Inequality, Ethnicity, Political Mobilisation and Political Violence in Latin America: The Cases of Bolivia, Guatemala and Peru*

ROSEMARY THORP, CORINNE CAUMARTIN AND GEORGE GRAY-MOLINA

Queen Elizabeth House, University of Oxford, UK

The paper explores the relationship between political violence and 'horizontal' inequality in ethnically-divided countries in Latin America. The cases studied are Bolivia, Guatemala and Peru. Preliminary results are reported on the measurement of horizontal inequality, or that between groups, defined in cultural, ethnic and/or religious terms. The Latin American cases are shown to be often more unequal than the cases from Africa and Asia included in the wider study of which the work forms a part. The complex relationship between such inequality, ethnicity and political violence is explored historically. Ethnicity is today rarely a mobilising factor in violence in the Latin American cases, but the degree of inequality based on ethnicity is shown to be highly relevant to the degree of violence which results once conflict is instigated. History explains why.

Keywords: ethnicity, political mobilisation, political violence, Bolivia, Guatemala, Peru.

This paper presents an initial review of the scope and preliminary findings of the Latin American contribution to a major comparative study of the interplay of ethnicity, inequality and political violence. The wider study is the principal concern of the Centre for Research on Inequality, Ethnicity and Human Security (CRISE) in Queen Elizabeth House in the University of Oxford, funded by DFID (the UK Department for International Development). The countries covered, in addition to those discussed here, are Ghana, the Ivory Coast and Nigeria, as our African cases, and Indonesia and

Malaysia as the Asian cases. The research agenda of CRISE is aimed at developing conclusions which contribute to the development of policies that can successfully target inequality and human development. The work builds on earlier studies showing that widespread political violence has on balance serious negative consequences for development, and this forms an initial assumption of the CRISE study.

The methodology of the wider study is a combination of qualitative and quantitative techniques – detailed case studies with a long run perspective integrating political, social and economic aspects, cross-country econometric work, and survey work, in particular on perceptions of identity and its relation to understanding ethnicity. The cases chosen contrast relative success and failure. One particular contribution of the Latin American studies is to emphasise the insights which a deep historical understanding gives, and we attempt to demonstrate that here.

The three cases chosen to develop Latin American insights for the wider project are the three countries with the largest indigenous populations in proportionate terms: Bolivia, Guatemala and Peru (Table 1). All three have a serious degree of horizontal inequality across ethnic divisions, which we document in section one below.

The central hypotheses of CRISE establish a link between horizontal inequalities (HIs) and conflict, predicting an increased likelihood of conflict whenever socio-economic and political HIs move in the same direction. CRISE research focuses predominantly on political violence (as opposed to common crime) and on large-scale intra-state conflicts (i.e. involving over a thousand combat-related casualties per annum). Such conflicts include various forms of civil wars including guerrilla wars and secessionist conflicts. Clearly, the horizontal inequality framework is only appropriate in countries with heterogeneous populations (either in ethnic or religious terms). At present, most of our case studies are concerned with conflicts where states play a predominant role, but our hypothesis also applies to communal violence where the state may not

Table 1. Estimates of Indigenous People in Latin America (1978–1991)

Estimated % of total population	(%)
Population over 10%	
Bolivia	60–70
Guatemala	45–60
Peru	38–40
Ecuador	30–38
Mexico	12–14
Population between 5–10%	
Belize	9
Panama	4–8
Chile	4–6
Population under 5%	
Guyana, Surinam, Honduras, Paraguay	4–2
El Salvador, Colombia, Nicaragua, Argentina, Venezuela, French Guyana, Costa Rica, Brazil and Uruguay	<2

Source: Yashar (2004).

necessarily be a chief actor in the conflict. On the surface, our Latin American cases can be made to fit well with this general approach. If we make some heroic assumptions to allow ourselves to aggregate across different HIs, then the two countries with the worst combined HIs (social, economic and political) are also those which have both experienced armed conflict in the recent past (Guatemala, 1960–1996; Peru, 1980–1992). However, CRISE research in Latin America becomes much more challenging when the issue of ethnicity is taken into consideration, primarily because of the general weakness over time of ethnic politics in the region.[1] Influential indigenous movements have consolidated in some countries (especially in Bolivia and Ecuador) and the recent election of Evo Morales to Bolivia's presidency is notable. (The case of Humala in Peru is far more ambiguous and difficult to interpret, as the text below will make clear.) However, if these cases suggest ethnic politics might one day come to play an important role, thus far ethnicity has not played the decisive role it has in the political systems of other CRISE case studies (particularly in West Africa.). In addition, those inclined to regard the emergence of political organisations around ethnic cleavages as inevitable would be hard pressed to account for the fact that influential indigenous political movements did not emerge in Latin America until the last decade of the twentieth century.[2] However, it is important to note a general tendency in Latin American societies to deny, if not the existence, at least the importance or relevance of ethnicity in political or economic terms. Unsurprisingly in societies where social, economic and political elites, as well as a large proportion of the middle classes (including the academic communities) tend to be non-indigenous, to suggest that ethnicity and ethnic justice (i.e. diminishing inequalities between groups) do matter provokes deep anxieties.[3] Overall, non-indigenous people deeply concerned with issues of poverty and inequalities (for there are many) have tended to focus on social justice (i.e. vertical inequalities), entirely by-passing the issue of ethnicity. One of the issues raised by CRISE is to question whether emphasising solely vertical inequalities may fail to address some of the important roots of societal cleavages in Latin America.

An additional complication is the role played by ethnicity in the recent conflicts in Peru and Guatemala. Neither of these conflicts can be depicted as prototypical 'ethnic' conflicts, in the sense that they did not pit clearly defined ethnic groups against each other. Instead, *both* the guerrilla and the armed forces were cross-ethnic organisations that tended to have indigenous troops or bases of support and *mestizo/ladino* leadership. Neither in the case of Peru or Guatemala did mobilisation revolve around ethnicity; instead, discourses were clearly delineated along class lines and mobilisation was overwhelmingly of 'poor' against 'rich' rather than of indigenous against

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1 David Horowitz' seminal work surveys ethnic politics throughout the world but he is hard pressed to find illustrations of his case in Latin America (Horowitz, 1985).

2 See Horowitz, 1985; see also Yashar (2005) comments on the latter.

3 These anxieties are illustrated almost daily in the press in Guatemala (*La Prensa*, *El Periódico*). The pitfalls of 'ethnicising' social issues feature prominently in the editorials of Guatemalan daily newspapers such as *La Prensa Libre* or *El Periódico*. Dire warnings that an 'ethnicised' approach somehow encourages 'reversed racism' and the 'balkanisation' of politics are frequently found in their pages (Warren, 1998; AVANCSO, 1999).

non-indigenous (*mestizo*s and *criollo*s). Yet, if ethnicity was not central to processes of political mobilisation, it nonetheless was a prominent feature of the conflicts in both Peru and Guatemala. In Guatemala, for instance, there is little question that a proto-typical leftist guerilla conflict became 'ethnicised' from the 1970s onwards. On the one hand, our horizontal inequalities work shows that ethnicity is a key factor in esta-blishing which side of the poor/rich divide both individuals and groups are in Latin America, which indicates at the very least that even in a supposedly 'rich' vs. 'poor' conflict, ethnicity plays a role. In addition, neither Sendero Luminoso nor the Guate-malan URNG (Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca) sought to politicise or instrumentalise ethnicity (the latter a potentially self-defeating move for the essentially *mestizo/ladino* leadership), but both understood that enlisting the support of the indig-enous rural population was essential in order to reach their objectives (overthrowing the state and capitalism in their respective countries).[4] The latter contributes to some degree to explaining why indigenous people account for a majority of the casualties during the conflict (73 per cent in Peru and 83 per cent in Guatemala). However, the severity and forms of repression against indigenous people cannot be accounted for as 'rational' actions from a state and armed forces confronting an insurgency. In the most conflictive areas of Guatemala, indigenous people were collectively identified as a threat to the state, as key actors in the conflict regardless of whether they supported or sym-pathised with the guerrilla. In many cases, ethnicity (i.e. belonging to certain indigenous groups or communities) was alone sufficient grounds for suspicion. It is precisely in these mechanisms of associating ethnicity with political activism that conflicts became 'ethnicised'. In addition, it is worth noting that the high levels of casualties indicated a complete lack of restraint on the part of the perpetrators of violence where indige-nous people were concerned. The latter is in keeping with past processes of ruthless collective punishment against violent collective action by indigenous communities since the Spanish conquest (Smith and Moors, 1990; Muñoz, Paredes and Thorpe, 2006).[5]

