PLVS VLTRA

University of Victoria

Undergraduate Journal of
Hispanic and Italian Studies

EDITORIAL TEAM

ABOUT

PLVS VLTRA endeavours to publish exceptional papers that promote research and scholarship in all areas of Hispanic and Italian Studies at the University of Victoria.

PLVS VLTRA is indexed online through the LOCKSS Program based at Stanford University and a physical copy of the journal is archived in Library and Archives Canada in Ottawa.

SUBMISSIONS

A maximum page length of 12 double-spaced pages is preferred by the Journal. Papers may be written in English, Italian, or Spanish. After each issue's submission deadline, *PLVS VLTRA* will submit the papers to an intensive selection process, including peer-review by undergraduates from both the Hispanic and Italian sections of the Department.

Each paper will be reviewed by at least two undergraduate students. Reviewers will address areas including clarity of writing, presentation, relevance to the theme of Hispanic and Italian Studies, originality, interdisciplinary relevance, and contribution to research in the area.

Should a number of submissions pertain to the same topic, the selection process may become competitive. Papers not selected for publication may be considered for a following issue, as declared by the Editorial Team, and with permission from the author at the time of submission.

PUBLISHING INFORMATION

Volume 5 of *PLVS VLTRA* was published with the assistance of the University of Victoria Student Society Publishing Grant at the University of Victoria's Printing Services.

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NOTES ON *PLVS VLTRA*

Today, Spain's coat of arms is flanked by two pillars, which together read PLVS VLTRA. This motto can be directly traced to the year 1516. Holy Roman Emperor Charles V adopted the Pillars of Hercules and the inscription "PLVS VLTRA" as his emblem. However, this motto was not created by Charles himself—it was his Italian physician, Luigi Marliano, who suggested it. PLVS VLTRA, meaning "further beyond" in Latin, was in reference to the Age of Exploration—going beyond the Pillars of Hercules, expanding the empire both westward and eastward. Going "further beyond" is very much an objective of the Hispanic and Italian Studies undergraduate journal, *PLVS VLTRA*. Both Italian and Hispanic cultures were immensely shaped by those who dared to go beyond the known world. In a similar sense, students here are encouraged to explore new things, make discoveries, and advance the state of knowledge.

Kyle McCreanor

FOREWORD FROM THE CHAIR

Volume 5 of *PLVS VLTRA* is a testament to our students' commitment to scholarship. Since 2015, our students have published high-quality research papers in an annual blind peer-reviewed journal. The publication process has provided and continues to provide our students with invaluable professional experience and has reached beyond Ring Road into the community at large.

This year's publication showcases five outstanding articles on Latin America that envisage research as an international and multidisciplinary endeavour. Two authors explore links between Latin America and other geographic areas: Lynden Miller focuses her research on the influence of neoclassical European architecture in colonial Mexico, while Michael Paramchuk explores the role Cuba played in the Angolan Civil War. Three authors explore multi-layered issues in three South American countries: David Romero Espitia tackles issues of exclusion, violence and inequality in the Colombian context; Mike Graeme examines Indigenous movements in Andean and Amazonian Peru; and Courtney McDonough explores racism, sexism and empowerment of *cholas*, Indigenous Bolivian marketplace women.

Hats off to the authors and the Editorial Team, led by Stephen Bagan and Isaac Nazaroff, for the publication of Volume 5 of *PLVS VLTRA*!

Pablo Restrepo-Gautier, Chair

MESSAGE FROM THE CO-EDITORS-IN-CHIEF

This year marks the fifth year of publication for *PLVS VLTRA*. As we celebrate this significant milestone, we acknowledge that the journal would not be possible without the support of several individuals: Donna Flemming, Departmental Assistant, for disseminating our promotional material and reserving meeting rooms; Sarah Stratton for poster design; Oriana Varas for the cover photo; Vaughan Lewis, for his invaluable wisdom and editorial work over the past five years; and, Dr. Pablo Restrepo-Gautier, Department Chair, for supporting this project and resolving our countless questions and concerns.

As Co-Editors-in-Chief of *PLVS VLTRA* for the second consecutive year, we are honoured once again to be a part of this student publication. This journal reflects the talent of UVic students and our engaged academic community. The excitement and initiative shown by our editors is a testament to the vitality of the Department of Hispanic and Italian Studies. After many editing sessions, countless emails, and several promotional presentations, we are proud to publish these five essays.

This compelling collection of research—spanning the Americas from Mexico and Cuba to the Andean nations of Colombia, Peru, and Bolivia—represents multidisciplinary investigations of these five Latin American countries. To everyone who submitted works to Volume 5 of *PLVS VLTRA,* and to the selected authors, we wish to thank you all for entrusting us with your work. We look forward to carrying this academic initiative further and beyond.

Stephen Bagan
Co-Editor-in-Chief

Isaac Nazaroff
Co-Editor-in-Chief

Building Order: Manuel Tolsá and Late Colonial Neoclassical Civic Architecture in Mexico

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Much research has been dedicated to neoclassical European architecture, but much less has been said about its dissemination in Latin America. This paper explores how Spanish architect Manuel Tolsá came to shape the experience of public space in a prominent cultural center of the Spanish empire. Through the revival of borrowed Greco-Roman forms, his vision was realized in the architecture of the colonial system's public institutions in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This paper argues that neoclassical architecture embodies the Enlightenment ideal of rational order and reinforces the aims of the Bourbon reforms in the political context of pre-independence Mexico. By connecting the visual evidence of three buildings, the history of the contemporaneous social institutions, and the implications of architecture in public space, I critically examine a visible legacy of Mexico's late colonial history.

Keywords: Mexico; New Spain; colonialism; neoclassical architecture; Manuel Tolsá; Academy of San Carlos; Enlightenment; Bourbon reforms; public space

1   Introduction

Public architecture in New Spain in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was transformed by the neoclassical style in order to promote European cultural supremacy that supported the Spanish colonial system. This transformation was accomplished under the direction of prolific sculptor and architect Manuel Tolsá, who was born in 1757 in Valencia; he died in 1816 in his new home of Mexico City, where he taught at the Academy of San Carlos. By adopting the ideology of the Enlightenment and the neoclassical architectural aesthetic, Tolsá participated in the articulation of a distinctly colonial perception of culture and space. During the transition from late colonial control to Mexico's early independence, the emerging nation was negotiating its *novohispano* identity.

Tolsá's work aligns with the dissemination of classicism in Latin American culture in this period. This becomes evident by tracing the rising interest in classicizing arts and culture in colonial Mexico, followed by Tolsá's development and sculptural training in imperial Spain. The impact of his works is furthered by the transformative influences of architecture in public space and the development of urban planning in colonial New Spain. Finally, the architectural forms of three case studies of his work—the Granary of Granaditas in Guanajuato, the Hospicio Cabañas in Guadalajara, and the Palacio de Minería in Mexico City—embody Tolsá's neoclassical aesthetic and formalize the colonial conception of urban spaces. These buildings reinforce the presence of the state as constructed evidence of Bourbon social reforms in the context of Mexican architecture, which had already been hybridized over centuries of Spanish colonial rule.

2   Development of Classicism in Mexican Architecture

The collapse of Spain's empire in the early nineteenth century certainly had repercussions in its prosperous territory of New Spain. A preceding period of relatively stable economic prosperity in New Spain from approximately 1550 to 1750, particularly in the eighteenth century, had supported the enumeration and development of architecture in colonial Mexico (Mullen 3). As early as the sixteenth century with the *Herreriana* style, architects were developing a taste for classical ornament, primarily the sturdy Doric style. This iteration is characterized by heavy proportions and simple columns, which communicates "an indubitable aspect of strength and power," frequently utilized in domestic and religious buildings (Kilham 13-14). An example of this Renaissance[1] predilection for "classical equilibrium and compositional clarity" can be found in sixteenth century examples such as the government palace in Tlaxcala (Mullen 7). The Plateresque and the *Herreriana* styles were replaced in the seventeenth century by the Baroque[2] and eighteenth-century Churrigueresque, a hyper-Baroque iteration, according to Manuel Toussaint's periodization (116). This dominant aesthetic is significantly more decorative than the previous Renaissance and the following neoclassical *academismo* associated with Tolsá. The Baroque and Churrigueresque still incorporated grounding classical references, notably tapered square pilasters called *estípites*, speaking to the sophistication of

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[1] See David Young Kim, "Renaissance," *Oxford Art Online*, 2015.
[2] See Gauvin Bailey and Jillian Lanthier, "Baroque," *Oxford Art Online*, 2018.

the Mexican oeuvre (3). Such examples of this elaborated Baroque and classical hybridization can be observed in instances such as the glazed tile exteriors of churches in the town of Puebla (188-191).

As the Bourbon dynasty succeeded the Habsburgs as the ruling house of the Spanish monarchy in 1700, so began their implementation of colonial reforms. These intensified under the reign of Charles III from 1759 to 1788. The subsequent effects on the architecture of New Spain during this period included the rise of the neoclassical style, a new aesthetic purportedly following the dictates of reason and the perfection of nature which visually borrowed from ancient Greco-Roman art and architecture. This was formalized in various academies that were being established in Europe and the Americas during this period (Cortés Rocha 25). Neoclassicism, linked to the concurrent European Enlightenment, celebrated reason, order, and restraint, much as the civic Bourbon reforms were understood by their advocates to impose order on the Spanish American empire. The neoclassical style was a reaction to the extravagance and exuberance of Baroque embellishment. Instead, neoclassical architecture incorporated classical Greek and Roman references, including extensive use of balanced elements following the tenants of geometry and symmetry, as well as decorative elements such as columns and entablature.

