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***Guerra del Gas: Resistance, Subaltern Counterpublics, and Indigenous
Rhetoric in Bolivia***

by

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Rhetoric in Bolivia***

**Approved by
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Abstract

Guerra del Gas: Resistance, Subaltern Counterpublics, and Indigenous Rhetoric in Bolivia

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Abstract: This thesis presents a rhetorical analysis of the *Guerra del Gas* movement in Bolivia from 2003 to 2005. It views the social movement and its major uprisings as emerging from a subaltern counterpublic that grounded its resistance in uniquely indigenous rhetoric. Chapter one provides a theoretical framework for understanding indigenous rhetoric as embodying a discourse of subaltern sensibilities and situating subaltern counterpublic theory within the historic-cultural situation of Bolivia to understand contemporary struggles over natural resources and against neoliberal politics within the country. The indigenous rhetoric of the *Guerra del Gas* movement provided a direct refutation of natural gas privatization and neoliberal hegemony. The second

chapter is a case study that explores the indigenous rhetoric of the October 2003 and May-June 2005 uprisings that characterized the subaltern counterpublic sphere of the *Guerra del Gas* movement. In chapter three the theoretical frame of subaltern rhetoric is established to analyze Evo Morales' inaugural address as an embodiment of a discourse of subaltern sensibilities. The conclusion chapter offers some directions for further research and considers how understanding indigenous rhetoric has implications for social struggle and organized resistance in a world of increasing globalization and neoliberal hegemonic policymaking.

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INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1: Bolivian Indigenous Rhetoric

In the countries of Latin America, indigenous oppression and ethnic tensions have been commonplace. Since Spanish colonial times, negative images of indigenous peoples have provided the justification for widespread policies of political, economic, and social exclusion and marginalization. For hundreds of years, indigenous peoples from the Andes region and beyond have risen up to resist colonialist leaders and policies, and engage in social struggles on a number of fronts. The mobilizations of indigenous populations have challenged the prevailing views that have branded them as backward, submissive, and anachronistic groups. While indigenous organizing has occurred up through the 20th century, it has predominately been initiated from, within, and between indigenous communities; the leadership of these organizations has been primarily driven by peasant unions, political parties, and revolutionaries. Interestingly, despite this history of organizing, indigenous communities have seldom initiated or maintained social movements which mobilized around demands for indigenous rights and recognition of indigenous identity.¹ Instead, indigenous community organizing through peasant unions, political parties, and the like has traditionally mobilized “Indians to forge class, partisan, religious, and/or revolutionary identities over, and often against indigenous ones.”²

The existence of indigenous peoples’ struggles is not a novel phenomenon; however, the growth of these movements into politically powerful collectives with enduring influence in regional and national politics is a relatively recent trend. The rise of

¹ Deborah J. Yashar, "Contesting Citizenship: Indigenous Movements and Democracy in Latin America," *Comparative Politics* 31, no. 1 (October 1998): 23.

² Ibid.

these movements has lead to significant cultural and political changes, as groups have challenged exclusionary nationalism, demanding cultural recognition, territory, autonomy, and increased political rights.³ In many ways, the work of these indigenous groups is extending political participation to previously marginalized groups; thus, facilitating the democratization (i.e. capitalist development) processes of many Latin American governments.⁴

Social movement scholars have focused on the emergence of indigenous organizations in Latin America, and have catalogued the factors and trends associated with this rise in mobilizations. Several theoretical perspectives have been deployed to examine how historically marginalized and exploited people have been successful in making an impact on governmental institutions and other social structures of power. These have included postmodern critiques of indigenous political programs, anthropological concerns about indigenous representation (Warren 1998), class-based approaches (Petras and Veltmeyer 2001), and identity-based approaches (Alvarez, Dagnino, and Escobar 1998). Deborah Yashar has examined the factors influencing Latin American indigenous movements arguing that democratic liberalization provided more opportunities to organize, that the existence of trans-community networks of support have increased organizing capacity, and that incentives to organize arose in response to the effects of neoliberal reforms.⁵ This analysis is valuable for understanding the relationship between neoliberalism and contemporary forms of organized protest in Latina America. Scholars have also focused on the commonalities of indigenous movements, examining

³ J. Montgomery Roper, Thomas Perreault, and Patrick C. Wilson, "Introduction to Special Issue on Indigenous Transformational Movements in Contemporary Latin America," *Latin American Perspectives* 30, no. 1 (January 2003): 12.

⁴ Donna Lee Van Cott, *Indigenous Peoples and Democracy in Latin America* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), 22.

⁵ Yashar 1998, 30-31; Yashar 1999, 77-78.

the discourse of resistance as a struggle against universal oppression, protection of the environment, and a common agenda of citizenship.

Focusing on the common threads among indigenous movements is useful, but it is also important to note that these movements represent a great deal of diversity. Their characteristics, their demands, and their strategies are extremely specific to the countries and regions from which they emerge. Although there are similar factors between the countries of Latin America, the struggle for indigenous rights depends upon the specificities of the country.⁶ Rather than focus on the similarities among various Latin American countries, I address the call to examine the details of the particular country and concentrate exclusively on Bolivia. This project concentrates on the particularities of the Bolivian situation surrounding the *Guerra del Gas* (Gas War), a protest movement that took place from 2003 to 2005 and demonstrated opposition to the Bolivian government's natural gas pipeline proposal that would export gas reserves through Chile where it would ultimately be sold to a consortium of international companies. The movement involved massive uprisings that united a broad range of the Bolivian society—including indigenous peoples, miners, teachers, students, and farmers—against natural gas privatization.⁷ Focusing on Bolivia's *Guerra del Gas*, I argue that the rhetorical dimensions of the movement were uniquely indigenous and can be understood as a combination of cultural and political practices that engaged diverse forms of resistance. This research informs rhetorical scholarship surrounding contemporary dissent, mobilization, and social movements by building upon subaltern and postcolonial theories to examine uniquely indigenous forms of social protest. Viewing the *Guerra del Gas*

⁶ Nancy Grey Postero and Leon Zamosc, eds. *The Struggle for Indigenous Rights in Latin America* (Portland: Sussex Academic Press, 2004), 3.

⁷ Suzanne York, "Bolivia's Indigenous Revolution," in *Paradigm Wars: Indigenous Peoples' Resistance to Globalization*. ed. Jerry Mander and Victoria Tauli Corpuz (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 2006), 189.

through this lens enables an understanding of the indigenous movement that represents a dynamic blend of modern and postmodern rhetorical strategies of resistance.

My focus on Bolivia centers on the rhetoric of the country's recent indigenous social movements; the country demonstrates a unique opportunity to examine emerging indigenous rhetorical styles and the broader implications of this rhetoric upon social movements. With rhetoric as the specific focal point, I contribute to existing scholarship on Latin American indigenous social movements by basing my analysis of the distinctive circumstances of Bolivia upon the particular rhetorical aspects of indigenous mobilization. The conditions of Bolivian neoliberal restructuring in the twenty-first century necessitated hybrid strategies of organizing and protest to challenge new forms of economic and political domination. With the *Guerra del Agua* (Water War) of 2000, Bolivians presented challenges against the government and its plan to privatize the water resources of the country. The *Guerra del Agua* was a grassroots movement against corporate globalization that created a coalition for indigenous peoples and *campesinos* in the Cochabamba region and beyond. It mobilized diverse sectors in strikes, protests, and blockades to oppose transnational companies and their attempts to control Bolivian water resources.⁸ While the *Guerra del Agua* was an extremely important movement, the *Guerra del Gas* demonstrates a more national and coordinated response to the government. The social movement engaged in physical forms of protest rhetoric, occupied and blocked space as a means of challenging control over natural resources, as well as demonstrated that rebellion and resistance was most effective when rooted in indigenous cultural and epistemological principles. In particular, I argue that the rhetoric of the Bolivian indigenous social movement during the *Guerra del Gas* can be considered a discourse of subaltern sensibilities. Walter Mignolo explains that the “period expanding

⁸ Oscar Olivera, *¡Cochabamba! Water War in Bolivia* (Cambridge: South End Press, 2004), 28-29.

from the late fifteenth century to the current stage of globalization, has built a frame and a conception of knowledge based on the distinction between epistemology and hermeneutics and, in so doing, has subalternized other kinds of knowledge.”⁹ This process overwhelmingly privileged knowledge from the perspective of modern colonialism, deeming other knowledge to be interesting only as objects of study instead of the starting point for articulation; thus, subaltern sensibilities refers to knowledge from a subaltern perspective “conceived from the exterior borders of the modern/colonial world system.”¹⁰ It is from the subaltern perspective that I begin to view the *Guerra del Gas* and indigenous mobilizations as embodying a discourse of subaltern sensibilities.

It is not my intention to study the Bolivian subaltern nor speak for the Bolivian indigenous peoples, but rather engage in the systematic unlearning of my privilege in order to focus on the indigenous discursive modalities present during the *Guerra del Gas*. I consider my position similar to that of a postcolonial intellectual and heed the call that Gayatri Spivak described, “in seeking to learn to speak to (rather than listen to or speak for) the historically muted subject of the subaltern [woman], the postcolonial intellectual *systematically* ‘unlearns’ privilege.”¹¹ Although this work does not focus solely on subaltern women, there are strong connections between the words of Spivak that pertain to all subalterns and are especially applicable to the Bolivian indigenous populations and their rhetorical strategies of resistance. Recognizing these connections, I have attempted to adopt a subaltern perspective throughout this work. I have started the process of unlearning my own privilege and sought to ground the discussion in the subaltern sensibilities of the Bolivian indigenous people. It is from this epistemological foundation

⁹ Walter D. Mignolo, *Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges, and Border Thinking* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 2000), 13.

¹⁰ Mignolo 2000, 11.

¹¹ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, “Can the Subaltern Speak?” in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, ed. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 295. Emphasis in original.

that I begin to engage the rhetorical facets of the Bolivian indigenous movement. From this position, the context for the rhetorical analysis is provided by beginning with a brief history of Bolivian resistance and then situating the contemporary movement within the areas of subaltern epistemology, indigenous resource struggles, and neoliberal hegemony.

The South American country of Bolivia has a long history replete with indigenous challenges to government repression and invasions on their land. During the centuries-long period of Spanish colonization, indigenous struggles disputed various colonial practices which forced their relocation and subsequently coerced them into laboring in the silver mines, textile workshops, and agricultural plantations.¹² The enormous wealth of Bolivia's natural resources had constantly been under the heavy-handed management of foreign influences or national minority forces which forged ties with international elites to create strategic alliances and virtually guaranteed that the ruling classes maintain control. This foreign influence has forced Bolivia, a country with extreme riches below the soil, to be one of the poorest nations above the ground. From the sixteenth century, when Spain controlled the rich silver deposits at Potosí which were essential for the emergence of European capitalism, to the contemporary era of foreign control which runs parallel to resource boom-and-bust cycles centering on silver, tin, coca, and most recently, natural gas—the Bolivian indigenous population has always contested these processes which have comprised indispensable elements in the formation of the global economy.¹³ In recent years, the dissatisfaction with the system of privileging the market has grown steadily. The market system has been criticized for concentrating wealth among an elite minority while reinforcing poverty among the majority, and reducing state provided social services. Diverse rhetorical forms of protest have followed the steady

¹² Benjamin Kohl and Linda Farthing, *Impasse in Bolivia: Neoliberal Hegemony and Popular Resistance* (London: Zed Books, 2006), 39.

¹³ Waltraud Q. Morales, *Bolivia: Land of Struggle* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992), 148.

increase in opposition to the economic system. The *Guerra del Gas* provides a primary example of how such opposition translated into a Bolivian indigenous rhetoric which embodied a discourse of subaltern sensibilities and portrayed subaltern epistemology.

INDIGENOUS RHETORIC: A DISCOURSE OF SUBALTERN SENSIBILITIES

“In Bolivia, where state rule exerts a historically weak hegemony over the country, power is decidedly in the hands of the people.” (Dangl 2007, 9)

Natural resources, something that should be a blessing for the country, have been turned into a curse of foreign expropriation. Bolivians have attempted to change this resource blight, contesting global control through localized social struggle. The Bolivian indigenous uprisings that coalesced in 2003 and 2005, during the period that is otherwise known as the *Guerra del Gas* are significant artifacts that warrant further inquiry from social movement, rhetoric, and communication scholars alike. The uprisings of September-October 2003 and May-June 2005, demonstrate a unique combination of identity politics, social movement strategies and tactics, as well as challenges to neoliberalism.¹⁴ The intricate web of the movement’s rhetorical dynamics provides a multifaceted strategy of opposition to neoliberal reforms and illustrates the way in which discourse influences public policy. I demonstrate that the *Guerra del Gas* movement occupied what can be understood as the subaltern public sphere, and deployed indigenous rhetoric that transformed into a politically effective force for challenging the hegemonic neoliberal order. The efficacy of this political challenge was demonstrated in 2003 when then President Sánchez de Lozada (August 2, 2002-October 17, 2003) resigned after mounting pressure from the movement; just two years later the existing political order was defeated again with the subsequent resignation of the presidential successor Carlos

¹⁴ It is not my intention to provide an in-depth critique and analysis of neoliberalism. Although I provide a short review of the literature on neoliberalism in subsequent sections, it is beyond the scope of this paper to engage the expansive literature and critical discussions of neoliberalism in Latin America.

Mesa (October 17, 2003-June 9, 2005).¹⁵ These resignations were a testament to the success of a movement emerging from a subaltern counterpublic sphere. The existence of the subaltern counterpublic facilitated indigenous rhetoric which mobilized and organized the masses for political change during the *Guerra del Gas*.

The subaltern public sphere, as explained by Nancy Fraser, emerges when public discourse is considered singular and overarching and thus results in the exclusion of particular groups. These subordinated social groups form “parallel discursive arenas,” or subaltern counterpublics, which “invent and circulate counterdiscourses to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests, and needs.”¹⁶ Fraser clarifies that subaltern counterpublics are structured sites of collective deliberation as well as contestation that engage their dominant counterparts through oppositional argumentation.¹⁷ The Bolivian indigenous people have historically been excluded from the dominant discursive arena of the country. The social groupings formed by the Aymara and Quechua indigenous peoples comprise a distinct arena that directly opposes the nation’s exclusionary practices and policies. During the *Guerra del Gas* the resistance of these indigenous groups and other social factors combined to topple the government; an accomplishment provided the catalyst for the 2005 presidential elections, culminating in the electoral success of country’s first indigenous leader, Evo Morales. While previous studies of the Bolivian resource wars have focused on social movement strategies with regard to the self-representation and self-understanding of the movement actors (Spronk and Webber 2007, 35-36), in this work I not only investigate indigenous identity issues but also examine the context in which the social movement emerged in opposition to

¹⁵ Raquel Gutiérrez Aguilar. *Los Ritmos del Pachakuti* (Buenos Aires: Tinta Limón, 2008), 257.

¹⁶ Nancy Fraser, “Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy,” in Calhoun, *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, 123.

¹⁷ Fraser 1992, 125.

Bolivian natural gas privatization and framed its demands by deploying a distinctively indigenous rhetoric.

Indigenous Resource Struggles: A Colonial History

“Resources, and with them workers’ rights and public services have been squashed in a post-colonial free for all.” (Dangl 2007, 9)

It is important that Bolivian resource struggles be examined within the historical context of colonial and neocolonial projects that established a political economy rooted in ethnic stratification, and provided the basis for a tradition of indigenous and worker mobilization and revolt.¹⁸ To that end, the historical context of Bolivian neoliberal reforms and imperial strategies will be outlined, to offer the background for what gave rise to various indigenous struggles leading up to the recent resource wars. These historical perspectives are crucial to situate the contemporary period of indigenous movements in Latin America and analyze their respective identity and organizational dimensions.¹⁹ From this political, social, and economic context the Bolivian indigenous social movement and resource struggles of the *Guerra del Gas* can be viewed as a continuation of past conflicts.

The period from 1742 to 1782, known as the “Age of Andean Insurrection,” was characterized by a series of indigenous uprisings that culminated in a rebellion of thousands of Aymara warriors in 1781. Although the revolt ultimately failed when its leader, Túpaj Katari, was captured he has become a symbolic figure of indigenous resistance.²⁰ This is evidenced by contemporary protests against neoliberal policies

¹⁸ Silvia R. Cusicanqui, “II. Reclaiming the Nation,” *NACLA Report on the Americas* 38, no. 3 (November-December 2004): 19-20.

¹⁹ Deborah J. Yashar, “Contesting Citizenship: Indigenous Movements and Democracy in Latin America,” *Comparative Politics* 31, no. 1 (October 1998): 30.

²⁰ Steve J. Stern, “The Age of Andean Insurrection, 1742-1782: A Reappraisal,” in *Resistance, rebellion, and consciousness in the Andean peasant world: 18th to 20th Centuries*, ed. Steve J. Stern (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987), 35.

frequently invoking his name. Under Spanish colonial rule, indigenous people enjoyed few rights and suffered from constant domination which relegated them to the margins of society and regarded them as little more than sources of labor and tax revenues. This status did not improve much during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, despite the resistance of the majority indigenous population.²¹

In 1825, shortly after the Bolivian wars of independence ended the prospect of indigenous rights seemed hopeful. The first Bolivian president, Simón Bolívar, took to the task of breaking with colonial rule through the political and economic organization of the new republic. New laws abolished discriminatory practices against indigenous peoples, establishing their freedom from the colonial past. The promise of Bolívar's anti-discrimination legislation was extremely short-lived; a year after its passage the successor President José Antonio de Sucre reinstated the commitment to the colonial past—denying indigenous access to the ideals of equality and liberty. Through the 1870s international demand for raw materials grew, ushering in a new generation of free-trade reforms that aimed to revive Bolivian silver-mining industry and liberalize land and capital markets.²² The reform process involved state-led privatization efforts which effectively codified anti-indigenous community practices into law. This discriminatory sentiment was implemented through coercive practices such as state sanctioned anti-community campaigns waged against indigenous groups. The efforts of state authorities to eliminate the indigenous community was a defining characteristic of Bolivian liberalism in the nineteenth century, it aimed to make the “Indians” into “Bolivians” while denying rights and citizenship status.²³ The passage of the Disentailment Law of 1874 explicitly

²¹ Kohl and Farthing 2006, 35.

²² Laura Gotkowitz. *A Revolution for Our Rights: Indigenous Struggles for Land and Justice in Bolivia, 1880-1952* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), 17-18.

²³ Forrest Hylton and Sinclair Thomson. *Revolutionary Horizons: Past and Present in Bolivian Politics* (New York: Verso, 2007), 47.

outlawed Indian communities and established procedures to partition communal land among community members, who were then required to purchase property titles; the remaining plots were sold to the various capitals and reverted to state ownership.²⁴ The law aligned with the prevailing liberal economic doctrine by subjecting natural resources and communal land to sale and privatization, a move that posed a blatant threat to existing indigenous communities.²⁵ In the face of such intolerance the indigenous people forged unprecedented alliances with non-indigenous groups, leading to a massive rebellion and the eventual return of communal property from the state.²⁶ The reinstatement of these communal landholdings served indigenous community leaders with a political tool against expropriation in future struggles.²⁷ Over the next several decades such political tools facilitated ongoing resistance toward government attempts at excluding the indigenous community influence. Opposition was particularly strong during the 1870s and 1880s when Bolivian mines were exploited to ensure the development of railroad projects; and again during the War of the Pacific (1879-1884), when Chile invaded Bolivia to seize portions of the territory which left the country permanently cut off from the coastline.²⁸ The conflict between Chile and Bolivia continued long after the war ended, contributing to strong Bolivian resentment toward its neighbor that carried into the twenty-first century when tensions mounted against the natural gas privatization plan that proposed gas transportation through Chile. The period from 1880 to 1890 was marked by indigenous resistance to land reform efforts which began under a presidential resolution authorizing land titles to communities that unanimously chose them—yet denying the legal status of indigenous communities to

²⁴ Gotkowitz 2007, 25-26.

²⁵ Hylton and Thompson 2007, 52.

²⁶ Gotkowitz 2007, 41.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Hylton and Thomson 2007, 51.

hold such rights. The indigenous opposition to the land title and survey process coincided with burgeoning discontent inside the Bolivian Liberal Party.²⁹ When Liberal Party leaders staged a string of revolts it created a situation of unlikely alliances among disgruntled indigenous authorities; the coinciding process of conflict and mobilization escalated into the Bolivian civil war.³⁰

In 1899 the Federal War began, which divided the nation between Liberal elites revolting against the conservative government—and ultimately solicited the assistance of Aymara indigenous communities to pressure the conservative authorities and their colonial-style rule over the indigenous.³¹ The Liberal alliance with the Aymara was influenced in part by the existence of an autonomous indigenous movement which defended communal land and promoted the Quechua-Aymara agenda of federalism. The existing indigenous movement provided a significant opportunity for the Liberals to create an indigenous alliance against the government forces. But this alliance proved to be a fragile one, and ties were split between the indigenous groups and the Liberal Party during the war. Polarized views of race have been attributed to infecting the liberal elite. This civil war is often characterized as a racial war due to the Aymara indigenous rebellion which highlighted the uncertainty among Indian-criollo alliances.³² Although the race war depiction of the insurgencies has dominated historiography, this portrayal often overlooks the focus of Aymara community disputes over labor, property, and political issues.³³ Despite the variegated disputes that the Aymara represented in the struggle, the Liberal Party did not maintain strong relational ties; when the Liberal Party

²⁹ Gotkowitz 2007, 34-35.

³⁰ Ibid., 36.

³¹ Hylton and Thomson 2007, 54.

³² Marcia Stephenson, *Gender and Modernity in Andean Bolivia* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1999), 115.

³³ Hylton and Thomson 2007, 56.

triumphed, their victory was over their own indigenous allies as well as the Conservative elites. The Liberal Party victory led to the adoption of a political platform that paralleled their colonial predecessors, launching another round of oppressive state forces and land seizures against the indigenous community.³⁴ Following the civil war the Liberal government consolidated its focus on economic commercialization and exportation of materials such as rubber, tin, and silver.³⁵ The privatization process was a major aspect of post-war liberal reforms which demanded direct legal attacks against indigenous communal landholding as a means to achieve its protracted economic and social goals.

The Liberal government would come to an end during the Chaco War, which took place between 1932 and 1935. The war exposed the nation as economically and socially backward, controlled by an oligarchy of Liberal and Republican parties in spite of the outward appearance of a representative democracy and constitutional government.³⁶ The war was initiated by a presidential plan involving settlement policies and aggressive military exploration of the uninhabited terrain near the Paraguay border. After Bolivian military troops were met with opposition from Paraguay the president ordered the army to attack two Paraguayan forts, a move that initiated a three-year conflict that would become the longest international war in Latin America in the twentieth-century.³⁷ The Bolivian army mobilized an unprecedented number of troops, a majority of which were Aymara and Quechua Indians and peasants who were overwhelmingly used in the frontlines.³⁸ The war ended with a peace treaty in 1935, leaving Bolivia with huge territorial losses and a resurgence of labor organizations and social movements that had

³⁴ Gotkowitz 2007, 36-38.

³⁵ Leslie Bethell. *Latin America: Politics and Society Since 1930* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 312.

³⁶ Javier Sanjinés, *Mestizaje Upside-Down: Aesthetic Politics in Modern Bolivia* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2004), 107.

³⁷ Gotkowitz 2007, 104.

³⁸ Ibid.

been repressed during the conflict.³⁹ The postwar period was characterized by unrest throughout the country; the war had provoked a rift in Bolivian middle-class consciousness, causing many young soldiers to enter politics and develop populist views. As a result, Bolivian politics was dominated by the establishment of nationalist principles that defied the ideology of the previous oligarchy and promoted a wider social agenda of popular demands.⁴⁰

The nation's economic and political goals of the twentieth century laid the groundwork for subsequent crises and eventually culminate in the 1952 Revolution. Prior to 1952, citizenship rights were denied under the *pongueaje* system of bonded labor; the system provided labor for Bolivia's large agricultural estates using indigenous *pongos* (who were largely bonded agricultural workers) as well as free peasants (who owned land yet also sold their labor).⁴¹ This system of inequality combined with years of political unrest, uprisings, and military coups that eventually terminated the existing oligarchy as a result of the short revolution. The National Revolutionary Movement (MNR) came to power after the revolution, to implement drastic changes demanded by rural indigenous movements and revolutionary unions.⁴² The period after the revolution provided an end to the direct attacks against indigenous land control and established the earliest guarantee of citizenship for the Bolivian indigenous people. The national revolution introduced important social gains such as universal suffrage, agrarian reform, and expanded labor rights. Although deemed a "revolution," the events of 1952 were not entirely revolutionary in scope; they gave rise to political developments that ushered in a

³⁹ Gotkowitz 2007, 106.

⁴⁰ Sanjinés 2004, 108.

⁴¹ Kohl and Farthing 2006, 46

⁴² Ibid., 47.

lingering system of cooptation and control that ultimately hindered the revitalization of independent political action by indigenous and popular masses.⁴³

The post-1952 state sequestered indigenous organizations, subordinating them to the authoritarian apparatus and suppressing activism through manipulation. In 1974, the dictatorship of Hugo Banzer embarked a crisis of the state which ensured continued state organized repression through a tumultuous era of dictatorships and transitory democratic periods from 1978-1982.⁴⁴ As the legitimacy of the state eroded an oppositional indigenous movement arose, articulating indigenous-campesino unionism and adopting an ideology inspired by eighteenth century anti-colonial uprisings reminiscent of the rebellion led by Túpaj Katari. Considered a Katarista-Indianista reawakening among the indigenous-campesino unions of the Aymara-Quechua valley as well as the *altiplano* (highland plateau), this resulted in the emergence of several indigenous political parties. This recurrence of indigenous-based political and ideological resistance to the state anticipated and informed the social struggles of today.⁴⁵ Shifting ahead to 1997, a national law was passed that finally opened the formal political process to organized indigenous groups. As a result, the Bolivian indigenous community was awarded the right to elect their own representatives to government.⁴⁶ This step granted indigenous representation at the national government level; however, years of organizing and social struggle would still be required for the indigenous community to obtain a strong foothold within important levels of government.

⁴³ Cusicanqui 2004, 20.

⁴⁴ James Petras and Henry Veltmeyer, "The Politics of Adjustment, Reform, and Revolution in Bolivia," in *Social Movements and State Power: Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Ecuador* (Ann Arbor: Pluto Press, 2005), 176.

⁴⁵ Cusicanqui 2004, 19-21.

⁴⁶ Kohl and Farthing 2006, 149.

The 1997 law provided a small step on the long road to indigenous political representation, ushering in a new collection of oppositional indigenous social movements that emerged across the country by 1999. These indigenous social movements represent the complexity of indigenous cultures and a variety of socio-economic positions in rural and urban locations. Such diverse indigenous cultures range from the Yuki (a semi-nomadic group of the eastern lowlands), to the Aymara (a powerful highland people who have defended their culture for more than 500 years), and Quechua (an Andean highland culture that predates the Inca empire).⁴⁷

The social movements were primarily comprised of groups was the teacher's union which became the backbone of the Bolivian Workers' Confederation (the *Confederación Obrera Boliviana*—COB); urban movements emerging from Bolivia's largest cities; and *ad hoc* committees that formed to defend the Bolivian's rights to natural resources.⁴⁸ Such indigenous groups were fundamental in paving the way for previous social struggles that focused on indigenous issues and opposed the system of governance; however, their efforts did not manage to overrun the political barriers holding resistance from below at bay. The *Guerra del Gas* changed the situation of previous struggles by confronting the existing political apparatus head on, the movement achieved this through direct resistance to neo-liberal reforms which sparked a national crises over resources.

