in practice is magnified by the limited professional or administrative experience of most members of its activist base. Morales has sometimes prioritized activist over professional qualifications in making appointments, with mixed results.

Morales and the MAS enjoy massive support for the broad agenda to promote growth with equity. The Morales administration has made it clear that, while the country needs increased foreign investment to develop its resource base rapidly and over the intermediate term the government will depend on rents from resource extraction to provide a platform for broader-based development, the country is seeking "partners not masters." The challenge for Morales in his second administration will be to develop government capacity to embark on the projects that implement decolonization, further consolidate power, and advance the struggle for hegemony of the indigenous-popular social majority.

NOTES

1. The new constitution recognizes 36 indigenous groups, the three largest being Quechua-speakers (about 2.5 million), broadly spread through the highlands and the inter-Andean valleys, Aymara-speakers (about 2.1 million), from which Morales comes, centered in the Departments of La Paz and Oruro, and Guaraní-speakers (about 300,000) in the eastern lowlands. Some of the smaller linguistic groups, such as the Yuki, with a handful of speakers, are not socially sustainable.

2. For a general introduction to Bolivia, see Klein (2003). For a history of Bolivia's revolutionary processes, see Hylton and Thomson (2007), and for a history that focuses on the rise and fall of neoliberalism that preceded Morales's election, see Kohl and Farthing (2006).

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