The first section of this paper explores and documents as far as we can the deep and enduring horizontal inequalities in our three cases. The second section develops one of the distinctive contributions of the Latin American case studies to the overall project, by demonstrating how far a long-run historical vision is necessary and rewarding for shedding light on key issues in the wider project. The first key challenge posed is

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4   Interestingly, in the case of Guatemala, the state and the military equally understood the central importance of indigenous people in the conflict, opting for forceful sub-mission through a variety of coercive means (brutality and intimidation as well as forceful recruitment into the state security apparatus and general militarisation of rural areas).

5   Overall, it is difficult to account for the high levels of casualties during the Guatema-lan armed conflict without considering racism. Supporters of the military regimes tend to argue that the number of casualties established by the truth commission is overes-timated and state action is legitimised by emphasising the communist threat to Guate-mala. These positions are well illustrated in a series of articles published following the recent death of former president General Lucas Garcia (1978-1982), notably by Jorge Palmieri's daily columns in the newspaper *El Periódico* (*El Periódico*, 30th May to 6th June 2006).

how to explain the relative delay in the emergence of ethnic politics in the cases of Peru and Guatemala, despite deep HIs. The second is that we need to understand the relation between ethnic variables and the explosion of violence in each country. Bolivia acts as an important counter-example, where ethnic politics are stronger. But Bolivia presents its own challenges, since significant mobilisation still does not achieve modification of socio-economic HIs, yet there is a relative lack of violence. This requires analysis of the Bolivian phenomenon of the 'politics of accommodation'. The final section presents the further hypotheses we are distilling from this work and the shape of the next stage of research.

Horizontal Inequalities: Preliminary Measurements

Evaluating group-based inequalities (horizontal inequalities) is a central aspect of CRISE work. As we will see below, the three countries we study in Latin America all exhibit strong inequalities between indigenous and non-indigenous populations. A first observation is that strong horizontal inequalities are relatively independent of the general degree of development or size of the economy. Bolivia is the poorest of our three countries with the smallest GDP per capita and a low ranking on its human development indicator (HDI), with the lowest life expectancy and the highest infant mortality rate. Guatemala, with a substantially larger GDP per capita, has an even lower HDI ranking and a much lower adult literacy rate than in our other cases. Guatemala is also the least urbanised of our three countries. Finally, Peru has the largest economy of the three and its HDI ranking is substantially higher than Bolivia or Guatemala but it claims the highest proportion of people living below the poverty line.

Initial measurement work on HIs has been carried out by Manuel Barrón and Luca Mancini, whose work we draw on here. For Barrón, the most compelling indicator of horizontal inequality is the percentage of the population living in poverty/extreme poverty (Table 2). Other indicators he has been able to collect cover education, health provisions, housing, and quality of employment.[6] Barrón's findings confirm our expectations of substantial inequalities between non-indigenous and indigenous groups. Indigenous people have less access to services; they are less educated and significantly poorer than non-indigenous.

If we attempt to rank our countries, assigning an arbitrary equal weighting to the different measures, we obtain the results shown in Table 3. We attribute a ranking of 1 to the country where indigenous people perform relatively well and a 3 to the country where indigenous people perform the worst. Thus Peru has the highest proportion of literate indigenous people (ranked 1) and Guatemala the worst (ranked 3) and Bolivia is in between (ranked 2). On the five HI indicators presented here, there is a lesser incidence of HIs in Peru (Peru is not ranked third in any of the categories

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6   Barrón's paper contains a more extensive range of indicators than presented here. However, we have respected the general tendency of his indicators. For an in-depth examination of socio-economic HIs, please refer to Barrón's paper.

Table 2. Horizontal Inequality: Percent Living in Poverty. (a)

	Bolivia		Guatemala		Peru	
	Non-indig.	Indig.	Non-indig.	Indig.	Non-indig.	Indig.
Extreme poverty	12.8	34.4	4.9	20.1	5.5	24.1
Poverty	28.7	31.3	27.2	47.3	21.2	29.3

(a) For detail on how the indigenous/non-indigenous classification problem has been solved, please see Barron (2005). The basic problem is that the Peruvian census data do not use self-identification, and language spoken does not work as a proxy for Peru, where the indigenous population in the north of the country today speaks Spanish. Barrón has used place of birth, but has omitted large provincial cities in the Sierra from the indigenous share, as a rough way of dealing with the fact that such cities have significant non-indigenous populations. This is problematic, but works better than any alternative solution we have been able to find.

Source: Barron (2005), derived from national household surveys.

presented here). Bolivia is an intermediate performer, usually ranked in second place. However, we should note that over a third of Bolivia's indigenous population are extremely poor (compared to a fifth and a quarter of the indigenous population in Guatemala and Peru respectively). Our evidence points forcefully to Guatemala as the worst performer in four of the five categories.

A different insight into the degree to which socio-economic HIs are important and have in part at least an ethnic dimension comes from a CRISE survey of perceptions of identity. Respondents were asked if someone's ethnic or racial origins[7] affected their chances of employment in the public or private sector. In Bolivia and Peru nearly two thirds felt that it did, while in Guatemala half did for the public sector and 37 per cent for the private sector. The population which self-identified as indigenous consistently saw ethnic origin as more important than did the rest of the population, but not by much – the perception was widely shared. The strongest result was for Bolivia, where 76 per cent of the indigenous population in the sample felt that ethnicity affected the possibility of working in the state.[8]

Our initial findings thus largely confirm our suspicion of deep horizontal inequalities. Latin America has long been infamous for its severe vertical inequalities, but our findings indicate that our Latin American cases deserve the same degree of infamy for inequalities between indigenous and non-indigenous groups. This can be seen more sharply using Mancini's preliminary work comparing countries across the CRISE sample in terms of women's education, child mortality and an indicator of wealth for the relevant ethnic divide in each country. Some summary data are given in Table 4. In women's education, the HIs are significantly worse than for the Asian members of the

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7   The language was adapted country by country. In Peru the question was framed in terms of racial/cultural identity, as the word ethnic is not commonly understood.

8   All results cited are significant at the five per cent level, and most at the one per cent level.

Table 3. Country Ranking of Selected HI Indicators

	Literacy	Health access to attention (a)	Share of white collar in group EAP	Extreme poverty	Poverty	Most frequent ranking
Bolivia	2 (0.8)	2 (0.8)	2	3 (2.7)	1 (1.1)	2 (3 times out of 5)
Guatemala	3 (0.7)	3 (0.7)	3	2 (4.1)	3 (1.7)	3 (4 times out of 5)
Peru	1 (0.9)	1 (0.9)	1	3 (4.4)	2 (1.4)	1 (3 times out of 5)

Ratio of indigenous to non-indigenous shown in parenthesis.

(a) Ratio of those who received medical attention, to the proportion reporting sickness or accidents in each group.

group, and slightly worse than in Ghana and the Ivory Coast. Nigeria is much the worst, however.[9] For child mortality, Bolivia and Peru are more badly placed than all the African countries.[10] The measure of household wealth also places Latin America in the most unequal category. In Peru, indigenous people are more than four times more likely to be in the bottom quintile of the wealth distribution. If we add political dimensions, early results suggest that these results are strengthened for Guatemala and Peru, while Bolivia is a significant exception in the political dimension (Caumartin, forthcoming).