Neoliberal Hegemony: Lessons from Bolivia

“Neoliberalism seems to be everywhere.” (Peck and Tickrell 2002, 380)

“Neoliberalism, with its emphasis on the market and consumption is not just a question of economy but a new form of civilization.” (Mignolo 2000, 22)

⁴⁷ Kohl and Farthing 2006, 154.

⁴⁸ Kohl and Farthing 2006, 149.

Rooted in the classical liberal political economy of Adam Smith, neoliberalism is a free-market economic theory that has rapidly become the dominant ideological rationalization for contemporary state “reform,” providing a sort of framework for globalization that entails extensive programs of state restructuring which span a wide range of local and national contexts.⁴⁹ What began as a somewhat utopian intellectual movement, transformed into a heavily politicized movement in the 1980s when it was adopted by the administrations of Ronald Reagan in the United States and Margaret Thatcher in Great Britain.⁵⁰ This led to the privatization of public services such as housing, power, water, and gas in Britain; and, in the United States resulted in cuts in federal spending, large tax cuts for corporations, and ultimately deep cuts in social spending and large reductions in social welfare.⁵¹ The United States and Britain instilled future leaders with the latest in Western political and economic orthodoxy, which played a pivotal role in diffusing neoliberal ideology around the world.⁵² Neoliberalism spread to international financial institutions, laying the ground rules for global lending agencies to operate in the crisis-ridden economies of Bolivia and beyond.

In the era of neoliberalism the issue of controlling the market supply and demand of natural resources has become a hotbed issue around the world. In the recent decade common property resources, such as water and natural gas, have been shifted into increasingly privatized markets. According to David Harvey, privatization has become a fundamental strategy of accumulation by dispossession which has the effect of an absolute “enclosure of the commons into an objective of state policies.”⁵³ This process

⁴⁹ Jamie Peck and Adam Tickrell, "Neoliberalizing Space," *Antipode* 34, no. 3 (2002): 380-381.

⁵⁰ Kohl and Farthing 2006, 15-18; Peck and Tickrell 2003, 381-382.

⁵¹ Mark Blyth, *Great Transformations: Economic Ideas and Institutional Change in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 172-173.

⁵² Yves Dezalay and Bryant G. Garth, *The Internationalization of Palace Wars: Lawyers, Economists, and the Contest to Transform Latin American States* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 46-47.

⁵³ David Harvey, *The New Imperialism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 158.

entails the release of a set of assets formerly owned by the state, at very low (and in some instances zero) cost, that can then be seized by private capital and used for profit.⁵⁴ Privatization has been the linchpin of mainstream international development since the 1980s; following the economic rationale that private firms have greater incentives to operate efficiently and as such can respond to markets and allocate resources better than public ones, governments have privatized their state-owned enterprises (SOEs) in the hopes that this efficiency would translate into faster growth for the national economy.⁵⁵ Neoliberalism has different variations; it is neither a singular nor monolithic entity but rather, multiple and often contradictory neoliberalisms exist. As a result, the experience of neoliberalism may differ from one country to another.⁵⁶

The Bolivian era of neoliberal restructuring has been considered to be one of the most radical in Latin America, in part because the country launched the task of market liberalization while simultaneously shifting toward political democratization—coupling these transitions ultimately increased the difficulties and tensions of both.⁵⁷ Bolivia, home of the second largest natural gas reserves in South America, has become one of the most significant arenas for neoliberal strategies and struggles.⁵⁸ For decades the country has been subjected to the restrictions of the global neoliberal system “that privileges the market, reduces the ability of the state to provide social services, and simultaneously concentrates wealth among an elite minority while it reinforces poverty among the

⁵⁴ David Harvey, *The New Imperialism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 149.

⁵⁵ Kohl and Farthing 2006, 105.

⁵⁶ Wendy Larnier, "Neoliberalism?" *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 21, no. 5 (2003): 509-510.

⁵⁷ Carlos H Waisman, "Social and economic transformations in Latin America: The emergence of a new political matrix?" in *Markets & Democracy in Latin America: Conflict or Convergence?*, ed. Philip Oxhorn and Pamela K. Starr (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1999), 45.

⁵⁸ Reed Lindsay, "Exporting Gas and Importing Democracy in Bolivia," *NACLA Report on the Americas* 39, no. 3 (November-December 2005): 5.

majority.”⁵⁹ Complex arrays of struggles that draw upon a broad spectrum of civil society have emerged in response to privatization processes. These contemporary struggles are not characterized, like many of their predecessors, by operating solely under a working-class or trade-union banner.⁶⁰ Quite distinctly, they embody a variety of social interests and unite the opposition across a spectrum of indigenous and popular sectors. The social resistance to privatization of the water and hydrocarbons sectors of the Bolivian economy represents a fundamental shift in the way that social movements articulate their demands in the neoliberal era controlled by transnational capital. These social movements represent unique perspectives and express the demands of an often excluded indigenous population. The immediate demands of Bolivian movements have presented fundamental challenges to the prevailing political and economic system.⁶¹ The actions of ordinary Bolivians mobilizing against neoliberal globalization have gained considerable attention across a variety of international activist networks. While neoliberal economic and political reforms have certainly provided a rallying point for these movements, the responses to these issues have been variegated and encompass a wide range of rhetorical tactics and strategies.

Bolivian plans for privatization were spearheaded by President Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada (“Goni”). Lozada was the primary designer of the country’s neoliberal program which was considered to be among the most innovative in the world, introducing plans that would be modeled elsewhere.⁶² The Bolivian government introduced policies of structural adjustment in 1985, a period known as the neoliberal invasion characterized

⁵⁹ Benjamin Kohl and Linda Farthing, *Impasse in Bolivia: Neoliberal Hegemony and Popular Resistance* (London: Zed Books, 2006), 2.

⁶⁰ David Harvey, *The New Imperialism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 162-169.

⁶¹ Benjamin Kohl and Linda Farthing, *Impasse in Bolivia: Neoliberal Hegemony and Popular Resistance* (London: Zed Books, 2006), 2.

⁶² Kohl 2006, 305.

by structural adjustment programs and hyperinflation.⁶³ From 1993 to 1997, during Goni's first administration the *Plan de Todos* (Plan for Everyone) was implemented which began the phase of neoliberal consolidation through expansive state-wide reforms.⁶⁴ These measures attempted to reinvent the nation by rewriting the constitution, decentralizing the administration, and privatizing the largest of the state-owned firms. One goal was to establish neoliberal hegemony at the national level that would mediate between the Bolivian and global economy.⁶⁵ A final step of the reforms involved the privatization of the main state enterprises such as the national mining, oil, gas, and telephone companies. This functionally shifted the remainder of economic control away from the state, allowing private and foreign influences unfettered access to Bolivia's economic sectors; the immediate effects were extensive, especially in terms of the supervision and allocation of natural resources such as natural gas.⁶⁶ These reforms sealed the fate of hydrocarbons to the process of privatization, returning the vast resources to a system of management not used since the 1920s.⁶⁷ Afforded such access, foreign companies were essentially given the green light to exploit the Bolivian natural gas industry—a concession that would strip the nation out of an estimated hundreds of millions, if not billions of dollars for decades to come.⁶⁸ The ultimate effect of the neoliberal reforms led to massive re-institutionalization of natural resource management—a transition that created a major source of tension for the Bolivian people and sparked the emergence of social movements challenging the privatization of natural

⁶³ Petras and Veltmeyer 2005, 184-185.

⁶⁴ Kohl 2006, 305.

⁶⁵ Kohl and Farthing 2006, 85-86.

⁶⁶ Perreault 2006, 156; Petras and Veltmeyer 2005, 185-186.

⁶⁷ Carlos Miranda Pacheco, "Del Descubrimiento Petrolífero a la Explosión del Gas," in *Bolivia en el Siglo XX: La Formación de la Bolivia Contemporánea*, ed. Fernando Campero Prudencio (La Paz: Harvard Club de La Paz, 1999), 242.

⁶⁸ Benjamin Kohl, "Privatization Bolivian Style: A Cautionary Tale," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 28 (2004): 904.

resources.⁶⁹ Although social struggle in Bolivia has been a recurring trend throughout the country's history, scholars have focused on contemporary indigenous mobilizations from the *Guerra del Agua* through the *Guerra del Gas* as exemplars of struggle focused specifically against neoliberalism (Kohl 2006, Kohl and Farthing 2006, Perreault 2006, Spronk and Webber 2007). The struggle over natural resources focuses on popular protest against Bolivian neoliberal hegemony, the history of neoliberal globalization has had a profound influence on Bolivian politics and relates to issues of democracy and markets, state restructuring, and citizenship (Kohl 2006; Kohl and Farthing 2006). The similarities and differences associated with the resource wars of 2000 and 2003 have been examined by Thomas Perreault (2006), who focused on the major factors of the protest that were expressed through claims of political participation, citizenship, nation, and regional autonomy. Comparisons have been made regarding the various ways in which contemporary Bolivian social movements have framed their demands in the struggle against water and natural gas privatization (Spronk and Webber 2007). The *Guerra del Gas* has been characterized as presenting a stronger challenge to neoliberalism than the *Guerra del Agua*. The direct confrontation was made possible by macro framing of the natural gas issue which placed the movements' demands on the political agenda and demonstrated revolutionary implications of social opposition to resource privatization. Each of these studies has provided valuable insight towards the recent natural resource protests and the crisis of governance in Bolivia. The authors have combined historical, economic, and social movement perspectives to analyze the Bolivian resource wars of the twenty-first century; their work has provided a strong base for understanding the historical and economic challenges imposed upon the Bolivian people and their struggle for resource control.

⁶⁹ Perrault 2006, 153.

The backdrop of centuries of exclusionary policies, the history of neoliberal hegemony and social struggle to preserve natural resources and indigenous livelihood provides the initial context from which the *Guerra del Gas* emerged. Drawing from many of the earlier approaches to evaluating the resource wars, my work also examines the social movement within the frame of globalization and neoliberal politics. Additionally, it incorporates a historic-cultural perspective that is based in postcolonial theories and conducts a rhetorical study of the *Guerra del Gas* and the immediate outcome of Bolivian political leadership. A rhetorical approach is necessary to gain insight on the indigenous social movement mobilizations and the discourse of subaltern sensibilities that emerged to directly refute natural gas privatization. With this contextual and theoretical frame in mind, I now turn to the particular lens of social movement theory which situates the *Guerra del Gas* as a subaltern counterpublic that combined indigenous rhetoric and anti-neoliberal strategies to challenge hegemonic economic and colonial practices.

Bolivian Public Sphere: A Turn to Subaltern Counterpublics

“Oppression and subordination are rarely suffered randomly. Certain groups of people have been more likely than others to be subordinated and oppressed, to perceive themselves as such, and to organize in opposition to subordination and oppression.” (Asen and Brouwer 2001, 8)

Neoliberalism has intensified economic inequality leaving larger numbers of people to face absolute poverty; its policies have not only created abject material conditions, but have also transformed the politico-cultural terrain in which social struggles are undertaken.⁷⁰ Despite overpowering neoliberal policies which have threatened popular movements and unsettled the language of protest, the system of neoliberalism lacks the strong consent and support from civil society necessary to

⁷⁰ Sonia E. Alvarez, Evelina Dagnino, and Arturo Escobar, eds. *Cultures of Politics, Politics of Cultures: Re-visioning Latin American Social Movements* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1998), 21.

maintain itself as a hegemonic system of governance; as such, it is subject to attack by anti-hegemonic social movements that are grounded in a number of demands which represent a combination of class, gender, ethnicity, identity, territorial, or religious interests.⁷¹

This unique combination of indigenous social movement demands has been previously discussed by scholars who have argued that mobilization has centered on issues such as class, culture, citizenship, democracy, and resources.⁷² Engaging in social struggle has historically been a tedious and often extremely polemic task. Activist groups do not always agree and the interests of antagonistic groups do not always correspond. Although disputes exist over specific mobilization issues or the tactics necessary to achieve their demands, social movements often find unity when points of rupture tie the groups' interest together. When common interests are found, antagonist groups form connections and establish communicative links; the significance of social movements lies in understanding their articulations along with other demands and struggles. Stuart Hall considers how the unity of discourse can be explained by a theory of articulation which provides "a way of understanding how ideological elements come, under certain conditions, to cohere together within a discourse, and a way of asking how they do or do not become articulated, at specific conjectures, to certain political subjects."⁷³ The theory of articulation illustrates the importance of rhetoric in relation to social movement mobilization, reflecting the possibility of converging interests through a common discourse. These rhetorical unities relate to Antonio Gramsci's argument that that diverse classes or groups can unite under particular historical circumstances, and form a

⁷¹ Stephen Gill, *Power and Resistance in the New World Order* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 130-131.

⁷² Lazar 2008; Postero 2005; Stephenson 2002; Yashar 1998.

⁷³ Stuart Hall, "On Postmodernism and Articulation: An Interview with Stuart Hall," ed. Lawrence Grossberg in *Stuart Hall, Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies*, eds. David Morley and Kuan-Hsing Chen (London: Routledge, 1996), 141-142.

collective will that may allow them to enforce their interests to gain control of the state.⁷⁴ This process of achieving state control is extremely complicated and is often riddled with conflict. Hall and Gramsci's analysis, while not identical nor always complimentary, is pertinent to the context of Bolivian indigenous social movements which have acted as simultaneous forces of resistance and consolidation in terms of creating alliances with political parties and popular classes.⁷⁵ The rhetoric of the *Guerra del Gas* movement facilitated unification across a broad spectrum of oppositional groups; this was made possible by emergent indigenous resistance from a subaltern counterpublic sphere

Nancy Fraser has argued that "conceptual resources" enable the expression of oppositional cultural identities.⁷⁶ Marcia Stephenson built from this idea to explain that the public sphere is a useful conceptual resource for understanding how oppositional groups critically engage in the practice of democracy.⁷⁷ A brief review of public sphere literature is necessary before applying these theoretical perspectives to contemporary Bolivian activism during the *Guerra del Gas*. Fraser and Stephenson critique the original conception of the public sphere provided by Jürgen Habermas, who argued that the public sphere refers to a realm where access is guaranteed to all citizens; this theorization of the bourgeois public sphere is explained as "the sphere of private individuals assembled into a public body."⁷⁸ Habermas' argument works in a purely Western format of the public sphere; he argued that the emergence of the public sphere is linked to the new social

⁷⁴ Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, ed. and trans. Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (New York: International Publishers, 1971), 228-229.

⁷⁵ Nancy Grey Postero "Articulation and Fragmentation: Indigenous Politics in Bolivia," in *The Struggle for Indigenous Rights in Latin America*, ed. Nancy Grey Postero and Leon Zamosc (Portland: Sussex Academic Press, 2004), 193.

⁷⁶ Nancy Fraser, "Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy," in *Justice Interruptus: Critical Reflections on the "Postsocialist" Condition* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 70.

⁷⁷ Marcia Stephenson, "Forging an Indigenous Counterpublic Sphere: The Taller de Historia Oral Andina in Bolivia," *Latin American Research Review* 37, no. 2 (2002): 100.

⁷⁸ Jürgen Habermas, "The Public Sphere: An Encyclopedia Article," *New German Critique*, 1 (1974): 52.

structure established by the system of trade and finance capitalism, and considered the public sphere to be a realm for the citizens' public use of reason to engage and debate rules governing the privatized arenas of social labor and commodity exchange.⁷⁹ This definition of the public sphere centers upon the individual use of reason, yet it has been criticized for ignoring the possibility that individuals could face exclusion from participation if their style of reasoning failed to conform to commonly accepted standards of reason.⁸⁰ The Habermasian conception of the public sphere has been thoroughly debated, and theorized which has led to contemporary works that guide the public sphere theory discussion away from this Western formation and toward a more subversive framework.

The counterpublic sphere is a notable theory which advanced the subversive direction of public sphere theory. Rita Felski explains the counterpublic sphere in terms of feminism as "an oppositional discursive arena within the society of late capitalism," that can be "a key to analyzing the distinctive yet often diversified political and cultural practices of [the women's] movements."⁸¹ This model of a public sphere focuses on "communicative networks, social institutions, and political and economic structures through which ideologies are produced and disseminated."⁸² Nancy Fraser supports Felski's explanation of counterpublics and provides a revisionist historiography which critiques the Habermasian conception of a bourgeois public sphere and argues that subordinated groups have an avenue to engage in communicative processes and articulate and defend their interests in the comprehensive public sphere. Fraser argues some

⁷⁹ Habermas, Jürgen. *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*. (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1991), 27.

⁸⁰ Robert Asen and Daniel C. Brouwer, *Counterpublics and the State* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001), 3-13.

⁸¹ Rita Felski, *Beyond Feminist Aesthetics* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989), 9.

⁸² *Ibid*, 9.

counterpublics should be called subaltern counterpublics to signal that they are “parallel discursive arenas where members of subordinated social groups invent and circulate counter discourses to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests, and needs.”⁸³ Thus, the subaltern counterpublic sphere provides a locus for expressing alternate ways of knowing; it is a space where cultural and political right to difference are legitimated, and oppressed groups are not viewed as objects but are understood as subjects of discourse.⁸⁴ I will later return to these three characteristics of the subaltern counterpublic sphere, addressing each one in sequence. These discursive arenas deploy communicative practices that resist the control of dominant groups, and as a result the study of counterpublics is extended to include a range of standpoints, social movements, and marginal populations.⁸⁵

Additionally, a counterpublic is considered to be ‘counter’ in status because it is excluded in various ways from the predominant means of political discourse and as a result suffers from a lack of political power.⁸⁶ This critique is particularly relevant to the case of Latin America where governmental arenas have been restricted to a privileged fraction of the population while subaltern groups and classes have been denied access to and information about important policy decisions.⁸⁷ Felki’s emphasis on communicative networks, political and economic structures, as well as the cultural practices of social movements is pertinent to establishing a rhetorical framework for indigenous social movements. Counterpublic theory provides a mechanism to examine the oppositional

⁸³ Fraser, Nancy. “Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy.” In *Justice Interruptus: Critical Reflections on the "Postsocialist" Condition*. (New York: Routledge, 1997), 123.

⁸⁴ Stephenson, Marcia. “Forging an Indigenous Counterpublic Sphere: The Taller de Historia Oral Andina in Bolivia.” *Latin American Research Review* 37, no. 2 (2002): 101.

⁸⁵ Asen and Brouwer 2001, 7.

⁸⁶ Brower, Daniel C., and Robert Asen. *Counterpublics and the State*. (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001), 3.

⁸⁷ Sonia E. Alvarez and others, eds. 1998, 19.

discursive space that Bolivian indigenous social movements occupy, as well as a means for analyzing the constitution of these collectivities and the political implications of their mobilization. Thus, the counterpublic sphere is an appropriate arena for examining the rhetoric of Bolivian indigenous social movements.

Fraser explains that the term subaltern counterpublic is coined by combining the term “subaltern” from Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and “counterpublic” from Rita Felski; since the term counterpublic has been sufficiently defined and explained above, I now turn to a brief review of the literature and an explanation of the term subaltern.⁸⁸ The term subaltern is loosely developed from the work of Antonio Gramsci, who argued that the term ‘subaltern’ designates non-elite or subordinated social groups; it is a useful term for problematizing concepts of the sovereign subject.⁸⁹ In her 1988 work, Spivak reviewed and in part critiqued Gramsci’s work on the subaltern classes; her consideration of the marginal and oppressed posited the thorny question: can the subaltern speak?⁹⁰ This question problematizes sovereign subjectivity and the role of the intellectual in the constitution of subalterns it argues that it is impossible to separate the agent from the object.⁹¹ Spivak settles on a specific definition of the subaltern, citing Ranajit Guha’s definition of subalternity which explains that social groups represent “the demographic difference between the total Indian population and all those whom we have described as the ‘elite’.”⁹² The category of the subaltern refers to more than just the economically dispossessed, the marginalized, the oppressed, or the Other; Spivak defines subaltern in postcolonial terms by stating that “everything that has limited or no access to the cultural

⁸⁸ Fraser 1997, 96.

⁸⁹ Donna Landry and Gerald MacLean, eds. *The Spivak Reader: Selected Works of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 203.

⁹⁰ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, ed. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 283.

⁹¹ Spivak 1988, 272.

⁹² Ibid., 284.

imperialism is subaltern—a space of difference.”⁹³ Thus, for Spivak, the subaltern existence in the space of difference cannot be alleviated by outside attempts; efforts to grant a collective voice to the subaltern or to “speak for” the subaltern condition only re-entrenches their dependency upon Western intellectuals, and perpetuates the logocentric assumption (in this context, the homogenizing logic) of cultural unity among a heterogeneous people.⁹⁴

Since its publication, Spivak’s question, can the subaltern speak, has been subject to a heated and ongoing debate. In response to critics, Spivak has explained that her essay was referring to the space that is cut off from the lines of mobility in a colonized country—and that moments of insurgency are moments when subalternity is brought to a point of crisis; every moment that is noticed as a case of subalternity is undermined.⁹⁵ This undermining of subalternity arises, in part, because there is “something of a not-speakingness in the very notion of subalternity,” because the subaltern occupies the marginalized space it is not possible to look at the pure subaltern.⁹⁶ It should be clarified that since the essay’s publication Spivak has voiced concern that the term subaltern has become a “buzzword for any group that wants something that it does not have,” and clarified that saying the subaltern cannot speak should not be taken literally as ‘the subaltern cannot talk.’⁹⁷

⁹³ Leon de Kock, “Interview With Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak: New Nation Writers Conference in South Africa” *A Review of International English Literature*, 23 (1992): 29-47.

⁹⁴ Spivak, “Can the Subaltern,” 84.

⁹⁵ Spivak 1996, 289. Spivak explains that “it is the force of a crisis that operates functional displacements in discursive fields. In my reading of the volumes of *Subaltern Studies*, this critical force or bringing-to-crisis can be located in the energy of the questioning of humanism in the post-Nietzschean sector of Western European structuralism, for our group Michel Foucault, Roland Barthes, and a certain Lévi-Strauss. These structuralists question humanism by exposing its hero—the sovereign subject as author, the subject of authority, legitimacy, and power. There is an affinity between the imperialist subject and the subject of humanism” (Spivak 1988, 10).

⁹⁶ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, “Subaltern Talk: Interview with the Editors,” in *The Spivak Reader: Selected Works of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak*, ed. Donna Landry and Gerald MacLean (New York: Routledge, 1996), 289.

⁹⁷ Spivak 1996, 290-291.

This review of Spivak and the subaltern demonstrates that the term ‘subaltern’ is a complicated one; yet, its complexity illustrates an integral aspect of Fraser’s conceptualization of the subaltern counterpublic sphere. The characteristics of the subaltern counterpublic relate to the *Guerra del Gas* in several ways.⁹⁸ First, the subaltern counterpublic is a site for expressing alternate ways of knowing. Thus, an understanding of Bolivian indigenous rhetoric requires an examination of indigenous epistemologies, or subaltern knowledges. Walter Mignolo argues that for the past five hundred years under modern colonialisms and global designs the economic and social forces of globalization have ushered in hegemonic forms of knowledge which subjugated and subalternized indigenous knowledges.⁹⁹ Mignolo argues for perspectives of coloniality to be adopted in order to subvert and challenge dominant Western epistemologies that have functionally erased subaltern knowledges. Mignolo’s perspective merges well with subaltern counterpublic theory in the Bolivian context. Rooted in subaltern epistemologies, the *Guerra del Gas* represented Other forms of knowledge and was informed by the particular indigenous social positions of its members.¹⁰⁰ The second characteristic of subaltern counterpublics pertains to legitimating cultural and political rights to difference. John Beverley explains that subaltern studies offers a method of intervening on the side of the subaltern, and provides a constructive articulation of “forms of political and cultural agency in the context of globalization. It entails both a critique of hegemony and a possibility of a new form of hegemony.”¹⁰¹ Thus, subaltern studies are a useful vantage

⁹⁸ Felski 1989, 171. Felski discusses counterpublics are characterized in terms of common identity and cultural significance.

⁹⁹ Mignolo 2000, 22.

¹⁰⁰ Spivak has argued that another example of how the subaltern cannot speak is evidenced by the fact that Indian general historiography has rejected the work of *Subaltern Studies*, refusing to consider it to be appropriately historical. This illustrates that a certain epistemological dimension must be factored into considerations of ‘the history’ of particular social struggles (Spivak 1996, 290).

¹⁰¹ John Beverley, "The Im/possibility of Politics: Subalternity, Modernity, Hegemony," in *The Latin American Subaltern Studies Reader*, ed. Ileana Rodríguez (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), 49.

point engaging indigenous rhetoric that emerged in the context of hegemonic neoliberal practices to establish unique political and cultural agency for change. Finally, subaltern counterpublics are characterized by viewing oppressed groups as subjects of discourse and for challenging the traditional view that subordinate groups are mere objects of discourse for academic research.

I recognize my difficult and troubled location as a student conducting academic research regarding the subaltern counterpublic of Bolivian indigenous social movements. I acknowledge that I occupy a position of privilege and attempt to build a framework that views the oppressed Bolivian indigenous groups as subjects of a discourse from subaltern sensibilities—otherwise understood as indigenous rhetoric. My argument is not an academic discourse *on* the subaltern but rather works *for* the subaltern. In working *for* the subaltern, I draw from a variety of interdisciplinary theories and perspectives rather than examining the movement through either a class-based or an identity-based approach.¹⁰² However, the complexity of Bolivian cultural dynamics and the unique circumstances surrounding its entry into a system of neoliberal governance requires an intersectional analysis when engaging the rhetoric of the *Guerra del Gas*. Such an approach considers the converging factors of social upheaval. Gerardo Otero succinctly argued for an interdisciplinary approach, stating that:

in the case of indigenous-peasant mobilization, class and identity struggles are actually inseparable. Emphasizing one or another determinant or "variable" will necessarily lead to an incomplete and one-sided analysis. If there is any subordinate social group in Latin America for which both class grievances and identity rights issues are similarly important in their constitution as political subjects, it is the indigenous population.¹⁰³

¹⁰² See Petras and Veltmeyer 2001; Alvaro, Dagnino, and Escobar 1998 for theorization focusing on singular perspectives of either class-based or identity-based analyses of Latin American social movements.

¹⁰³ Gerardo Otero, "The 'Indian Question' in Latin America: Class, State, and Ethnic Identity Construction," *Latin American Research Review* 38, no. 1 (February 2003): 249.

This assessment is a sound one, and provides a guide for my rhetorical approach to the *Guerra del Gas*. In my attempt to avoid a one-sided analysis, I build from the work of various theorists from social movement and communication scholars, to historical, anthropological, and political perspectives. Proceeding in this way extends existing social movement & subaltern counterpublic theory to the Bolivian indigenous populations and informs an understanding of the movement and its subsequent political, social, and economic effects in Bolivia.