The concept of *buen gusto*, or good taste, needed to be transformed intellectually and artistically in New Spain in order to proliferate Enlightenment ideals. This transformation was an attempt to mimic and rival Spanish cultural influences despite Spain's dwindling position in Europe. New Spain needed to assert its importance in light of centuries-long debates about the inferiority of European colonies in the Americas (Deans-Smith 4). Though the

historiography of neoclassical European architecture does not typically explore the stylistic expressions and cultural context of the Spanish examples, the European tradition imported from Spain was decisive for the *novohispano* and later Mexican iterations (Niell 253).

Mexico City's newspapers, the *Diario* and the *Gazeta de México*, frequently published European and classical material for public access and cultural education, aligning them with the term *buen gusto*. This was used regularly but without definition, other than simply as the antithesis of *mal gusto* (Deans-Smith 15-16). This subjective labelling masquerading as rational observation, based on an elite "upbringing and cultivated through exposure to objects and ideas" (Donahue-Wallace, "Taste" 95), was the precursor to the periodization later established by art-historical study. The newspapers served as one of the sites of the construction of taste, reflecting and producing the distinct qualities of the values of the capital's elite, which to a lesser extent also applied to the values of their provincial contemporaries. The messaging of the Academy's neoclassical style was evident in the newspapers' content, including advertisements and descriptions of fashionable furnishings. The emphasis placed on secular decoration aligned with the tendency of neoclassicism to reject the typical Catholic exuberance and drama associated with the Baroque. The display of good taste was necessitated by material markers, denoting wealth and access to luxury goods, and therefore class privilege (98). Of course, the *novohispano* population at this time was largely agrarian and illiterate, limiting the newspapers' readership to the privileged and educated elite in the capital (Herzog 136). The readership and indeed the rhetoric of the newspapers distinguished itself as distinctly Spanish, including both creole and peninsular,

as well as identifying with European heritage and elite class status (Donahue-Wallace, "Taste" 107-108).

The newspapers' propagandistic affirmation of elite cultural sensibilities was "promoted by a cooperative viceregal government" (Donahue-Wallace, "Spinning" 414) before the newspapers officially came under governmental control in 1809. This viceregal oversight can be seen in the description of the events surrounding the equestrian Charles IV statue in Mexico City (see fig. 4) printed in the *Gazeta*. The institutional practice of the Academy functioned in tandem with these newspapers to formalize and disseminate the principles and practices of the tasteful neoclassicism which consciously diverged from the Baroque and presented itself as internationally comparable (Charlot 10). With the inclusion of news from many provincial locations, the newspapers reinforced acceptance of the emerging norms promulgated by the colonial cultural capital (Donahue-Wallace, "Taste" 101-102). In this way, colonial *novohispano* identity reflected and shaped good taste.

Paul Neill also considers the plasticity of the nature and expression of taste, noting that *buen gusto* was not exclusively associated with strictly neoclassical works (256). Prior to 1780 there was a preference for *mexicanidad*, a term later coined by historian Justino Fernández indicating the assertion that colonial works were preferable to European ones. This notion had all but disappeared during Tolsá's Mexico City residence as *novohispano* neoclassicism challenged established taste (Donahue-Wallace, "Taste" 96). Neill also suggests that the local elite preference for clear classical visual references pertains to a later distinct nationalist American identity that privileges a pre-Hispanic past rather than Mexico's European heritage (261). Even at the turn of the nineteenth century, the soon-to-be Mexican citizens

heavily identified with their homeland, their *patria* (253). The reception of the imposition of the European colonial vision from the perspective of these *criollos* of New Spain, people of European descent but born in the colonies, provides a counter to the narrative of the intellectual and artistic domination of the Academy.

3   Academic Rise and Influence

Tolsá was educated at the Royal Academy of San Carlos in Valencia before arriving in New Spain in 1791. He later served as the Director of Sculpture at Mexico City's namesake of his alma mater, the Academy of the Three Fine Arts of San Carlos, founded in 1783, which he helped to bring into prominence (Kilham 21). The royal sponsorship of education, aligning with the Enlightenment values of rational inquiry and classical study, was a critical element of the assertion of Bourbon culture in New Spain (Niell 256). Tolsá's name and reputation came to be synonymous with the neoclassical style in New Spain, as many works of his contemporaries have been incorrectly attributed to him (Kilham 22). His education and status as a peninsular, a Spanish-born immigrant to New Spain, allowed him to wield cultural influence. This was especially true in the capital city, dominated by elite *criollos*. Tolsá's Iberian lineage firmly aligned him and his work with the cultural politics of the centralizing reformist Bourbon project. Jean Charlot notes his loyalist involvement in the Wars of Independence, constructing firearms and weaponry (48).

One of Tolsá's more notable works is a monumental equestrian bronze statue of Charles IV. A temporary version of it was dedicated in late 1796 in Mexico City (Deans-Smith 15). It is now better known by the diminutive nickname "*el caballito*." This work's

commanding presence deals in what Susan Deans-Smith calls "cultural patriotism" (4), which contributes to public space in a similar yet less explicitly functional fashion than civic architecture. The statue was consciously modelled on classical examples of statuary which promote a heroic icon of civic might, such as the famous Marcus Aurelius statue in the Campidoglio, Rome's conspicuously imperial plaza (Donahue-Wallace, "Spinning" 412). Viceroy Marqués de Branciforte commissioned Tolsá's statue, intending to demonstrate his loyalty to the Crown and leave a physical legacy in the colony (412-413). This work then is a typical example of the alignment of stylistic content and political context, as is also evidenced in Tolsá's architectural achievements.

4   Civic Architecture and Public Space

The colonial spatial context of Mexico City, on the location of the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlán in Lake Texcoco, was informed by the amalgamation of pre-Hispanic and Renaissance conceptions of public space (Herzog 116). Indigenous cities were highly sophisticated; some planned for ceremonial use had already developed architectural systems that reflected social and religious cultural constructions that valued community participation (117). Further, the infrastructural technology was highly advanced, as Tenochtitlán was centrally planned around a sacred space with canals facilitating movement around the city (118-119), not unlike the Hospicio's many courtyards and covered walkways. These practical considerations of organizing city life and a surrounding network of power were furthered by the conquering Spanish. Urban centralization around public plazas and courtyards was a feature of Spanish colonial cities from the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries, remarkably similar in form to Aztec

central squares (4). As an additional example of the presence of classical influence in Mexican architecture, the distinction of public spaces by a gathering place dates to the early models of the Greek agora and Roman forum (7).

The construction of colonial Latin American cities is "simply an artefact of Spain in the act of colonizing the Americas" (Herzog 125). In the sixteenth century during the reign of Philip II, the particularities of Spanish urban planning were still developing (122). The colonizing vision for urban planning in the Americas anticipated expansion rather than enclosure, with functional buildings being constructed rather than fortresses, making civic architecture an integral instrument of colonization. This role is evident in civic planning ordinances, such as the 1573 "Laws of the Indies," which decreed that government buildings be placed on the central plaza in order to emphasize secular authority rather than that of the church, though this regulation was not always followed (123-124). The task of transplanting the high culture of Europe and the colonial capital to the remote outposts of the empire was furthered by institutionalized secular Bourbon reforms in the eighteenth century. These centralizing projects and administrative restructuring were undertaken to develop the Spanish economy and strengthen the crown's mastery over its colonies in order to maintain its position among the major European powers (Niell 256).

The nature of public city life in the eighteenth century was shaped by social stratification and class tensions, visible in Mexico City's increasingly destitute population. This growing turmoil would be a factor in the impending independence movement (Herzog 143). Inflation, unemployment, and competition for land led to an increase in poverty, despite prosperous mining in late eighteenth-century New Spain (Arrom 6-7). Policy

changes were implemented in an effort to eliminate poverty and promote economic development. Decrees against vagrancy and begging, which was considered a legitimate Catholic practice of soliciting alms, recurred in New Spain and Mexico from the 1770s in to the late nineteenth century (1-2).[3] "Poorhouses," including those in Mexico City and Guadalajara, attempted to intern and transform the disorderly population and "rationalize the distribution of assistance" (45), combining a humanitarian institution with the imposition of a wider scheme of colonial social control. In practice, this shift towards secular social welfare did not operate as intended due to weaknesses in administration and funding and a lack of focus on economic growth. Nevertheless, continuities linked the reformist intent of the Bourbon initiatives and the liberal politics of the mid nineteenth century (5).

Pre-industrial public space needed to be structured according to the dominant social groups because it performed multiple functions as a social, economic, and political centre (Herzog 9). Just as social stratification is understood to be signalled by personal appearance, so too were social and political identity performed in public spaces. This function can also be applied to the messaging of public architecture, as it performed and sought to impose civic identity. Through its physical forms and cultural context, civic architecture structures the experience of occupied space and performs practical societal functions. Further underscoring its importance, the range of form and utility of civic architecture differentiates it from the more illustrious categories of

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[3] On colonial Bourbon control of poverty and public societal customs in New Spain, see Juan Pedro Viqueira Albán, *¿Relajados o Reprimidos?,* México, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1987.

religious and residential buildings. As the physical manifestations of government institutions, the constant presence of civic buildings in provincial centres provided a more sustained messaging of colonial control than the limited impact of a magnificent altarpiece or sculpture. Although the elites of the capital carefully adhered to the aesthetics of good taste as defined by neoclassical theory, the urban environment looked different elsewhere in the colony, where the impact of the Bourbon reforms was not as dominant. The following examples highlight architectural forms which populate public space and contribute to its colonial messaging of constructed unity and power while responding to local particularities.

5 Studies in Neoclassicism

5.1 Granary of Granaditas

A new *alhóndiga*, or granary, to store maize and wheat was completed in 1809 after fifteen years of construction in the town of Guanajuato. The town bears the same name as the inland *intendencia* (provincial region) several days travel away from the more southerly capital city of the colony. The development of the Bajío region's economy, including mining, agriculture, and textiles production, led to growing towns and cities along with a growing population competing for land and resources (Gordo Peláez 71). In this region, towns such as Guanajuato, Zacatecas, and Querétaro began as outposts of colonial administration on the frontier in the mid-sixteenth century. They partly adopted features of the existing indigenous settlement while imposing the European gridiron structure (Herzog 127-129).