Few who know Latin America well will be surprised by these findings but their implications for the next stage of research of CRISE Latin America and for the CRISE project in general need to be carefully evaluated.

To make that evaluation, we first needed to understand the history of ethnic mobilisation (or its lack) and the relation between ethnicity and political violence (or its absence). We now turn to summarise our findings in these regards, before returning to the implications of the data we have presented for the next stage of CRISE research.

Guatemala: Isolation, Inequality and Oppression

The Spanish conquest of Guatemala was a slow affair that encountered staunch resistance from the various Mayan kingdoms established there (Saenz de Tejada, 2005). In the absence of mineral wealth, Guatemala remained largely a 'rural backwater', where

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9   The results are sensitive to the way groups are defined, which we cannot enter into here for lack of space. See Mancini (forthcoming).
10 The 1995 figure for Indonesia is worse, but since it is almost double the previous year measured, 1990, this remains to be confirmed, and the 1995 figure has not been used here.

Table 4. Indicators of Horizontal Inequality across the CRISE Countries[11]

Most recent year	HI in Women's education (a)	HI in child mortality (b)	Wealth indicator (c)
Bolivia (1998)	2.69	2.0	6.61
Guatemala (1998)	3.07	1.2	3.79
Peru (2004)	2.41	1.93	4.25 (2002)
Ghana (2003)	2.39	1.44	4.39
Ivory Coast (1999)	2.65	1.12	1.78 (1994)
Nigeria (2003)	3.57	1.66	2.71
Indonesia (1995)		2.25 (1990; see fn. 11)	
Malaysia (1990)		2.3	

(a) Ratio between average group values for each country. The lower the value the greater the inequality.
(b) Ratio between average group values. The higher the value the greater the inequality.
(c) This is a composite index of ownership of assets and quality of living quarters (e.g. radio, TV, telephone, bicycle, motor cycle, water supply). We are giving the ratio of two ratios: (i) the ratio between the proportion of people from each group belonging to the bottom quintile and (ii) the ratio between the proportion from each group belonging to the top quintile. The higher the figure, the greater the inequality.
Source: Mancini, 2006.

the opportunities for amassing wealth for the Spaniards and *criollo* elites were few (Dunkerley, 1988). The state remained weak, impoverished and with only a tiny bureaucracy (Dunkerley, 1988). Spatially, indigenous and non-indigenous cohabited in certain regions of Guatemala (around the present day capital and department of Sacatepequez). In the eastern regions of Guatemala indigenous people were either displaced or absorbed into 'Spanish' communities, but in the western highlands of the country, indigenous inhabitants were and still remain the majority (Smith and Smith, 1990).[12] There is little doubt that the Spanish colonial rulers had virtually no tolerance for indigenous collective action, especially if it took a violent form, and Spanish reprisals tended to be thorough and pitiless. Overall, communities generally preferred less overt forms of resistance to the colonial rulers, opting for instance to refuse to pay tribute when the state's demands were too excessive (Smith and Smith, 1990; CEH, 1999). However, it is important to contrast the ferocity of the colonial authorities' repression of indigenous armed protest with the weakness of everyday rule. The

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11 To secure comparable data over several years, Mancini uses a different data source to that used by Barrón for Peru. The source Mancini uses takes language as the ethnic marker. This will tend to reduce the inequality below the true figure, since the Spanish-speaking indigenous population will not be classified as indigenous.

12 The history of the population of the Western regions of Guatemala is much more contested: see Dary, 2003.

control over the indigenous communities of the western highlands was often tenuous, with limited or even no presence of the colonial state.[13]

Overall, scholars of Guatemala have highlighted the importance of Mayan highland communities as a focal point of indigenous ethnic and political identity (Grandin, 1997: 8–9). Each *municipio* in the indigenous highlands was politically autonomous, with complex hierarchies of civil and religious office (Grandin, 1997: 8–9). Those who were in a position to undertake a series of obligations (financial sponsorship of events and lengthy periods of community service) rose to become leaders of communities (elders or *principales,* Grandin, 1997; Barrios, 2001) who in turn tended to work as intermediaries with the colonial authorities. This system was institutionalised through the *alcadías indígenas*. These were officially recognised up to 1898, but subsequently went on to run in parallel to official municipal authorities, up to the present day in some of the Western highlands municipalities (Barrios, 2001).[14] In this system, it is important to note both the relative autonomy of indigenous communities and also a tendency towards linguistic and political isolation of each individual community.[15] Considering that there are over twenty major indigenous languages and over 100 dialects which are not easily mutually understood, it is unsurprising that there was little sense of a common 'indigenous' or 'Mayan' identity until after both the political autonomy and isolation of individual communities had started to break down.

Until perhaps as late as the mid twentieth century, Guatemalan political institutions were a complex combination of 'formal' bodies (the state and state institutions, dominated by a succession of authoritarian leaders, as well as some formal municipal authorities) and at local level indigenous institutions and authorities run in parallel or instead of the 'formal' municipal ones (Barrios, 2001). A series of important changes started to alter this order, including the development of roads and commercial networks across the highlands that diminished community isolation (Grandin, 1997). In addition, social differentiation and generational change brought strong challenges to the traditional indigenous authorities (Grandin, 1997). This erosion of indigenous political institutions was not compensated by significant increases in the indigenous presence in the 'formal' political system, despite the extension of the voting franchise to all adult males in 1944. In this respect, we could interpret the 1944–1985 period as one when indigenous people gradually lost their long standing 'political autonomy' in the highland communities whilst avenues of participation in formal politics were still extraordinarily limited.

From the 1960s onwards, however, new forms of indigenous political participation started to emerge. On the one hand, there was a deliberate policy by the Christian

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13   We include present-day departments of Alta and Baja Verapaz in the 'western high-lands' of Guatemala.

14   Nobody knows for certain how many *alcadías indígenas* survive to this day. They seem to have been maintained without interruption in some key municipalities and department, notably in Chichicastenango (El Quiche) and in the department of Totonicapán. Elsewhere, notably in Solola, they are being revived, with funding from international agencies.

15   For a review of the debates relating to the notion of the 'closed corporate communities' in Guatemala see Smith and Smith, 1990.

Democrat party to build bases of support at municipal level in indigenous rural areas (Falla, 1978). The culmination of indigenous formal political participation during this period was the election of two indigenous MPs in the 1974 elections. These took a strong stance, denouncing a series of ethnic grievances, focusing on low status, poverty and lack of political representation. An attempt to build on this early success led to the creation of the FIN (Frente de Integración Nacional), the first indigenous political party in Guatemala, in April 1976 (Falla, 1978).[16] However, the FIN miscalculated in making an electoral alliance with the far right and proved unable to capitalise on its initial successes.[17] However, by that stage participation in the formal political system had become largely redundant for *all* Guatemalans. The avenues of participation in the formal political system had been heavily restricted since the overthrow of Arbenz in 1954, with military candidates monopolising a tightly circumscribed party system, further delegitimised by electoral fraud (Sieder, 1996).

Participation in social organisations became an important means of articulating socio-economic demands. Social mobilisation increased dramatically during the early 1970s with the emergence of militant trade unions, cooperative movements, and peasant and student organisations. It is clear that many indigenous people participated in the incipient mass mobilisations of the 1970s, notably with the indigenous-led CUC (Comité de Unidad Campesina, Bastos and Camus, 2003). Rural grievances were many, ranging from issues of access to basic services (access to school, water, electricity, road and bridges), to demands for increased access to land. Very small plots, or *micro fincas* (less than one hectare), had accounted for just over 21 per cent of holdings in 1950, but that number had risen to 41.1 per cent by 1973 (PNUD, 2004: 10).[18] Another important nexus of rural discontent was the denial of labour rights to agricultural workers (especially seasonal labour) with working conditions and wages featuring prominently in their demands (CEH, 1999: 137). By the early 1970s, there were 109 peasant leagues registered in Guatemala with an additional 97 agrarian unions (Saenz de Tejada, 2005: 35).