CHAPTER PREVIEW

The following chapters provide a series of case studies that explore the *Guerra del Gas* through the lens of protest movements and subaltern counterpublics and examine indigenous rhetoric as a discourse of subaltern sensibilities. This perspective uncovers the story of a country rising against neoliberalism by positioning its resource struggles from within a subaltern counterpublic sphere. In the first case study, I examine the *Guerra del Gas* by focusing on the specific periods of September-October 2003 and May-June 2005. I analyze press releases and communiqués from the key social movement organization *Coordinadora Nacional de Recuperación y Defensa del Gas* (NCDRG), and the political organizations *Movimiento al Socialismo* (MAS) and *Confederación Sindical Única de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia* (CSUTCB). I argue that the rhetoric of the movement operates in tandem with the particular uprisings of 2003 and 2005 to represent subaltern counterpublics that deployed ethnic tropes and metaphors to mobilize the Bolivian people and unite various social groups under the common cause of attaining nationalization of the country's natural gas.

In the second case study, I shift focus from the uprisings of the *Guerra del Gas* to the immediate outcome of the movement—the electoral victory of Evo Morales. The *Guerra del Gas* ruptured the existing political leadership and ignited a chain of events

that facilitated Morales' emergence as an indigenous leader for the country. The victory of Evo Morales established a platform of change within Bolivian politics and his leadership represented a major break from past Bolivian presidents. Morales was the first president elected by popular vote, the first to represent a non-traditional political party, and the first president elect with a primarily indigenous ethnic background. Against this unique backdrop, the outset of his presidential politics were marked by his utilization of a specific indigenous discourse. In the third chapter I use standpoint epistemology and the Aymara theory of "Both Eyes" as lenses that work in combination with the concepts of de-colonial thinking and subversive complicity to uncover the indigenous rhetoric in Evo Morales' 2006 inauguration address.¹⁰⁴ I argue that Morales' indigenous rhetoric represents a contemporary application of the Aymara theory of "Both Eyes" which enables the Bolivian indigenous population to be brought out of the periphery and into the focus of Bolivian politics.

¹⁰⁴ Following Javier Sanjinés in his work *Mestizaje Upside-Down*, I use quotations and capitalize these terms to emphasize their special character as a theoretical perspective.

Chapter 2: Resisting Neoliberalism Through a Bolivian Subaltern Counterpublic

Although the issue of gas development had been discussed by Bolivia's politicians as early as 2001, it did not emerge as a major source of public mobilization and protest until 2003. In 2000, prior to organizing around the issue of natural gas, the country experienced the *Guerra del Agua* movement which involved tens of thousands of protesters against a government water privatization plan with foreign-owned firm *Agua de Tunari*.¹ When the corporation took over the water project it hiked up water rates for local farmers and poor neighborhoods. In response, popular sectors organized protests that caused the government to declare a state of siege, and ultimately forced the expulsion of the company.² The eruption of organized protests demonstrated the public's strong opposition to the dual forces of neoliberalism and globalization.³ In 2003, just a few short years after the *Guerra del Agua* concentrated enormous efforts against water privatization, gas became the magic word; representing "a symbol of all past resources lost and all possible wealth for the future. Like coca and water, the gas was viewed as a natural resource for survival."⁴ Natural gas represented the next arena for national privatization.

The *Guerra del Gas* fought to maintain control over the country's natural resources and prevent the government's privatization plans from coming to fruition. It marked the beginning of collective action against gas privatization from a social

¹ Perreault 2006, 150; Spronk and Webber 2007, 39-40.

² Nancy Postero, "Indigenous Responses to Neoliberalism: A Look at the Bolivian Uprising of 2003," *PoLAR: Political and Legal Anthropology Review* 28, (2005): 73.

³ Willem Assies, "David Versus Goliath in Cochabamba: Water Rights, Neoliberalism, and the Revival of Social Protest in Bolivia," *Latin American Perspectives* 30, no. 3 (May 2003): 14.

⁴ Benjamin Dangl, *The Price of Fire: Resource Wars and Social Movements in Bolivia* (Oakland: AK Press, 2007), 123.

movement that mounted “*contentious* challenges through disruptive direct action against elites, authorities, [and] other groups” and sought to obstruct and ultimately interrupt the activities of the establishment.⁵ The movement emerged as a subaltern counterpublic; with those who had been most excluded leading the way in terms of politically organizing and taking the initiative to protest yet another government plan to export the country’s natural resources.⁶ The movement coalesced around the issue of natural gas privatization which was commonly perceived as the source of the latest economic problems, and was a symbol of the government’s exploitative practices.⁷ The natural gas issue was able to unify the movement by underscoring the injustice of the Bolivian social condition—being poor in a land full of rich natural resources. Natural gas became the collective action frame of the movement, Snow and Benford explain that such frames “underscore and embellish the seriousness and injustice of a social condition or redefine as unjust and immoral what was previously seen as unfortunate but perhaps tolerable.”⁸ The collective action frame combined with the existing Bolivian cultural matrix and functioned as a mobilizing symbol which motivated the movement. The existing Bolivian cultural milieu lent itself to such collective action against natural gas privatization due to the “conceptual linkage between natural gas and political-economic and development models.”⁹ This combination set the stage for collective action from a subaltern counterpublic, an oppositional arena where social movement actors were able to articulate their struggle against the dominant neoliberal ideology. The emergence of the counterpublic grew from

⁵ Sidney Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*. 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 5. Italics in original.

⁶ Thomas Perrault, “From the *Guerra del Agua* to the *Guerra del Gas*: Resource Governance, Neoliberalism, and Popular Protest in Bolivia,” *Antipode* 38 (2006): 166.

⁷ Mirko Orgáz García, *La Guerra del Gas: Nación versus Estado Transnacional en Bolivia* (La Paz: OFAVIN, 2003), 50.

⁸ David E. Snow and Robert D. Benford, “Master Frames and Cycles of Protest,” in *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory*, ed. Aldon Morris and Carol McClurg Mueller (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 137.

⁹ Perreault 2006, 162.

the basic questions regarding access to land, the cost of basic services, and management of resources; such concerns were all primarily focused on the material means of supporting social reproduction.¹⁰ Since natural gas offered such structural significance for Bolivians, the strategic frame resonated with the populace and provided the movement with a space to articulate demands to end foreign control over natural gas across the Bolivian cultural spectrum. The movement offered a critique of cultural values from the standpoint of the marginalized indigenous group within society; natural gas united those from the Aymara indigenous groups of the Altiplano region to the urban, middle, and upper class groups from Santa Cruz.¹¹ Unlike the previous resource war over water, the discourse of the *Guerra del Gas* movement materialized into concrete actions at the level of the national government which ended the gas privatization plan and established fundamental changes to the existing political leadership.

Two major uprisings that occurred during the *Guerra del Gas* greatly contributed to the movement's overall success at achieving its goals against natural gas privatization, these uprisings provide a provocative case study for viewing the movement as a subaltern counterpublic. In this chapter, I analyze the social movement as a subaltern counterpublic while highlighting particular moments such as the September-October 2003 and the May-June 2005 uprisings from a social movement perspective. This approach is pluralistic in scope, grounded in subaltern counterpublic theory it combines various social movement and rhetorical perspectives to discuss the issues of coalitional politics, strategies, tactics, institutional violence, and leadership of the *Guerra del Gas* movement. Representing a unique oppositional discourse that emerged from, within, and about the Bolivian indigenous people, the movement demonstrated the people's stake in controlling natural

¹⁰ Alvaro García Linera, "Sindicato, Multitud y Comunidad: Movimientos Sociales y Formas de Autonomía Política en Bolivia," in *Tiempos de Rebelión*, ed. Alvaro García et al. (La Paz: Muela del Diablo, 2001), 43.

¹¹ Perreault 2006, 163.

gas resources. The movement also shaped the people in terms of galvanizing opposition across indigenous and popular sectors; its discourse provided a combined approach of resistance and coalition building that solidified opposition toward another state-led round of Bolivian neoliberal structuring. As a result of the 2003 and 2005 uprisings the administration that promoted such extensive neoliberal endeavors was forced to give in to the social movement demands. The intricacy of the *Guerra del Gas* and its outcomes are difficult to understand without first situating the historical context of the resource struggles and neoliberal government policies in Bolivia. In the section that follows, the history of indigenous resource struggles and neoliberal control are outlined to provide the historical backdrop from which the *Guerra del Gas* emerged.

THE STRUGGLE FOR RESOURCE GOVERNANCE

In 2003, the *Guerra del Gas* movement took opposition to then President Sánchez de Lozada, the bearer of Bolivian neoliberal reforms. Known widely as “Goni,” he had served a previous presidential term from 1993 to 1997.¹² His earlier administration implemented a number of neoliberal reforms that resulted in drastic reduction of social program and increased natural resource exploitation by foreign companies.¹³ Although these economic reforms were unpopular, the administration was able to circumvent public opposition by simultaneously passing social reforms that aimed to appease the populace. The reforms reflected a commitment toward social justice for the majority indigenous population of Bolivia.¹⁴ Unfortunately, the reality was quite the opposite; the reforms did not change existing colonial power relations and were virtually “incapable of

¹² Perreault 2006, 15.

¹³ Postero 2005, 73-74.

¹⁴ According to the 2001 census, 78 percent of the rural population and 53 percent of the urban population claimed an indigenous ethnicity. Sixty-two percent of the population over fifteen years old self-identified as indigenous. (INE 2009, <http://www.ine.gov.bo>)

changing the basic material conditions of life for the majority of Bolivians.”¹⁵ In spite of the guarantees afforded within the law books, hierarchical relations continued—virtually ensuring the marginalization of indigenous perspectives from the political process. This legacy of broken promises combined with the major consequences of neoliberal restructuring to create an impending crisis for Bolivia’s large poor sectors.¹⁶ Set against this precarious national situation, Lozada assumed the presidency again in August of 2002 and began initiating several new rounds of neoliberal policies. This time his term was characterized by strong public opposition.

Popular discontent was brought to a boiling point when the administration introduced a proposal to build a natural gas pipeline that would export Bolivian gas through a Chilean port and out to Mexico and the United States of America.¹⁷ The plan was to be executed by a consortium of companies that not only controlled the largest area of gas reserves in Bolivia, but also enjoyed the lowest operating costs for oil and gas exploration and production in the world.¹⁸ According to the plan gas would be sold to foreign importers at more than twenty times the price the Bolivian government paid; and Chile would face extreme profits from processing the Bolivian gas in its port.¹⁹ The plan was met with overwhelming rejection by the Bolivian people. It represented another government attempt to export Bolivian natural riches into the pockets of foreign companies and economies, while ensuring the Bolivian people would remain impoverished at home.²⁰ Additionally, the prospect of exporting natural gas through

¹⁵ Benjamin Kohl, “Democratizing Decentralization in Bolivia: The Law of Popular Participation,” *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 23, (2003): 161.

¹⁶ Lesley Gill, *Teetering on the Rim: Global Restructuring, Daily Life, and the Armed Retreat of the Bolivian State* (Columbia: Columbia University Press, 2000), 4-5.

¹⁷ Perreault 2006, 151.

¹⁸ Hylton and Thomson 2004, 17.

¹⁹ Dangl 2007, 121.

²⁰ Hylton and Thomson 2004, 18.

Chile contributed to the controversy. Chile was a contentious factor in the exportation plan because many Bolivians still resent their defeat in the War of the Pacific, an outcome which left Bolivia landlocked and its people outraged by the loss of access to the sea.²¹ Despite strong opposition to the Chilean factor, Lozada was unburdened by nationalist sentiment; he openly pledged support for exportation through Chile due to the economic expediency of the option.²² With his pledge Lozada effectively signed his term over to a tumultuous, violent, and protest ridden fate.

A Bolivian Subaltern Counterpublic Emerges

The *Guerra del Gas* facilitated the alignment of social forces through new articulations with new allies, creating a multifaceted collection of social groups that banded together in the insurrections of September-October 2003 to contest Lozada's neoliberal policies; and later in May-June 2005 to dispute then President Carlos Mesa.²³ These new alliances and coalitions demonstrate the emergence of a Bolivian subaltern counterpublic, one that challenged the experience of exclusion of the indigenous people in the process of national decision making about the resources of the country. Javier Sanjinés has argued that in Bolivia "ordinary people are participating in history rather than merely observing it," this unique situation is attributed to the recent development of a new "spatial environment for an alternative public sphere."²⁴ From this observation, the alternative public sphere is represented by a subaltern counterpublic which has functioned to articulate indigenous demands, unite diverse sectors around the issue of natural gas, and mobilize groups against Bolivian neoliberal hegemony. Bolivia has an

²¹ Herbert S. Klein, *Bolivia: The Evolution of a Multi-Ethnic Society*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford, 1992), 144.

²² Perreault 2006, 161.

²³ Perreault 2006, 161; Postero 2004, 207.

²⁴ Javier Sanjinés C., "Outside In and Inside Out: Visualizing Society in Bolivia," in *The Latin American Subaltern Studies Reader*. Ed. by Ileana Rodríguez (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), 292.

extensive tradition of collective organization and protest, the country has a number of social groups that have been operating in the city of El Alto since the 1950s. These groups form an extensive network that operates through horizontal organization and has a sustained history of grassroots action.

Despite the extensive experience with local organizing, there was a modest record of inter-group collaboration prior to the *Guerra del Gas*.²⁵ The *Guerra del Gas* movement incorporated a number of the existing social groups and built from the historical legacy of social struggle in the country. However, the movement demonstrated a distinct break from previous struggles by operating as a subaltern counterpublic; as an oppositional public the movement facilitated the formation of new coalitions, incorporated innovative forms of social organization, and flexibly represented various groups that had previously been excluded from the resource and social struggles.

Emerging from a subaltern counterpublic contributed to the movement's ability to build alliances that had not been previously possible or successful. This was made possible, in part, by the sustained criticism for the government's blatant disregard of the indigenous and popular sectors opposing gas privatization. The *Guerra del Gas* deployed its position as a subaltern counterpublic to circulate a counterdiscourse to gas privatization, instead promoting nationalization of natural resources. The demands of the movement consolidated support for restoring natural resources to the hands of the Bolivian people. The *Guerra del Gas* demanded a referendum to ensure that the voice of the people was considered when determining natural gas governance and exportation; it also demanded a revision of the national hydrocarbons law to ensure the protection of the Bolivian people and nation from outside influence; and finally, the establishment of a

²⁵ Raúl Zibechi, *El Alto: A World of Difference*, IRC Americas Special Report, 2, <http://www.irc-online.org> (accessed February 7, 2009).

Constitutional Assembly in order to rewrite the national constitution.²⁶ The formation of these demands facilitated strong relationships across social sectors and played a crucial role in the success of the movement. The movement against gas privatization united a variegated group that included “miners, indigenous peoples, farmers, teachers, students, and even the national Police.”²⁷ Sidney Tarrow explains that alliance formation often involves crossing a shifting boundary between challengers and members of the polity and provides incentives for new movement organizations.²⁸

The *Coordinadora Nacional de Recuperación y Defensa del Gas* (NCDRG) serves as an example of a new movement organization, and was a prominent facilitator of alliance building during the *Guerra del Gas*.²⁹ The NCDRG, or *Coordinadora*, characterized the movement. The organization worked in tandem with other existing social organizations to galvanize popular protest against gas privatization and united a broad range of social sectors from all over the country. The *Coordinadora* was not unfamiliar with the challenges associated with organizing to contest the government’s neoliberal policies; the organization was based on a similar coordinating committee that was a major asset in mobilizing diverse social groups against water privatization during the *Guerra del Agua*.³⁰ In 2003, the *Coordinadora* circulated a document called the “Manifesto to the Bolivian People” which outlined its position as an organization with

²⁶ Perreault 2006, 164.

²⁷ Suzanne York, “Bolivia’s Indigenous Revolution,” in *Paradigm Wars: Indigenous Peoples’ Resistance to Globalization*, ed. Jerry Mander and Victoria Tauli-Corpuz (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 2006), 189.

²⁸ Sidney Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 24.

²⁹ The organization has been cited with several different names, it has been referred to as the ‘National Coordinator for the Defense and Recovery of Gas’ [NCDRG] (see Kohl 2006); although the organization is referenced in various ways in both Spanish and English in this chapter I refer to it as the *Coordinadora*. Translated in English, the organization is called the National Coordinator for the Defense and Recovery of Gas.

³⁰ Kohl and Farthing 2006, 164; 173.

experience and understanding of the resource struggles, and encouraged unity among diverse groups and collective action for change:

The Bolivian people, since April of the 2000, have established with clarity and dignity that it is possible to change the conditions of life, that it is possible to dispense with and defeat those that until today had decided for us, behind our backs and against us, those so-called rulers who are blind, deaf and clumsy before the demands of the population. Simple people and workers have begun to write, to plan and to construct to a new participatory democracy, one made of organizations of the multitudes with collective and horizontal direction, where the decisions are made by all, without the leaders or political parties giving us permission to do it.³¹

Formed to organize against the Chilean option for gas exportation, the organization provided a strong critique of the hydrocarbons law and expressed opposition to the policies of President Sánchez de Lozada:

Today, regarding the issue of GAS, the people have rebelled, they are indignant of the absolutely unpatriotic and undemocratic management firstly for having become aware of the shipment through the hydrocarbons law and decree number 27,408, in which Sánchez de Lozada has given our hydrocarbons and natural resources and property to transnational companies, and secondly, in conspiracy with the Chilean oligarchy, he tries to give away our GAS, for the economic and military promotion of that country.³²

Building from its initial formation against gas privatization, the *Coordinadora* eventually expanded to take on the task of organizing protest marches and grew into a coalition of roughly twenty-one organizations including coca growers, military leaders, union representatives, and anti-globalization activists.³³ This creation of such a coalition was facilitated, in part, by the establishment of the *Coordinadora* as a tool for organizing and

³¹ Coordinadora Nacional de Recuperación y Defensa del Gas, “Manifiesto al Pueblo Boliviano,” Trans. Tiara Naputi, *Observatorio Social de América Latina OSAL* 4, no.12 (2003), <http://www.clacso.org.ar/clacso/areas-de-trabajo/area-academica/osal/publicaciones/revistas/revista-osal-no-12>. The full text of this document appears in Appendix A & B, the document was numbered by the translator.

³² Coordinadora Nacional de Recuperación y Defensa del Gas 2003, Trans. Tiara Naputi, paragraph 2.

³³ Kohl 2006, 320.

mobilizing the Bolivian people across diverse sectors in order to defeat the government and articulate the demands of the population.

Since the 5th of September of this year, continuing with the construction of those spaces of deliberation and dignity the NATIONAL COORDINATOR FOR THE DEFENSE AND RECOVERY OF GAS has established itself as a tool that makes that task possible, which has been pledged for years, where the leader of organization, mobilization and proposals is the Bolivian people.³⁴

The rhetoric of the *Coordinadora* solidified its role as a social movement organization that created unity through diversity; it called for alliance formation as a means of solidifying efforts around natural gas:

For that reason, from the National Coordinator for the Defense and Recovery of Gas we make a political call to all sectors, political parties and leaders of the social movements to establish the re-channeling of UNITY around the topic of GAS, as the only way to face the certain possibility of including a state of siege or self-coup, as has been denounced, UNITY without leaders, establishing a horizontal direction, collective, solidarity. The isolated actions, the attempted unity with verticalisms and authoritarianisms will only lead the people to the precipice and confrontation in unequal conditions, where the people will again put their dead.³⁵

This call was answered by principal political organizations that joined with the *Coordinadora*, including: the *Confederación Sindical Única de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia* (CSUTCB) a coca growers union in Chapare, and the *Central Obrera Boliviana* (COB) a workers federation.³⁶ The participation of these trade unions,

³⁴ Coordinadora Nacional de Recuperación y Defensa del Gas, "Manifiesto al Pueblo Boliviano," Trans. Tiara Naputi, *Observatorio Social de América Latina OSAL* 4, no.12 (2003), <http://www.clacso.org.ar/clacso/areas-de-trabajo/area-academica/osal/publicaciones/revistas/revista-osal-no-12>.

³⁵ Coordinadora Nacional de Recuperación y Defensa del Gas, "Manifiesto al Pueblo Boliviano," Trans. Tiara Naputi, *Observatorio Social de América Latina OSAL* 4, no.12 (2003), <http://www.clacso.org.ar/clacso/areas-de-trabajo/area-academica/osal/publicaciones/revistas/revista-osal-no-12>.

³⁶ Jimena Costa Benavides, "La "Guerra del Gas" en Bolivia. Representaciones sobre neoliberalismo y el rol del Estado en la defensa de los recursos naturales en la crisis de octubre de 2003," in *Políticas de Economía, Ambiente y Sociedad en Tiempos de Globalización*, comp. Daniel Mato (Caracas: Facultad de Ciencias Económicas y Sociales, Universidad Central de, 2005), 233, <http://www.red.org.ve/view/rocky3.php>.

political, and labor organizations played a critical role in the *Guerra del Gas* uprisings and the overall success of the movement. Ties were forged with various organizations encompassing indigenous leaders and non-indigenous popular sectors. Indigenous demands intertwined with questions of livelihood that resonated with other non-indigenous sectors. Stuart Hill and Donald Rothchild explain, “as protests and riots erupt among groups that have long histories of conflict, they stimulate other citizens in similar circumstances to reflect more often on their own background of grievance and mass action.”³⁷ The mass action of Bolivian social struggles demonstrated an emerging ambiguity between class and ethnicity; the existence of such ambiguity facilitated alliances in response to neoliberalism and made it possible for indigenous organizations to “present their rights as a part of broadly defined set of social and political issues (such as justice or human rights) that unite popular sectors.”³⁸ The unique alliances were built as a result of the alternative public sphere established by the movement; the counterpublic provided a space for discourse about the contentious issue of gas privatization, enabled the members to articulate their demands, and contributed to creation of a diverse set of strategies and tactics for opposition.

There was a shared sense among Bolivians that the national gas plan was squandering the country’s natural resources. Natural gas was the primary frame for struggle and, as a result, it was easier to build alliances that were catered to the common interests of various groups.³⁹ Thomas Perreault argues that several factors conjoined to assist the radicalization of politics centered on opposing neoliberalism. These factors included the formation of the *Coordinadora*, the relationships forged across local, labor,

³⁷ Stuart Hill and Donald Rothchild, "The Impact of Regime on the Diffusion of Political Conflict," in *The Internationalization of Communal Strife*, ed. M.I. Midlarsky (London: Routledge, 1992), 193.

³⁸ Postero 2005, 83.

³⁹ Postero 2005, 75.

and political sectors, as well as the election of indigenous and leftist political party members to Parliament; such issues contributed to the ability of social forces to align in order to halt the state supported plan for gas exportation and ultimately led to the president's resignation.⁴⁰ The scope of this essay is not broad enough to investigate each of the factors outlined by Perreault in detail; however, the observation of alliance building factors does raise questions about the subsequent issues of strategies, tactics and leadership of the movement. In the sections that follow these issues will be discussed within the context of the 2003 and 2005 uprisings.

OCTOBER 2003: A DISRUPTIVE UPRISING

Initially, the Bolivian national government continued to pursue the gas privatization option despite widespread opposition toward the plan. Although large scale protests and demonstrations persisted against the gas proposal, the government largely ignored the demands for resource nationalization. This non-reaction was a strategy of control deployed by the Bolivian government; the establishment utilized its resources to avoid significant change in its natural gas policy and its overall neoliberal ideology.⁴¹ The *Guerra del Gas* was built upon communicative practices that fought to resist the dominance of the national government and its avoidance strategies; comprised of people characterized by a lack of political power, they relied upon networks of communication to challenge existing economic and political discourse. The movement created strong communicative ties in spite of its exclusion from the administration's neoliberal discourse.⁴²

⁴⁰ Perreault 2006, 161-162.

⁴¹ John W. Bowers, Donovan J. Ochs, and Richard J. Jensen, *The Rhetoric of Agitation and Control* (Long Grove: Waveland Press, Inc., 1993), 48-49. The authors explain that the rhetorical strategy of avoidance is used by the establishment when confronted with proposals for change in structure, ideology, or policy.

⁴² I draw this conclusion from the explanation Rita Felski (1989) provides of a counterpublic sphere as an oppositional discursive arena.

It was able to establish a voice of resistance from a subaltern counterpublic sphere, one that not only facilitated discourse among subordinated groups and also provided a locus for organizing and mobilizing. From this arena, the movement articulated its objection to the neoliberal government as a system of exclusion for Bolivian indigenous and poor populations and focused on mechanisms of disrupting the state. Bowers, Ochs, and Jensen explain that when advocates for significant social change are faced with strong opposition from the establishment, the social movement groups must make choices about how to achieve their goals. This involves the development of strategies (general choices) as well as tactics (more specific choices guided by the general choices).⁴³ Strategies and tactics are important to examine since both “dictate the particular form any rhetorical discourse, action, or event takes.”⁴⁴ In 2003, the *Guerra del Gas* focused on tactics of disruption. Sidney Tarrow has argued that when a social movement engages in disruption it “obstructs the routine activities of opponents, bystanders, or authorities and forces them to attend to protestors’ demands.”⁴⁵

The disruption of the *Guerra del Gas* began in September 2003 when the *Coordinadora* began working with other groups to intensify pressure on the government by calling for a nationwide series of civil actions; independently, *campesinos* were also organized from the Bolivian Altiplano region to demand the release of political prisoners.⁴⁶ At that time protests were already a frequent occurrence in El Alto and the Altiplano region, and they rapidly spread to the city of La Paz and other rural areas.⁴⁷ Then, on September 19, 2003 a march began in Cochabamba which the *Coordinadora*

⁴³ Bowers, Ochs, and Jensen 1993, 19.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Tarrow 1996, 96.

⁴⁶ Kohl 2006, 320.

⁴⁷ Kohl 2006, 320; Perreault 2006, 162.

later described in its “Manifiesto” as an illustration of the organizing and unifying capacity of the Bolivian people to take action:

The first showing of unity and mobilizing capacity was demonstrated the day of September 19th, when more than half a million people, not only in the main cities, but in towns and small communities spanning the length and width of the country carried out massive marches demanding gas for the Bolivians and industrialization.⁴⁸

The September marches also coincided with road blockades that began cutting off the town of Sorata from the rest of the country. The Bolivian national government had been in denial, it had been avoiding the severity of the protests and the movement’s solidified position against gas privatization—a position rooted in the common identification with the experience of oppression at the hands of the neoliberal state.

The issue of common identity was established through one of the movement’s primary strategies, the strategy of solidification which is used to unite followers and includes the rhetorical processes that the agitating group utilizes to reinforce the cohesiveness of the membership.⁴⁹ Tactics associated with the strategy of solidification can include slogans, consciousness-raising groups, and expressive and esoteric symbols.⁵⁰ According to Robert E. Denton, Jr., “movements may have several slogans created to fulfill specific functions that aim at specific audiences” and the use of these slogans can “have a great impact upon the success of a movement in terms of expressing ideology as

⁴⁸ Coordinadora Nacional de Recuperación y Defensa del Gas, “Manifiesto al Pueblo Boliviano,” Trans. Tiara Naputi, *Observatorio Social de América Latina OSAL* 4, no.12 (2003), <http://www.clacso.org.ar/clacso/areas-de-trabajo/area-academica/osal/publicaciones/revistas/revista-osal-no-12>.