The colonial government regulated the price and storage of grain to mitigate shortages as fluctuations in

production were all too common. Guanajuato had a smaller granary in the urban centre built earlier in the eighteenth century which was damaged in a flood of the nearby river and needed to be rebuilt (Gordo Peláez 72). The provincial authorities implemented higher taxes and a review of municipal funds, as well as a request for funding assistance from the viceroy, in order to pay for new public works such as the granary. Partly as a consequence of the economic prosperity of the municipality, the town also boasted an impressive cultural presence, including a Jesuit school before the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1767. In 1792, the new intendant Juan Antonio de Riaño y Bárcena implemented Bourbon reforms while also promoting the Enlightenment ideal of education. He petitioned the viceroy for funds to improve public works such as the *casas reales* and aqueducts in his previous post in Michoacán (73-74). Riaño's initiatives were supported by the wealthy elite administrators and aristocracy. He submitted a plan for the footprint and budget of the proposed granary project to solve practical problems posed by smaller granary structures with the assistance of the Master of Public Works, José Alejandro Durán y Villaseñor (74-75).

The Granary of Granaditas (see fig. 1), as it is now known, is organized in a rectilinear plan with ornamented entrances on its north and east facades. The three-story building is located on a slope, with only two floors on the north-facing side. The regularity of the large, square plan required several wide streets surrounding it to facilitate access (79). This extends the imposition of uniformity on to the irregular existing urban environment, in addition to the messaging of the neoclassical architecture. The building's original multi-purpose use necessitated storage rooms around a central courtyard and offices on the upper floor. The specifics of the plan, reflecting the practical

functions of the institution and the conditions of the site, is a pertinent example of the local negotiation of the overarching Bourbon reforms according to centralizing rational principles (Niell 258). Academy-trained architect José del Mazo y Avilés submitted a report in 1797 suggesting changes to Durán's plan (Gordo Peláez 77). It included simplifying the layout in consideration of rain on grain storage and the use of the open interior patio, and the combination of beauty and solidity in the masonry of the building (78). This plan was not completely realized, but his ideas speak to the consistently careful application of form and function in local contexts as practiced by the Academy.

By 1806, the *Junta Superior* in Mexico City demanded a new progress report from the granary's primary architects Francisco Ortiz de Castro and Juan de Dios de la Trinidad Pérez. They consulted the Royal Academy, of which Tolsá was a director at this point (Gordo Peláez 83). Tolsá's report praised the practical, simplistic design and classical details. The triglyph and metope structure of Doric entablature above the entrances follows the model of the Greco-Roman temple front. The sculptural relief conflates local and classical imagery, featuring the city's medallion and the ancient Roman harvest god Ceres (Cortés Rocha 34). By contrast, the west and south facades are markedly less ornate. The small, squat windows near the top of each storeroom are aligned on each floor for circulation. The three-foot (one *vara*) thick walls were built to mitigate humidity and support the weight of the grain on the upper floors (Gordo Peláez 75). The modestly ornamented exterior is echoed by the interior scheme, such as the second-story patio's robust rectilinear balustrade fashioned in heavy stone (see fig. 2). This solidity and simplicity evokes the stability of a

fortress or castle, and by extension the symbolic strength of the administration (81).

5.2   Hospicio Cabañas

Bishop Fray Antonio Alcalde saw a need for a hospital in Guadalajara, later to become the Hospicio Cabañas (see fig. 3), to shelter and assist the poor, orphaned, homeless, elderly, and disabled populations of the city following a period of droughts and floods in the late eighteenth century ("World Heritage List" 68). The city of Guadalajara, located inland from the Pacific coast in what would become the state of Jalisco north-west of Mexico City and Guanajuato, was already a well-established urban centre at the outset of the Hospicio project. The paternalistic colonial caste system sought to "protect" the indigenous population, much as the Academy desired to "rais[e] the standards of Mexican art production," as evidenced in this project (Charlot 50). Earlier elite pious charity led to the private adoption of orphans. The Bourbon regime transformed care for orphans in to a public institution, incorporating religious and secular reform (Niell 259). Evidence from Mexico City's poorhouse points to systemic bureaucratic tension between the ecclesiastical and state administrations. However, religious establishments were still "under the ultimate authority of the Crown," and therefore the architecture of the Hospicio includes tenants of religious and secular architecture (Arrom 51).

Construction of the Hospicio began in 1791 on a site outside the town with a sufficient supply of water ("World Heritage List" 68). The initiative was adopted in 1796 by the namesake of the complex and Alcalde's successor as Bishop, Juan Ruiz de Cabañas (Jiménez et al. 19). The project was approved by Charles IV in 1803.

Cabañas entrusted the task of designing the structures and complex to Tolsá and his student José Gutierrez. Tolsá had already established his prolific reputation with his work on monumental projects such as the cathedral in Mexico City. During the Hospicio's decades-long building process, the Mexican War of Independence exploded and continued until the definitive repudiation of Spain in 1821. War interrupted construction, as the site was used as barracks by both royalists and rebels, followed in the 1830s and 1850s by several other military occupations (Jiménez et al. 32; "World Heritage List" 69). The newly created state continued the project in 1828 after the death of Cabañas in 1823, eventually inaugurating the Hospicio in 1829. However, the site would remain as Church property until 1853. It was managed by the monastic order of the Sisters of Charity in the latter half of the nineteenth century and maintained its intended function well into the twentieth century (69). The Hospicio is now famous for the murals by famed Mexican painter José Clemente Orozco in the chapel dome and houses a cultural institute.

The hospital complex was inventive in its plan, though not atypical in institutional intention for the period. The purpose-built plan demonstrated careful attention to form and function. The design draws upon European examples including the Paris Hôtel des Invalides and the Monastery of El Escorial, a sixteenth-century royal palace near Madrid, which Tolsá was familiar with from his schooling in Spain ("World Heritage List" 69). The symmetry and regularity of the plan, nearly square and measuring 164 by 145 meters, follows the Vitruvian model (Cortés Rocha 36-37). The arrangement of the spaces adheres to the longitudinal and transverse axes, crossing at the chapel (Jiménez et al. 108). Following Enlightenment principles of rationality, the structural elements of the buildings are also decorative visual components. Here, the

austere column form is elaborated as a central component of the design under the neoclassical scheme (Cortés Rocha 30-31). The twenty-three rectilinear courtyards are lined by arcades, making movement within the complex easy for patients and residents, as well as satisfying the requirements of dual public and private spaces (Jiménez et al. 104). The ample light and air circulation were considered optimal conditions for healing. The central building is the chapel, with the dome on a windowed drum rising above the rest of the one story buildings. The kitchen also boasts a more modest dome and lantern. The eminence of the dome as a feature in colonial Mexican architecture can be observed in innumerable and varied churches (Kilham 27).

5.3   Palacio de Minería

The Royal School of Mines in Mexico City (see fig. 4), known in Spanish as the Palacio de Minería, was built from 1797 to 1813. It is considered one of Tolsá's crowning achievements. Its elevated status among neoclassical Mexican works is partly due to its location in Mexico City, the nexus of *academismo*. Even so, the extensively popularized Baroque tendency that had been elaborated in New Spain remained influential. As evidence of the distinction between Spanish and American styles of the period, the Baroque and neoclassical styles coexisted in this work of the marquee proponent of neoclassicism in New Spain. The pedagogical function of the institution, which combined the commercial practice of mining with the professionalized arts, again speaks to the overarching aims of the Bourbon reforms and their implementation of Enlightenment ideals.

The Palacio's facade is complicated by broken pediments, busier than the typical neoclassical iteration,

but its primary features are still distinctly Greco-Roman (Niell 253). The primary facade of the Palacio conspicuously employs many markers of classical design. These include Ionic pilasters, elegantly elongated windows, balustrades, and finials in its highly symmetrical and proportionate tripartite division. These constitute a more delicate style than the squat Doric seen in the previous two examples. The variation in floor heights and rusticated masonry on the ground floor of the Palacio contrasts with the solid foundational structure of the Granary and the plain exterior walls of the majority of the Hospicio. This elaboration on classical references tends towards referencing the ornate ancient three-story classical model (Cortés Rocha 40-41). The interior is also more intricately planned with staircases and colonnades, as markers of grandeur would be required for the official association of the Royal School (Charlot 44).

6   Conclusion

Tolsá's work represents an integral part of Mexican history on the eve of independence. The conscious and highly visible construction of the colonial state's agenda was subsumed by the nationalist politics of the nineteenth century. The legacy of the Academy also shifted, particularly through Tolsá's student Pedro Patiño Ixtolinque, who incorporated the precedent of classical teachings along with his Indigenous heritage and nationalist politics in his sculpture. This transformation was furthered by the iconic works that rejected classicizing aesthetics by the Mexican muralists who would be trained at the very same academy that Tolsá directed only a century after his death (Charlot 58-60).

Just as the muralists would diverge from neoclassicism, so too did *novohispanos* actively develop

Enlightenment ideals that deliberately broke away from the preceding Baroque aesthetic tradition in late colonial New Spain. Epitomized in the work of prolific sculptor and architect Tolsá, the iterations of neoclassicism as defined by the Academy of San Carlos show variations in visual form according to their location and function. The Granary of Granaditas, Hospicio Cabañas, and Palacio de Minería were successful in their application of the colonial taste for neoclassicism. Through these examples of civic architecture, the Spanish colonial regime sought to establish strength, stability, and cultural stature in relation to European values. However, the complete body of architecture from this period includes a persistent strain of the Baroque as the proliferation of imperial style also incorporated local tastes. Despite Tolsá's fame and artistic ability, his role in the neoclassical colonial regime is not that of supreme creator, but as one exemplary piece of the larger project of colonial development. Thus, his buildings must be considered in their urban and political contexts, not simply as aesthetic statements. Tolsá's architectural works, amplified by recognizable classical features and storied history, produced a sense of place which was distinct to the late colonial period. They functioned politically while also serving a public purpose, two roles that were not disparate in the purview of the Bourbon reforms. By combining analysis of the variations on classical form and the context of social reform and municipal administration, it becomes evident how imperial and local politics shape the architecture of the urban environment in the alignment of Enlightenment aesthetic virtues and colonial civic engagements.