By the late 1970s, Guatemala had entered a stage of polarisation and radicalisation of social organisations (trade unions, peasant organisations). In the face of increasing state repression, many CUC or trade unions members opted to join the guerrilla (Bastos and Camus, 2003). Two new guerrilla organisations appeared in the early 1970s: the *Ejército Guerrillero de los Pobres* (EGP), and the *Organización del Pueblo en Armas* (ORPA). Both ORPA and the EGP had a *ladino* cadre and leadership but also had important bases of support in the indigenous western highlands of Guatemala. In addition, between 1981 and 1983 there was a short-lived attempt to organise a purely

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16 The name of the party was changed from Frente Indígena Nacional to Frente de Integración nacional following protest by members of Congress that the former would provoke tension between ethnic groups (Falla, 1978).

17 In addition the FIN leaders were heavily hit by state repression: by 1982 twelve of the twenty-two leaders had been killed and three more were in exile (Bastos and Camus, 2003: 49).

18 The latest PNUD estimate put the current proportion at 45.4 per cent of all holdings in 2003 (PNUD, 2004: 10).

indigenous revolutionary armed group, the Movimiento Indio Tojil (Bastos and Camus, 2003: 66–67). However, the group lacked the military wherewithal to survive confrontations with the state (Bastos and Camus, 2003: 66–67). The geographical areas of activity of ORPA and EGP corresponded to zones of high indigenous presence (Smith and Smith, 1990: 11). Yet, the Guatemalan guerrillas clearly were not 'indigenous' organisations, notably because they had equally important bases of support amongst the poor and *ladino* middle classes of the capital city (especially the trade union and student movements). All guerrilla groups understood the importance of indigenous support in their struggle to overthrow the state, but it is class and the logic of class war that prevailed in the discourse of the Guatemalan insurgents. Indigenous people constituted a population with huge grievances, but it is because indigenous people were poor and stuck in the bottom quintile of an extraordinarily unequal society that the guerrillas sought their support, not because they were indigenous.

The Guatemalan army had already shown that it would not hesitate to resort to brutality (see the counterrevolution of 1954 and the quelling of the first wave of guerrilla in the 1960s), but what occurred in the early 1980s was unprecedented. The worst episodes of violence took place during the regimes of General Romero Lucas García (1978–1982) and his successor General Efraín Rios Montt (1982–1983). The Guatemalan security forces started to eliminate systematically the supporters and sympathisers of the insurgent and non-insurgent left in rural and urban areas. By the mid 1980s, Guatemala's left, centre left and the social organisations that emerged in the 1970s had been decimated, with their members and leadership dead, in exile or hiding.

Whilst unchecked violence affected both rural and urban areas, in the indigenous rural areas all restraints were removed. In areas of guerrilla activity, the list of 'suspicious' activities and behaviour grew ever longer. This extended to all local leaders, mayors, teachers, traditional Mayan leaders (*principales*) as well as those who were members of cooperatives (even when they had been named by the state, CEH, 1999). Finally, the armed forces organised several scorched earth campaigns, purporting to detach the guerrilla from the population, during which entire communities were massacred. As is now well reported, these forms of collective violence and punishment targeted at civilian indigenous communities led the Guatemalan Truth Commission to accuse the security forces of having committed acts of genocide. The Guatemalan Truth Commission estimated the overall number of deaths during the 36-year conflict to be around 200,000, 85 per cent of whom were indigenous, with over 90 per cent of the killings, torture and violence committed by the security forces and their allies.

The period of ultra violence in the early 1980s was followed by two tentative transitions, first a transition to democracy that saw the return to power of civilian politicians (1985) followed by a negotiated peace settlement between the state and the umbrella guerrilla organisation, the URNG, finalised in December 1996.[19] The transition to democracy saw the gradual retreat of the armed forces from direct intervention

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19 For contrasting interpretations of the Guatemalan transition to democracy in 1985 see Jonas (1991) and Trudeau (1993). Schirmer (2001) wrote a good account of the role played by the armed forces during this period. Jonas (2000) has written a solid overview of the peace process.

in government and politics. The peace process was essential to bringing the armed conflict to an end and helping to stop some of the worst aspects of the militarisation of the country, including forced recruitment into the armed forces and civilian patrols, as well as reducing the number of cases of human rights abuses.

The transition to democracy provided a modicum of political space where a few organisations gradually started to re-emerge after 1985, focusing initially almost exclusively on issues of human rights (Bastos and Camus, 1993, 2003; Brett, 2002). The social movement in Guatemala did not die in the violence of the early 1980s, but it was both weakened and transformed.[20] For instance, none of the peasant leagues present in the 1970s appears to have survived the repression.[21] Clearly, the popular appeal of social organisations was negatively affected by a brutal repression that stigmatised virtually all forms of political engagement and participation. Thus organisations such as the Coordinadora Nacional Indígena y Campesina (CONIC) succeeded in building a substantial membership, but their mobilisation capacity is still limited compared to that of the popular organisations of the 1970s. A second notable change has been the increasing visibility of indigenous leaders, activists and issues in the re-emerging Guatemalan social movements (Bastos and Camus, 1993, 2003; Brett, 2002). There was a clear evolution from organisations with concerns rooted in human rights, to organisations still concerned with human rights but with a visible indigenous leadership, to organisations that promote indigenous rights (Bastos and Camus, 2003).[22]

By 1992, there was a clearly identifiable indigenous movement in Guatemala that went on to play a prominent role in setting the agenda for the drafting of the AIDPI (Acuerdo Sobre Identidad y Derechos de los Pueblos Indígenas), one of the key agreements of the Guatemalan peace accords.[23] The latter could have marked a turning point in inter-ethnic relations in Guatemala, but the AIDPI has remained in limbo since no government has been able (or willing) to bring in the necessary constitutional amendments for its implementation (Jonas, 2000). The Guatemalan indigenous movement is also split between two groups, a 'culturalist' wing dominated by a small group of prominent Mayan intellectuals and professionals who focus on cultural issues (typically bi-lingual education) and a 'popular wing' who prioritise socio-economic issues (Cayzac, 2001; Bastos and Camus, 2003).[24] In addition the 'popular wing' of the indigenous movement is further split between organisations that retain ties with the

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20 Velasquez Nimatuj (2005) provides a poignant and illuminating account of how the CUC survived and was rebuilt, in spite of the murders of most of its original leaders.

21 Personal communication with Santiago Bastos and with Byron Garoz of CONGECOOP (Coordination of cooperatives and NGOs). April 2006, Guatemala city.

22 Rosalina Tuyuc went on to become a member of the Guatemalan parliament (Sieder, Thomas, Vickers and Spence, 2002).

23 Bastos and Camus (2003) provide a detailed discussions of the entire drafting process and its aftermath.

24 Typical 'culturalist' organisations include the Academia de Lenguas Mayas and the publisher Cholsamaj. For an in-depth discussion of the Mayan movement see also Warren, 1998.

former insurgent left (Majawil Q'ij for instance) and those that have broken these ties (such as CONIC).[25] The divisions in the Guatemalan indigenous movement are highly visible, but have to be seen in the general context of fragmentation and divisions that characterise most of Guatemalan society (including political parties, the armed forces and the Guatemalan elite).[26]

On balance, there have been some notable changes in indigenous forms of political participation and mobilisation over the past 100 years, but perhaps the most salient factor to emerge from this brief historical review is the persistence of a general lack of interaction between the indigenous population and 'formal' political actors and institutions. There is a visible indigenous movement in Guatemala, but it is one that lacks serious political leverage. The 'culturalist' wing is highly visible, with a degree of access to state and government, but its leverage is limited by its lack of support amongst the wider population. The 'popular wing', on the other hand, has some important bases of support in the population, but it lacks linkages with formal political actors, limiting its capacity to influence policy and decision making processes.[27] Consequently a successful challenge to horizontal inequalities is unlikely.