⁴⁹ Bowers, Ochs, and Jensen 1993, 24. The authors explain that the types of individuals who are willing to join dissent movements are often difficult to control and that the movement leader face the task of maintaining energy and motivation among members to work in unison; during the Gas War, which saw an unprecedented amount of solidarity despite formal leadership, the strategy of solidification did not experience membership control issues.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 24; Tarrow 1998, 5.

well as membership affiliation.”⁵¹ During the *Guerra del Gas*, several important slogans were adopted, such as: “¡El Gas No Se Vende!” (The Gas is Not for Sale!), “¡Basta!” (Enough!),⁵² “¡El gas es nuestro!” (The gas is ours!),⁵³ and “¡El gas es nuestro, carajo!” (The gas is ours damn it!).⁵⁴ These slogans united the Bolivian people against neoliberalism, and catered a message to the Bolivian government audience which was unsympathetic to the issue of gas nationalization. The slogans were straightforward and articulated a major demand of the movement—to end the gas privatization plan, and allow the Bolivian people to have a say in the control of the country’s rich natural gas resources. In addition to slogans against natural gas privatization, social movement organizations and political groups also crafted slogans to establish common identity and send a message of resistance to the government. In October 2003, the *Movimiento al Socialismo* (MAS) party gave a press statement containing slogans that articulated opposition to President Sánchez de Lozada and his administration: ¡No a la democracia de la oligarquía gubernamental! (No to the democracy of the governmental oligarchy!), and FUERA GONI, AHORA (GONI OUT NOW).⁵⁵ Other organizations, such as the CSUTCB, created slogans to denounce the injustice and violence committed by the administration and raise consciousness about the indigenous suffering:

¡¡FUERA EL GRINGO ASESINO DE NUESTRO SUELO SAGRADO!! (OUT GRINGO, MURDERER OF OUR SACRED LAND!)

⁵¹ Robert E. Denton Jr., “The Rhetorical Functions of Slogans: Classifications and Characteristics,” *Communication Quarterly* 28, no. 2 (Spring 1980): 11.

⁵² Dangel 2007, 117.

⁵³ Postero 2005, 74.

⁵⁴ Susan Spronk, “Reflections on “Speaking Truth to Power”: Doing Fieldwork in Bolivia,” *CERLAC Review*, <http://www.yorku.ca/cerlac/news04-05/students.htm> (accessed March 16, 2009).

⁵⁵ Movimiento al Socialismo, “¡Defender la democracia!” Trans. Tiara Naputi, *Observatorio Social de América Latina OSAL* 4, no. 12 (2003), <http://www.clacso.org.ar/clacso/areas-de-trabajo/area-academica/osal/publicaciones/revistas/revista-osal-no-12>. Translated in English, the political party is called Movement Toward Socialism (MAS).

¡¡SOBRE LA SANGRE INDÍGENA DERRAMADA JURAMOS RECUPERAR
NUESTRO PODER!! (OVER SPILLED INDIGENOUS BLOOD, WE SWEAR
TO RECOVER OUR POWER!)

¡¡POR LA MEMORIA DE NUESTROS HÉROES TÚPAJ KATARI Y BARTOLINA
SISA!! (FOR THE MEMORY OF OUR HEROES TUPAJ KATARI AND
BARTOLINA SISA!!)⁵⁶

Such messages were dynamic and full of rhetorical power; as a result they required a reaction or response from the Bolivian state.⁵⁷

The movement sought a government response and recognition regarding the demand for natural gas nationalization; however, state responses do not always entail a peaceful concession to the movement. As a movement engages in disruption to gain attention from the authorities it is simultaneously enlarging the circle of conflict “by blocking traffic or interrupting public business, protesters inconvenience bystanders, pose a risk to law and order, and draw authorities to private conflict.”⁵⁸ Despite the potential risks, the *Guerra del Gas* movement engaged in such tactics of disruption as a mechanism of forcing the government to consider its demands. During this time, the movement utilized blockades as one of its primary disruptive tactics. Creating blockades required the obstruction of roads by any and all means possible; blockades were often constructed with blankets full of rocks, small bonfires, and other debris such as trash, and tree branches.⁵⁹ The blockades served to literally strangle the flows of economic goods and services throughout the country. By blocking roads and access to transportation, the

⁵⁶ Confederación Sindical Única de Trabajadores., “Resolución de la Confederación Sindical Única de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia y de la Dirección Central del Movimiento Indígena Pachakuti,” *Observatorio Social de América Latina OSAL* 4, no.12 Trans.Tiara Naputi (2003), <http://www.clacso.org.ar/clacso/areas-de-trabajo/area-academica/osal/publicaciones/revistas/revista-osal-no-12>.

⁵⁷ Denton explains that slogans evoke an emotional response, are dynamic, and serve persuasive functions—they are the symbolic justifications for particular actions (1980, 11-12); this was the case with the *Guerra del Gas* slogans which served to persuade the government to end corporate exploitation of the country’s natural gas supply.

⁵⁸ Tarrow 1998, 96.

⁵⁹ Dangl 2007, 119.

spatial environment of the country was altered. Such change illustrated the spatial dimension of the movement's disruptive tactics, and provided the opportunity for a chain of cultural strategies to be deployed. This offers an example of how the subaltern counterpublic was able to transform the traditional terrain of occupation, opposition, and resistance; it utilized disruptive tactics and cultural strategies that challenged various levels of existing institutional structures.⁶⁰ The *Guerra del Gas* defied the government's attempt to open up the Bolivian economy by literally closing off important cities from the rest of the country. This tactic was particularly effective in not only opposing the gas privatization proposal but literally putting the Bolivian economy at a standstill—as a landlocked country much of its sectors depended upon transport via main roads and highways to facilitate the economic flows.⁶¹ With such a grave situation of economic disruption on their hands, the administration was forced to respond to the movement.

In response to the blockade, military forces were dispatched. The military deemed their mission a 'rescue' operation to assist foreign nationals who were trapped due to the blockade.⁶² Security forces traveling to Sorata surprised the residents who were participating in the blockade in the town of Warisata. The security forces made no attempt to negotiate; instead they opened fire indiscriminately and shot into homes, schools, and at unarmed *campesinos*.⁶³ The confrontation left seven dead, and an estimated twenty-five people were reported injured from both sides. The skirmish became known as the Warisata Massacre; instead of quelling the protests, the government's mission effectively radicalized the demonstrations, igniting a large-scaled

⁶⁰ It is important to note that Felski explains counterpublics as sustaining opposition both *inside* and *outside* of existing structures (1989, 170).

⁶¹ Ibid., 171.

⁶² Dangl 2007, 118.

⁶³ Ibid., 118.

campesino resistance.⁶⁴ Such widespread response was facilitated by the dissemination of the news of what had happened in Warisata, the *Coordinadora*'s "Manifiesto" explained the events stating:

Since that day the sectoral conflicts and the struggle for the recovery have intensified and radicalized, there were the first five martyrs over GAS in Warisata and the multiple demands of the sectors that reject the present government's policy of imposition and impoverishment.

In response to all these protests and signals from the people, the government has answered with repression and contempt, this has been added the generally raised order for the rulers to leave, which in practice means the loss of legitimacy of the current government, in addition there are the latest activities of politicians in appointed positions in the state apparatus that demonstrate a total lack of reality with the situation of the country and the indignation of the people against the self-appointed "political class."⁶⁵

This description coincided with a document released by the CSUTCB which called out the violent government response and expressed how the massacre in Warisata sparked more protests, road blockades, and rallies to be organized against the administration:

That, after the massacre of Ilabaya and Warisata, all the indigenous intensified the Blockades and amassed a Hunger Strike, receiving from Goni's butcher government, shrapnel after shrapnel, leaving hundreds dead and disappeared, sending into mourning the family of the original nations of the Great Qullasuyu Marka.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Alvaro García Linera, "La Crisis del Estado y las Sublevaciones Indígena-Plebeyas," in *Memorias de Octubre*, ed. Luis Tapia Mealla, Alvaro García Linera, and Raul Prada (La Paz: Muela del Diablo, 2004), 28.

⁶⁵ Coordinadora Nacional de Recuperación y Defensa del Gas, "Manifiesto al Pueblo Boliviano," Trans. Tiara Naputi, *Observatorio Social de América Latina OSAL* 4, no.12 (2003), <http://www.clacso.org.ar/clacso/areas-de-trabajo/area-academica/osal/publicaciones/revistas/revista-osal-no-12>.

⁶⁶ Confederación Sindical Única de Trabajadores. "Resolución de la Confederación Sindical Única de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia y de la Dirección Central del Movimiento Indígena Pachakuti." *Observatorio Social de América Latina OSAL* 4, no.12 Trans. by Tiara Naputi (Septiembre-Diciembre 2003), <http://www.clacso.org.ar/clacso/areas-de-trabajo/area-academica/osal/publicaciones/revistas/revista-osal-no-12>.

Essentially, Warisata “galvanized public anger against the Sánchez de Lozada administration as well as his gas exportation plan.”⁶⁷ The CSUTCB expressed the antagonism felt after the massacre, and illustrated the unity of the social movement in terms of a unified voice for articulating an overwhelming demand of presidential resignation:

That the indignation has gripped the population, Warisata has been the overflow that burst the dam of unrest and contained fury, and a single voice, like wildfire travels through all Bolivia: THE RESIGNATION OF GONZALO SÁNCHEZ DE LOZADA FROM THE PRESIDENCY OF THE REPUBLIC.⁶⁸

In addition to disruption via the blockade, marches offered another important tactic of disruption for the movement.⁶⁹ The marches and demonstrations staged by the movement were well organized, with people working together and organizing shifts to maintain the massive road blockades and stave off the violent repression forced upon them by the state. Because demonstrations can “spread rapidly from place to place and combine many social actors”⁷⁰ they were a fitting means of protest for the movement. The political demands made by the movement were focused on broader issues than an immediate resolution to the gas crisis, they were general demands made on behalf of ‘the people’ and included demands for clarity of coca eradication laws, rejection of harsh national security laws, an increase in basic wages, and rejection of free trade

⁶⁷ Ibid., 119.

⁶⁸ Confederación Sindical Única de Trabajadores. “Resolución de la Confederación Sindical Única de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia y de la Dirección Central del Movimiento Indígena Pachakuti.” *Observatorio Social de América Latina OSAL* 4, no.12 Trans. by Tiara Naputi (Septiembre-Diciembre 2003), <http://www.clacso.org.ar/clacso/areas-de-trabajo/area-academica/osal/publicaciones/revistas/revista-osal-no-12>.

⁶⁹ Tarrow (1998) notes that in the context of U.S. social movements, the repertoire of contention has widened to include diverse means of disruption; from 19th centuries barricades to the sit-ins and marches of the 20th century, social struggles have added to the means of non-violent direction action. The repertoire of contention and its diversity of disruptive means is certainly applicable to 21st century Bolivian indigenous social movements.

⁷⁰ Tarrow 1998, 100.

agreements.⁷¹ The diversity of these demands from a variety of social actors may seem unlikely to create unity; however as mentioned above, the strategy of identification enabled the *Guerra del Gas* to weave commonalities through these diverse issues and identities within the movement. In addition to slogans, expressive and esoteric symbols also represented powerful and interesting agitation artifacts that created common identity within the movement.⁷² An important symbol for the movement was the *wiphala*—the multi-colored Aymara flag that represents the diverse indigenous cultures of the Andes.⁷³ The Aymara flag is a symbol of indigenous self-determination and was waved alongside the Bolivian flag during the *Guerra del Gas* uprisings.⁷⁴ The *wiphala* expressed the importance of indigenous participation in the movement, and also demonstrated the overlap between indigenous identities with Bolivian identities. The combination of the Aymara and Bolivian flags illustrated the common characteristics between the indigenous and national popular struggles.⁷⁵ These symbols converged as “protesters repudiated neoliberal government in the name of the nation” and demonstrated that the effects of neoliberalism could not rupture the country’s long-standing history of ethnic solidarities and proletarian traditions.⁷⁶ The presence of these symbols and slogans provided evidence of a subaltern counterpublic in several ways. First, the use of the flags resonated with the indigenous communities as a uniquely indigenous artifact that the state or the administration could not control. The flag was a symbol that stood to divide the indigenous people from the neoliberal state, and simultaneously unite the indigenous groups with other Bolivian sectors that shared the frustration and opposition toward

⁷¹ Postero 2004, 207

⁷² Bowers, Ochs, and Jensen 1998, 28.

⁷³ Dangl 2007, 49.

⁷⁴ Hylton and Thomson 2004, 15.

⁷⁵ Forrest Hylton and Sinclair Thomson, "The Checkered Rainbow," *New Left Review* 35 (September-October 2005): 43.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

Lozada's neoliberal policies. Second, the slogans and symbols exemplified the activist community comprised by the Bolivian indigenous peoples, one "with divergent histories and social locations, woven together by the *political* threads of opposition to forms of domination that are not only pervasive but also systemic."⁷⁷ Marcia Stephenson argues that the importance of territorial demands as well as issues of self-determination and the struggle to achieve autonomy can also distinguish an indigenous counterpublic sphere from other types of contestatory publics.⁷⁸ In this sense, the movement slogans expressed both the significance of land as well as autonomous control of Bolivian natural gas resources; and this set the *Guerra del Gas* apart as a subaltern counterpublic. The combination of its slogans and symbols were an important and necessary aspect of the movement, they united the diverse sectors of the Bolivian population under the banner of resistance to neoliberal policies and the injustices of the Lozada administration; and ultimately facilitated the movement's articulation of demands upon the state.

As previously mentioned, the protests, blockade, and marches earned the attention of the administration, which responded through force. Police and other security forces were dispatched to respond to movement demonstrations, firing tear gas into the crowd, using nightsticks, and arrests to quell the protests; however, the more the government responded with violent means of repression—the more the Bolivian people resisted.⁷⁹ The Bolivian context demonstrates that it is indeed a gamble for an institution to say no to a movement, and "the tactic of denying demands may precipitate and generate increased power in the ranks of the dissenting group."⁸⁰ The Warisata massacre certainly

⁷⁷ Chandra Talpade Mohanty, "Introduction: Cartographies of Struggle," in *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism*, ed. Chandra Talpade Mohanty, Ann Russo, and Lourdes Torres (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), 4.

⁷⁸ Stephenson 2002, 101.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Bowers, Ochs, and Jensen 1993, 57.

resulted in escalating the power of the people in the 2003 uprising; the movement was more determined than ever to prevail in ending the gas privatization plan even in the face of government sanctioned military violence.

The movement resistance carried over into October 2003. The *Guerra del Gas* movement developed a historical pact between Bolivian labor and social organizations, and ensured protests against the gas exportation would sustained momentum through the October uprising. “Groups normally at odds with each other unified against the gas plan and the Sánchez de Lozada administration, paralyzing the country with strikes, marches and road blockades.”⁸¹ As citizens mobilized for change in terms of natural gas resources they were met with violent repression from the state. The use of violence was an escalated response to the demands of the social movement; however, when the strategy of suppression through nonviolent means proved to be ineffective the Lozada administration felt pressured to devise alternative strategies of social control. The government had previously deployed the tactic of denying the agitators’ demands. However, the simple denial of demands presented a great deal of risk for the government—especially when its opponent was a rapidly growing social movement that encompassed almost all sectors of the Bolivian society. Thus, after attempts to deny the demands of the movement, the administration found itself under pressure from foreign embassies to take action against the road blockades that were effectively trapping many foreign nationals within parts of the country.⁸² Unfortunately, the movement’s demands to nationalize the natural gas reserves were put on hold as it faced an onslaught of violence responses from the state.

Violent repression directly contributed to the formation of consciousness and embedded the *Guerra del Gas* in peoples’ daily routines. Bolivians experienced

⁸¹ Dangl 2007, 124.

⁸² Postero 2005, 75; Dangl 2007, 118.

harassment, shootings, and imprisonment for their involvement in the movement. Yet, in the face of the violent government responses, the resistance became unified and radicalized—Aymara *campesinos* throughout the Altiplano region “reinforced the road blockades and declared strikes in both rural areas and in the cities of El Alto and La Paz.”⁸³ For many of the impoverished Bolivian people there was no choice but to join in the struggle, and for the urban workers there was a great deal of sympathy for the *campesino* resistance since they also had a stake in maintaining national control of the Bolivian gas reserves. This common cultural milieu lent itself to collective action in the movement and established a conceptual linkage between natural gas and political-economic and development models; thus, illustrating that the October uprising over natural resources represented a broader demand for *national* resources.⁸⁴

Violence can be understood as a function of the interaction between protesters’ tactics and policing.⁸⁵ The interactive relation of violence also involves tactical adaptations between demonstrators and the police, especially in the face of escalating protest repertoires.⁸⁶ In comparison to other Latin American countries, Bolivia had experienced relatively low levels of state violence even under military dictatorships. This history was betrayed with successive state sanctioned violence in response to the uprising. With the Warisata massacre barely behind them, on October 12, 2003 the military killed over 20 people in El Alto and violence again erupted in La Paz on the following day.⁸⁷ The massacres created an enormous outrage that swept the already

⁸³ Perreault 2006, 162. *Campesinos* is a Spanish term that typically refers to farmers and landworkers.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Tarrow 1998, 95.

⁸⁶ Donatella Della Porta, *Social Movements, Political Violence, and the State: A Comparative Analysis of Italy and Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 211. Although this conclusion was drawn about Germany and Italy, the phenomenon of tactical adaptations is also applicable to the Bolivian context.

⁸⁷ Perreault 2006, 163.

turbulent country. Additionally, Lozada refused to comment on the deaths of Bolivians in El Alto, and had previously commented on the divisive situation of social unrest by stating, “these problems and difficulties are born of what I consider a very radical group in Bolivian society that believes they can govern from the streets and not from Congress or the institutions.”⁸⁸ The violence inflicted by the Lozada administration resulted in more than 67 deaths and hundreds of injuries in the months of September and October of 2003.⁸⁹ Bolivians were stunned at the administration’s use of violence in order to repress the protests and demonstrations. As Charles Tilly explains “repressive forces do the largest part of the killing and wounding, while the groups they are seeking to control do most of the damage to objects.”⁹⁰ This observation holds true for the *Guerra del Gas*, where the repressive Bolivian state regarded demonstrations as potential riots and sanctioned the savage repression of the peaceful protesters through the use of military and police force. The Lozada administration resorted to alternative strategies of control, moving beyond the tactic of denying the movements’ demands and into the dangerous territory of violent suppression. By authorizing such violent responses, the government effectively escalated the efforts of the movement and subsequently faced an onslaught of people, numbering in the hundreds of thousands, who poured into the streets to add to the list of demands the president’s resignation.⁹¹

Goni is Gone: Tactics of Adjustment

The October 2003 public protests demonstrated deep-seated resistance to the neoliberal gas proposal; at the pinnacle of these protests the Bolivian President Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada was forced to resign. Prior to his resignation, several actions

⁸⁸ Dangl 2007, 124.

⁸⁹ Dangl 2007, 118.

⁹⁰ Charles Tilly, *From Mobilization to Revolution* (Reading: Addison-Wiley, 1978), 177.

⁹¹ Kohl 2006, 320.

foreshadowed that the administration was about to reach its breaking point. On October 14, 2003 the former head of the government's human rights office declared a hunger strike and was joined by more than 1,000 others over the next few days; then, on October 16th over 8,000 miners began a march from the Altiplano to La Paz; finally, the high command of the armed forces withdrew support for Lozada which sent the most clear signal that his options were limited and his resignation was just around the corner.⁹² The persistence of the movement was eventually successful despite the administration's use of violence and other control strategies. President Sánchez de Lozada resigned his position by October 17, 2003 and was on a flight out of Bolivia that evening.⁹³

The resignation was widely celebrated and considered a major win for the *Guerra del Gas*. However, the presidential acquiescence did not end the problem of resource control in the country. Lozada's resignation can be considered a tactic of adjustment by the Bolivian government. Although Lozada was forced to resign due to his inability to control the country and its increasing social unrest and protests, his resignation indicates what Bowers, Ochs, and Jensen (1993) have described as the establishment tactic of sacrificing personnel. The tactic of sacrificing personnel carries risks, as an institution can suffer from the temporary vacancy and the legitimate power of the establishment can become vulnerable.⁹⁴ However, this tactic allows the establishment to disrupt the key moments of the social movement. Removing the target individual forces the agitative group to redirect its energies toward maintaining the movement.⁹⁵ Although Lozada's resignation signaled the achievement of one of the movement's principal demands, the

⁹² Lazarte 2003, 8; Perreault 2006, 163.

⁹³ Postero 2005, 75.

⁹⁴ Bowers, Ochs, and Jensen 1993, 61.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 61-62.

movement had to maintain its momentum because there was still the greater issue of gas privatization to be reconciled.

Mesa's Reign: A Presidency of Empty Pledges

With Lozada gone from Bolivia, then Vice President Carlos Mesa, assumed the presidency; taking on the role of president of a country in chaos. After Carlos Mesa assumed the presidency he immediately composed a cabinet of neoliberal technocrats and progressive intellectuals.⁹⁶ Mesa set out to create a broadly inclusive government and promised to answer the demands of the protesters.⁹⁷ His initial speeches immediately promised to fulfill three major political demands that the movement articulated during the October uprising:

(1) a referendum on the governance and export of natural gas; (2) passage of a revised hydrocarbons law that would be more favorable to the Bolivian state and people; (3) the formation of a popularly elected *Asamblea Constituyente* (Constitutional Assembly) to re-write the Constitution.⁹⁸

Mesa seemed prepared to give in to the demands; his willingness to adjust to the external challenges presented by the movement illustrates the tactic of incorporating the dissident ideology. Bowers, Ochs, and Jensen explain that incorporating the ideology of an agitative movement into the beliefs of an establishment is a risky and delicate operation, particularly because the decision makers must maintain an image of strength.⁹⁹ Although Mesa did not promise a complete reversal of the plan to privatize natural gas, his three promises initially indicated a possible reconsideration of the previous administration's steadfast commitment to neoliberal policies. This shift in the Bolivian government signaled a response that the movement had sought after, although it would later to prove

⁹⁶ Forrest Hylton and Sinclair Thomson. *Revolutionary Horizons: Past and Present in Bolivian Politics*. (New York: Verso, 2007), 118.

⁹⁷ Postero 2005, 75.

⁹⁸ Perreault 2006, 164.

⁹⁹ Bowers, Ochs, and Jensen 1993, 63.

to be the establishment's tactic of incorporating the movement's dissident ideology. Given the prevalence of neoliberal hegemony as the driving force for the political and economic structures, the *Guerra del Gas* movement expressed skepticism in response to Mesa's pledge.

The movement had been confronted with violence and repression under the Lozada administration to which the new president Mesa was associated; after enduring such a tumultuous outcome the movement was not about to be bought over with yet another promise from a politician. Responding to Mesa's promises, the movement promised to renew a campaign of demonstrations and blockades if the new president did not meet his pledge—especially with respect to the gas nationalization issue.¹⁰⁰ Whether or not Mesa truly intended to make good on his promises, it was soon discovered that putting an end to the gas privatization plan was much more complex than anticipated. The difficulty was associated in part with Bolivia's need to meet international requirements; as Nancy Postero observed, "the major structural changes demanded by the protesters have not been easy to accomplish. Bolivia continues to be bound by the conditions of the IMF standby loans, which all for increasing revenue from natural gas resources."¹⁰¹ Against these barriers, Mesa was unable to immediately scrap the gas exportation plan that his administration viewed as a potential source of national revenue. Instead, the Mesa government hoped that the national referendum would provide a middle ground between the movement and the multinational requirements.

Mesa organized the national referendum in order to develop a new strategy of gas exportation to benefit Bolivia. The goal was that with a revised proposal, ostensibly devised from the input of the Bolivian people, Mesa would be able to win over the

¹⁰⁰ Dangel 2007, 151.

¹⁰¹ Postero 2005, 85.

movement opposition. The binding referendum was to be held on July 18, 2004.¹⁰² It was said to be an instrument for determining support for nationalization of Bolivian hydrocarbons. Although the referendum was one of the demands articulated during the 2003 uprising, critics argued that the Mesa administration used the referendum as a mechanism for sidestepping the issue of gas nationalization; this effectively denied a nationalized option for Bolivian voters.¹⁰³ It was clear to many that Mesa's gas referendum was not going to meet the goals of the Guerra del Gas movement, the referendum was viewed with extreme skepticism and key movement organizations (such as the Coordinadora) boycotted the referendum, arguing that it was not fulfilling the purpose of direct democracy.¹⁰⁴ In addition to the boycott, those who participated in the referendum found that the framing of the ballot questions conjured away the option of a nationalized system; these factors contributed to an outcome of ambiguous results.¹⁰⁵ In spite of the ambiguity of the referendum, the Mesa administration proposed to repeal Lozada's contentious hydrocarbon law and offered to conduct negotiations with the multinational corporations in order to balance the profit interests of the country with the demands of the movement.¹⁰⁶ The move for negotiations signaled a blatant avoidance of the issue of gas nationalization, and effectively pushed Mesa's government into direct conflict with the forces that staged the 2003 uprising. The Guerra del Gas did not find Mesa's new proposal convincing at all—many Aymara protesters and trade unions argued that the national referendum was a sellout. "They believed the referendum ignored the clear message of the October uprising: that the people want immediate nationalization

¹⁰² Hylton and Thomson 2007, 119.

¹⁰³ John-Andrew McNeish, "Stones on the Road: The Politics of Participation and the Generation of Crisis in Bolivia," *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 25 (2006):221.

¹⁰⁴ Hylton and Thomson 2007, 119.

¹⁰⁵ Hylton and Thomson 2005, 58.

¹⁰⁶ Hylton and Thomson 2007, 119.

of the gas wells and a reformulation of the hydrocarbon policy to promote national industrialization without export.”¹⁰⁷ The referendum failed to solidify Mesa’s control over the Guerra del Gas movement, his attempt at appeasing the opposition only served to plant the seeds for another national uprising against natural resource privatization.

In January 2005, political polarization began as the debate over Mesa’s proposed Hydrocarbons Law began in the Lower House of Congress.¹⁰⁸ Mesa had to confront the tension his law created between the interests of multinational corporations and the people’s demand for nationalization; he ultimately showed his support for corporate interests by eliminating the progressive members of his newly formed cabinet and replacing them with neoliberals that favored a multinational agenda for the country’s natural resources.¹⁰⁹ This action confirmed the administration’s use of postponement tactics, which allowed the establishment to avoid unwanted change by stalling on making a binding decision on nationalization.¹¹⁰ Mesa was more concerned with cabinet members than implementing a gas law that nationalized resources; by changing cabinet personnel, Mesa delivered a discursive attack to the opposition movement, one that provided the impetus for increased pressure on his administration. Mesa’s gas proposal was criticized for scaring off foreign investment; discarded for not providing enough revenue to the natural gas regions; and was opposed by the leftist forces for presenting a solution that did not go far enough towards nationalization.¹¹¹ At this point, the hydrocarbons law was at a standstill, as a result the *Coordinadora* issued a press statement on March 7, 2005

¹⁰⁷ Postero 2005, 85.

¹⁰⁸ Hylton and Thomson 2007, 121.