Figure 1. Durán y Villaseñor, José Alejandro. Alhóndiga de Granaditas. 1798-1809, Guanajuato, Mexico. View of west façade.
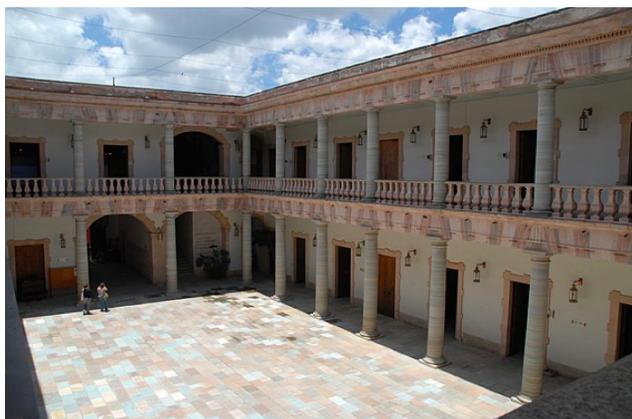
Figure 2. Durán y Villaseñor, José Alejandro. Alhóndiga de Granaditas. 1798-1809, Guanajuato, Mexico. Interior view from patio.

Figure 3. Tolsá, Manuel. Hospicio Cabañas. 1791-1829, Guadalajara, Mexico. View of main courtyard and chapel dome.

Figure 4. Tolsá, Manuel. Palacio de Minería. 1797-1813, Mexico City, Mexico. View of main façade.

Acknowledgements

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The Cubans in Angola: An Assessment of Military and Diplomatic Involvement in Angola from 1960-1978

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Cuba's military and diplomatic interactions in Africa from 1960 to 1978 is a topic often overlooked, in spite of the significant role Cuba played internationally at a time when global tensions were high. This paper examines the role of Cuba in the Angolan Civil War and its diplomatic relations with the Angolan parties vying for power in addition to explaining Cuban motives for engaging abroad militarily. It also explores race relations within Cuba and how its foreign policy was partly a product of domestic relations. Cuba had friendly relations with the Soviet Union during this period and the role of communist ideology is also examined.
Keywords: Cuba; Angola; international relations; revolution; independence; military involvement

In 1959, Fidel Castro started to transform the island of Cuba into a socialist regime with a successful military coup. He quickly attempted to establish favourable relations with all races domestically, Afro-Cubans in particular (Moore x-xi). Castro also increasingly sought to align himself with the USSR, the leading Communist power of the time. As Castro was seizing power in Cuba,

the "second scramble" for Africa was beginning as a series of coups unfolded. This yielded many self-proclaimed progressive or socialist regimes. The Soviet Union began to establish itself as favourable to these regimes shortly thereafter (Valenta 6). Cuba was not far behind, although it may have been motivated by factors other than those that interested the Soviet Union. This paper intends to explore Cuban involvement in Africa, specifically Angola. By looking at diplomatic relations, along with military involvement in Angola prior to, during and immediately following the Angolan Civil War, it will highlight Cuban connections to Africa through the mid-twentieth century. This paper maintains that Cuban foreign policy in Angola was more independent of Soviet influence than previously assumed (Gleijeses, "Moscow's Proxy?" 103). [1] It also examines the extent to which Cuban foreign policy in Africa was motivated by domestic race relations with Afro-Cubans, how Cuba attempted to spread communism and how the Soviet Union influenced Cuba in relation to intervention in Angola.

Cuban interests in Africa can be traced back to the early 1960s with attempts to reach out to white-colonized black majority states under white-minority rule. Castro was keen to spread the revolutionary fervour that he believed in so strongly (O'Ballance 47). Moreover, he saw Africa as the perfect place to introduce Marxist revolutionary ideas. Consequently, the most important relationship that Cuba forged in its early involvement in Africa was with the Movimento Popular para a Liberacao

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[1] It is asserted by then US Secretary of state, Henry Kissinger, that the US government had thought originally that Cuba was acting as a Soviet proxy; however, they have uncovered evidence that the Cubans were acting independently in some cases.

de Angola (MPLA). In 1965, Che Guevara[2] met with MPLA leader Agostino Neto in Congo-Brazzaville. By all accounts, this meeting was of little significance to Cuban-MPLA relations that developed over the next twenty years other than to establish a base relationship (Mesa-Lago and Belkin 20). This relationship proved to be valuable to both groups involved.

The relationship between the MPLA and Cuba can be traced to Soviet-MPLA relations that predate Cuban involvement in Angola. The Soviets, under Nikita Khrushchev, had ties to the Angolan Communist Party (Valenta 6),[3] which would later merge with other radical groups to form the MPLA (LeoGrande 13). Therefore, the MPLA had Marxist-Leninist affiliations, "adhering to a staunchly anti-imperialistic, multi-racialist, and pro-socialist ideology" (13), that were closely aligned with Cuba and the Soviet Union. The MPLA also held a Marxist view with regard to race, as they preached to judge people not on the basis of race, but rather on their individual merit (Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions* 235-236). This policy is of significance, as Castro would cite saving Black African people from the South African regime and from imperialism as one of the key reasons why Cuba would

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[2] Guevara, an Argentine national, held the position of Minister of Industries and Finance in Castro Regime from 1960-1965.
[3] The Angolan Communist Party was founded in 1955 by Angolan intellectuals including Agostino Neto, who had been university educated in Portugal. It would evolve into the MPLA after merging with other leftist groups. Towards the late 1960s, the MPLA would develop relations with the Portuguese Communist Party and the Cuban government. Khrushchev would commit to the MPLA and officially offered monetary aid in 1961. Leonid Brezhnev succeeded him in 1964 and was more reluctant with the movement.

decide to intervene militarily in Angola in 1975 (Moore, 327).

  The MPLA would be the obvious choice for alignment if Cuba and the Soviet Union were to take sides in Angola as the other two revolutionary groups, UNITA (Uniao Nacional para a Independencia Total de Angola) and FNLA (Frente Nacional de Liberacao de Angola), were receiving support from sources rival to the Soviet Union including the United States, China and South Africa (Gleijeses, "Moscow's Proxy?" 100). By most early impressions, Cuban involvement with the MPLA had been a direct result of the pre-established Soviet-MPLA relations (O'Ballance 48). Further examination of contemporary accounts of the situation seem to show that involvement with the MPLA was the choice of the Cuban government, a testament to their own initiative on the African continent (Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions* 243-244).

  After Guevara's meeting with Neto in 1965, the next major meeting between the two parties would be in 1966 at the Tricontinental Conference in Havana. From this point forwards, Cuban assistance to Angola seems to have been constant until Cuba sent troops into Angola in 1975 (LeoGrande 13). The assistance would come primarily in the form of combat training programs based in both Cuba and the Congo with a definite focus on guerrilla tactics, while some aid would come in the form of arms (13). However, the primary arms supplier for the MPLA was the Soviet Union who provided most of the heavier weapons in Angola (Dominguez 11).

  Through the late 1960s and early 1970s, as Cuban military assistance remained unwavering, diplomatic relations were "cooling down" between the MPLA and Cuba (Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions* 244). This may be attributed to Castro's perception of a lack of revolutionary

fervour on the part of the MPLA, which he saw as a key requisite for his support. This required commitment was realized by Neto in the late 1960s although he felt as though the Angolan revolution was as strong as ever. In response, Havana expressed interest in sending a delegation to review the situation. This analysis was not conducted until 1974, with both parties responsible for the degeneration of relations and delays in Cuban assessment of revolution (244-245).

Cuban-MPLA relations between 1963 and 1972 may have been affected by Soviet decisions to cease aid to the MPLA during this time (LeoGrande 14). The events in 1963 had little impact on Cuban policy because Cuba was not yet providing aid to the MPLA (14). However, in 1972, the lack of Soviet support for the MPLA may have had an impact on MPLA-Cuban relations. Soviet aid was reduced and halted altogether in 1974 because "about half of the MPLA openly revolted against him [Neto] in May [of that year]" (Moore 326). It is not clear to what extent Cuba was following the Soviet Union's lead with respect to the MPLA during this time, but reduced levels of Cuban-MPLA diplomatic relations are closely correlated with the Soviets reducing military aid.

The MPLA leadership struggle proved not to be a large issue with respect to MPLA-Cuban relations, largely because of the 1974 leftist power seizure in Portugal that was sympathetic to the MPLA. The new Portuguese regime granted independence for Angola in mid-1974 and administrators from the new Portuguese government proceeded to visit Castro in Cuba, where Castro would seek Portuguese permission to dispatch troops to reinforce the MPLA (Moore 326-327). Neto secured himself as president of the MPLA in October 1974 (Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions* 245). Members of the Cuban Central

Committee [4] would be sent to Angola in December to assess the situation. They made two key discoveries in relation to the MLPA. The first being the preparation of MPLA representatives to travel to Moscow to seek military aid. The second, Neto's intentions to meet with UNITA and FNLA leaders Jonas Savimbi and Holden Roberto, respectively, to discuss the upcoming talks of impending Angolan independence with the new Portuguese regime. The conclusion of this meeting was that Angola would be led by a coalition of all three groups (245-246).

Through meetings with the Cuban representatives, the MPLA sent a letter to the Cuban government requesting arms, communications technologies, uniforms, Marxist propaganda, and the establishment of a military school with Cuban assistance and funds (Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions* 247). The Soviet Union had committed a large supply of heavy arms to the MPLA and weapons began to build up as much of the MPLA force was unable to operate the weaponry, hence the request for a military school. The MPLA opted instead to ask the Cuban government for assistance, and the first 230 Cuban military advisors were sent to Angola to establish training camps (Durch, 64).