Peru: Lack of Mobilisation, Persistence of Inequality

In contrast to our other two cases, Peru is a country and society where the concepts of ethnicity and race have been and are very much suppressed, both in society at large and within the marginalised indigenous populations.[28] The relative failure of an indigenous movement to emerge in the twentieth century – compared with Guatemala, Bolivia or indeed Ecuador – is marked. Unlike Guatemala, where what is to be explained is the lack of participation in formal politics, in Peru there seems to be a more deep-seated lack of indigenous identity, despite a significant indigenous population and severe horizontal inequalities. Yet Peru is also a country which has seen widespread and terrible violence in the 1980s and early 1990s,[29] 'ethnic' in the sense that 75 per cent of those killed in the conflict were of indigenous origin.[30]

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25 Ibid, see also Velasquez Nimatuj on the break-up of CUC and the creation of CONIC.
26 Sieder et al., 2002.
27 Interview with Dr Demetrio Cojtí, prominent Mayan intellectual and former vice minister of education (2000–2004), 6 May 2005, Guatemala City.
28 The same is true of blacks, though to a lesser extent, but we have not yet been able to devote enough time to the analysis of this aspect.
29 However, this violence reached only one third of the territory of Peru: having started in the central highlands and expanded in the south, Sendero tried to move north and failed. Violence was almost entirely ended with the capture of the leader of Sendero Luminoso, Abimael Guzman, in September 1992, and of a significant proportion of the movement's leadership.
30 One of the conclusions of the final report of the CVR is that the political violence exposed both the socio-economic gaps and the sharp ethnic-cultural inequalities that still prevail in Peru. From their analysis of the testimonies, the Commission estimates that 75 per cent of the victims of the armed conflict had Quechua or another native language as their mother tongue. This contrasts with the fact that according to the 1993 census only sixteen per cent of the population had this characteristic.

The History of Ethnic Movements in Peru[31]

As of the eighteenth century, there is clear evidence of an incipient indigenous move-ment, culminating in the Rebellion of Tupuc Amaru in 1780, though this was far from the only significant event.[32] The core of the motivation for rebellion was resentment at the taxation imposed by the colonial authorities, and other forms of exploitation. Each act of rebellion, involving an incipient alliance with some *criollo* and *mestizo* populations, was weakened by ethnic differences within the group – a theme that would surface again later in the next century in the conflict with Chile. Within the indigenous group there was a significant upper and even middle class, from which the leadership came. Education[33] and economic opportunities in a dynamic trade circuit linked to the Potosí mine were the basis for this elite to emerge in the eighteenth century. The leadership intention was integrationist: they wished to unite *mestizo*, *criollo*, black and Indian against the colonising power. But this goal was not fully shared by the indigenous peasantry, who felt resentment, often as much against merchants and others from the *mestizo* groups, as against whites (Flores Galindo, 1976; Walker, 1999).

What made 1780 into a 'foundational event', in the view of the main analysts, was the brutal repression and deliberate wiping out of the entire indigenous leadership class, followed by a depth of cultural repression of the emerging identity in the south, the consequences of which are still seen today. The indigenous elite lost the right to receive education. The use of Quechua was prohibited, along with any symbols refer-ring to their Inca past (Flores Galindo, 1976; Walker, 1999; Canepa, 2005). With the killing of the leaders, the networks which had been the heart of the movement were destroyed. In a much-used phrase of the literature, 'the Indian was colonised for a second time'.[34]

As an indigenous middle class gradually began to re-emerge, its goal tended to be assimilation with *criollo* culture and a downplaying of indigenous kinship and cultural links. At a crucial point, the defining of the nation at the declaration of Independence in 1821, there was no Indian elite present at the table (Montoya, 1998). Following

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31 The following paragraphs draw on a paper written for this project by Gisela Canepa (2005), available on the CRISE web site as a working paper (www.crise.ox.ac.uk).

32 According to O'Phelan Godoy (1985), the rebellion of 1780 led by Túpac Amaru was only the final episode of a convulsive century. See Stern (1987) for evidence of the multiplicity and complexity of the events of this period.

33 Flores Galindo (1976) explains that since the seventeenth century noble Indians had access to Spanish education, instructed by the Jesuits. Túpac Amaru and other lead-ers not only spoke and read perfect Spanish, but also Latin; Túpac Amaru was a fervent Christian, familiar with the Spanish culture of his time. The *Comentarios Reales* of Garcilaso de la Vega had an enormous influence in this elite re-interpretation and reconstruction of a neo-Inca identity.

34 Flores Galindo, 1976 describes how Cusco in the eighteenth century became the centre of a new flourishing identity. Inca symbols, colours and techniques were incorporated into craft-making, cloth design, and painting. All this was prohibited after the 1780 rebellion.

Independence, the exit of capital, the loss of centralised control of indigenous labour and the decay of trade circuits and regional links all led to atomisation of loyalties and perspectives of the indigenous population. The Central Sierra was to a degree an exception: after Independence peasants managed to maintain control over resources and to lead a relatively autonomous life (Mallon, 1987). For most of the Sierra, systematic exclusion followed, as the practices known as *gamonalismo* developed in the first half of the nineteenth century.[35]

The most important event of the nineteenth century was the war with Chile.[36] During this war (1879–1883) peasants were compulsorily enrolled in the Peruvian Army, but it was in the Central Highlands where guerrillas called *montoneras* were formed among peasant and indigenous communities that freely wanted to defend the *patria* against the Chilean occupation (Manrique, 1981; Mallon, 1987). At the beginning of this resistance, Andrés Avelino Caceres, a high ranking *mestizo* in the Army, emerged as the symbol of national unity around which all could gather and fight, making possible an alliance between landowners and indigenous communities to fight against the foreign force. However, class and ethnic conflict was soon to undermine the alliance. From the landowners' point of view, increasing peasant mobilisation and autonomy from central command represented the greatest danger against which they had to defend themselves. Land owners understood that their best solution was peace at any price (even the fragmentation of territory), and control and repression of peasant guerrillas.[37]

This political mobilisation of indigenous people in the Central Highlands was a major event in the formation of the 'national' consciousness. Following the war, the official interpretation made the Indians responsible for the defeat, presenting them as lacking a sense of nationhood, as enemies of all whites, especially from the coast; as ignorant of what it meant to be Peruvian. In this context, the economic, territorial and cultural unification of the country was seen as a precondition for avoiding a repetition

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35 According to Larson (2002), the *gamonal*, the traditional Sierra landlord, developed from an amorphous group of landlords, including 'indigenised whites' and *mistis*, or 'whitened indigenous', who from the latter half of the nineteenth century to the early years of the twentieth century, consolidated a new position of power. Particularly in the South, they owed their new fortune to the boom in wool and to their increasing control of the resources of the indigenous (land, livestock and labour). Indigenous communities suffered violent occupations and expulsion and were displaced to less fertile territories. The *gamonal* typified the type of 'Serrano landlord' characterised by governing with extreme cruelty and violence, but at the same time sharing with indigenous communities the fundamental elements of Andean culture.

36 Chile declared war in 1879. In 1881 Peru was defeated in Lima and suffered occupation for almost three years.

37 According to Manrique, 1981, the collaboration of some landlords with the Chilean forces deprived the whole group of credibility. The peasants felt that the whole burden of the fight fell only on them and they should only trust in themselves, becoming more and more independent of the central command of Caceres. It was only in the last period of the resistance and after the landlords' collaboration with the Chileans and their drive to end the war at any cost that the contradictions between the economic interests of both partners of the resistance appeared as the central conflict.

of the 1879 disaster. In addition to the construction of roads and railways that would establish a firm material base for unification, the elite cooperated with the different regional oligarchies by offering state aid for the solution of their most immediate problems. In the central highlands, this meant not only eliminating the remaining pockets of post-war peasant resistance, but also providing state assistance with labour control and the modernisation of the local economy (Mallon, 1987; Manrique, 1988).