¹⁰⁹ Hylton and Thomson 2007, 122.

¹¹⁰ Bowers, Ochs, and Jensen 1993, 51.

¹¹¹ Ton Salmon, “The Jammed Democracy: Bolivia’s Troubled Political Learning Process,” *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 25 (2006):176.

calling for another round of mobilizations and demonstrating the strength of the subaltern counterpublic to challenge another set of seemingly empty presidential promises:

The message from Mesa has been clear: he is not willing to continue governing a country where the interests of transnational companies are upset, because he considers it unfeasible.

For all the above, the social organizations that are mobilized, we have decided to maintain and fortify our mobilization through all the country in demand of the approval of the new Hydrocarbons Law including 50% royalties and restituting national sovereignty over that resource, the approval of the law calling for a Constituent Assembly respecting the proposal of the indigenous and peasant movement, and the immediate expulsion of the *Aguas de Illimani*, also we denounce the international cooperation through BM, BID, the IMF, GTZ and others are the real cause for seizure in the country by imposing conditions that maintain the structure of transnational plunder of our natural resources and our companies.¹¹²

The *Coordinadora* effectively announced an increase in marches and blockades, utilizing rhetoric that would solidify the movement's renewed calls for national control over natural resources. Blockades spread throughout the country, taking place from El Alto and Santa Cruz to Oruro, Chuquisaca, Yungas, and Potosí.¹¹³ These blockades provoked Mesa to threaten his resignation on March 6, 2005.¹¹⁴ On March 15, 2005 the passage of the new Hydrocarbons Law through Congress bought Mesa some time, the law appeased some of the national-popular bloc that was beginning to disrupt the country by shutting down access to most cities.¹¹⁵ Although the law did not meet the movement's demand of nationalizing the gas industry, its passage brought blockades to a halt—at least temporarily.¹¹⁶ Even after the March blockades had subsided Mesa found himself caught

¹¹² The Narcosphere, "Comunicados de Prensa 1 El Pueblo No Renunciará a Sus Legítimas Demandas: Hidrocarburos, Agua y Constituyente," Comunicados de Prensa del Pueblo Boliviano, Trans. Tiara Naputi <http://narcosphere.narconews.com/notebook/gissel-gonzales/2005/03/comunicados-de-prensa-del-pueblo-boliviano>.

¹¹³ Hylton and Thomson 2007, 122.

¹¹⁴ Hylton and Thomson 2007, 122.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 122.

¹¹⁶ Forrest Hylton and Sinclair Thomson, "The Chequered Rainbow," *New Left Review* 35 (2005) 59.

between local demands and multinational requirements, this crossfire characterized his shaky control over the country in the months leading up to the May-June 2005 uprising.¹¹⁷

MAY-JUNE 2005: BLOCKADING NEOLIBERALISM

The Mesa government utilized extreme caution toward the gas nationalization issue. On May 5, 2005 the new Hydrocarbons Law was finally introduced, it made a commitment to recover fifty percent of revenues generated from gas and oil sales.¹¹⁸ The new law was met by mass opposition from across Bolivia; it was considered by the movement to grant insufficient control of natural gas reserves.¹¹⁹ The bias that Mesa had shown towards the interests of multinational corporations and the obvious stalling on passing legislation outraged the *Guerra del Gas* movement, the law sparked a renewed round of protests, demonstrations, and blockades that presented a more radical demand of complete nationalization.¹²⁰ The radicalized demand spread like wild-fire throughout the country that set the stage for another uprising. In mid-May the organizing began to pressure the administration and senate for hydrocarbons legislation; an indefinite strike was declared in El Alto, and communities were mobilized throughout the provinces.¹²¹ “The latest uprising appeared to be a sequel to the insurrection of October 2003, with the mobilization of similar sectors, deploying similar tactics, leading to similar scenes in the streets of the capital”¹²² On May 30, 2005 the streets filled with protestors responding to the law, approximately 15,000 people occupied the Plaza Murillo in La Paz. Just two days later, factory workers and *campesinos* led a march through the city of Cochabamba;

¹¹⁷ Ton Salmon, “The Jammed Democracy: Bolivia’s Troubled Political Learning Process,” *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 25 (2006): 164.

¹¹⁸ McNeish 2006, 235.

¹¹⁹ Albro 2006, 387.

¹²⁰ McNeish 2006, 236.

¹²¹ Hylton and Thomson 2007, 124.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 123.

and a group of Aymara indigenous and other members created a blockade preventing access to La Paz.¹²³ The uprising was formed in various parts of the country in a matter of days, by June 4, 2005 there were fifty-five blockades spanning the major highways in Bolivia.¹²⁴ The uprising voiced a plurality of demands, some protestors called for a human rights trial for the violence that Sánchez de Lozada authorized in October 2003; others insisted on a constitutional assembly; many called for Mesa's resignation; and the most forceful of all the demands was the call for natural gas nationalization.¹²⁵

Despite enjoying initial public approval, Mesa realized his control was collapsing; although he did not respond to the uprising with suppression strategies, as Lozada had done before him, he soon confronted a similar fate as his predecessor. Mesa opted to step down gracefully and proposed early national elections; however this solution was strongly opposed by the Bolivian political right. National elections would require then Senate President Hormando Vaca Díez to renounce his constitutional right to succeed to the presidency, a position that he did not want to give up if Mesa resigned.¹²⁶

Over the next few days, the uprising entailed not only a plurality of demands but also demonstrated variegated tactics of opposition spreading throughout the country. Road blockades were numerous and nearly doubled in size by the end of the uprising, hunger strikes were implemented in the capital cities and seven other major areas, and hydroelectric plants as well as pipeline valves were shut down in a massive barricade to the forces of neoliberal policymaking in the country.¹²⁷ On June 6, 2005 Mesa resigned, signaling his inability to govern in the midst of large-scale social mobilization and the

¹²³ Albro 2006, 387.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Hylton and Thomson 2007, 124.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Hylton and Thomson 2005, 60.

hundreds of protests that were staged during his short term in office.¹²⁸ Protests galvanized on June 9, 2005 as “tens of thousands of miners and community peasants from the western departments of Chuquisaca, Potosí, and Oruro quickly converged on Sucre’s Plaza 25 de Mayo in order to prevent Vaca Díez from succeeding Mesa;” the *Guerra del Gas* movement did not support another presidential hopeful from within the Mesa administration.¹²⁹ Vaca Díez represented another round of politics as usual in Bolivia, for the diverse sectors of the movement this meant maintaining the structure of neoliberal hegemony that excluded the indigenous and the poor from political participation. Vaca Díez renounced his constitutional appointment to the presidency in the face of the siege on Sucre.¹³⁰ This left the country in the hands of Eduardo Rodríguez Veltzé who called for general elections to be held in December—an act that satisfied the *Guerra del Gas* movement and demobilized the uprising. On June 10, 2005, the *Coordinadora* issued a statement to the people mobilized in Cochabamba and throughout Bolivia, offering a reflection of the movement uprising and future directions for Bolivia.

It is also important to make the following reflection. In this mobilization of May-June we have seen two things. On the one hand, the gigantic force that the social movements are capable of paralyzing the national territory and avoiding the maneuvers of the industrialists and the bad rulers. On the other hand: we have not been able to impose our decisions and objectives to those same rulers who today are in the worst crisis that they can confront. Based on these two considerations we have to open up a wide reflection and debate in all the districts and communities of Cochabamba and the country, about the necessity little by little to construct our own capacity of SELF-GOVERNMENT, to promote it in the next mobilization.

Our immense strength for paralyzing the country must correspond to a great and creative capacity to carry out our decisions beyond the official institutions and the traditional parties which lead us time and time again to the precipice. In this occasion this has started to happen with the occupation of hydrocarbon wells, of

¹²⁸ Albro 2006, 387.

¹²⁹ Hylton and Thomson 2005, 61.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

the gas plants, the refineries, the next time we must also be able for it to operate for the good of us.

We will continue in an unwavering, irreversible way in this collective horizon laid out by the people for years, to construct a country for us, for our children and the children of our children.¹³¹

With this statement, the *Coordinadora* highlighted the crucial moment of the 2005 uprising in the *Guerra del Gas* movement. Reflecting on the problems of governance and national leadership, it provided the final articulation of a demand for political participation beyond the ingrained neoliberal ideology. Emerging from the subaltern counterpublic sphere, the movement argued for the continuation of collective organizing and representation of the Bolivian people within an alternative democracy that the previous administration could not provide. The national elections held in December, would culminate in a response to the movement's call for self-governance and a democratic system that represented the people.

Indigenous Leadership Styles

The major uprisings of 2003 and 2005 demonstrated a variety of factors converging across grassroots organizations and popular sectors of Bolivian society. This dynamic lent itself to a diversity of leadership for the *Guerra del Gas* movement as a whole. Instead of a primary leader, several prominent figures occupied positions of leadership throughout the movement. According to Jeffrey Rubin, "collective action is simultaneously one of constructing and reconstructing unstable meanings within social movements" this means that leaders and movement participants are often faced with

¹³¹ The Narcosphere, "A Los Compañeros y Compañeras Movilizados de Cochabamba y de Bolivia," La Coordinadora Nacional de Recuperación y Defensa del Gas, Trans. Tiara Naputi <http://narcosphere.narconews.com/notebook/gissel-gonzales/2005/06/comunicado-de-la-coordinadora-de-defensa-del-gas>.

ambiguity in terms of mobilization and political confrontation.¹³² This discussion of ambiguity is applicable to the *Guerra del Gas* since the movement did not adhere to a traditional organizational and leadership structure. As previously mentioned, the *Guerra del Gas* was a unique movement that illustrated unprecedented alliance building and coalitional politics, the unique characteristics also extend to the presence of figure heads for the movement that represented different positions within organizations and embodied distinct leadership styles. The Indigenous leaders Felipe Quispe and Evo Morales were viewed as movement leaders although both represented different organizations associated with the movement and neither maintained any formal leadership roles. Interestingly, although it is argued that the *Coordinadora* was the bedrock organization of the movement, its leader Óscar Olivera was not considered as prominent as individuals such as Quispe or Morales.¹³³ This could, in part, be related to the connections that both Quispe and Morales held within the indigenous political parties of Bolivia. Quispe and Morales' indigenous identity and political connections resonated with the movement and aligned with its objection to the neoliberal government for its stranglehold over Bolivian poor and indigenous populations and their systematic exclusion from political decision making.¹³⁴ The movement and its membership equated the indigenous heritage of these individuals to their ability to carry out the demands of those excluded from political discourse and power. Embodying leadership styles that were reminiscent of subaltern sensibilities (a point I discuss at length in chapter three), these leader figures situated themselves in distinctive ways during the movement and as a result their leadership continued on separate paths after the final uprising of the *Guerra del Gas*.

¹³² Jeffrey Rubin, "Ambiguity and Contradiction in a Radical Popular Movement," in *Cultures of Politics, Politics of Cultures: Re-visioning Latin American Social Movements*, ed. Sonia E. Alvarez, Evelina Dagnino, and Arturo Escobar (Boulder: Westview Press, 1998), 143.

¹³³ Kohl 2006, 318.

¹³⁴ Postero 2005, 77.

Felipe Quispe is often referred to as *El Mallku*, meaning prince or leader in the Aymara language; he served as the General Secretary of the indigenous CSUTCB and was an outspoken critic of neoliberalism for the movement.¹³⁵ Quispe participated in the *Guerra del Gas* protests of 2003 and the blockades in El Alto.¹³⁶ His leadership style relied heavily upon ethnic claims and calls for the formation of a nation that unites the Aymara people of both Peru and Bolivia.¹³⁷ As a leader, Quispe used ethnic tropes and metaphors when speaking and constructing his arguments, “even when accepting the new president’s request for a treaty, Felipe Quispe said the blood would run in the streets if their demands were not met, evoking the white/mestizo Paceños centuries’old fear of Indian insurrection and vengeance.”¹³⁸ Quispe’s discourse often referred to the strength of the Andean people, he drew from these indigenous cultural references to provide support for the project to refound the country—to return Bolivia to its cultural heritage based in indigenous perspectives. In 2000, Quispe founded an Indianist political party, the Pachakuti Indigenous Movement (MIP); this party established Quispe’s ethnic nationalist position that strongly contrasted with that of indigenous leader, and on again/off again rival, Evo Morales.¹³⁹ His position of fervent Aymara nationalism has been met by heavy criticism and has been considered to create division of the nation which has prevented Aymara-Quechua alliances.¹⁴⁰ The mixed reactions to his strategy of ethnic nationalism had a negative impact on his attempts at solidifying his leadership role beyond the movement. Following the 2005 uprising and Carlos Mesa’s resignation,

¹³⁵ Dangel 2008, 126.

¹³⁶ Ibid., 127.

¹³⁷ Postero 2005, 84.

¹³⁸ Postero 2004, 207.

¹³⁹ Albro 2006, 308. Morales and Quispe cooperated throughout the moments of intense mobilization during the *Guerra del Gas*; however, these leaders represent different indigenous options and have competed against one another in successive national elections.

¹⁴⁰ Donna Lee Van Cott, *From Movements to Parties in Latin America: The Evolution of Ethnic Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 77.

Quispe ran for president in the 2005 election; his defeat in the presidential race has been attributed to his contentious ethnic nationalist formation.¹⁴¹ In an interview conducted just before the December elections, Felipe Quispe spoke of his political party in terms of an exclusively indigenous membership: “In fact, the MIP has no economic resources. It is an indigenous, native organization whose only capital is the mobilization of its militants.”¹⁴² Quispe isolated his political organization as explicitly Aymara, and singled out his former comrade Alvaro Garcia Linera for his membership in the opposition party:

So he’s a traitor who had one foot in our camp, and one foot in the camp of the MAS, and he went where that suited him best. He’s a White, and like all the Whites in the past, he has betrayed our people.¹⁴³

His discourse reflected a particular ethno-nationalist position by rejecting “Whites” in favor of Aymara identity. This focus emphasized identity conflicts in terms of Whites versus Aymaras, a move that set Quispe’s organization apart from other movement organizations that focused on a broader criticism of Western ideology while building alliances across diverse ethnicities and groups in the struggle for social justice. Finally, Quispe described his conflict with Evo Morales in terms of a battle “...Evo Morales is waging war against me, because I am his bad conscience. As soon as he deviates from a line in defense of the peasants, I give him no peace,” his statement reflected opposition to Morales for drifting from a concerted focus on the peasant and indigenous struggles.¹⁴⁴ Ultimately, Quispe’s attempts to establish an Aymara nationalist position and denounce Morales proved to be unsuccessful; the movement’s other prominent leader figure, Evo Morales emerged victorious in the 2005 presidential election.

¹⁴¹ Lazar 2008, 8.

¹⁴² Herve do Alto, “‘I am the Bad Conscience of Evo Morales’: Interview with Felipe Quispe,” *International Viewpoint* 373, (2005), <http://www.internationalviewpoint.org/spip.php?article937>.

¹⁴³ Herve do Alto, “‘I am the Bad Conscience of Evo Morales’: Interview with Felipe Quispe,” *International Viewpoint* 373, (2005), <http://www.internationalviewpoint.org/spip.php?article937>

¹⁴⁴ Herve do Alto, “‘I am the Bad Conscience of Evo Morales’: Interview with Felipe Quispe,” *International Viewpoint* 373, (2005), <http://www.internationalviewpoint.org/spip.php?article937>.

Evo Morales had been an important Bolivian figure since well before the *Guerra del Gas*. He organized the *cocaleros* (coca growers) to fight against U.S. imperialism in the coca eradication program. During the *Guerra del Agua*, Morales' support of the blockades expanded his political platform beyond the *cocalero* issue to unite a diverse popular front against water privatization. The new political party he established, *Movimiento al Socialismo* (MAS) continued his earlier efforts against resource privatization and directly focused on the Bolivian people:

Thus, the poor, the disenfranchised, the marginalized, those who walk on foot, those that were always ruled, we have begun to demand and defend our rights.

From that date, we have recovered dignity to emit our voice, to raise our head and say to the powerful: NO! Enough already with the handling and deceit! Enough already with neoliberalism! We construct a new national project and provide flesh to our democracy!¹⁴⁵

The party declared to be the representative for all indigenous and popular peoples of Bolivia.¹⁴⁶ In chapter three I detail how the use of ethnic tropes in Morales' inaugural address provided an appeal to indigenous sensibilities, and illustrated his commitment to affirm indigenous ethnicity by legitimizing the axis of difference between the subordinated indigenous people and the Bolivian political elite. His proximity to the protests and his opposition to neoliberalism helped galvanize popular support.¹⁴⁷

Morales' leadership demonstrated a populist style and signified a new power of the people that represented "a public entirely different from that imagined by the neoliberal state-led multiculturalism."¹⁴⁸ Ernest Laclau argues that movement leaders are accepted if they present features shared with those they lead, this shared commonality

¹⁴⁵ Movimiento al Socialismo, "¡Defender la democracia!" Trans. Tiara Naputi, *Observatorio Social de América Latina OSAL* 4, no.12 (2003), <http://www.clacso.org.ar/clacso/areas-de-trabajo/area-academica/osal/publicaciones/revistas/revista-osal-no-12>. Translated in English, the political party is called Movement Toward Socialism (MAS).

¹⁴⁶ Postero 2004, 205.

¹⁴⁷ Kohl 2006, 319.

¹⁴⁸ Postero 2004, 208.

facilitates identification between group members and also holds the leader accountable to the community.¹⁴⁹ Morales' indigenous identity was shared with a great deal of the movement's membership; this enabled him to participate in the process of mutual identification while functioning as a key leader for the group. As a leader Morales was considered to represent the people. The explanation of populism provided by Laclau indicates that 'the people' should be understood as a relation between social agents that provides one way of constituting the unity of the group.¹⁵⁰ In a populist configuration group unity is articulated through a plurality of demands which construct a broad social subjectivity (Laclau 2007, 74); this explanation relates to the subaltern counterpublic of the *Guerra del Gas* movement which articulated popular demands from a broad conceptualization of the Bolivian people. The movement had become a nexus for diverse interests that engaged the state and international system. It incorporated a broad spectrum of opposition including: indigenous and *campesinos*' concern for land access, teacher's and professional's concern for wage increases, protests against rate hikes associated with privatization of natural resources, and elderly demands for state support.¹⁵¹ The term 'people' offered a condensation point for Morales' leadership, it enabled individuals of different classes, ethnicities, races, and even political views to invest their energy and hopes in the movement.¹⁵² Morales demonstrated an understanding of the convergence of both the Bolivian indigenous and the poor in the creation of a subaltern counterpublic that struggled against the state. His populist leadership style had far reaching implications for

¹⁴⁹ Ernesto Laclau. *On Populist Reason*. (London: Verso, 2007), 59-60.

¹⁵⁰ Laclau 2007, 73.

¹⁵¹ John-Andrew McNeish, "Stones on the Road: The Politics of Participation and the Generation of Crisis in Bolivia," *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 25 (2006):233-234.

¹⁵² David Zarefsky, "Presidential Rhetoric and the Power of Definition," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 34 (2004): 612-613. My use of 'condensation point' parallels Zarefsky's explanation of condensation symbols that provide no clear referent but instead "'condense' a host of different meanings and connotations that otherwise might diverge."

his continued leadership position within the country. The MAS party, with Morales as its leader, emerged after the *Guerra del Gas* as the defender of indigenous rights and sought to avenge the troubled history of oppression and indignities inflicted upon the Bolivian people.

Ending Blockades, Beginning an Indigenous Presidency

The departure of Lozada and subsequent resignation of Carlos Mesa provide a sound example of the power of the Bolivian people and the strength of the subaltern counterpublic to craft a discourse that would unite the oppressed people against the economic weapons of neoliberalism. Although the *Guerra del Gas* movement struggled to stave off government sponsored brutality, the result of grassroots organizing, marches, protests, and blockades were successful in terms of achieving the immediate demand for President Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada's resignation. On one hand, the resignation signaled a win for the movement by demonstrating that social opposition in the 2003 uprising had the capacity to achieve concrete gains at the level of national politics. On the other hand, the subsequent presidential term under Carlos Mesa presented another round of neoliberal policymaking while paying lip service to the demands of the movement. As a response to this politics-as-usual, the movement renewed its resistance efforts in 2005 which led to Mesa's resignation.

Such victories were made possible by the movement's emergence from the subaltern counterpublic sphere to articulate a counter hegemonic discourse; the movement rhetoric resonated with the subordinated and marginalized groups of Aymara and Quechua people, and forged ties across distinctive labor groups and economic sectors. Coalescing around the issue of natural gas and the demand for political inclusion of the indigenous and poor sectors of the country united the people together in uprisings that occurred without official leaders or an overarching organizational structure. Even in

the absence of concrete movement leadership, the events of the *Guerra del Gas* left Bolivia in need of a new political leadership at the national level. After Mesa's resignation the country was in search of a leader that understood the movement's struggle against neoliberal hegemony, represented the indigenous and poor sectors, and could provide a force of resistance for change from within the national government. The country would find their leader in Evo Morales. In the chapter that follows, I provide an in-depth analysis of the rhetoric of subalterity of Evo Morales, the man who emerged from the fragmented political arena that followed the *Guerra del Gas* to unify the remnants of democracy from within the Bolivian presidential office.

Chapter 3: Indigenous Rhetoric: Double Vision in Evo Morales' Inauguration Address

Evo Morales victory in the 2005 presidential election was a landmark event in the Bolivian politics. It marked an unprecedented victory for a presidential candidate who belonged to the country's indigenous community and was of great symbolic importance following the *Guerra del Gas*. The victory signified a shift toward indigenous political power and was a herald for the new directions in economic and social policies. As the first indigenous leader Morales defied traditional political precedent and established his own precedent by opposing the colonial state of government and targeting the neoliberal ideology for its stranglehold on the Bolivian economy and people. President Evo Morales' inauguration speech given on January 22, 2006 presents an insightful example of indigenous rhetoric. As explained in chapter one, indigenous rhetoric embodies a discourse of subaltern sensibilities and is grounded in subaltern epistemology. In the beginning part of his speech, Morales recognizes his location and acknowledges those that have helped him along his path to leadership:

To all the Bolivian people, greetings from here, thanks to my parents, may they rest in peace, I am convinced that they continue with me and continue helping me. Thanks to God, and to Pachamama for having gave me this opportunity to lead the country. To all of you many thanks; thanks to you all I am where I am and thanks to the popular movement, to the indigenous movement in Bolivia and the Americas.¹⁵³

Here he offers gratitude and respect for the Bolivian people, gives thanks to God and the indigenous goddess Pachamama (Mother World), and finally to the indigenous and popular movements. From the outset, his discourse provides recognition for the country's

¹⁵³ Evo Morales, "Mandaré Obedeciendo." In *La Revolución Democrática y Cultural: Diez Discursos de Evo Morales*. Trans. Tiara Naputi (Bolivia: Editorial Malatesta, 2006), 21. All quotations from the inaugural address appear in Appendices C & D, paragraphs were numbered by the translator.

indigenous roots that have influenced and supported him as well as social movements. Additionally, Morales discussed the experience of oppression that has pierced Bolivian history; his speech fuses that history together with the present-day struggles and triumphs of indigenous people like him:

This morning, at dawn, with much joy I have seen some sisters and brothers singing in the historical Murillo Plaza, the Murillo Plaza like the San Francisco Plaza, when 40 to 50 years ago we did not have the right to enter the San Francisco Plaza or the Murillo Plaza. For 40, 50 years our ancestors did not have the right to walk on the sidewalks. That is our history that is our experience.¹⁵⁴

From these initial statements Morales provides an indication of his subaltern sensibilities by focusing on his indigenous experience, recognizing Bolivia's history of oppression, and acknowledging the contemporary indigenous and popular social movements for their sustained efforts. The inaugural address is an important case study for rhetorical scholars; it not only contributes to an understanding of Morales' outlook on Bolivian politics as grounded in indigenous perspectives and utilizing subversive means to achieve its ends, but also illuminates a particularly subaltern standpoint emerging from within a political arena that had never before experienced such a unique rhetorical style. In combination with his rhetoric, Morales' actual practice helps bring the concept of the subaltern into a new light, justifying the study of his inaugural address as a practical and rhetorical artifact that connects subaltern subjectivities to wider political frameworks. The speech accomplished these connections by carefully balancing Morales' acceptance of the position as the first indigenous president of the country, laying the framework for vast changes within the country, and establishing a critique of colonialism and the history of oppression from the West. An examination of Morales' speech-making contributes to rhetorical and Latin American scholarship by providing a way of viewing indigenous rhetoric that operates as a call for change within national and international politics.

¹⁵⁴ Morales 2006, Trans. Tiara Naputi, paragraph 2.

This chapter provides an analysis of Evo Morales' inaugural address as a unique discursive act that deploys indigenous rhetoric to establish an overarching criticism of the West and bring the Bolivian subaltern population out of the periphery and into politics.¹⁵⁵ I establish the theoretical frame of indigenous rhetoric by first developing standpoint epistemology and then tracing the historical and theoretical underpinnings associated with the Aymara theory of "Both Eyes," de-colonial thinking, and subversive complicity; because of their grounding in subaltern perspectives and epistemology each of these theories form an integral part of Morales' indigenous rhetoric and contributes to a unique discourse which integrates indigenous perspectives that have been marginalized from Bolivian politics.¹⁵⁶ Before examining the indigenous rhetoric in the speech, a brief biography of Evo Morales as a rhetor is necessary. In the following sections I provide a biographical account of Evo Morales that situates him within the historical-cultural background surrounding his election and illuminates his subaltern standpoint. Then, I outline in detail the critical perspective of indigenous rhetoric which encompasses standpoint epistemology, the Aymara theory of "Both Eyes," and the theories of de-colonial thinking and subversive complicity. Finally, I apply this theoretical framework to evaluate the indigenous rhetoric at work in Morales' 2006 inaugural address.

Evo Morales: Biography of a Rhetor

In order to understand Morales' indigenous roots, we must consider his upbringing and entry into politics. Evo Morales was born on October 26, 1959 in the rural community of Orinoca, a Bolivian high plane region inhabited mostly by the

¹⁵⁵ For the purposes of this chapter, I analyze the first six pages of Morales' inaugural address. In Appendix C, I have provided the original text of his speech (in Spanish); and I provide my own English translation of the text in Appendix D.

¹⁵⁶ I deliberately capitalize these terms and place them in quotations in order to make ordinary terms conspicuous and emphasize their special character as a theoretical perspective.

indigenous Aymara people who live and work off the land.¹⁵⁷ His parents were coca farmers who gave birth to seven children, only three of whom survived to adulthood. Morales had always spoken his ancestral language Aymara, so when he encountered school for the first time he barely understood the Spanish language and after falling behind he was forced to quit.¹⁵⁸ Later he attended school again, this time at an impoverished rural school like many others that were designated for the indigenous communities at that time.