The Soviet Union, and by extension Cuba, sent aid to the MPLA, which was largely a response in reaction to the Chinese and US assistance provided to the rival FNLA in the spring of 1974. This prompted the FNLA and UNITA to form a coalition that outnumbered the MPLA by a factor of four to one (LeoGrande, 16-17). The

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[4] The Cuban Central Committee was an executive governmental body akin to the Soviet Central Committee. It met between party congresses and would send delegations abroad if necessary.

Portuguese had decided that Angolan independence would come on 11 November; although the MPLA, FNLA and UNITA had agreed to lead the country together, it would prove that the group with control of Luanda, the capital of Angola, would be the effective leader of the new country (Durch 64; Gleijeses, "Moscow's Proxy?" 100).

Fighting between the liberation groups raged on for much of 1975, and by October South Africa had dispatched troops into southern Angola to battle the MPLA who now controlled much of the country. The South African entrance into the war was largely to further their apartheid policy (Gleijeses, "Moscow's Proxy?" 100; Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions* 299-300). By November, southern Angola was under the control of the South African forces that had entered the country only a month earlier, providing military assistance to UNITA and the FNLA (O'Ballance 48). Cuba responded to the South African invasion in early November with Operation Carlota (Gleijeses, "Moscow's Proxy?" 101; Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions* 305). By December 1975, there were an estimated 5,000 Cuban troops and advisors in Angola. By March 1976, there were 18,000 Cubans directly involved in the conflict (LeoGrande 20).[5] Cuban entrance into the conflict was a direct response to South African involvement. The Angolan civil war was quickly becoming an international affair (Gleijeses, "Moscow's Proxy?" 100; Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions* 307; Valenta 23-25).

The motivation for Cuban involvement in the Angolan Civil War is a contested topic, with different

[5] Figures cited by the author are based on estimates from Western Intelligence sources. Cuban and MPLA sources cite dramatically different figures with 2,800 personnel in Angola in 1975 and up to 36,000 by 1976.

sides having differing opinions as to whether they acted independently, or whether they were used as a proxy by the Soviet Union. On the one hand, Cuban interests in Africa were already well established, although they had been primarily diplomatic prior to 1975 (Durch 63). There seems to be no doubt that the Cuban military involvement in Angola would benefit the Soviet interests; however, one must question if this was a war of proxy or not (71-72).

Cuba maintained that the decision to intervene was solely its own, with no consultation with the Soviets prior to deployment. The assertion has been backed up by then Soviet ambassador to the United States, Anatoly Dobrynin, as well as other high-ranking Soviet officials (Gleijeses, "Moscow's Proxy?" 102-103; Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions* 306-307). The United States initially doubted the fact that Cuba worked alone; however, then Secretary of State Henry Kissinger acknowledged that the Cubans independently made the decision (Gleijeses, "Moscow's Proxy?" 102-103; Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions* 306-307). Soviet hesitancy to officially intervene was a product of warming East-West relations, as well as Angola having relatively "low strategic priority" (LeoGrande 21)

Soviet reaction to Cuban troop deployment was mixed. Olga Nazario asserts that Cuban involvement strengthened Soviet-Cuban relations, giving Marxism and by extent the Soviet Union a foothold in Africa. She maintains that as a direct result of Cuban involvement, the Soviets "[supplied] Cuba with new, sophisticated military equipment and granted Castro economic awards" (105).[6]

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[6] Nazario is not the only scholar to assert that the Cubans may have intervened to further themselves economically. Valenta argues that Cuban military involvement was initiated in an attempt to gain leverage in their economic situation with the Soviet Union, which supplied massive monetary aid to Cuba in

According to Nazario, it is clear that the Soviets were in favour of Cuban intervention. Piero Gleijeses, one of the most accomplished researchers on Cuban foreign policy under Castro, asserts that the Soviets were displeased to see the Cuban intervention. He asserts that Brezhnev was even opposed to the deployment of Cuban troops ("Moscow's Proxy?" 103). Gleijeses further argues that if Cuba were a true client state of the Soviet Union, it might not have intervened so aggressively. He adds that the Cubans were not afraid to push their own foreign policy, even if it challenged the Soviet Union, as they did in November of 1975 ("Moscow's Proxy?"103, 126-127).

The Cuban government was also interested in establishing itself as the foremost revolutionary power in the world. Castro was set on a Marxist interpretation of perpetual revolution and he had plans to export this idea specifically throughout the developing world (Moore 143-144). A specialist in Cold War and Communism studies, Jiri Valenta, argues that Cuban military involvement not only furthered Soviet-Cuban relations, but also reinforced Castro as a true revolutionary leader[7] (24), perhaps "the most genuine revolutionary leader then in power" (Kissinger 816).

Castro's plunge into Angola is interpreted by many as a commitment to racial justice. Africans collectively showed overwhelming support for Cuban intervention, even the black population of South Africa found hope in this. Africans saw the Cuban intervention as

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the years following its revolution, thus charging Cuba with massive debt (24).

[7] The fact that Castro was cementing himself as a revolutionary leader is echoed by many including Valenta. Dominguez asserts that the only way revolutionary governments could survive was international solidarity amongst revolutionary movements (17).

justifiable, even necessary, to push back the South Africans who many thought were only getting involved to further the apartheid regime (Gleijeses, "Moscow's Proxy?" 100; Moore 328-329, 371-373). It is argued by both Gleijeses and Carlos Moore, a Cuban defector and expert on Africanism, that Castro's intervention was made more likely when South Africa intervened. He wanted to provide "opposition to the white supremacist regime [South Africa]." (Moore 143-144, 328) By deploying troops, Castro was successful in driving South African forces from Angola (Gleijeses, "Moscow's Proxy?" 103).

Fighting in Angola was largely contained to late 1975 and early 1976 with much of Cuban involvement supporting the FNLA troops and operating heavy weapons that were supplied by the Soviets (Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions* 308-318). Accounts of battles that took place during the civil war are sporadic and provide little detail as to the intensity of the fighting. It is clear, however, that by February, the bulk of the South African forces were retreating out of Angola.[8] With the South African forces retreating, the MPLA had succeeded in pushing the rival UNITA and FNLA groups into the periphery of the Angolan countryside (Gleijeses, "Moscow's Proxy?" 127). It quickly became apparent that the MPLA, their Cuban supporters and the Soviet Union had succeeded in

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[8] The debate as to why South Africa withdrew their troops in February 1976 is contested. There are varying theories, such as the impending defeat by Cuban forces, the tarnishing of South Africa's international reputation, or the reluctance of other western governments to intervene. Edgar O'Ballance states that Cuban involvement was key to MPLA success in Angola, going as far as arguing that had the Cubans not assisted the MPLA, they would not have stood a chance against the South African forces (48).

further spreading communist influence in Africa (O'Ballance 48).

Following the South African disengagement from Angola, the Cuban government was pressured by the MPLA to withdraw its troops. They decided on a policy of gradual withdrawal, while continuing to train and organize the MPLA guerrillas. The conversion from MPLA guerrilla forces to the National Army began in 1976 with Cuban and Soviet assistance; it became known as the FAPLA (Forças Armadas Populares de Libertação de Angola), (Gleijeses, "Moscow's Proxy?"; 104, Ratliff 34-35).[9]

As Cuban military presence in Angola decreased through 1976, Angolan society began to rebuild. In the years following Angolan independence, a large portion of the skilled labour force left the country as they were primarily of European descent (Gleijeses, "Moscow's Proxy?" 105). In a response that may be interpreted as a bid to impress Afro-Cubans, Castro sent over 2,600 Cuban professionals and workers to Angola to help build the infrastructure of the newly independent country (LeoGrande 23). This figure accounts primarily for professionals such as doctors, lawyers and teachers; it does not account for the large contingent of Cuban construction workers who were in fact "building" the country. From 1977 to 1978, there were twenty-three new bridges built in Angola by Cuban construction brigades. (Díaz-Briquets and Pérez-López 74) This effectively shows that Castro was committed to not only defending the new Angolan

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[9] Cuban troops were to be withdrawn at a rate of 200 per week starting in February 1976. How close to this withdrawal rate the Cubans actually were is still not known, although by Cuban accounts their force reached a low point of 12,000 troops by early 1977 (LeoGrande 23).

nation, but also providing it with skilled professional aid as well as infrastructure projects.

Cuban involvement in Angola was an integral part of Fidel Castro's foreign policy in Africa. In providing aid and military assistance, Cuba had a major role on an international scale and could push its own agenda over that of the Soviet Union. Cuba's involvement in Africa was successful in displaying its commitment to export revolution, and especially in the case of Angola, to assist in preventing further influence of the apartheid regime in South Africa. All these factors lead historians to see the Cuban intervention in Angola as a high-stake situation with relatively low risk (Valenta 25). Therefore, Cuban involvement in Angola can only be viewed as a success for Cuban foreign policy.

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The Legacy of a Weak Democracy: The Colombian Case

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The study of democracy in Latin America has been extensive since much of the region transitioned from authoritarian regimes to democratic governments in the 1980s and 1990s. During this period, much of the debate focused on defining the form of democracy that was being implemented by governments across Latin American countries. The purpose of this paper is to extend the research of democracy in Latin America. This article uses Colombia as a case study to identify the three most significant challenges to democracy in the region: political exclusion, political violence, and socioeconomic inequality. Political exclusion, political violence, and social inequality are deeply rooted in Colombia's long history of conflict and confrontation. Political exclusion and political violence have become practices ingrained in the political behaviour of the regime and has shaped the interaction between the state and civilians, while social inequality has led to the decrease of political representation and a weak democracy.
Keywords: Colombia; democracy; political exclusion; political violence; socioeconomic inequality

1   Introduction

Schmitter and Karl define democracy as "a system of governance in which rulers are held accountable for their actions in the public realm by citizens, acting indirectly through the competition and cooperation of their elected representatives" (76). Robert Dahl identifies a series of political institutions that are needed in a democracy: elected officials; free, fair, and frequent elections; and extended suffrage to eligible voters. [1] Further, all eligible adults have the right to run for office, freedom of expression without the fear of being punished, freedom of access to alternative sources of information, and freedom of association (11).