The resulting weakness of the indigenous movement and with it the absence of indigenous politics, was compounded in the twentieth century by the gradual move to a language of class,[38] reaching its apotheosis with the military government of General Velasco. Admittedly, in the different Andean countries the varieties of corporatist politics played out through the middle of the twentieth century gave (usually unintended) space to indigenous communities, and Peru was no exception.[39] But its culmination in Peru in the Velasco regime (1968–1975) also introduced elements of contradiction and conflict, as we describe below in relation to land reform. Further, the desire to institutionalise and control was more in evidence than the desire to empower (as seen, for instance, in the 1970 Statute on Peasant Communities).

Such control and contradictions further weakened the communities. All in all, the historical legacy of these two centuries was one of lack of leadership. In the north, especially, there was also loss of language: there the indigenous population today is Spanish-speaking. In some areas, there was a weakening or loss of community institutions.

To a significant degree, the result of history was the failure of indigenous and peasant communities to construct a common identity; the differences were too many and the distances and physical barriers enormous. It was more profitable to suppress one's origin and work on assimilation – particularly if one had already moved to an urban area, as close to 10 million had by the late twentieth century.[40] It is important to note that this migration was not to highland cities closely related in cultural terms to their hinterland, as in Bolivia and Ecuador, but principally to very distant coastal cities, a hostile and alien environment where a quite different culture prevailed.[41]

For those who remained in their communities, the principal identity reference was to that community, rooted in physical space. Research on Andean culture (Ansion, Tubino and Villacorta, 2005) reveals that an individual community member typically does not see the members of other communities as part of a common identity. Even if they are Quechua-speaking, other communities speak 'other Quechuas'. This is yet one more factor explaining the failure of indigenous politics to develop.

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38 See Tullis, 1970; Handelman, 1974, c. 1975, Montoya, 1989 and Kapsoli Escudero, c. 1987 for detailed information on those peasant movements that characterised the 1950s, mainly 'land invasions'. At the beginning they were local, dispersed, and spontaneous (Cusco, 1957–1963; Sierra Central, 1963–1964). Later, emerging peasant organisations were able to lead them. After 1965, revolts occurred in Piura, 1972; Andahuaylas, 1974; Anta, 1976.
39 Yashar (2005) develops an interesting comparative analysis along these lines.
40 INEI, 1995.
41 This point is made eloquently by Albó (2002) and adduced as an important reason for the weakness of indigenous mobilisation in Peru.

Such a weakness of indigenous politics is not to be equated with its total absence, however. Part of the reason for the lack of major protest and mobilisation may possibly be that there is quite an elaborate expression of identity through 'cultural politics'. Canepa (2005) finds abundant evidence of this in Lima itself. Cultural politics refers to the use of fiestas, dance, processions and song to express identity and make political statements, albeit in a very low-key way. In Peru this form of expression is deeply contradictory in nature. It is rooted in trying to allow the emerging *mestizo* class an expression that goes beyond the 'emerging entrepreneur', which is where the prevailing culture tries to pin down and limit them. But the individuals concerned are divided in their own thinking on how far the emerging group is superior to or takes its strength from the original indigenous culture. We see yet again how class and ethnicity intertwine in Peru.

We have explained the weakness of indigenous political organisation: what is the link to violence, in the particular form it has taken in Peru in the last twenty years? Sendero[42] found its fertile territory in the south, where the greatest strength of the traditional feudal system was combined with a poorly-executed land reform.[43] The latter led to an increase in conflict, as better off peasants were able to get control of land. It was a classic situation of weak identity and a tremendous sense of powerlessness, combined with very weak community institutions and little presence of the state. Great divisiveness was combined with a lack of institutions (traditional or modern) to resolve conflict.[44] Sendero's success in initial recruitment drew on the sense of rootlessness and powerlessness felt acutely by young indigenous people. Radicalised via the

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42 Sendero was not the only group mobilising at this time. In 1984, the Movimiento Revolucionario Tupac Amaru (MRTA), a guerrilla movement, also declared war against the state, and was responsible for 1.5 per cent of the victims reported to the CVR. This paper focuses on Sendero for reasons of limitation of space.

43 The radical land reform of Velasco represented a fundamental shift in the balance of power, by expropriating large estates above a certain limit (Bourque and Palmer, 1975; McClintock, 1981). However, as so often with land reforms it had both positive and negative effects. In the Sierra it created huge collectives from the large estates. These collectives, known as SAIS (*Sociedades Agrícolas de Interés Social*), were intrinsically divisive, since they principally incorporated workers from the former estate and left most of the families of communities on their fringes in their historical state of abandon. They also were typically not created with adequate support, so that a few entrepreneurial peasants could grab opportunities, and in general the collectives fared quite badly. As we shall see, in some areas the result was a significant increase in divisiveness and conflict (Reñique, 2004).

44 The war, which began in the early 1980s, originated in the political activity and mobilising actions of a group of professors in the university of Huamanga in Ayacucho: a group adopting a Maoist philosophy and focussing on mobilising initially young people in the university who were sent in turn to mobilise their communities. The doctrine was not ethnic but class-based. (Official documents of Sendero reject out of hand Andean cultural reevaluation as folklore or bourgeois manipulation. See Degregori in Palmer, 1992.) Methods were based on political indoctrination and the inculcation of extreme and bloody techniques of violence, and the goal was the destruction of authority. The teaching rejected the primacy of politics in favour of the primacy of violence.

university by a doctrine that offered a strong quasi-religious identity – a sense of belonging – and that would allow them to move from the base to the peak of the social pyramid, these young people became the backbone of Sendero.

Initially, Sendero was successful in penetrating communities themselves. However, the movement failed to understand the nature of community institutions – it took reprisals against community leaders and in other ways offended deeply the community ethos. Growing resistance was used by the police and army, and peasants were armed in *rondas*, or community self-defence groups. The result was terrible loss of life, with many peasants caught in the cross-fire.[45] The latent strong tensions and lack of 'regular' means of dealing with small-scale conflict also contributed, as individuals took advantage of the growing violence to take private revenge (Tanaka, 2002).

In the north, the story was very different. In Cajamarca, the breaking up of large estates had been going on in a piecemeal fashion since the 1920s. The earlier rather weak land reform of the Belaúnde period in the 1960s had led to more small-holding. So the Velasco measures were able to build on an existing trend to restoring community land and creating small-holdings. But peasants faced a tremendous threat from cattle thieves, in the face of the weak presence of the state, especially inadequate police and justice systems. In the late 1970s community initiatives to protect themselves began in the form of *rondas*. These organisations evolved through the 1980s and 1990s into strong community institutions, gradually broadening their remit to cover community disputes also, and even taking on other kinds of community defence. They evolved into a source of identity with no explicit ethnic connotation.

It is this level of community organisation which is adduced by all as the reason Sendero failed to penetrate to the north of the country. Important also was extensive work by external agents (NGOs and church workers) with the communities to inculcate a culture of peaceful resistance – or at least, controlled violence.

Returning to horizontal inequalities: if community organisation and sense of identity is enough to resist the mobilisation to violent protest, is it also enough effectively to modify the pronounced degree of horizontal inequality observable throughout the Peruvian data? And if not, is it likely that the containment of and/or resistance to violent techniques will weaken with time? These are questions for further research, requiring analysis of the Peruvian political system and the key actors. While the party system has never been closed in the manner of Guatemala, it has been difficult to penetrate, principally because of the lack of vitality and coherence in local politics and in political parties. The party system, quite well developed up to the 1980s (at least at the national level) went into deep crisis with the civil war, to be dealt a near-mortal blow with Fujimori's anti-politics.[46] And the deeply-rooted centralising trend in the Peruvian polity and economy has been only mildly and ineffectively challenged by the various initiatives aimed at decentralisation. Such efforts confront an absence of the state at the local level, a lack of capacity in local government, and a lack of trusted intermediaries, given the distrust of parties and continuing clientelism in the one party still numerically significant at the local level: the Aprista party.

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45   And others taking sides, as the CVR concludes (2003 Vol. II Ch. 1 p. 3).
46   See Tanaka 2005; Crabtree (ed.), 2006.