In the 1980s Morales moved to work in the coca fields in the Chapare region of Cochabamba; it is here that he began his work as a political and union leader.¹⁵⁹ He worked with a union of coca growers and quickly advanced to positions of leadership.¹⁶⁰ Morales articulated the demands of the coca union, declaring the need to preserve the coca plant which has been used among the Aymara and Quechua populations of Bolivia for centuries. The practice of using the leaves for medicine, religious offerings, and sustenance continues today; coca is vital to the traditional lifestyle and social rights of the indigenous population.¹⁶¹ However, coca is not viewed as a social right by everyone; previously, United States' coca eradication efforts targeted Bolivia to quell its production into cocaine and subsequent use in the U.S. The Bolivian government cooperated with the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), leaving the coca unions to struggle against an institutional partnership that was destroying the only source of income and cultural heritage for the Bolivian indigenous people. Morales met with government officials to

¹⁵⁷ Jubenal Quispe, "Evo Morales: Indigenous Power" *YES! Magazine*, Summer 2007, <<http://www.yesmagazine.org/article.asp?ID=1732>>.

¹⁵⁸ Quispe, 2007.

¹⁵⁹ Quispe, 2007.

¹⁶⁰ Watson Institute for International Studies, "Evo Morales –From the Andes: New Visions, New Voices," April 22, 2008, <http://www.watsoninstitute.org/events_detail.cfm?id=1127>.

¹⁶¹ Jorge Hurtado Gumucio, *Cocaine the Legend: About Coca Leaves and Cocaine* (La Paz: Hisbol, 1995), <http://www.drugtext.org/library/books/hurtado/default.htm> (accessed December 1, 2008).

represent the union's resistance to coca eradication policies. In the mid-1990s Morales' opposition culminated in his leadership to transform the *Instrumento Político por la Soberanía de los Pueblos* (IPSP), a united organization of farmers and indigenous people, into a national political organization called the *Movimiento al Socialismo* (MAS).¹⁶² After founding MAS, Morales was elected as the party's representative to the Bolivian National Assembly. During his first year in Congress he defended the coca plant as a sacred symbol of sovereignty for the Bolivian indigenous people. He spoke out against the DEA's military enforced eradication efforts, and spoke in favor of an indigenous armed resistance of the eradication troops.¹⁶³ Morales' actions solicited a warning from Bolivian high authorities, and culminated in his removal from Congress in January of 2002. This expulsion was later declared unconstitutional by the Constitutional Tribunal.¹⁶⁴

By November of 2002, Morales returned to the political scene as the MAS presidential candidate; the party took second place losing by a very small margin.¹⁶⁵ Following the 2002 election Bolivia suffered turbulent national leadership as Sánchez de Lozada and then Carlos Mesa struggled to govern in the midst of the *Guerra del Gas* uprisings; this forced early general elections in December 2005.¹⁶⁶ When Morales campaigned again for president, his platform focused on nationalization of Bolivia's natural gas reserves and relations with the United States. He overtly opposed the U.S.

¹⁶² Luis Gómez, "Bolivia: The Power of the People," July 11, 2002.

<http://www.narconews.com/Issue22/harvest1.html>. Translated to English, IPSP is the Political Tool for the Sovereignty of the Common People, and MAS is Movement Toward Socialism.

¹⁶³ Jubenal Quispe. "Evo Morales: Indigenous Power" *YES! Magazine*, Summer 2007, <http://www.yesmagazine.org/article.asp?ID=1732>.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Donna Lee Van Cott. "From Exclusion to Inclusion: Bolivia's 2002 Elections" *Journal of Latin American Studies* 35 (2003), 751-775.

¹⁶⁶ Matthew M. Singer. "The Presidential and Parliamentary Elections in Bolivia, December 2005" *Electoral Studies* 26 (2007) 196-231.

government, and separated himself from other candidates by situating the MAS party as representing the voice of the disadvantaged and the only one concerned with reducing social conflicts.¹⁶⁷ Morales countered the other candidates' expensive campaigns and publicity by attending indigenous events to receive blessings and free media coverage; at these events, he openly expressed opposition to the United States and neoliberalism.

By focusing on the Bolivian indigenous population, the issue of natural gas nationalization, and critiquing neoliberal policies Morales' campaign resonated with the Bolivian populace that organized and struggled during the *Guerra del Gas* movement. His campaign strategy succeeded and won the election with a landslide victory. The voter turnout rate was the highest it had been in any Bolivian presidential election; at 84.5% it was certainly an indication that the public supported Morales' re-entry into politics.¹⁶⁸ As chapter two explained, Bolivian politics in the years preceding Morales' election were characterized by tumultuous leadership, government violations of the constitution, and military coups. Advocating for change, Morales' victory challenged the history of corruption and faltering democracy. His leadership presented a major break from past Bolivian presidents: he was the first president elected by popular vote, the first to represent a non-traditional political party, and the first president elect with a primarily indigenous ethnic background.¹⁶⁹ This historical-cultural context of Bolivian politics created the backdrop from which Morales emerged to present his inaugural address.

A day before his congressional inauguration, Morales participated in an indigenous ceremony held at the pre-Inca ruins of Tiwanaku. An estimated 25,000 supporters were in attendance as Morales was blessed by Aymara priests, a symbol of his recognition as the leader for Bolivia's indigenous peoples. Morales was barefoot and

¹⁶⁷ Singer 2007, 202.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 204.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

dressed in traditional clothing.¹⁷⁰ He exuded a style that aligned him with the Bolivian indigenous people.¹⁷¹ This personal style reinforced his subversive image and persona; his manner of dress reflected his indigenous heritage and symbolized his refusal to succumb to the outside culture of the West.¹⁷²

On Sunday, January 22, 2006, the day after his indigenous ceremony, Morales gave his inauguration address. The audience included political leaders from Spain, Brazil, Venezuela, and a representative from the European Union; he spoke directly to the “international press,” an indication that his speech was being delivered to a wide ranging audience beyond the foreign dignitaries who were present.¹⁷³ He also spoke directly to indigenous brothers, the people who had joined the MAS party, the Andean people, as well as the participants of the *Guerra del Gas* who represented the popular and indigenous social sectors.¹⁷⁴ His speech concentrated on conveying a message to a comprehensive audience—to all Bolivian people, Latin America, and the broader international arena.¹⁷⁵ Insofar as Morales' success came from the political participation of marginalized peoples, his indigenous rhetoric can be helpfully read as a discourse of subaltern sensibilities. It is to the concept of indigenous rhetoric that I now turn.

¹⁷⁰ Tom Hennigan, “Leader takes power from earth god on ancient site,” *The Times* (London), January 23, 2006, <https://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,11069-2005124,00.html>.

¹⁷¹ At the congressional inauguration Morales wore another traditional garment, a striped alpaca sweater, which he also wore in early 2006 during his diplomatic tour to visit with European leaders (see *Spiegel Online*, “Indian, coca farmer, Bolivian president” May 2, 2006)

¹⁷² Marcela Sanchez, “What’s in a Tie? Evo Morales Raises the Question,” *The Washington Post*, January 13, 2006, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/01/12/AR2006011201138.html>.

¹⁷³ *BBC News*, “Bolivia's new leader vows change” January 22, 2006, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/americas/4636190.stm>.

¹⁷⁴ Morales 2006, Trans. Tiara Naputi. See Appendices C & D, paras. 1, 4, 5, & 12.

¹⁷⁵ Despite the intentionally broad scope of Morales’ audience, the transcript for his address is only available in Spanish; although excerpts of his speech have appeared in English news sources (see *BBC News*), the immediate international audience was limited to those individuals who could speak or read Spanish fluently.

‘SEEING’ INDIGENOUS RHETORIC: MORALES’ DOUBLE VISION

In chapter one I introduced the concept of indigenous rhetoric as a discourse of subaltern sensibilities. In this section I establish the theoretical frame of indigenous rhetoric and employ the term subaltern that was discussed in the introduction. This chapter avoids the danger of logocentrism described by Spivak; rather than attempt to describe the indigenous culture from my own standpoint as a scholar influenced and trained in Western traditions, the focus here is upon Morales’ standpoint and utilizes his discourse as an embodiment of the subaltern condition.¹⁷⁶ Morales does not attempt to speak for the indigenous people but rather speaks from the perspective of the subaltern, identifying himself as Aymara he positions himself among the indigenous subaltern population in Bolivia.

By speaking from the perspective of the subaltern, Morales exemplifies standpoint epistemology which is considered to be an organic way of perceiving the world that “can rise whenever oppressed people gain public voice.”¹⁷⁷ Standpoint epistemology challenges us to see and understand the world through the eyes and experiences of the oppressed and applies the vision and knowledge of the oppressed to social activism and social change; it is both an approach to knowledge construction and a call to political action.¹⁷⁸ The vision and knowledge that Morales’ speech provides in terms of Bolivian politics can be better understood through the lens of standpoint epistemology and will be explored in conjunction with the Bolivian indigenous theory of

¹⁷⁶ I am referring to the earlier discussion of the subaltern condition and the homogenizing logic that often results from attempts to give collective voice to the subaltern, see Introduction chapter pages 27-28.

¹⁷⁷ Sandra Harding, “Introduction: Standpoint Theory as a Site of Political, Philosophic, and Scientific Debate,” in *The Feminist Standpoint Theory Reader: Intellectual and Political Controversies*, ed. Sandra Harding (Florence: Routledge, 2003), 3.

¹⁷⁸ Abigail Brooks, “Feminist Standpoint Epistemology: Building Knowledge and Empowerment Through Women’s Lived Experience,” in *Feminist Research Practice: A Primer*, eds. Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber and Patricia Lina Leavy. (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2007), 55.

“Both Eyes.” Javier Sanjinés proposes that the Aymara theory of “Both Eyes” offers a new way to see through subaltern sensibilities; and provides a double vision which must come “from the perspective of subalternity, from decolonization, and therefore from a new epistemological terrain on which the Other’s way of seeing works.”¹⁷⁹ In the sections that follow I establish the theoretical framework of the theory of “Both Eyes,” and posit the combined theories of “de-colonial thinking” (Mignolo 2007, 46), and “subversive complicity” (Grosfoguel 2003, 9) to enrich and complicate the theoretical perspective for analyzing Morales’ inaugural address. I argue that these theories work in tandem, and their convergence provides a means of viewing the indigenous rhetoric that Morales’ discourse evinces. This theoretical framework illuminates Morales’ perspective of subalterity and demonstrates a sort of double vision offered in his speech.

The first concept in the theoretical framework is the theory of “Both Eyes” the history of which relates back to the Peasant-Military Pact that codified military control over much of the Bolivian countryside, maintaining militaristic dominance over the indigenous people and their lands until the 1970s. When the pact ended numerous autonomous indigenous organizations emerged for the first time.¹⁸⁰ The most significant was *Katarismo* which focused on recovering Aymara identity and used the Aymara theory of “Both Eyes” to challenge the historical linkage of indigenous peasants to the state (through trade unions and peasant militia movements, particularly in the Quechua zones around Cochabamba).¹⁸¹ By promoting a specifically indigenous identity, the movement challenged the single-eyed view of *mestizaje*, the process of indigenous and Spanish intermixing in order to create a synthesis of both racial and national dimensions

¹⁷⁹ Javier Sanjinés C., *Mestizaje Upside-Down: Aesthetic Politics in Modern Bolivia* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2004), 31.

¹⁸⁰ Rex A. Hudson and Dennis M. Hanratty, eds., *Bolivia: A Country Study* (Washington: GPO for the Library of Congress, 1989), <http://countrystudies.us/bolivia/>.

¹⁸¹ Sanjinés C., *Mestizaje Upside-Down*, 14.

that has expressed the ideal image of the nation since the mid-twentieth century.¹⁸² Through its opposition to the singular *mestizaje* perspective, the *Katarismo* movement recuperated the second eye that had been blinded against looking back on the anti-colonial struggles of the past; the second eye recovery entailed a reintegration of the colonial past into reflections on the present and a confrontation of the singular Western perspective.¹⁸³ The second eye concept was promoted by university educated indigenous intellectuals who argued that Bolivia could never be successfully understood as long as the perspective of the *mestizo-criollo* sector continued to impose its single eye of reason.¹⁸⁴ Thus, *Katarismo* is credited with perceiving the continuity of colonialism that characterizes the other side of modernity, and seeing that politically the Aymara formed a national ethnic majority; these two significant ideological achievements provide the lens for understanding subaltern consciousness, an issue that will be returned to in later sections of this chapter.¹⁸⁵

De-colonial thinking is the second concept that converges within the theoretical framework; it offers an-other critical theory, an-other epistemology that emerged from the critical foundation in Latin America established by José Carlos Mariátegui in the 1920s, and spread dependency theory and philosophy of liberation through Latin America in the 1970s. The concept traces back to indigenous populations such as the Quechua and Aymara—it has historically been a perspective adopted by the indigenous people and has emerged as an indigenous strategy in contemporary Bolivian politics. For Walter

¹⁸² Ibid., 2.

¹⁸³ Modern Western culture is dominated by the visual, and is grounded heavily in Cartesian perspectivism where one eye—the mind’s eye—creates a singular point of view, and follows a static logic of the “gaze” rather than the “glance” (Sanjinés 2004, 23 & 28).

¹⁸⁴ Xavier Álbo. “From MNRistas to Kataristas to Katari.” In *Resistance, Rebellion, and Consciousness in the Andean Peasant World, 18th to 20th Centuries*. Ed. Steve Stern (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987), 402.

¹⁸⁵ Silvia Rivera, *Oppressed But Not Defeated: Peasant Struggles Among the Aymara and Qhechwa in Bolivia, 1900-1980* (Geneva: UNRISD, 1983), 164.

Mignolo, de-colonial thinking involves rupturing the foundation of Western concepts and accumulation of knowledge in order to create an epistemic shift among the people who have been oppressed by Western imperial history.¹⁸⁶ The concept is also explained as requiring a dual strategy of “unveiling the logic of coloniality” and “de-linking from the totalitarian effects of Western categories of thoughts and subjectivity.”¹⁸⁷ Mignolo draws from Bahktin’s concept of dialogism which formulates discourse as double-voiced and capable of accounting for someone else’s words, and argues that language provides the capacity for looking through the eyes of another.¹⁸⁸ It is a colonial subaltern epistemology that is anchored in double consciousness.¹⁸⁹ For Javier Sanjinés, double consciousness refers to the “epistemology from which the colonized thinker learns the consciousness of the colonizer and the colonized at once, while the colonizer only knows his [*sic*] own monotopical consciousness and can only visualize events from his [*sic*] own, exclusive, Eurocentric perspective.”¹⁹⁰ This understanding of double consciousness is very similar to W.E.B. DuBois’ notion of the same term, which is explained as the sense of always looking at one’s self through the eyes of others, of feeling an ever present two-ness.¹⁹¹ Such two-ness can be seen in the double world in which the indigenous lived (and lives) in Latin America.¹⁹² The explanation of double consciousness provided by both Sanjinés and DuBois directly connects with de-colonial thinking in the Bolivian context. Morales’

¹⁸⁶ Walter D. Mignolo, “The De-colonial Option and the Meaning of Identity in Politics,” *Anales* 9-10 (2007):45-46.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 60.

¹⁸⁸ Mikhail Bahktin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, Trans. Caryl Emerson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 186-187.

¹⁸⁹ Walter D. Mignolo, “Introduction: Coloniality of Power and De-Colonial Thinking.” *Cultural Studies* 21(2007): 165.

¹⁹⁰ Sanjinés 2004, 54.

¹⁹¹ W.E.B. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folks*. (Chicago: A.C. McClURG & Co., 1903), <http://www.bartleby.com/114/index.html> (accessed December 1, 2008), 3.

¹⁹² W.E. B. DuBois quoted in David J. Hellwig, *African American Reflections on Brazil's Racial Paradise* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992), 163-164.

inaugural address brought the approach of de-colonial thinking to the forefront by representing a rupture with Western imperialism in favor of supporting oppressed peoples, and offering an epistemology grounded in subaltern experiences. The events that culminated in his electoral victory demonstrated “some of the most visible signs today of the de-colonial option.”¹⁹³ If de-colonial thinking is grounded in double consciousness, understood as a necessary condition for subaltern subjectivities to challenge the singular perspective of colonialism, then it is particularly salient for exploring the indigenous rhetoric of Morales’ inaugural address.

De-colonial thinking closely relates to subversive complicity with the system, the third concept of the theoretical framework, which is concerned with the representation of hybrid, transcultural forms of knowledge that intersect the traditional and the modern.¹⁹⁴ Subversive complicity is a de-colonial theory that functions as a form of resistance to dominant knowledge forms, challenges Eurocentric rationality, and places subaltern subjectivities at the center of the process of knowledge production. Specifically, Ramón Grosfoguel explains:

[t]he strategy of subversive complicity would imply the radical resignification of the symbols of U.S. hegemonic discourses in the region such as democracy, civil rights, and equal opportunities. This means using a democratic discourse rather than a socialist discourse, but resignifying it in a radical democratic direction. This is subversion from within the dominant discourses.¹⁹⁵

By resignifying dominant symbols and centering the Bolivian indigenous subaltern, Morales’ speech exemplifies the strategy of subversive complicity with the system. His address demonstrated subversive complicity by focusing on the indigenous population as the Bolivian subaltern:

¹⁹³ Mignolo, “The De-colonial Option,” 46.

¹⁹⁴ Ramón Grosfoguel, *Colonial Subjects: Puerto Ricans in a Global Perspective* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 20.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 72.

We are obligated to perform a great reminiscence about the indigenous movement, about the situation of the colonial period, about the republican period and the period of neoliberalism. Indigenous peoples – who are the majority of the Bolivian population, so that the international press and guests know, according to the latest census of 2001, 62.2% are Aymaras, Quechuas, Mojeños, Chipayas, Muratos, and Guaraníes. These people, we have historically been marginalized, humiliated, hated, unappreciated, and condemned to extinction. That is our history; they never recognized these people as human beings, that these people are absolute owners of this noble earth, of its natural resources.¹⁹⁶

Morales' perspective enables the Bolivian subaltern to be seen; his language draws attention to the indigenous subjects and criticizes their marginalization to the periphery. Beginning from the perspective of subalterity, President Evo Morales' inauguration address clears a new terrain operating from standpoint epistemology to encompass de-colonial thinking and subversive complicity; these theories combined serve as Morales' double vision that grounds his indigenous rhetoric. Now that the theoretical framework of indigenous rhetoric has been explained as a discourse of subaltern sensibilities that emerges from the convergence of the theories of "Both Eyes," de-colonial thinking, and subversive complicity, I shift toward an application of this theoretical approach to Morales' inaugural address.

De-colonial Thinking: Seeing from the Mind's Eye(s)

Morales' inaugural address was structured in terms of remembering the past, outlining the present, and looking to the future. He wove the history of indigenous discrimination into the present and unfolded the future for Bolivia by creating expectations of change in the audience. He detailed the historical marginalization of indigenous people by recounting the discrimination that the indigenous had faced: "for 40, 50 years our ancestors did not have the right to walk on the sidewalks. That is our history that is our experience."¹⁹⁷ He also traced the origins of the indigenous movement

¹⁹⁶ Morales 2006, trans. Tiara Naputi, paragraph 1.

¹⁹⁷ Morales 2006, trans. Tiara Naputi, paragraph 2.

and praised the efforts of the movement to unite the people in the struggle against injustice and discrimination:

This original indigenous movement is not granted by anyone; no one has given it to us, it is the consciousness of my people, of our people.

...and all sectors have worked to end that injustice, to end that inequality, and above all to end the discrimination, the oppression, that we have been subjected as Aymaras, Quechuas, and Guaraníes.¹⁹⁸

In these examples Morales incorporated the historical record of coloniality in Bolivia and promoted a specifically indigenous identity. Using ‘we’ terminology he inserted himself among the indigenous peoples like the Aymara and Quechua, this discursive move solidified his identity as an indigenous leader. His use of terms such as “our” and “us” functioned to situate himself within the indigenous identity category and provided a means of uniting the indigenous population. This temporal and identity development organized Morales’ inaugural address around a shared indigenous experience—the sharing of integrally related experiences is fundamental to achieve an understanding the Bolivian situation, a point that will be explored further in the discussion of Morales’ strategy of subversive complicity.

Early in the speech Morales demonstrated his double-eyed view by recalling the anti-colonial struggles of individuals such as Túpac Katari, Simon Bolivar, and Che Guevara, who fought for justice and equality in Latin America:

We can continue speaking of our history; we can continue remembering how our ancestors fought: Túpac Katari fought to recover the Tahuantinsuyo, Simon Bolivar who fought for this great homeland, Che Guevara who fought for equality in a new world.

That cultural democratic struggle, this cultural democratic revolution, is part of the struggle of our ancestors; it is the continuation of Túpac Katari’s struggle; that struggle and these results are the continuation of Che Guevara. Hence we are

¹⁹⁸ Morales 2006, trans. Tiara Naputi, paras. 3 & 6.

sisters and brothers of Bolivia and of Latin America; we shall continue until securing such equality in our country.¹⁹⁹

Through the references made to these Latin American icons the speech recuperated the colonial past, provided evidence for the authority of past activists, and incorporated reflections on the present by sharing the value of continuing in their footsteps. By recalling Túpac Katari as a revolutionary figure, Morales resonated with the *Katarismo* movement and established the backdrop for his double-eyed perspective of subalterity within his inaugural address.

Morales' speech created a stark contrast between his viewpoint of "Both Eyes" and the single-eyed Western perspective; this is evidenced by his allusion to the culturally familiar legend of *Sacaojos* (Eye-stealers). This popular Central and South American legend has evolved into a contemporary tale that cautions against foreigners by arguing that foreign individuals have come to kidnap children and gouge out their eyes in order to sell these body parts overseas for a lucrative profit. The legend of *Sacaojos* relates to the Lik'irichi legend of the native Andean cultures that is considered to have originated prior to the 17th century Spanish Conquest, and represents the "other" (read non-indigenous) in exclusively negative terms.²⁰⁰ In the inaugural address Morales used "Both Eyes" to tell the story of indigenous oppression while alluding to the cautionary tales of foreigners, the *Sacaojos*, who threaten the native population. One example he provided is given in terms of education, and the foreign threat to indigenous learning:

I want to tell you, so that the international press knows the first Aymaras, Quechuas that learned to read and to write, had their eyes removed, their hands cut off so that they may never again learn to read or to write. We have been subjected, now we are looking for a way to solve that historical problem, but not with revenge, because we are not spiteful.²⁰¹

¹⁹⁹ Morales, 2006, trans. Tiara Naputi, paras. 9 & 10.

²⁰⁰ Gilles Rivière. "Lik'ichiri y Kharisiri: A Propósito de Las Representaciones del "Otro" en la Sociedad Aymara" *Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Études Andines* 20:1 (1991), 24-25.

²⁰¹ Morales 2006, trans. Tiara Naputi, paragraph 4.

On a cultural level, the indigenous peoples were threatened by outsiders; their bodies were subjected to brutality in order to perpetuate both their physical and intellectual marginalization. In the excerpt above the word “looking” illustrates Morales’ attempt to use “Both Eyes.” As an Aymara child he struggled to learn Spanish and while attending an impoverished rural school, he had seen the work of intellectual marginalization and had shared the difficult educational experience with other Bolivian indigenous people. His discourse reflected subaltern sensibilities and sought to recover the stolen eye(s) of from the forces of oppression and marginalization. The speech continued to criticize the state of indigenous education, and referred to the intellectual marginalization that relegated indigenous education to darkness:

Imagine, rural schools called sectionals, without light. We are in the third millenium, that I remember where I was born, where for the first time I went to a sectional school, two years ago it reached the light, but in other sectional schools such as Acunami, Chivo, Rosapata, Arcorcaya, there is still no light.²⁰²

Morales’ discourse here demonstrated that without light the rural schools are blinded, they are left in the dark periphery and excluded from the single-eyed gaze of the West. His speech continued to challenge the peripheral exclusion of the Bolivian people by remembering the forgotten history of colonial oppression, a history that spans across five centuries. Understanding colonial oppression as five hundred years old may seem out of place considering the Bolivian country has been in existence for less than two hundred years.²⁰³ However, “the identification of the sixteenth century as the beginning of modernity/coloniality is...something that is ingrained in a different colonial experience. Indigenous movements also have been emphasizing, lately, the five hundred years of colonization.”²⁰⁴ The focus that movements have directed toward temporal

²⁰² Morales 2006, trans. Tiara Naputi, paragraph 35.

²⁰³ Morales 2006, trans. Tiara Naputi, paras.14 & 38.

²⁰⁴ Walter D. Mignolo, “Coloniality of Power and Subalternity,” In *The Latin American Subaltern Studies Reader*, ed. Ileana Rodríguez (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), 435-436.

classifications of oppression parallels Morales' discussion of the 500 years of resistance and oppression of indigenous peoples. The temporal references to oppression are significant for understanding Morales' indigenous rhetoric not only as a de-colonial project but also as exhibiting his specific vision from subaltern sensibilities:

And I want to say especially to the indigenous brothers of America concentrated here in Bolivia: the campaign of 500 years of popular black-indigenous resistance has not been in vain; the campaign of 500 years of popular indigenous resistance started in 1988 and 1989, has not been in vain.²⁰⁵

We are here to say, enough with the resistance. For 500 years of resistance and the takeover of power for 500 years, indigenous people, workers, and all sectors have worked to end that injustice, to end that inequality, and above all to end the discrimination, the oppression, that we have been subjected as Aymaras, Quechuas, and Guaraníes.²⁰⁶

In these instances, Morales exemplified de-colonial thinking by speaking about the 500 year history of resistance and oppression. The examples drawn from the inaugural address demonstrate his indigenous rhetoric was an embodiment of subaltern sensibilities in terms of its ability to see with "Both Eyes" and engage in de-colonial modes of thought to challenge marginalization and oppression in Bolivian society. His speech unveiled the logic of coloniality, further aligned with the Bolivian indigenous people, and posited himself against the West—an act that illustrated consciousness from within his position of subalterity.

Subaltern Consciousness: A Double Understanding

In this section I return to the issue of standpoint epistemology that was briefly mentioned in the above discussion on indigenous rhetoric. Standpoint epistemology offers a way to empower oppressed groups by attributing value to their experiences and a

²⁰⁵ Morales 2006, paragraph 5.

²⁰⁶ Morales 2006, trans. Tiara Naputi, paragraph 6.

point of departure for developing oppositional consciousness.²⁰⁷ This consciousness is characteristically subaltern and refers to awareness, a way of knowing and representing from the perspective of indigenous consciousness.²⁰⁸ From this understanding of standpoint epistemology, I argue that the theory of “Both Eyes” works in conjunction with standpoint epistemology to present lenses for viewing subaltern consciousness operating within Morales’ inauguration address. In the Bolivian context, “subaltern consciousness turns...mestizaje upside down, Aymaras invert Europe with their rewriting of ethical and political issues, thus decentering and displacing the instrumental logic that guides social sciences and positivist thought.”²⁰⁹ Morales’ expressed subaltern consciousness through his consideration of the indigenous population as a national ethnic majority with political power and his recognition of the colonial influences that persist in contemporary society; such discursive moves provoked a displacement of instrumental logic and pushed the Bolivian indigenous people into the center of political issues. Morales also explicitly mentioned consciousness in several parts of the speech. First, he stated that the indigenous movement is “the consciousness of my people, of our people,”²¹⁰ then he argued that “the outcome of the national elections is, precisely, the combination of social consciousness with professional capacity,”²¹¹ and finally he declared that government corruption has “been limited and ended thanks to the consciousness of the Bolivian people.”²¹² Linking consciousness to indigenous mobilization, Morales signaled the power of the *Guerra del Gas* movement to influence

²⁰⁷ Harding 2003, 2.