Within this definition of democracy, Latin American countries have generally relied on the concept of electoral democracy in which elections are based on the universal right to vote and the right to run for office without ill-treatment due to race, political ideology, or religious beliefs, and elections are devoid of violence or fraud (Munk 371). Moreover, Guillermo O'Donnel argues that historical factors, along with severe socioeconomic problems such as high levels of inequality and poverty within Latin American countries, have resulted in democratic regimes that are not institutionally consolidated. In effect, they are characterized by practices and conceptions about the practice of political authority that lead to "delegative democracies," in which "whoever wins election to the presidency is thereby entitled to govern as he or she sees fit constrained only by the hard

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[1] All Colombians, 18 years of age and older, are eligible to vote. Only members of the State Security Forces are not allowed to participate in elections.

facts of existing power relations and by a constitutionally limited term of office" (59).

The first section of this case study examines how political exclusion has led to a regime predominated by the traditional landowning and current commercial elite and the persecution or extermination of alternative political actors legitimized by the use of the "state of exception".[2] The second section shows how continued political exclusion has generated political violence and resulted in a state of "violent pluralism" in which human, civil, and political rights have been repeatedly violated. The third section looks at how socioeconomic inequality in Colombia has undermined political representation and produced a transnational state that weakens the country's democracy.

2   Political Exclusion in Colombia

Political exclusion has been a prevalent characteristic of the Colombian regime.[3] The traditional governing elite has repeatedly excluded opposing actors by establishing institutional pacts between the two traditional political parties. In instances when a political pact has proven insufficient to silence and exclude opposition, the government has resolved to exterminate the opposition (Lee and Thuomi). This has been done through the use of the "state of exception." This type of exclusion in

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[2] Andrés Dávila Ladrón de Guevara has called attention to the use of the ''state of exception'' as a government mechanism to legitimize military actions against civilians and thereby achieve long-term institutional stability (20).

[3] Hedstrom and Smith refer to political exclusion as the process in which an individual or group is excluded from participation in political processes (11). This exclusion may stem from law, custom, intimidation or discrimination.

Colombia is best exemplified through two historical events: the "Frente Nacional" and the extermination of the "Union Patriotica" (UP).

Since the consolidation of the Colombian Conservative and Liberal parties in the mid-19th century, Colombian democracy has been limited to a duopoly of the monopoly of power, in which two parties solely control the government and exclude potential opponents through the use of violence (Ramirez 85). The best representation of the exclusive two-party regime in Colombia is the 16-year political pact that lasted from 1958-74, better known as the "Frente Nacional." During this period, the Conservative and Liberal parties agreed on a power sharing governing pact, in which power would alternate every four years between the two parties through elections at both the national and local levels, and it was known that either the Liberals or Conservatives would win the election, with all governing positions equally divided amongst the two parties. The "Frente Nacional" also served as a strategy to repress, silence, and alienate all radical liberal "gaitanistas" and self-defence left-winged groups mainly composed of poor peasants and rural dwellers.

These "gaitanistas" and left-winged groups mobilized against the Conservative and Liberal oligarchy after the assassination of populist Liberal Jorge Eliecer Gaitan in 1948 (Guzman Campos). Consequently, left-wing guerrillas, such as the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Columbia (FARC) were formed. Although the "Frente Nacional" opened up a democratic space for the participation of the two traditional parties, this political pact excluded alternative actors and relied on the use of "state of exception" to maintain political order. Before the current constitution was enacted in 1991, Colombia was under a state of siege for a cumulative total of thirty years between 1949 and 1991 (Pizarro Leongómez 159).

Moreover, during this period the government developed sophisticated mechanisms of repression and terror to defeat all individuals or groups considered to be adversaries.

In efforts to ensure political victory and to protect economic interests, both Liberals and Conservatives used assassinations to repress and silence adversaries (Palacios 164). In 1968, it became legal to create civil defense groups to confront guerillas and to support the army's counterinsurgency efforts. Many right-wing landowners and drug traffickers formed such groups "in order to protect themselves and help the government retake and secure rural land being surrendered to the guerilla groups" (Holmes et al. 168). In 1984, after escalating violence and deteriorating civil-military relations, president Belisario Betancourt Cuartas signed an amnesty agreement with the FARC, M-19, and EPL guerrilla forces in efforts to broaden political participation and avert greater armed conflict (Watson 533).[4] As Watson notes, the disarmed groups often decided to participate in the electoral system and the former FARC members formed the UP, while the M-19 formed the Alianza Democrática M-19 (AD-M19). However, the Colombian military and paramilitary forces continued to view these groups as subversive and a threat to the state (Maher and Thomson 2145).[5] The UP,

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[4] The M-19th (Movimiento 19 de abril) center-left insurgent group was established by university students after the fraudulent elections of 1970. The EPL (Ejercito Popular de Liberación) is a Marxist-Leninist armed guerrilla group that was established in 1967. Finally, the Marxist-Leninist FARC guerilla forces (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia) were established in 1964.

[5] Modern paramilitarism developed as an anti-insurgent movement connected to the state's counterinsurgency efforts and interests of large landholder property owners and drug

composed by ex-FARC combatants who had been granted amnesty, were particularly successful in North-western Colombia at the local electoral level. UP supporters and alleged supporters increasingly became targets of massacres, with violence ascribed to the paramilitaries, whose rhetoric increasingly focused on the need to cleanse society of anti-Colombian elements. Between 1984 and 1990, more than 1000 members of the UP were assassinated.

Political exclusion has been an enduring characteristic of Colombian politics, and has limited the participation of alternative political actors and given birth to various armed guerilla movements. The government has allowed the use of repression and violence to eliminate all opposition that poses a threat to the traditional structure of power. Through the use of "state of exception," military actions against civilians have been legitimized in the government's efforts to achieve long-term institutional stability.

3   Political Violence in Colombia

The use of military forces and counter-insurgent paramilitary groups has led to high levels of political violence and a state of "violent pluralism" in which human, civil, and political rights have been repeatedly violated. As aptly pointed out by Brubaker and Laitin, one should not conceive of political violence as a distinct degree of conflict, rather as a unique process following particular characteristics, whose episodes follow an

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traffickers. Furthermore, paramilitaries have aspired to 'defend the interests of powerful domestic and international economic actors and espouse a 'fiercely anti-communist' ideology (Maher and Thomson 2145).

unpredictable trajectory, and that are largely endogenous and highly contingent (426). Political violence and illegality in the periphery is intrinsic to the maintenance of Colombia's model of democracy. A counterinsurgency metanarrative legitimizes a dirty war marked by the use of torture, kidnappings, and murders carried out by the armed forces against political alternatives portrayed as leftists, often with paramilitary proxies or in alliance with paramilitaries (Ramirez 85-86). This type of political violence has resulted in a state of "violent pluralism," in which state and non-state actors compete outside the "accepted norms of comportment in a consensual democratic society." This behaviour has led to numerous human rights violations, and has directly limited civil and political rights.[6]

       In response to trade union violence, political protest, and other forms of political and social resistance, military forces throughout the 1980s were responsible for the detention of over 8,000 individuals, numerous forced disappearances, and allegations of torture (Aviles 386). Throughout the 1980-90s, paramilitaries expanded their participation to the rural regions of the country. Since much of the rural territory was ignored by the state, these self-defence groups served as the protection forces for the rural elite against any threats from left-winged guerrillas. As Aviles notes, paramilitary groups became even more crucial to military forces and the state as increased

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[6] In the Colombian context, violent pluralism can be understood as "the situation that ensues when demands for democratic, nonviolent alternatives to conflict resolution that can bring into dialogue multiple, divergent voices are met with resistance by the state, while the civilians who embrace a nonviolent approach are treated as potential enemies threatening the integrity of Colombian democracy" (Roldan 64).

international pressure, especially from the US, called upon the Colombian government to consolidate a less violent and more democratic regime in the transition to a neoliberal globalized capitalist state (384-385). The overt use of repression and violence was, thus, transferred over to counterinsurgency forces. By the 1990s, these groups replaced/surpassed the armed forces as the leading perpetrators of human right violations, accounting for about 70 per cent of political assassinations (Aviles 384).

In 1989, paramilitary groups were banned and a series of anti-paramilitary policies were established after it was proven that they were responsible for more civilian deaths than guerrillas (Kline 75-76). However, this was not the end of the participation of paramilitaries in Colombian politics. Throughout the 1990s and into the early 2000s, various presidents, including Ernesto Samper (1994-98) and Alvaro Uribe Velez (2002-2010), have supported the creation of new civilian militias in counter-insurgency strategies, most famously known as CONVIVIR (Aviles 397). Only after two years of their existence, these new civil militias (Asociaciones Comunitarias de Vigilencia Rural) displaced over 200,000 peasants (Hylton 88).

Since the beginning of former president Alvaro Uribe Velez's second term in office in 2006, Velez and many members of his government are being investigated for what has come to be known as "para-politics." As Vanden and Prevost note, in 2006 sixty-eight members of Congress were being investigated on allegations that they had connections with paramilitaries (452). The long history of tension, confrontation, and violence has led to the construction of a culture of violence in Colombia. Pécaut argues coercion and violence are now fixed components of the social and political machinery of

Colombia and any attempt to change this must include sincere and arduous efforts (91).