How far does the emergence of Humala in the recent elections modify or question this analysis? We are inclined to think it does not. Humala's wide support was based on poverty and exclusion more than ethnic identity.

Pointing toward a comparative analysis, then, we have the historical decimation of the leading classes, at a critical juncture as the country defined itself at Independence. This is a stronger destruction than we find in our other cases. From this flows a weakness of identity, and specific characteristics of identity, on the one hand very local – one's own community – and on the other hand focussed in a contradictory manner on assimilation and denial, and channelled into non-confrontational cultural forms. Where we have external mobilisers to violence, much of the country is held in a critical tension: enough organisation to resist the mobilisation, but not enough to manage effective change to right injustice, given the incoherence of local and national institutional structures, including party structures.

The Bolivian Case: Political Accommodation and a 'Harmony of Inequalities'

The paradox of Bolivia is that unlike our other cases, we find genuine indigenous politics emerging, to the point of significantly modifying political horizontal inequalities. Yet by 2006 this has patently not led to the modification of socio-economic horizontal inequalities. Again, to interpret this we need to explore the historical roots of the indigenist movement.

Bolivia's equivalent to the Peruvian events of 1780 – the Katarista uprising of 1781 and the siege of La Paz – was a foundational event which, far from leading to the destruction of the incipient indigenous movement and the elimination of its leadership, provided a revolutionary tradition and inspiration. The resulting repression was far less extreme than in neighbouring Peru. Fundamental in this was geography: the fact that the capital was in the heart of indigenous territory in Bolivia. The rebels laid siege to the capital city itself and were able to cut off supplies – a pattern repeated constantly up to the present day. This geography forced a politics of accommodation radically different from the Peruvian situation, where the rebel forces could be isolated and decimated. Over time, in Peru those migrating to the coast were moving to an alien and isolating culture where hiding your identity was the rational action (Albó, 2002) and fragmentation was a natural consequence. In Bolivia, migration was to a relatively familiar Andean culture.

In Bolivia too, as in Peru, the perverse result of war was to awaken fear of Aymara allies; thus Indian mobilisation under Zárate in 1899 in support of the Liberal elites perversely led to Liberal repression of their allies. But the need for a politics of accommodation – what the literature refers to as a 'harmony of inequalities' – thereafter shapes a complex construction and deconstruction of the 'Indian question' and a period of elite accommodation and resurgence.[47]

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47   See Irurozqui (1994) and Gray-Molina (2005).

The end of the Liberal period was marked in the early twentieth century by a new way of dealing with the 'harmony of inequalities', this time via *mestizo* alliances with workers and miners. The *coup d´état* of 1921 symbolised a new period of elite accommodation and resurgence. President Bautista Saavedra (1921–1925) attempted to realign working class and indigenous sympathies more directly through clientelist political means that ushered in a form of political inclusion mastered by the military socialists of the 1930s and again by the National Revolution of 1952. The resilience of elite regeneration is an important feature that recurs throughout the first half of the twentieth century. With it came a new vocabulary that celebrated the '*mestizo*' and 'indigenous' character of the 'Bolivian nation'. This discursive form of recognition was itself a platform for more nuanced constructions around ethnicity and class-based cleavages over the second half of the twentieth century. The 1952 National Revolution is a milestone along this historical path, sharing as it does with pre-revolutionary periods the survival of old forms of elite accommodation in key arenas of social and political life. Universal suffrage, agrarian reform and the nationalisation of mining were foundational events of the National Revolution, carried out by a loose coalition of middle class politicians with the backing of worker and *campesino* militias. The Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario (MNR), born a decade earlier, aspired to be a hegemonic party, despite its loose political leadership and social composition. As noted by René Zavaleta Mercado, the MNR was 'a rabble, that revived a local and traditional way of confronting war. The rabble of Bolivian illiterates did not and could not organise itself as a scientific political party' (Zavaleta Mercado, 1990: 147).

The development and demise of the National Revolution have been exhaustively analysed.[48] This section will focus on a single, but important, aspect of the revolution as it relates to ethnicity and inequality. The Revolution constructed a new vocabulary that emancipated indigenous citizens from colonial forms of labour exploitation, but pointed to a new cohesive identity linked to the working classes, peasantry and a national bourgeoisie. This matched but was even more clear-cut than the shift to a language of class we have already noted in Peru (and indeed in many countries at this time). The *campesino* played a key role in defining the identity of the protagonists of the revolution's most important action: the Agrarian Reform of 1953. A significant feature of the Agrarian Reform was the dissolution of all forms of agrarian labour exploitation coupled by the massive redistribution of land over 30 years. The Agrarian Reform decree erased all mention of 'Indian peoples', 'Indian race', Aymara or Quechua identity from official discourse. The *campesino* union system, created to redis-

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48 Early assessments of the National Revolution were made by Alexander (1958); Peñaloza (1963); Zondag (1966) and Malloy (1970). Assessments of the agrarian reform include Heath (1959); Carter (1965); Antezana and Romero (1968); Heath, Erasmus and Buechler (1969); Dandler (1969) and Calderón and Dandler (1986). For political and historical accounts of this period see Whitehead (1986), Malloy and Gamarra (1988), Dunkerley (1984) and Lavaud (1986). Two recent conferences on the fiftieth anniversary of the revolution also provide a retrospective assessment of the achievements of the National Revolution (see Grindle and Domingo, 2003; PNUD, ILDIS, ASDI y PLURAL, 2003).

tribute land, was to provide a longlasting link between the MNR and the rural society and economy for nearly half a century.

Before the 1952 Revolution Bolivia's land distribution was the worst in Latin America. A major success of the land reform programme was the redistribution of nearly 50 per cent of peasant lands within its first two years. The 1950 Census data show a striking portrait of rural land inequality: 8 per cent of the largest land-holders (7000 property owners with 500 or more hectares of land) owned 95 per cent of available land, while 69 per cent of the smallest landholders (60,000 peasants with 10 or less hectares) owned only 0.4 per cent of available land.[49] Small and medium size owners made up the remainder. Thus, bottom-up land takeovers precipitated a top-down process of land reform, providing a focal point for social action and political discourse during the early phase of the National Revolution. The politics of land reform illustrates the complex infighting that took place between elites and with indigenous and *campesino* communities across the country. As observed during the Liberal period, elite accommodation – now focused on access to the MNR and state power – provided the backdrop for new forms of social and political inclusion, based on co-optation and redistribution of the spoils of power.

While ethnic-based political parties never caught on either in the Bolivian highlands or lowlands, ethnic representation increased steadily, first, in municipal politics, and since 2002, in national politics. Today, nearly one-third of Congressional districts are represented by indigenous deputies or senators, another third is represented by urban-based popular worker or informal sectors and a third by middle-class *mestizo* representative of the 'traditional' political class. As pointed out by Ricardo Calla (2003), however, the mainstreaming of indigenous political demands – Constitutional reform, land tenure reform, bilingual education, Constitutional Assembly – has been achieved mostly by indigenous social movements on the streets rather than in Congress. Indigenous movements have successfully introduced a multiethnic political agenda in Bolivia, from the early 1990s. The slow pace of reforms and achievements, however, are behind the recent backlash against conciliatory and reformist proposals.

The structural changes produced by the 1952 revolution were accompanied by the evolution of a more complex system of political accommodation that is porous to ethnic, class or regional cleavages. This system of accommodation assumes both a weak and heterogeneous state, as well as differentiated and non-hegemonic social actors. It is sustained by a chronic imbalance that forces elites to accommodate social demands through both formal and informal means.