²⁰⁸ Sanjinés C., *Mestizaje Upside-Down*, 72.

²⁰⁹ Ibid., 153.

²¹⁰ Morales 2006, trans. Tiara Naputi, paragraph 3.

²¹¹ Morales 2006, trans. Tiara Naputi, paragraph 7.

²¹² Morales 2006, trans. Tiara Naputi, paragraph 21.

and transform contemporary Bolivian thought.²¹³ His speech argued that such transformative power emerged from the consciousness of the indigenous people within the movement and could expand to include a broader Bolivian and international consciousness:

We must recognize that those mistaken, wrong, selfish policies, have auctioned off natural resources, and privatized basic services. This forced there to be a consciousness of the Bolivian people.²¹⁴

And we would truly want, truly, for there to be not only national but international consciousness.”²¹⁵

The accounts of consciousness provided by Morales demonstrate de-colonial thinking operating within his speech. Grounded in consciousness, de-colonial thinking also combines oppositional strategies that confront the totalizing effects of Western thought. Thus, subaltern consciousness brings an awareness that enables the West to be unlinked from the indigenous experience. As consciousness provides a clear view of the destructive facets of Western ideology, it exposes change as a means of providing the necessary opposition to Western influence. Morales develops an argument for change in a variety of ways throughout the speech, the first use of “change” is posited in relation to an alluded figure of the West:

Bolivia appears to be South Africa. Threatened, condemned to extermination, we are here, we are present. I want to tell you all that there are still remnants of those people who are the enemies of indigenous peoples, we want to live on equal terms with them, and for that reason we are here to change our history.²¹⁶

By comparing contemporary Bolivia to South Africa, Morales uses the Bolivian historical plight and present-day situation to call for a break with the historical narrative and change for the future. Here, Morales relies on the consciousness of the people to move toward

²¹³ Sanjinés C., *Mestizaje Upside-Down*, 25.

²¹⁴ Morales 2006, paragraph 29.

²¹⁵ Morales 2006, trans. Tiara Naputi, paragraph 37.

²¹⁶ Morales 2006, trans. Tiara Naputi, paragraph 3.

supporting change, by relating the negative history of oppression his discourse resonates with the awareness of the indigenous people. His call for change entails a break from the relationship between the indigenous people and the West. De-colonial thinking starts this process of unlinking, simultaneously moving the indigenous people out of the periphery of the West while re-connecting them in the center.

Subversive Complicity: Resignifying from Margin to Center

As explained above, subversive complicity entails a resignification of dominant symbols and places subaltern subjectivities at the center of the process of knowledge production. From the outset of the inaugural address Morales demonstrated subversive complicity by calling upon the international community to focus attention on subaltern issues. Morales directed international attention to Bolivia, on three other occasions he singled out his international audience:

I want to tell you, so that the international press knows the first Aymaras, Quechuas that learned to read and to write, had their eyes removed...²¹⁷

We are here in democracy, and I want you to know, especially the international community...²¹⁸

We would like to resolve these issues, not only with the participation of Bolivians, but also with international cooperation.²¹⁹

With these statements Morales invited the international audience to share his perspective and to recognize the Bolivian subaltern situation. The subaltern standpoint is the locus from which the international community is educated in the inaugural address; Morales' discourse situates the Bolivian subaltern at the center and encourages the broader international community to accept his view, his (re)placement of subaltern subjectivities.

²¹⁷ Morales 2006, trans. Tiara Naputi, paragraph 4.

²¹⁸ Morales 2006, trans. Tiara Naputi, paragraph 15.

²¹⁹ Morales 2006, trans. Tiara Naputi, paragraph 36.

Through subversive complicity, the speech enables Morales to recover indigenous subjectivities from the dark margins of Bolivia's repressive history.

Subversive complicity also involves the resignification of the symbols of U.S. hegemonic discourses such as democracy and equal opportunities.²²⁰ Specifically, Morales' motif of sight allowed for the symbol of and democracy to be re-envisioned and exposed the symbol of neoliberalism to a scathing critique. In order to counter these hegemonic symbols, Morales confronted the former Bolivian government head on and challenged the Western economic model that his campaign opponents supported for Bolivia. He first argued against energy privatization stating, "the fights for water, coca, and natural gas have brought us here sisters and brothers. We must recognize that those mistaken, wrong, selfish policies, have auctioned off natural resources, and privatized basic services" and then expressed how he could not "understand how the former rulers privatize the basic services especially water. Water is a natural resource, without water we cannot live, therefore the water cannot be of private business, from the moment that it is private business human rights are violated."²²¹

After turning his critical eyes to energy privatization Morales took issue with the problem of land distribution in the Bolivian economic system:

Constitutionally speaking, the large estate is unconstitutional. Lamentably due to interests of powerful groups the large estate exists. How it is possible that there are large estates? How is it possible when some sectors suggest they need 20, 30, 40, 50 hectares to raise a cow, which cow would need to have 50 hectares? That is part of an unconstitutional economic model.²²²

Chastising energy privatization and unconstitutional land policies provided the foreground for Morales' broader criticism of the neoliberal model:

²²⁰ Grosfoguel 2003, 72.

²²¹ Morales 2006, paragraphs 29 & 28.

²²² Ibid., para. 30.

We have seen closely the products from the application of the neoliberal model. The State spends money so that a young person, whether from a rural area, or the city can be a professional; a family spends money so that their child can be a professional, they are a professional, and there are no jobs, so that professional must think about Argentina, the United States or Europe. Nowadays that young person who goes away to Europe cannot find a job, professional or nonprofessional. How many relatives of yours are there, if not in Argentina, in the United States, in Europe? How many of our neighbors, sisters and brothers are the product of the application of the neoliberal model? That is the law of capitalization; those are the politics of auction, of plundering our natural resources.²²³

Morales' criticism of the neoliberal economic model brought the underside of capitalization policies to light. His perspective challenged the notion that neoliberalism equates to economic justice by exposing the adverse outcomes of such policies, which have resulted in the plundering of Bolivian natural resources and the subjugation of its people to unsustainable foreign institutions. To complete the strategy of subversive complicity, Morales resignified the neoliberal symbol by envisioning change: "I believe even still, we have the responsibility to settle these social, economic and historical errors, that together we can all better change and correct those errors surely implemented by foreign institutions."²²⁴ Morales also resignified the symbol of democracy. His discourse represented subversive complicity with the system in various ways. First, it labeled the previous government corrupt and undemocratic, and then it argued that the previous actions of Parliament resulted in auctioning off the country and dividing the resources among an elite few:

Before there was talk of democracy, democracy was constantly fought for; there was talk of a pact for democracy, a pact of governability. The year 1997 when I arrived at this Parliament that I have seen personally, no pact for democracy or governability, but pacts of corruption, pacts of how to make money from where and how...²²⁵

²²³ Ibid., para. 33.

²²⁴ Ibid., para. 34.

²²⁵ Ibid., para. 21.

They left us a divided country, a divided State, an auctioned off country. I am almost convinced: if they had been intelligent administrators of the State, if they had wanted this homeland, loved this homeland and not as some people who only want a homeland to plunder and make themselves rich, if there had really been responsible people to handle loving this homeland, its people, Bolivia would be better than Switzerland.²²⁶

Morales' discourse marks democracy as a symbol polluted by the dominant narrative of the elitist Bolivian government which showed little concern for the people; this critical perspective towards the government was shared by the general population whom had just experienced turbulent and violent national leadership during the preceding resource wars. Morales subverted the tainted views of governance by offering a different symbol of democracy that envisioned connecting with the Bolivian people through political struggle: "that cultural democratic struggle, this cultural democratic revolution, is part of the struggle of our ancestors... Hence we are sisters and brothers of Bolivia and of Latin America; we shall continue until securing such equality in our country."²²⁷ Morales' vision of political struggle and his determination to relate to the Bolivian people offered a newly signified symbol of democracy grounded in change:

We are here in democracy, and I want you to know, especially the international community, that as our vice-president of the Republic said in a conference: we want to change Bolivia not with bullets but with votes, and that is the democratic revolution.²²⁸

The above excerpts illustrate Morales' subversive complicity with the previous democratic system. This is evidenced by his adoption of the role of a subversive politician—one who supports a democratic revolution that effectuates change for Bolivia. Politics provides the answer to the call for change that Morales directed toward the existing neoliberal and democratic models in his inaugural address. The speech

²²⁶ Ibid., para. 22.

²²⁷ Ibid., para. 10.

²²⁸ Ibid., para. 15.

discursively placed subaltern subjectivities in the center; it shared his vision of politics as one that connects people to realize change. For Morales, this move facilitated their incorporation into politics and helped better equip them to achieve the change he advocated. His reference to politics shows another example of subversive complicity operating within his speech—Morales both defied traditional politics and worked hard to make politics into an instrument for the people:

Politics means a science of service to the people; we must serve the people not live off of the people, if that is the policy. We have to live for politics and not live from politics.²²⁹

I understand that politics is a way to solve the economic problems of the country. As we have seen, there are many people who will return after resting a year, two years to continue living off of politics. It must change and we must have the participation of you all to change those subjects.²³⁰

As standpoint epistemology argues, the shared experiences of people can accomplish change; in the Bolivian context, Morales stated that the mechanism for change was in the “political instrument of the people, a political instrument of liberation, a political instrument in search for equality, justice, a political instrument such as the Movement Toward Socialism (MAS), which seeks to live in peace with social justice, that called for unity in diversity”²³¹ His emphasis on politics transformed the historical plight of the indigenous people into an emancipatory struggle that is founded upon the collective narrative of the indigenous. While Morales placed support for political participation among the Bolivian indigenous people his speech also attended to the necessity of a redefined politics, a politics that he provided from his subaltern standpoint.

In the inaugural address Morales referred to himself in the third person on six different occasions; what is unique about these references is the way in which they

²²⁹ Morales 2006, para. 25.

²³⁰ Ibid., para. 27.

²³¹ Ibid.

illustrate how subversive complicity functioned to detach Morales from the previous Bolivian political structure while simultaneously developing his identity as a politician for the Bolivian people:

In March of last year, in the Murillo Plaza they wanted to hang Evo Morales, they wanted to carve up Evo Morales. That should not happen, that cannot continue compañeras and compañeros. Former presidents understand this is not how it is done.

It is not important Evo; Evo, we are not campaigning anymore, we are only remembering our history, that black history, that permanent history of humiliation, those offenses, those lies, and everything they have said to us.

We would like to resolve these issues, not only with the participation of Bolivians, but also with international cooperation. To resolve, not for Evo; I am not requesting participation of the international community for Evo, but for the Bolivian people.²³²

These passages reveal subversive complicity through a refutation of the political system while simultaneously avowing the possibility of politics. Rather than completely dismiss politics, Morales argued in favor of a distinctive political leadership centering on the people. The above passages also demonstrate subversive complicity through a somewhat unusual discursive shift to third person references. His acceptance of the presidential position while referring to himself in the third person not only established a clear delineation between the politics of the past and the Bolivian present, but also separated Morales from the corruption associated with Bolivian politics. The discursive move challenged the idea that as a political leader he would be self absorbed and disassociated from the Bolivian people. It also implies Morales' double consciousness, his understanding of self as embodying an ever present two-ness by virtue of living within a double world meant that he was not only able to see beyond a singular consciousness but also understood his role as a political leader to be something greater than himself. In the

²³² Morales 2006, paras. 13, 14, & 36.

second example above, Morales also indicated his double-eyed approach to politics by recalling the colonial past of indigenous history and used us-them language to confront corruption from the West. Morales' inaugural address entailed the discursive resignification of symbols and the placement of subaltern subjectivities at the center of the knowledge production process, this move of subversive complicity with the system established a foundation for his presidential politics.

ENVISIONING CRITICAL SUBALTERITY

Evo Morales' inaugural address served the purpose of critiquing the dark history of the country and strongly resisted the historical oppression of the Bolivian indigenous population. The speech also criticized the colonial state of government by identifying the epoch of neoliberalism and capitalism's dangerous stranglehold over the Bolivian economy and its people. The argumentative conclusion presented was one of continued indigenous struggle; Morales' discourse elicited recognition of the plight of the indigenous peoples from their particular social location. Morales assumed the role of an indigenous activist, involved in the *Guerra del Gas* movement and supportive of the Bolivian indigenous population. He positioned himself within the indigenous struggle by claiming the plight of the indigenous people as his own. By acknowledging his indigenous identity Morales contributed to his credibility as an activist in the service of the Bolivian people. His activist role involved combating the historical narrative of indigenous oppression with the search for concrete solutions. When addressing the Bolivian people, his speech utilized various supporting materials such as statistics to express the importance of the Bolivian indigenous as a majority of the population. Additionally, Morales spoke to the authority of individuals who have experienced cultural democratic struggle and emphasized the need to connect with the Bolivian people through politics. His discourse refuted the existing political system but did not dismiss

politics wholesale. Instead, it supported political leadership centered on the people and attempted to redefine the Bolivian reality by providing an understanding of the indigenous population as an integral part of Bolivian society and politics. This process of redefinition was addressed toward the people of Bolivia and also extended to other parts of Latin America, as well as the broader international community. The inaugural address concluded with a call for international cooperation, and for consciousness from the international community as well as the Latin American people; it also emphasized the importance of political engagement of the people to overcome the narrative of indigenous oppression.

I have established a theoretical framework to view the indigenous rhetoric in Evo Morales' 2006 inaugural address. I have argued that this framework is built upon the connection of subaltern epistemology to the convergence of the theory of "Both Eyes," de-colonial thinking, and subversive complicity. De-colonial thinking allows us to see how Morales' indigenous rhetoric is grounded in double consciousness which opens up the range of political possibilities for the Bolivian people within a democratic society. The speech discussed the past, present, and future of the country this structure reflected Morales' de-colonial thinking operating within the text. The perspective of subversive complicity was used to highlight how Morales' speech centered on subaltern subjectivities and privileged their experiences as crucial to the process of knowledge production. By resignifying symbols of hegemonic discourse, such as neoliberalism and democracy, Morales deployed an important discursive strategy that necessarily brought the Bolivian subaltern from the margins to the center of politics. Examining indigenous rhetoric in this way has illuminated Morales' double vision, as a visualization that brings the history of oppression into focus and posits a sort of subversive politics centering on the subaltern experience as a springboard for change. Morales' use of indigenous rhetoric

also allowed him to position himself among the Bolivian indigenous center; it is from this standpoint that he was able to empower the people as a group through his populist style leadership.

Standpoint epistemology is useful for discussing Morales' inaugural address because it rearticulates the notion of the subaltern into the context of present-day Bolivian politics. It also reinforces Morales' subaltern position as a necessary starting point for political work dedicated to recovering the marginalized perspective. As an Aymara Indian, Morales' entry into presidential politics was anything but conventional—his indigenous identity, his defiance of traditional politics, and blatant criticism of the West necessitated a unique rhetorical style that brought his dissident perspectives out of the periphery and into focus for the Bolivian people and the broader international community. Examining the indigenous rhetoric at work in President Evo Morales' inaugural address informs rhetorical and Latin American scholars as well as activists for social change. The double-lens approach offers insight to the Bolivian subaltern position and informs new visions for social, economic, and political change for any contemporary struggles against neoliberalism and Western ideology. If we are to understand the discourse of President Evo Morales' inaugural address we must be guided by standpoint epistemology and subaltern perspectives working in tandem with de-colonial theories to uncover the uniquely political dimension operating in Morales' rhetoric. It is a rhetoric that offered an unprecedented critical perspective of the political arena and enabled marginal voices to be recovered and the indigenous population to realize discursive mechanisms for political change.

CONCLUSION

Chapter 4: Learning to Unlearn, Subaltern Sensibilities for the Future

Initially, I wanted to focus on Bolivia for this project because of my interest in social movements in Latin America and Spanish speaking countries. I first heard about the *Guerra del Gas* from various news sources in the United States, and then while studying abroad in Spain my attention was directed to the 2005 uprising. Early on I took an interest in the movement and its struggle for resource governance because I thought the conflict over neoliberalism and the criticism being raised towards Western ideology seemed pertinent at a time when U.S. exceptionalism was continuing on an increasing trajectory with what seemed to be no end in sight—offering no relief for subjugated peoples.

A central component of my argument throughout this thesis has been that indigenous rhetoric can be understood as a discourse of subaltern sensibilities. To understand this rhetoric as such has required a speaking to subaltern epistemologies, and I have certainly attempted to do that here. In speaking to subaltern sensibilities I have troubled my privileged position as an academic trained in Western knowledge, and have begun my journey towards learning Other knowledges. As Spivak has argued, intellectuals systematically unlearn privilege as they seek to speak to the historically muted subject of the subaltern.²³³ Understanding the indigenous rhetoric of the *Guerra del Gas* movement has been enhanced through my attempts at systematic unlearning. I have approached the movement and its political implications from beyond purely Western concepts, in order to recognize a fundamental aspect at the heart of the Bolivian

²³³ Previously mentioned and cited in chapter one, see page 5.

resistance—the opposition to Western epistemology as the final arbiter of neoliberal hegemony.

In chapter one I discussed some of the historical-cultural context surrounding Bolivia from periods of colonial rule to contemporary neoliberal governance and globalization. I argued that the *Guerra del Gas* and its momentous uprisings offer an important terrain for combining subaltern counterpublic and social movement theories as a lens for viewing the rhetoric of the movement. From this theoretical vantage point, I considered how the movement embodied indigenous rhetoric in order to directly confront the existing government and neoliberal agenda of natural gas privatization. To understand the movement as an emergent subaltern counterpublic that embodied indigenous rhetoric, I offered an explanation of indigenous rhetoric as a discourse of subaltern sensibilities. Building from this contextual and theoretical frame, the indigenous rhetoric of the movement was examined in combination with strategies against both neoliberalism and hegemonic economic and colonial practices. Such a dynamic web of the movement's rhetoric offered a multifaceted strategy of opposition that ultimately transformed Bolivian public policy and culminated in presidential resignations in 2003 and 2005. These resignations provided a sign of success for the movement, and solidified the demands for political change. I posited that the existence of a Bolivian subaltern counterpublic and the use of indigenous rhetoric facilitated the mobilization and organization of the masses during the *Guerra del Gas*.

Chapter two recognized the plurality of demands and forces within the movement and argued for combined approaches to discuss the uprisings of October 2003 and May-June 2005. I combined social movement perspectives with subaltern counterpublic theory and the concerns of the Bolivian people to characterize the indigenous rhetoric of the *Guerra del Gas*. The subaltern counterpublic sphere provided a nexus for resistance that

defied previous resource struggles and directly challenged existing political constructions. I examined the rhetoric of various press releases and communiqués from the *Coordinadora* social movement organization as well as the political organizations of the CSUTCB and MAS, to argue that the *Guerra del Gas* was a distinct kind of social movement that incorporated diverse identities in an engaged political struggle for alternative development. As a unifying factor for the movement, natural gas served as a symbol in the social struggle against government exploitation of the country's natural wealth. The organization and mass participation in the uprisings provided a sturdy disruption to the economy and ultimately lead to the dismissal of the previously elected president. The conscious decision of the *Guerra del Gas* movement to "seek non-indigenous allies and to work within existing political institutions in order to reshape them from inside," facilitated the convergence of indigenous and popular sectors that paved the way for the achievement of demands at the state level by challenging the dominant political ideology, and ultimately electing an indigenous leader to its presidency.²³⁴ The election of Evo Morales represented the movement's articulation of a coherent alternative to the corruption, violence, and neoliberal hegemony imposed upon the Bolivian poor and indigenous population.

The tumultuous history of the social struggle for natural gas privatization set the backdrop for Evo Morales' rise to the Bolivian presidency. I argued that Morales' inaugural address embodied indigenous rhetoric, more specifically; his speech provided an exemplar of the discourse of subaltern sensibilities. Morales embodied the leadership necessary to take charge of the country following the *Guerra del Gas*, he represented the unique political leadership grounded in subaltern epistemology. The profound situation of

²³⁴ Donna Lee Van Cott, "The Intercultural Construction of Public Authority in Latin America," in *Identity Conflicts: Can Violence be Regulated?*, eds. J. Craig Jenkins and Esther E. Gottlieb (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2007), 293.

Morales utilizing indigenous rhetoric from within the Bolivian political structure has demonstrated the extent to which the subaltern counterpublic sphere can challenge dominant discourse and enable those who have been marginalized from political power to have recourse—to perhaps bring about change by moving from the margins to the center. To the extent that the subaltern counterpublic strives to bring the margins to the center, it presented a subversive discourse to challenge dominant structures and enable the subaltern to have political power.

In an increasingly globalized world it is important for communication scholars to expand their purviews of rhetorical criticism to international contexts. Examining the Bolivian struggle against neoliberal hegemony contributes to an understanding of the dynamics of the subaltern counterpublic sphere, and of the need to focus attention on indigenous rhetoric as a unique contribution to social movement mobilization and success in the political arena. This thesis informs scholars of social movements and rhetoric, it contributing an understanding of postcolonial theories and their application within communication studies research.

Appendix A

“Manifiesto al pueblo boliviano”

Coordinadora Nacional de Recuperación y Defensa del Gas

Cochabamba, octubre 4 de 2003

Unidad ante estado de sitio y autogolpe de estado

1. El pueblo boliviano, desde abril del 2000, ha establecido con claridad y dignidad que es posible cambiar las condiciones de vida, que es posible prescindir y derrotar a aquellos que hasta el día de hoy deciden por nosotros, a espaldas de nosotros y contra nosotros, esos llamados gobernantes que están ciegos, sordos y torpes ante las demandas de la población. La gente sencilla y trabajadora ha empezado a escribir, diseñar y construir una nueva democracia, la participativa, la de las organizaciones de multitudes con dirección colectiva y horizontal, donde las decisiones sean tomadas por todos, sin que los caudillos o partidos políticos nos den permiso para hacerlo.
2. Hoy, a raíz del tema del GAS, el pueblo se ha rebelado, está indignado por el manejo absolutamente antipatriótico y antidemocrático de primero haberse enterado que a naves de la ley de hidrocarburos y el decreto 27.408, Sánchez de Lozada ha entregado nuestros hidrocarburos y recursos naturales y propiedad a las empresas transnacionales, y segundo, en contubernios con la oligarquía chilena, pretende regalar nuestro GAS, para el potenciamiento económico y militar de ese país.
3. A partir del 5 de septiembre de este año, continuando con la construcción de esos espacios de deliberación y dignidad se estableció la COORDINADORA NACIONAL DE RECUPERACIÓN Y DEFENSA DEL GAS, como instrumento que posibilite esa tarea que desde hace años arras se está impulsando, donde el protagonista de la organización, movilización y propuestas sea el pueblo boliviano.
4. La primera muestra de unidad y capacidad movilizadora se demostró el día 19 de septiembre, cuando más de medio millón de personas, no sólo en las principales ciudades, sino en pueblos y pequeñas comunidades a lo largo y ancho del país protagonizaron masivas marchas reclamando el gas para los bolivianos e industrialización.

5. Desde aquel día los conflictos sectoriales y la lucha por la recuperación se han intensificado y radicalizado, ahí están los primeros cinco mártires del GAS en Warisata y las múltiples demandas de sectores que rechazan la política de imposición y empobrecimiento del actual gobierno.
6. A todas estas protestas y señales dadas por el pueblo, el gobierno ha contestado con represión y menosprecio, a esto se ha sumado el pedido generalizado de que los gobernantes se vayan, lo que en la práctica significa la pérdida de legitimidad del actual gobierno, sumado a esto las últimas actuaciones de los políticos en la nominación de cargos en el aparato estatal demuestra la falta total de ubicación de la realidad del país y la indignación de la gente en contra de la autodenominada "clase política".
7. Por eso, desde la Coordinadora Nacional por la Recuperación y Defensa del Gas hacemos un llamado a todos los sectores, partidos políticos y líderes de los movimientos sociales a establecer el re-encauzamiento de la UNIDAD en torno al tema del GAS, como única forma de enfrentar inclusive la posibilidad cierta de un estado de sitio o un autogolpe, como se ha ido denunciando, UNIDAD sin protagonismos, estableciendo una dirección horizontal, colectiva, solidaria. Las acciones aisladas, la pretendida unidad con verticalismos y autoritarismos sólo conducirán al pueblo al precipicio y la confrontación en desigualdad de condiciones, donde el pueblo será nuevamente el que ponga a sus muertos.
8. Convocamos de manera vehemente a todos ellos, a todos nosotros, a través de la lucha por el GAS, a empezar a diseñar y construir un nuevo país. La ASAMBLEA CONSTITUYENTE es el camino para aquello. Una Asamblea desde abajo, entre todos los excluidos, ignorados y despreciados, sin la intermediación partidaria, aquella que tanto daño ha hecho al país.
9. Fuera a aquellos que han demostrado que no sirven para nada y que dejen el paso a la gente autoorganizada, y que ahora con sus actitudes y medidas están poniendo en riesgo la propia existencia como nación.

Appendix B

“Manifesto to the Bolivian People”

National Coordinator for the Defense and Recovery of Gas

Cochabamba, Octubre 4, 2003

Unity before a state of siege and self coup d’etat

1. The Bolivian people, since April of the 2000, have established with clarity and dignity that it is possible to change the conditions of life, that it is possible to dispense with and defeat those that until today had decided for us, behind our backs and against us, those so-called rulers who are blind, deaf and clumsy before the demands of the population. Simple people and workers have begun to write, to plan and to construct to a new participatory democracy, one made of organizations of the multitudes with collective and horizontal direction, where the decisions are made by all, without the leaders or political parties giving us permission to do it.
2. Today, regarding the issue of GAS, the people have rebelled, they are indignant of the absolutely unpatriotic and undemocratic management firstly for having become aware of the shipment through the hydrocarbons law and decree number 27,408, in which Sánchez de Lozada has given our hydrocarbons and natural resources and property to transnational companies, and secondly, in conspiracy with the Chilean oligarchy, he tries to give away our GAS, for the economic and military promotion of that country.
3. Since the 5th of September of this year, continuing with the construction of those spaces of deliberation and dignity the NATIONAL COORDINATOR FOR THE DEFENSE AND RECOVERY OF GAS has established itself as a tool that makes that task possible, which has been pledged for years, where the leader of organization, mobilization and proposals is the Bolivian people.
4. The first showing of unity and mobilizing capacity was demonstrated the day of September 19th, when more than half a million people, not only in the main cities, but in towns and small communities spanning the length and width of the country carried out massive marches demanding gas for the Bolivians and industrialization.