4   Social Inequality in Colombia

The underlying causes of Colombia's political violence revolve around unequal access to economic power, such as land and resources as well as unequal access to political power. Ultimately, these represent institutional factors that are related to the creation of guerrilla and paramilitary violence (World Bank 6). Socioeconomic inequality, fuelled by the global integration of the Colombian economy, has led to the rise of a transnational state that weakens the legitimacy of the democratic system (Robinson 18). The sixty-year internal conflict between various counterinsurgent groups and the state has mainly been a rural phenomenon where the vast majority of victims have been the rural poor. In the early stages of the conflict, intense violence resulted in a high number of forcefully displaced individuals, landless peasants, and increased levels of poverty in rural areas (Rojas and Tubb 132). It was in these regions that guerilla forces recruited the majority of their combatants and the isolation of these communities has led to an increased influence of insurgent groups (Palacios 167).

Moreover, the 1980s and early 1990s saw the introduction of a series of political and economic reforms that sought to further democratize the country and integrate the Colombian economy into the global system. These reforms consist not only of the decentralization of capitalist production and introduction of neoliberal economic policies, but also the transformation of

Colombia into a "transnational state" (Robinson 18).[7] Furthermore, Robinson argues that this transformation is linked with a process of democratization that is weakened by globalization and the interest of transnational corporations and the emergence of the transnational elite (90). Hence, the state became an apparatus for the protection of the economic and political interests of transnational corporations, while further disregarding the basic socioeconomic necessities of the marginalized and lower social class. Aviles argues that this process of transformation in Colombia has promoted a regime that has co-opted and repressed opposition while globally integrating the economy (384). In addition, external pressures to create a welcoming environment for international business and transnational corporations coincided with this globalization. As a result, increased paramilitary repression against guerrilla insurgency in the efforts to further exclude them from the political process, leading to a "low-intensity democracy" (Aviles 384).[8]

In order to foster neoliberalism and transnational corporations, the Colombian government and the armed forces tolerated and promoted paramilitary repression of political and social opposition to the globalization of the economy. The opening of the economy led to an unemployment rate of 20 percent by 1999, the elimination of jobs in the agrarian sector, and the weakening role of the state (Ahumada and Andrews 462). Consequently, the

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[7] A transnational state is a set of institutions that operates in order to advance the interests of transnational corporations, with national states becoming components of a larger economic and political project (Aviles 383).

[8] Giles et al. define low-intensity Democracy as a largely procedural democracy that allows political opposition, greater individual freedoms, and a more permeable environment for the investments of transnational capital (8-9).

state of violence worsened by forcing agrarian workers to substitute their traditional crops for drug production or to join either the guerilla or paramilitary forces (462). The economic transformation has also resulted in the exacerbation of rural poverty, unequal land ownership, and increased levels of income inequality.[9]

5   Conclusion

Political exclusion, political violence, and social inequality are deeply rooted in Colombia's long history of conflict and confrontation. The traditional elite has monopolized political and economic power through the use of coercion, repression, and exclusion. Political exclusion and political violence have become practices ingrained in the political behaviour of the regime and have shaped the interaction between the state and civilians. Social inequality has led to the decrease of political representation and increased tensions.

The recent signing of the peace agreement in 2016 between the government and the FARC guerilla forces indicates a positive step. However, the 2018 congressional and presidential elections have demonstrated that tensions remain high as the newly elected president has expressed his disapproval of the peace agreement by promising to amend various of the points agreed upon between the previous administration and the FARC. This jeopardizes the commitment both actors maintain towards the peace agreement and could prove to be a destabilizing factor in Colombia's transition into a peaceful state. Further

[9] Between 1997 and 2000 the Gini Coefficient for income distribution increased from 0.54 to 0.59: the income of the richest 10 percent of the population increased by over 20 percent to reach 58 percent of total national income between 1992 and 1997 (Yepes Palacio).

research on the topic should focus on examining the ways in which a state facing similar challenges can consolidate a strong and stable democracy.

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"The Little Things are Important:" A Closer Look at Peru's Indigenous Movements

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President Toledo's platform and the Bagua uprisings brought Peru's Indigenous movements into the limelight. The long and significant history of these movements, however, is often overshadowed by these recent events. Peru's Indigenous movements gained strength and momentum decades earlier, forming regional as well as international linkages to assert their rights and resist exploitation of their territories. However, the Indigenous movements of the Amazon have lacked recognition in political and scholarly discussion. This analysis examines the factors that have silenced them, in addition to illuminating several avenues that recent Indigenous movements have been exploring since the 1970s. Future research should take into account the "little things" and quieter narratives, as well as the political factors eclipsing them, in order to provide a more accurate picture of Indigenous movements in Peru.
Keywords: Peru; Indigenous movements; resistance; Amazon; Andes; Pax Americana

1   Introduction

The political context and associated uprisings of early 21st-century Peru brought the country's Indigenous movements into the public eye. However, the emphasis on these recent developments obscures a much deeper history, [1] one rooted in exploitation by transnational corporations beginning with the *Pax Americana* following World War II. In protest to the oppression of Indigenous peoples by the government and corporate actors, several groups formed strategic alliances. In order to understand the success of these Indigenous movements in Peru, a closer look at community and individual-level efforts is necessary. An example of this includes Hilaria Supa Huamán's efforts empowering Indigenous women in the Andes. Similarly, in the Amazon during the same time frame, Indigenous shaman Pablo Amaringo used art education to change the discourse on environmental commodification and formed strategic alliances. By presenting a broader overview of other strategic alliances formed in the Amazon, this paper demonstrates how a pan-Amazonia political movement took root. In effect, the quieter narratives, such as those of Huamán and Amaringo reflect a critical element of Peru's Indigenous movement.

2   Appearing from the Periphery

In the last decade, political scientists and other scholars

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[1] In this paper, the term "Indigenous movement" is used to refer specifically to organized ethno-political mobilization through the building of Indigenous associations and intercommunity and global alliances to defend Indigenous rights and resist undesired ventures on Indigenous territory post-conquest (Varese 262).

have claimed that Peru's Indigenous movement has finally emerged, awakened by Peru's first Indigenous president, Alejandro Toledo (2001-2006), and climaxing during the Bagua uprisings and massacre in 2009 (Greene 327; Hughes 86; Rénique 117). Toledo's 'pro-Indigenous' platform brought the discussion of indigeneity into public discourse and provided "a political platform for 'new' social actors: the [I]ndigenous communities" (Lust 196). Arce adds that Toledo opened the democratic space previously constrained by the authoritarian Fujimori government for Indigenous mobilization and protests ("The Repoliticization" 43). However, Toledo's actions served as more of a symbolic gesture of Indigenous resurgence, rather than a systemic transformation (Lee 54, 55). In fact, at the same time Toledo was promoting Indigenous recognition, he was furthering Fujimori's neoliberal campaign and implementing the "concession of thousands of hectares of public, Indigenous and peasant lands to private agro-industrialists" (Rénique 123).

Indigenous movements in Peru subsequently gained prominence during protests and blockades led by the Asociación Interétnica de Desarrollo de la Selva Peruana (AIDESEP), a national Indigenous-led organization that pushes for self-determination, collective rights, and protection of Indigenous territories in the Amazon. These protests were led in response to Toledo's successor, President Alan García's, signing of the free trade decrees in 2007 and 2008, which were based on the US-Peru Free Trade Agreement (FTA) championed by Toledo in 2006 (Hughes 86; Rénique 120). García's decrees, carrying on where Toledo left off, increased concessions of Indigenous territory to oil and gas, mining, logging, palm oil, and bio-fuel industries (Rénique 120, 123; Hughes 86). In 2009, in opposition to the decrees, AIDESEP began blockading roads and rivers in strategic

locations, halting traffic in and out of the Amazon (Hughes 88). AIDESEP also greatly obstructed Peru's oil production during this time by ceasing the flow of Peru's only crude oil pipeline into Iquitos, the Amazon's capital city (Hughes 88). The situation escalated when AIDESEP led a national strike in April, and on May 27, protests broke out across the country in solidarity (Rénique 121). On June 5, 2009, García's administration sent a militarized army of 600 soldiers and riot police to "clear the highway" at Devil's Curve near Bagua, where thousands of Indigenous protesters—including children—were mobilized (Hughes 88; Schmall 112). According to official death counts, by day's end, at least 23 policemen and 10 civilians were dead, yet movement leaders and Indigenous representatives alleged that close to 200 Indigenous people lost their lives (Apffel-Marglin, "Under the Guns"; Rénique 118). Indeed, reports from some journalists included observations of policemen disposing of bodies into the nearby Utcubamba River (Schmall 112).

Until these recent events and uprisings, Indigenous movements in Peru were broadly described as "marginal," non-emergent, and even "a profound failure" (Albo qtd in García 217; Mayer qtd in Yashar 26). Indeed, as Korovkin writes, due largely to the appropriation of the Incaic past by elites, Peru's Indigenous ethnic movement "took place...within the white-mestizo society, with [I]ndigenous people acting, by and large, as onlookers or cautious supporters" (158). Yet, the popular misconception regarding the 'recent' appearance of Peru's Indigenous activism is fuelled by a complex interplay of factors, some of which were purposefully put into effect. In truth, Peru's organized Indigenous struggles span back centuries. For instance, the *Comité Pro-Derecho Indígena Tawantinsuyu* led an Indigenous movement in the 1920s to claim political and educational rights for Indigenous peoples (Rousseau

and Hudon 150). From 1780 to 1782, Túpac Katari, Túpac Amaru II and others organized a pan-Andean uprising in the heart of Peru at the time (since absorbed by Bolivia), as well as in southern Peru, which ultimately led to the end of the 300-year Spanish colonial rule (Rénique 125). Even further back, Inca-descendent Santos Atahualpa led a great rebellion from 1742 to 1752, for which he allied with the Ashaninka peoples of the central Peruvian Amazon (Rénique 125). In a similar manner, Indigenous peoples of the Amazon have been mobilizing to fend off missionaries, rubber plantations, logging and mining exploits, and *Sendero Luminoso* guerrillas, among others since the 18th century (Rénique 126). Yet Rénique notes that the 2009 uprising against the García decrees "has not only redrawn Peru's political landscape; it has made Amazonian Indigenous peoples the most important actor in this crucial political conjuncture" (134). Indeed, it is correct that the Amazonian Indigenous communities are among the most important political actors in Peru's organized ethnic struggles, but this is not a recent role as implied by Rénique (134). Peru's national political landscape, in fact, has been in the process of being redrawn by the Amazon's Indigenous peoples for "decades (if not centuries)," yet their role has been silenced in the national narrative (Greene 354).