As in Guatemala, an important question we need to consider is why episodes of ethnic politicisation were not followed by the establishment of ethnic-based political parties that might 'institutionalise' ethnic differences within the formal system of democratic governance. How can one explain the poor performance of indigenous parties but the strength of indigenous social movements? The MRTK and MITKA electoral performance in the late 1980s is illustrative of this pattern.[50] The katarista movement, which attained such prominent influence within the *campesino* union system, never

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49   See Census of 1950 (Republica de Bolivia, 1950).
50   See Calla (2003).

surpassed a three per cent electoral threshold from 1979 to 1989. One answer might be electoral engineering. Did institutional design hinder indigenous political participation? Formally, Bolivia's electoral proportional representation would seem to favour ethnic representation, as close to two-thirds of uninominal constituencies are predominantly quechua, aymara or lowland indigenous districts. However, we would argue that the limited appeal of all-indigenous political parties might be explained, rather, by a system of clientelist and corporatist inclusion inherited from the early 1900s and developed by the near-hegemonic MNR in the mid 1950s. A number of informal institutions organise ethnic-based local and class-based collective action around the state. These include clientelistic relations, dual powers (*poderes duales*), co-management (*cogestión*), collective self-management (*autogestión*), among others. The most pervasive form of inclusion is a legacy of the conservative and liberal periods at the turn of the century. Strong elite hold over political and economic power was buttressed by clientelism between the mining-based elites, urban middle classes and indigenous communities. In 1936, President David Toro consolidated his political support by installing compulsory unionisation in urban and rural producer associations under the nascent Central Obrera Boliviana (COB). However, the most significant consolidation of clientelistic relations emerged during and after the National Revolution. *Campesino* and worker unions provided critical social and political support in the early stages of the Revolution. Unionisation in rural areas provided direct access to state patronage for *campesino* and indigenous communities.

Political clienteles shifted away from the MNR in the 1960s and towards the military between 1964 and 1982. The democratic transition was followed by a wave of decentralisation reforms in the 1990s which moved patronage relations from capital cities to small towns and municipalities. Political capture by local elites accentuated a patrimonial government style and pushed political reform and disenchantment to the fore in the late 1990s. Today, political parties suffer from the lowest level of public credibility of the past 40 years. In October 2003, President Carlos Mesa appointed a non-political cabinet and dismantled many of the clientelistic networks that previously benefited from public employment and patronage by the executive power. While clientelistic relations are an integral part of democratic politics in present-day Bolivia, there is increased pressure to open up political participation to non-clientelistic and meritocratic forms of politics.

Important to understanding this evolution is the way the National Revolution institutionalised a dual form of government that has recurred over time since the 1950s. In the early years of the Revolution, one power was constituted by a worker and *campesino* militia, associated with the Central Obrera Boliviana (COB), while the other emerged from the MNR leadership that led the revolutionary government. Dual power allowed the popular movement access to political power without yielding collective political positions to the government. A key feature of dual power is the absence of political hegemony within the government, which secures governance and political support by 'sharing power'.

A remarkable aspect of dual power is its persistence beyond the hegemonic period of the National Revolution. The design of the Popular Participation reform in the 1990s, for example, institutionalised dual power at the local level, by granting veto

power to a civil society oversight committee in each municipality. The oversight committee was itself constituted by territorial grassroots organisations, most of which developed from the *campesino* and urban union movement. At a time when the union movement was at its weakest, after the collapse of tin-mining and the privatisation of state companies, the Popular Participation reform created a new arena for union-based collective action. The recent Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRSP), elaborated by the Bolivian government and discussed at a National Dialogue table, also institutionalised dual power by delegating oversight and accountability powers to a civil society *Mecanismo de Control Social*.

Has dual power eroded formal political parties and Congressional checks and balances? Checks and balances are institutionalised outside the reach of formal government bodies or powers. They allow social movements or local grassroots organisations an arms-length control over government policy decisions in a context of weak state legitimacy. This has been remarkably effective in avoiding the level of violent political conflict we have seen in our other two cases. The significantly better degree of horizontal equality in Bolivia is clear, and clearly very important. However, for all this, as we have seen, socio-economic inequalities have persisted and are serious. The complex system of checks and balances has provided political accommodation, but what it has not done – and here is the nub of the next stage of research – is provide, or allow, effective policy management that delivers in terms of horizontal inequalities. Hence the dramatic turn of events in Bolivia in 2006 with the election of the first indigenous President, the outcome of which we have to await.

Conclusions: Further Research

To date, CRISE research in Latin America has emphasised the gap between the severe ethnic cleavages in societies (horizontal inequalities are large and present along economic, social and political lines) and variations in the prominence of these cleavages in patterns of collective actions and political mobilisation.

Further hypotheses generated by the preliminary research summarised above can be laid out as follows:

- In Bolivia the system of political accommodation allows mobilisation on peaceful lines, maintaining political equilibrium with impact on political HIs but not so far on socio-economic HIs. In the explanation of the relatively high degree of ethnic mobilisation, and the processes of accommodation which lead to lack of violence but also lack of progress in socio-economic goals, we hypothesise that geography and the political control of resources have played a key role, as has the political weakness of government and the resulting need for allies.

- In Peru repression from the Conquest on, and early efforts (from 1870s) at integration/control (to 'fix' the work force) both tend in the same direction: generation of a very weak movement and little mobilisation.

Again we hypothesise that geography is important, as is the inability of any incipient movement to find allies.

• In Guatemala relative autonomy is possible given the nature of the economy and geography, and this is positive for the growth of ethnic consciousness. But the history of repression works powerfully in the other direction, as does the inaccessibility of politics to all citizens after 1954. The eventual emergence of a *ladino*-led guerrilla movement draws in the indigenous population. The resulting huge repression both reduces political activism and increases ethnic awareness.

• In all three cases land reform is crucial. In Bolivia this is because it increased participation and a sense of rights gained, though it was a disappointment in its impact on socio-economic HIs. In Peru the importance stems from the form it took (collectives that excluded many) while the lack of supporting institutions increased conflict and fragmentation. In Guatemala, the *absence* of land reform is a mobilising factor.

• The different playing out of the eruption of violence in our two 'violent' cases can be explained by the different nature of Sendero Luminoso and the Guatemalan guerrillas in their relationship with the communities, the different previous history of indigenous politics/movement/non-movement, and the different management of violence by the state.

These hypotheses are stated boldly for the purpose of discussion: they will shape our research going forward. There are further distinct but complementary central questions. The first need is to enhance our understanding of the nature of Horizontal Inequalities themselves. Understanding the gender component of horizontal inequality and the extent to which it contributes to overall horizontal inequality is one illustration of how we intend to proceed with HIs. Indigenous women clearly suffer double discrimination, but how much of our HIs does gender explain, and with what implications for collective action and conflict? A second central component of ongoing CRISE research in Latin America is to further unpack the relationship between processes of mobilisation and collective action and horizontal inequalities. Our intuition, based on an initial study in Peru,[51] is that the durability of economic and social HIs has much to do with the way collective action does or does not interact with local political and institutional structures. The nature of party politics and political mobilisation at the community level needs to be explored, analysing indigenous incorporation (or exclusion) from politics beyond the boundaries of the community.

A third issue in considering why ethnicity has not been instrumentalised in the past, and why it is recently becoming so, will require a thorough examination of the relationship between indigenous people and the left. How far was the predominance of class in the thinking and discourse of the Left an important element in weakening

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51 See Muñoz, Paredes and Thorp (2006).

ethnic identity, and how does this play out comparatively in our three cases? How far is the present resurgence of indigenous politics the product of the collapse of the Left and the resulting 'space', and what does this imply for the nature of the movement?

Finally, it is important to signal the contribution of the Latin American case studies to the wider CRISE research. Our findings highlight the need to reflect on and refine some of our central research questions and assumptions. We need to emphasise that horizontal inequalities clearly do not automatically lead to ethnic mobilisation. Thus horizontal inequalities cannot be said to create ethnic politics; rather, HIs dramatically increase the likelihood of ethnic conflict where ethnic politics are *already* in existence.[52] Adopting historical approaches in order to understand why and how modern politics coalesce around ethnicity in some of our case studies but not in all remains one of the key avenues of research open to CRISE.

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52 These conditions, as Horowitz noted, are present in many countries in the world (Horowitz, 1985).

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