5. Since that day the sectoral conflicts and the struggle for the recovery have intensified and radicalized, there were the first five martyrs of the GAS war in Warisata and the multiple demands of the sectors that reject the present government's policy of imposition and impoverishment.
6. In response to all these protests and signals from the people, the government has answered with repression and contempt, this has been added the generally raised order for the rulers to leave, which in practice means the loss of legitimacy of the current government, in addition there are the latest activities of politicians in appointed positions in the state apparatus that demonstrate a total lack of reality with the situation of the country and the indignation of the people against the self-appointed "political class."
7. For that reason, from the National Coordinator for the Defense and Recovery of Gas we make a political call to all sectors, political parties and leaders of the social movements to establish the re-channeling of UNITY around the topic of GAS, as the only way to face the certain possibility of including a state of siege or self-coup, as has been denounced, UNITY without leaders, establishing a horizontal direction, collective, solidarity. The isolated actions, the attempted unity with verticalisms and authoritarianisms will only lead the people to the precipice and confrontation in unequal conditions, where the people will again put their dead.
8. We vehemently call on all of them, all of us, through the struggle for GAS, to begin to design and construct a new country. The CONSTITUTIONAL ASSEMBLY is the way for that. An Assembly from below, among all the excluded, ignored and despised, without the intermediary party, that has done so much damage to the country.
9. Outside those that have demonstrated that they do not serve for anything and that they are left leave the step to the self-organized people, and now with their attitudes and measures are putting at risk the very existence as a nation.

Appendix C

1. Estamos en la obligación de hacer una gran reminiscencia sobre el movimiento indígena sobre la situación de la época colonial, de la época republicana y de la época del neoliberalismo. Los pueblos indígenas -que son mayoría de la población boliviana-, para la prensa internacional, para que los invitados sepan: de acuerdo al último censo del 2001, el 62.2% de aymaras, de quechuas, de mojeños, de chipayas, de muratos, de guaraníes. Estos pueblos, históricamente hemos sido marginados, humillados, odiados, despreciados, condenados a la extinción. Esa es nuestra historia; a estos pueblos jamás los reconocieron como seres humanos, siendo que estos pueblos son dueños absolutos de esta noble tierra, de sus recursos naturales.
2. Esta mañana, esta madrugada, con mucha alegría he visto a algunos hermanos y hermanas cantando en la plaza histórica de Murillo, la Plaza Murillo como también la Plaza San Francisco, cuando hace 40, 50 años no teníamos derecho a entrar a la Plaza San Francisco, a la Plaza Murillo. Hace 40, 50 años no tenían nuestros antepasados el derecho de caminar en las aceras. Esa es nuestra historia, esa nuestra vivencia.
3. Bolivia parece Sudáfrica. Amenazados, condenados al exterminio estamos acá, estamos presentes. Quiero decirles que todavía hay resabios de esa gente que es enemiga de los pueblos indígenas, queremos vivir en igualdad de condiciones con ellos, y por eso estamos acá para cambiar nuestra historia, este movimiento indígena originario no es concesión de nadie; nadie nos ha regalado, es la conciencia de mi pueblo, de nuestro pueblo.
4. Quiero decirles, para que sepa la prensa internacional, a los primeros aymaras, quechuas que aprendieron a leer y escribir, les sacaron los ojos, cortaron las manos para que nunca más aprendan a leer, escribir. Hemos sido sometidos, ahora estamos buscando cómo resolver ese problema histórico, no con venganzas, no somos rencorosos.
5. Y quiero decirles sobre todo a los hermanos indígenas de América concentrados acá en Bolivia: la campaña de 500 años de resistencia indígena- negro- popular no ha sido en vano; la campaña de 500 años de resistencia indígena popular empezada el año 1988, 1989, no ha sido en vano.

6. Estamos acá para decir, basta a la resistencia. De la resistencia de 500 años a la toma del poder para 500 años, indígenas, obreros, todos los sectores para acabar con esa injusticia, para acabar con esa desigualdad, para acabar sobre todo con la discriminación, opresión donde hemos sido sometidos como aymaras, quechuas, guaraníes.
7. Respetamos, admiramos muchísimo a todos los sectores, sean profesionales o no profesionales, intelectuales y no intelectuales, empresarios y no empresarios. Todos tenemos derecho a vivir en esta vida, en esta tierra, y este resultado de las elecciones nacionales es, justamente, la combinación de la conciencia social con la capacidad profesional. Ahí pueden ver que el movimiento indígena originario no es excluyente. Ojala, ojala, otros señores también aprendan de nosotros.
8. Yo quiero decirles con mucha sinceridad y con mucha humildad, después de que he visto muchos compañeros de la ciudad, hermanos de la ciudad, profesionales, la clase media, intelectuales, hasta empresarios, que se suman al MAS. Muchas gracias, yo me siento orgulloso de ellos, de nuestra clase media, intelectual, profesional, hasta empresarial, pero también les invito a ustedes que se sientan orgullosos de los pueblos indígenas que es la reserva moral de la humanidad.
9. Podemos seguir hablando de nuestra historia, podemos seguir recordando como nuestros antepasados lucharon: Túpac Katari para restaurar el Tahuantinsuyo, Simón Bolívar que luchó por esa patria grande, Ché Guevara que luchó por un nuevo mundo en igualdad.
10. Esa lucha democrática cultural, esta revolución cultural democrática, es parte de la lucha de nuestros antepasados, es la continuidad de la lucha de Túpac Katari; esa lucha y estos resultados son la continuidad de Che Guevara. Estamos ahí hermanas y hermanos de Bolivia y de Latinoamérica; vamos a continuar hasta conseguir esa igualdad en nuestro país, no es importante concentrar el capital en pocas manos para que muchos se mueran de hambre, esas políticas tienen que cambiar pero tienen que cambiar en democracia.
11. No es posible que algunos sigan buscando como saquear, explotar, marginar. No solo nosotros queremos vivir bien, seguramente algunos tienen derecho a vivir mejor, tienen todo el derecho de vivir mejor, pero sin explotar, sin robar, sin humillar, sin someter a la esclavitud. Eso debe cambiar hermanas y hermanos.
12. Quiero decirles, a ese movimiento popular, a esa gente andina honesta de las ciudades, especialmente al movimiento indígena originario, para que vean, no estamos solos, ni en los movimientos sociales ni en los gobiernos de América, de Europa de Asia, de África, aunque lamentablemente, hasta los últimos días, la guerra sucia, la guerra mentirosa eso no va; eso hay que cambiar, es verdad que duele. En base a la mentira, en base a la calumnia nos quieren humillar.

13. ¿Recuerdan? en marzo del año pasado, en esta Plaza Murillo querían hacer colgar a Evo Morales, querían descuartizar a Evo Morales. Eso no debe ocurrir, eso no puede seguir compañeras y compañeros. Ex presidentes entiendan eso no se hace, no se margina, se lucha; se trabaja para todos y para todas.
14. No es importante Evo; Evo, no estamos en campaña ya, solo estamos recordando nuestra historia, esa historia negra, esa historia permanente de humillación, esa ofensiva, esas mentiras, de todo nos han dicho. Verdad que duele pero tampoco estamos para seguir llorando por los 500 años; ya no estamos en esa época, estamos en época de triunfo, de alegría, de fiesta. Es por eso, creo que es importante cambiar nuestra historia, cambiar nuestra Bolivia, nuestra Latinoamérica.
15. Estamos acá en democracia, y quiero que sepan -sobre todo la comunidad internacional-, como nuestro vicepresidente de la República decía en una conferencia: queremos cambiar Bolivia no con bala sino con voto, y esa es la revolución democrática.
16. ¿Y por qué hablamos de cambiar ese estado colonial?, tenemos que acabar con el estado colonial. Imagínense: después de 180 años de la vida democrática republicana recién podemos llegar acá, podemos estar en el Parlamento, podemos estar en la presidencia, en las alcaldías. Antes no teníamos derecho.
17. Imagínense. El voto universal el año 1952 ha costado sangre. Campesinos mineros levantados en armas para conseguir el voto universal -que no es ninguna concesión de ningún partido-, se organizaron; esa conquista, esa lucha de los pueblos.
18. Imagínense, recién el 2003 se ha podido conseguir con sangre el Referéndum vinculante para que los pueblos, los bolivianos no solamente tengamos derecho que cada cinco años elijamos con nuestro voto quién será alcalde, quién será el concejal, quién es el presidente, vicepresidente, senador o diputado; que también con nuestro voto decidamos el destino del país, nuestro futuro. Y ese Referéndum vinculante también ha costado sangre.
19. Ahí estaba el estado colonial, y aún todavía sigue vigente ese estado colonial. Imagínense, no es posible, no es posible que no haya en el Ejército nacional un general Condori, un general Villca, un general Mamani, un general Ayma. No hay todavía, ahí está el estado colonial.
20. Para cambiar ese estado colonial habrá espacios, debates, diálogos. Estamos en la obligación, como bolivianos, de entendernos para cambiar esta forma de discriminar a los pueblos.

21. Permanentemente antes se hablaba de la democracia, se lucha por la democracia, se hablaba de pacto por la democracia, pacto por la gobernabilidad. El año 1997 cuando llegué a este Parlamento que he visto personalmente, ningún pacto por la democracia ni por la gobernabilidad, sino los pactos de la corrupción, pacto de cómo sacar plata de dónde y cómo, felizmente había tenido límite y se acabó gracias a la conciencia del pueblo boliviano.
22. Maniobras más maniobras. La forma de cómo engañar al pueblo, la forma de cómo subastar al pueblo. Nos dejaron un país loteado, un Estado loteado, un país subastado. Yo estoy casi convencido: si hubieran sido inteligentes administradores del Estado, si hubieran querido esta patria, amado esta patria y no como algunos solo quieren a esta patria para saquear y enriquecerse, si realmente hubiera habido gente responsable para manejar amando a esta patria, a su pueblo, Bolivia sería mejor que Suiza.
23. Suiza, un país desarrollado sin recursos naturales, y Bolivia con semejantes recursos naturales y con semejante pobreza. Eso hay que cambiar, y por eso estamos acá para cambiar juntos estas injusticias, este saqueo permanente a nuestros recursos naturales.
24. Después de escuchar el informe de las comisiones de transición, he podido ver como el Estado no controla al Estado, sus instituciones. Una dependencia total, como hemos visto en lo económico, un país transnacionalizado. Su pretexto de capitalización solo ha descapitalizado al país. Su pretexto de capitalización, entiendo que hay que importar el capital en vez de exportar el capital. Solo se exporta al capital y sólo se exporta ahora como producto de esas políticas de capitalización, al ser humano. No se gobierna así estimados parlamentarios, no se gobierna así, quienes pasaron por el Palacio de Gobierno y por el Parlamento.
25. La política significa una ciencia de servicio al pueblo, hay que servir al pueblo no vivir del pueblo, si esa es la política. Hay que vivir para la política y no vivir de la política.
26. Hermanas y hermanos, nuestras autoridades originarias saben exactamente que cuando uno asume ser autoridad, es para servir al pueblo, y estos temas hay que cambiar pues, y están aquí parlamentarios para servir, si realmente están decididos, a servir los 5 años. Eso quisiéramos, en todo caso hay que tomar ciertas medidas para que el pueblo entienda.
27. Entiendo que la política es una forma de resolver los problemas económicos del país. Hemos visto, hay mucha gente que seguramente vuelve después de descansar un año, dos años para seguir viviendo de la política. Hay que cambiar y estamos con la participación de ustedes cambiar esos temas.

28. No es posible se privatice los servicios básicos. No puedo entender cómo los ex gobernantes privaticen los servicios básicos especialmente el agua. El agua es un recurso natural, sin agua no podemos vivir, por tanto el agua no puede ser de negocio privado, desde el momento que es negocio privado se violan los derechos humanos. El agua debe ser de servicio público.
29. Las luchas por agua, por coca, por gas natural nos han traído acá hermanas y hermanos. Hay que reconocer que esas políticas equivocadas, erradas, interesadas, recursos naturales subastadas, servicios básicos privatizadas. obligó a que haya conciencia del pueblo boliviano. Estamos en la obligación de cambiar estas políticas.
30. Constitucionalmente es inconstitucional el latifundio. Lamentablemente por intereses de grupos de poder hay latifundio. ¿Como es posible que haya latifundio?, ¿cómo es posible cuando algunos sectores plantean, necesitan 20, 30, 40, 50 hectáreas para criar una vaca, habría que ser una vaca para tener 50 hectáreas?. Eso es parte de un modelo económico.
31. Hay familias, veamos en Titicaca, en Parotani, le pedimos a nuestro senador por Cochabamba (Hoz de Vila) no se duerma, estamos hablando de Parotani, donde ni siquiera familias tienen 5 hectáreas, ni media hectárea, ni cuarta hectárea, ni siquiera tienen cuarta hectárea, pero si el oriente boliviano por vaca hay que dar 50 hectáreas. Eso debemos cambiar, estamos aquí, repito, para cambiar esta injusticia, esta desigualdad.
32. Estas políticas económicas implementadas por instrucciones externas, por recomendaciones externas, ¿que nos han dejado?: desempleo. Nos dijeron hace unos 10, 15 años, o 20 años que aquí la empresa privada va a resolver los problemas de la corrupción y los problemas del desempleo. Pasan tantos años, más desempleo, más corrupción, que por tanto ese modelo económico no es solución para nuestro país, tal vez en algún país europeo o africano puede ser una solución. En Bolivia el modelo neoliberal no va.
33. Producto de la aplicación de este modelo neoliberal hemos visto de cerca qué pasa. El Estado gasta para que un joven, sea del campo o la ciudad sea profesional, la familia gasta para que su hijo sea profesional, es profesional, no hay empleo, ese profesional tiene que pensar en Argentina, Estados Unidos o en Europa. Hoy en día se va a Europa ese joven que no encuentra trabajo, sea profesional o no profesional. ¿Cuántos familiares de ustedes están, sino es en Argentina, sino es en Estados Unidos, está en Europa?, ¿cuantos de nuestros vecinos hermanas y hermanos, es el producto de la aplicación del modelo neoliberal?. Esa es la ley de capitalización, esas son políticas de subasta, de saqueo a nuestros recursos naturales.

34. ¿Y a qué van, a Estados Unidos, a Europa o Argentina o a otros países?, lamentablemente - hay que decir la verdad-, van de meseros. Esos profesionales, van a lavar platos. Duele de verdad, repito otra vez, teniendo tantos recursos naturales que la gente abandone nuestro país. Creo aún todavía, tenemos la responsabilidad de cómo saldar ese error social, económico e histórico, que mejor juntos todos podemos cambiar y corregir esos errores implementados por instituciones seguramente extranjeras.
35. Imagínense, escuelas rurales llamadas seccionales, sin luz. Estamos en el tercer milenio, que me acuerdo donde nací, donde por primera vez he ido a una escuela seccional, hace dos años ha llegado la luz, pero en otras escuelas seccionales como Acunami, Chivo, Rosapata, Arcorcaya, todavía no hay luz. ¿Como será en otras comunidades?, no hay camino carretero, el profesor tiene que caminar horas y días para llegar a la escuela seccional. ¿Qué han hecho esos gobernantes?, ¿Acaso no sienten lo que sufren las mayorías nacionales, los niños?. En vez de juntar plata en los bancos, en vez de ahorrar plata en Estados Unidos, en Europa o en Suiza, ¿por qué esa plata no ha invertido en su país, si son solidarios?.
36. Imagínense ustedes, en el campo sobre todo, la mayor parte de los niños muere y muy pocos se salvan de esa muerte. Estos temas quisiéramos solucionarlos, no solamente con la participación de los bolivianos, sino también de la cooperación internacional. Resolver, no para Evo; no estoy pidiendo participación de la comunidad internacional para Evo sino para el pueblo boliviano.
37. Y quisiéramos de verdad, de verdad, que haya una conciencia no solo nacional sino internacional. Seguramente algunos países también tienen que ponerse la mano al pecho para pensar en las mayorías no solo bolivianas sino latinoamericanas.
38. Es verdad que va a ser importante. ¿Cómo buscar mecanismos que permita reparar los daños de 500 años de saqueo a nuestros recursos naturales? será otra tarea que vamos a implementar en nuestro gobierno.
39. Por esa clase de injusticias nace este llamado instrumento político por la soberanía, un instrumento político del pueblo, un instrumento político de la liberación, un instrumento político para buscar la igualdad, la justicia, un instrumento político como el Movimiento Al Socialismo, que busca vivir, paz con justicia social, esa llamada unidad en la diversidad.

Appendix D

1. We are obligated to perform a great reminiscence about the indigenous movement, about the situation of the colonial period, about the republican period and the period of neoliberalism. Indigenous peoples – who are the majority of the Bolivian population, so that the international press and guests know, according to the latest census of 2001, 62.2% are Aymaras, Quechuas, Mojeños, Chipayas, Muratos, and Guaraníes. These people, we have historically been marginalized, humiliated, hated, unappreciated, and condemned to extinction. That is our history; they never recognized these people as human beings, that these people are absolute owners of this noble earth, of its natural resources.
2. This morning, at dawn, with much joy I have seen some sisters and brothers singing in the historical Murillo Plaza, the Murillo Plaza like the San Francisco Plaza, when 40 to 50 years ago we did not have the right to enter the San Francisco Plaza or the Murillo Plaza. For 40, 50 years our ancestors did not have the right to walk on the sidewalks. That is our history that is our experience.
3. Bolivia appears to be South Africa. Threatened, condemned to extermination, we are here, we are present. I want to tell you all that there are still remnants of those people who are the enemies of indigenous peoples, we want to live on equal terms with them, and for that reason we are here to change our history. This original indigenous movement is not granted by anyone; no one has given it to us, it is the consciousness of my people, of our people.
4. I want to tell you, so that the international press knows the first Aymaras, Quechuas that learned to read and to write, had their eyes removed, their hands cut off so that they may never again learn to read or to write. We have been subjected, now we are looking for a way to solve that historical problem, but not with revenge, because we are not spiteful.
5. And I want to say especially to the indigenous brothers of America concentrated here in Bolivia: the campaign of 500 years of popular black-indigenous resistance has not been in vain; the campaign of 500 years of popular indigenous resistance started in 1988 and 1989, has not been in vain.
6. We are here to say, enough with the resistance. For 500 years of resistance and the takeover of power for 500 years, indigenous people, workers, and all sectors have worked to end that injustice, to end that inequality, and above all to end the discrimination, the oppression, that we have been subjected as Aymaras, Quechuas, and Guaraníes.

7. We respect, we admire all the sectors very much, whether they are professional or nonprofessional, intellectual or nonintellectual, entrepreneurs or non-entrepreneurs. We all have the right to live in this life, on this earth. And the outcome of the national elections is, precisely, the combination of social consciousness with professional capacity. From there all can see that the original indigenous movement is not exclusive. Hopefully, hopefully, others may also learn from us.
8. Let me tell you with much sincerity and much humility, after I have seen many companions of the city, brothers of the city, professionals, the middle-class, intellectuals, and even entrepreneurs, add themselves to the Movement Toward Socialism (MAS). Thank you very much, I feel proud of them all, of our middle-class, intellectuals, professionals, and even enterprises, but also I invite you all to feel proud of the indigenous peoples that are the moral reserve of humanity.
9. We can continue speaking of our history; we can continue remembering how our ancestors fought: Túpac Katari fought to recover the Tahuantinsuyo, Simon Bolivar who fought for this great homeland, Che Guevara who fought for equality in a new world.
10. That cultural democratic struggle, this cultural democratic revolution, is part of the struggle of our ancestors; it is the continuation of Túpac Katari's struggle; that struggle and these results are the continuation of Che Guevara. Hence we are sisters and brothers of Bolivia and of Latin America; we shall continue until securing such equality in our country. It is not important to concentrate capital in a few hands so that many die of hunger, these policies have to change but they must change in democracy.
11. It is not possible that some can continue to look for ways to plunder, exploit, and marginalize. It is not only us who want to live well, surely some have the right to live better; you all have every right to live better, but without exploiting, stealing, humiliating, or submitting to slavery. That is what must change, sisters and brothers.
12. Let me tell you, to that popular movement, to those honest Andean people of the cities, and especially to the original indigenous movement, so that you may all see, we are not alone, neither in the social movements nor in the governments of America, Europe, Asia, and Africa. Although unfortunately, up until these last few days, the dirty war, the lying war that does not work; that must change, it is the truth that hurts. On the basis of lies, on the basis of slander they want to humiliate to us.

13. Remember? In March of last year, in the Murillo Plaza they wanted to hang Evo Morales, they wanted to carve up Evo Morales. That should not happen, that cannot continue compañeras and compañeros. Former presidents understand this is not how it is done. Do not marginalize, but struggle; one works for all men and all women.
14. It is not important Evo; Evo, we are not campaigning anymore, we are only remembering our history, that black history, that permanent history of humiliation, those offenses, those lies, and everything they have said to us. Truth hurts but we are not here to continue crying for 500 years; since we are no longer in that time, we are in times of triumph, joy, celebration. That is why I believe it is important to change our history, change our Bolivia, our Latin America.
15. We are here in democracy, and I want you to know, especially the international community, that as our vice-president of the Republic said in a conference: we want to change Bolivia not with bullets but with votes, and that is the democratic revolution.
16. And why do we talk of changing that colonial state? We must end with the colonial state. Imagine: after 180 years of the Republican Democratic life we can just now arrive here, we can be in Parliament; we can be in the presidency, and in the mayorships. Before we did not have the right.
17. Imagine: the universal vote in 1952 cost blood. Peasant miners raised arms to secure the universal vote - that it was not a concession of any party, they organized themselves; for that conquest, for that pueblo struggle.
18. Imagine, just in 2003 we have been able to secure with blood the binding Referendum for the pueblos, Bolivians not only have the right to choose every five years with our vote who will be mayor, who will be councilman, who is the president, vice-president, senator or deputy; also with our vote we decide the destiny of the country, our future. And that binding Referendum also has cost blood.
19. There was the colonial state, and that colonial state still continues to be effective. Imagine, it is not possible; it is not possible that in the National army there is no general Condori, general Villca, general Mamani, general Ayma. Still there is not, that is where the colonial state is.
20. In order to change that colonial state there will need to be spaces, debates, dialogues. We are under obligation, as Bolivians, to understand ourselves, to change this way of discriminating against the people.

21. Before there was talk of democracy, democracy was constantly fought for; there was talk of a pact for democracy, a pact of governability. The year 1997 when I arrived at this Parliament that I have seen personally, no pact for democracy or governability, but pacts of corruption, pacts of how to make money from where and how, fortunately it has been limited and ended thanks to the consciousness of the Bolivian people.
22. Maneuvers more maneuvers, the way in which to deceive the people, the way to auction off the people. They left us a divided country, a divided State, an auctioned off country. I am almost convinced: if they had been intelligent administrators of the State, if they had wanted this homeland, loved this homeland and not as some people who only want a homeland to plunder and make themselves rich, if there had really been responsible people to handle loving this homeland, its people, Bolivia would be better than Switzerland.
23. Switzerland, a country developed without natural resources, and Bolivia with similar natural resources and similar poverty. That needs to change, and for that reason we are here together to change these injustices, this constant plundering of our natural resources.
24. After listening to the report of the transition commissions, I have been able to see how the State does not control itself, its institutions. A total dependency, as we have seen with the economy, a transnationalized country. Their pretext of capitalization has only decapitalized the country. Their pretext of capitalization, I understand that we must import capital instead of exporting capital. It is only exported to the capital and it is only exported now as a product of those policies of capitalization, to human beings. Governing is not like that esteemed parliamentarians; to govern is not like that, those who went through the Palace of Government and the Parliament.
25. Politics means a science of service to the people; we must serve the people not live off of the people, if that is the policy. We have to live for politics and not live from politics.
26. Sisters and brothers, our original authorities know exactly that when one assumes to be an authority, it is to serve the people, and these issues must be changed, and parliamentarians you are here to serve, if you are really determined, to serve five years. That is what we would want; in every case we must take certain measures so that the people understand.
27. I understand that politics is a way to solve the economic problems of the country. As we have seen, there are many people who will return after resting a year, two years to continue living off of politics. It must change and we must have the participation of you all to change those subjects.

28. It is not possible to privatize the basic services. I cannot understand how the former rulers privatize the basic services especially water. Water is a natural resource, without water we cannot live, therefore the water cannot be of private business, from the moment that it is private business human rights are violated. Water must be a public service.
29. The fights for water, coca, and natural gas have brought us here sisters and brothers. We must recognize that those mistaken, wrong, selfish policies, have auctioned off natural resources, and privatized basic services. This forced there to be a consciousness of the Bolivian people. We are obligated to change these policies.
30. Constitutionally speaking, the large estate is unconstitutional. Lamentably due to interests of powerful groups the large estate exists. How it is possible that there are large estates? How is it possible when some sectors suggest they need 20, 30, 40, 50 hectares to raise a cow, which cow would need to have 50 hectares? That is part of an unconstitutional economic model.
31. We see there are families, in Titicaca, in Parotani, we asked our senator from Cochabamba (Hoz de Vila) to stay vigilant, we are talking about Parotani, where families do not even have five hectares, or half a hectare, or a quarter hectare, and some do not even have a quarter hectare, but are told the Bolivian east cow must be given 50 hectares. That we must change, we are here, I repeat, to change this injustice, this inequality.
32. These economic policies implemented according to external instructions, through external recommendations, what have they left us? : unemployment. We were told about 10, 15, or 20 years ago that here private enterprise will solve the problems of corruption and the problems of unemployment. Many years passed, more unemployment, more corruption, than therefore this economic model is not a solution for our country, perhaps in some European country or African it can be a solution. In Bolivia the neoliberal model does not function.
33. We have seen closely the products from the application of the neoliberal model. The State spends money so that a young person, whether from a rural area, or the city can be a professional; a family spends money so that their child can be a professional, they are a professional, and there are no jobs, so that professional must think about Argentina, the United States or Europe. Nowadays that young person who goes away to Europe cannot find a job, professional or nonprofessional. How many relatives of yours are there, if not in Argentina, in the United States, in Europe? How many of our neighbors, sisters and brothers are the product of the application of the neoliberal model? That is the law of capitalization; those are the politics of auction, of plundering our natural resources.

34. And what are they after in the United States, Argentina, and Europe?
Unfortunately – we must tell the truth, they go to be waiters. Those professionals are going to wash plates. It hurts really, I repeat again, having so many natural resources that people leave our country. I believe even still, we have the responsibility to settle these social, economic and historical errors, that together we can all better change and correct those errors surely implemented by foreign institutions.
35. Imagine, rural schools called sectionals, without light. We are in the third millenium, that I remember where I was born, where for the first time I went to a sectional school, two years ago it reached the light, but in other sectional schools such as Acunani, Chivo, Rosapata, Arcorocaya, there is still no light. How will it be in other communities? There is no highway; the teacher must walk hours and days to arrive at the sectional school. What have these rulers done? Perhaps they do not feel the suffering of the national majorities, the children. Instead of collecting money in banks, instead of saving money in the United States, Europe or Switzerland, why hasn't the money been invested in your country, if you are all united in support?
36. Imagine, especially in the countryside, the majority of children die and very few are saved from that death. We would like to resolve these issues, not only with the participation of Bolivians, but also with international cooperation. To resolve, not for Evo; I am not requesting participation of the international community for Evo, but for the Bolivian people.
37. And we would truly want, truly, for there to be not only national but international consciousness. Surely some countries also have to put their hands to their chest to think of not only the Bolivian but also the Latin American majorities.
38. It is truth that is will be important. How can we find mechanisms that allow us to repair the damages from 500 years of plundering our natural resources? It will be another task that we are going to implement in our government.
39. Because of those kinds of injustices, this call for a political instrument for sovereignty was born, a political instrument of the people, a political instrument of liberation, a political instrument in search for equality, justice, a political instrument such as the Movement Toward Socialism (MAS), which seeks to live in peace with social justice, that called for unity in diversity.

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