3   Diminished Movements in the *Pax Americana*

Although neglected by the public eye, Peru's Indigenous movements have worked to strengthen their organizational capacities for decades, forming regional as well as international linkages. Varese notes that while there has been five hundred years of Indigenous resistance to colonial rule of the Americas, "it was mainly after World War II that they initiated political mobilization at the

national and international scale in order to resist oppression" (262). This era of relative peace following World War II, known as the *Pax Americana*, represented the industrial expansion and internal resource explorations into areas previously on the periphery of development (Varese 262). Beginning in the 1950s, transnational corporations, especially from the United States, received greater freedom to carry out their ventures on Indigenous territories in Peru unrestricted by laws and regional elites (Hunefeldt 218, 228). Toledo and García's neoliberal developments in the 2000s were far from novel for Amazonian Indigenous peoples, who had been resisting the manifestations of capitalist exploitation for decades.

There are numerous factors that contributed to the neglect of Peru's Indigenous movements during the *Pax Americana* and earlier. The crises that occurred in Indigenous communities during the *Pax-Americana* era of capitalist conquest gave rise to the relationship between Amazonian resistance and international environmental and Indigenous rights organizations, which allowed Peru's Indigenous voices to be heard on the global stage (Greene 339; Varese 264). However, the development of these "eco-ethnic alliances," in which Peru's Amazonian Indigenous forces had been at the very center at least since the 1980s, went largely unnoticed in Peru's national sphere (Greene 332). Moreover, examinations of the Andean Indigenous movement eclipsed Peru's Amazonian Indigenous movement (Greene 338). Ironically, while the Andean movement overshadowed activism in the Amazon throughout the twentieth century, it went mostly under the radar itself. For one, the Andean movement did not greatly affect politics in Lima, Peru's capital (Baud 31). Secondly, the symbolic appropriation of Andean indigeneity by political elites thwarted the Andean Indigenous movement (Baud 25). That is to say, national politicians and other

Peruvian elites tied themselves to a romanticized image of the Inca past, which allowed them to embrace Peru's Indigenous history for their own gain—a tactic used more recently by Toledo as well (Baud 25; Greene 336). While empowering the country through nationalist sentiment, Peruvian elites simultaneously disempowered Indigenous peoples' connection to their own past. Moreover, since overt assimilation measures were not employed to the extent that is apparent in other Latin American countries, it did not provide the same catalyst for anti-assimilation uprisings that brought Indigenous movements to the forefront elsewhere (Greene 336).

The Peruvian social class system provided a third manner for subverting the Andean Indigenous movement. Although the Peruvian Constitution of 1920 recognized Indigenous rights and provided protection of Indigenous territory in writing, the 1924 Penal Code hierarchically categorized Peruvian society, placing Creoles and mestizos—deemed 'civilized peoples'—on the top rung of the ladder (Kania 14). The other three categories of the Penal Code were 'semi-civilized Indigenous peoples,' 'Indigenous peoples,' and 'wild peoples,' the latter of which referred to Indigenous peoples of the Amazon who were seen as "incapable of self-determination in both legal and economic terms" (Kania 14). Furthermore, as Hogue and Rau write, despite recognition by the Constitution, "the state defined the [I]ndigenous [peoples] as illiterate agriculturalists, making political action and native identity mutually exclusive, preventing groups from organizing politically as [I]ndigenous groups" (295).

The rise to power of Velasco's leftist military regime (1968-1975), which took power through a coup d'état against the previous Belaúnde administration, provided a further development to entrench Peru's classist system (Kania 14). While Velasco worked to nationalize the

exploitation of natural resources, expelling transnational companies from Peru, his government appeared to make gains in recognizing Indigenous rights and title through agrarian and educational reforms (Kania 15). Indigenous-led uprisings for land reclamation largely sparked these reforms (Huamán 17). However, territorial boundaries were reduced in the process of official recognition and the government was seen as the organizing power rather than Indigenous peoples (Kania 15). Moreover, through constitutional reforms enacted during his government's second term, Velasco created a popular conceptual shift by relabeling 'indígena' as 'campesino'—that is, the term 'Indigenous' was replaced by 'peasant' (Greene 334; Kania 15). This effectively marked an official transition into a "hegemonic class discourse" as opposed to one of ethnic rights and identity (Greene 334; Baud 28; Hogue and Rau 293). The rhetorical maneuver from 'Indigenous' to 'peasant' was portrayed as a promotion of Indigenous people but in reality it maintained them at the bottom of a social hierarchy while politically marginalizing them from their ethnicity. Indigenous peoples of the Andes were, as Larson states, up against "an apparatus of power that simultaneously incorporated and marginalized peasant political cultures" (14). While ignored and often deliberately downplayed, Indigenous movements in Peru were nonetheless still fully present and gathering force.

The story of Hilaria Supa Huamán[2] offers one account of the effects that the 'campesino' (or 'peasant') rhetoric had for the Andean movements of the 1980s. In her memoir, *Thread of My Life*, Huamán chronicles her

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[2] Incidentally, Huamán's grandfather played a key role in the uprisings that helped lead to Velasco's aforementioned agrarian reforms, yet he was ultimately murdered in 1965 for his participation in the movement ("Hilaria Supa Huamán").

participation in *campesino* movements organized in response to the abuse she and other Indigenous families faced in the estates where they were forced to work. After experiencing extreme violence—rape, racism, beatings, *machismo*, forced labour, and crippling arthritis from malnutrition and poor sleeping conditions—Huamán organized an Indigenous women's movement in Cusco, beginning in 1981 with the Women's Committee of Huallyaqocha (Huamán 46, 52; Gracia 341, 364, 366). During their meetings, she and other Quechua women discussed Indigenous rights struggles in other countries (Huamán 52). In her memoir, Huamán recounts one of these meetings focusing on a movement organized by an Indigenous woman in Bolivia, at which point she remarks, "[i]t was very impressive to hear the story of such a brave Indigenous woman, and I asked myself, 'so then, what are we waiting for?'" (52-53). The group of Indigenous women went on to formalize their committee, and Huamán was elected as its president (Huamán 53; Gracia 367). Huamán then received funding to travel to Cusco to meet women from other committees, learning from their organizing experiences (Gracia 367-368). She also participated in the assemblies of Peasant Federations of Cusco and Anta in 1982, yet remarked that speakers at the assemblies never spoke about Indigenous land and cultural rights: "They spoke only of the rich and poor" (Huamán 56). That is, their movement was confined within the discourse of class as opposed to Indigenous rights, and thus it was considered a peasant movement rather than an Indigenous one.[3]

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[3] Recently more ethnically oriented organizations made visible marks on the Indigenous Andean front, such as the leading organization Coordinadora Nacional de Comunidades Afectadas por la Minería (CONACAMI) (Felix, 2008).

Beyond the obstructions associated with social class rhetoric, others claim the *Sendero Luminoso*, the communist revolutionary organization which launched its twenty-year-long war in Peru in 1980, had effects for the visibility of Peruvian Indigenous movements. As Korovkin writes, "The war between *Sendero Luminoso* and government security forces...no doubt...created an atmosphere of violence unsuitable for any form of political activism" (153). Nonetheless, Huamán's leadership in Indigenous women's committees in the 1980s helped spur a transformation in the Andean narrative, especially among Indigenous women, many of whom had never considered themselves agents of political change. Huamán went on to accomplish many feats to further Peru's Indigenous movements, working tirelessly for land rights, denouncing discrimination against Indigenous languages in Peru, and promoting bilingual education [4] (Páez; "Hilaria Supa Huamán"; Huamán 162). In her role as Organizational Secretary with the Women's Federation of Anta (FEMCA), beginning in 1991, she avidly promoted the preservation of Indigenous medicine, among other initiatives (Yataco). She also played a key role in calling attention to President Fujimori's forced sterilization campaign during the 1990s, in which upwards of 300,000 Indigenous women were forcibly given tubal ligations under the guise of "Family Planning" (Huamán 135; "Hilaria Supa Huamán"; Yataco). Huamán states that the program should have more aptly been termed "Indian Planning": "They want to control the Indigenous population because it is not convenient to have a large

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[4] Notably, in 2006, Huamán was elected to Congress for the Peruvian Nationalist Party and became the first person to swear her oath in the Indigenous Quechua language in Peruvian history (Páez; "Hilaria Supa Huamán").

group which might one day rise against them" (Huamán 135). Indeed, Huamán's organizing work revolved around bringing Indigenous peoples together in many different forms and contexts to facilitate such an uprising.

In addition to social class rhetoric, the *Sendero Luminoso* insurgency war, and the appropriation of ethnic identities by elites, the narrative of Huamán and other Indigenous leaders was silenced in other ways. Condori writes that "whoever has the ability to write, print reports, newspapers, and books has the capacity to impose their own truth" (286). Fujimori's regime is one example of Peru's government influencing the national narrative through media. Arce notes that the Fujimori government "utilized bribes to collude with the local print media, boasting about the performance of the regime while belittling the opposition" ("Protest and Social" 281). Vladimiro Montesinos Torres, chief of Peru's National Intelligence Service (SIN) under Fujimori, led this campaign. In one secret videotape analyzed by McMillan and Zoido, Montesinos boasts about his dealings with media outlets: "Each [news] channel takes $2 million [from us] monthly, but it is the only way. That is why we have won" (82). To give merely two examples, *America Television* is estimated to have received US $9 million over a five month period, while Ernest Schutz, a shareholder of *Panamericana News*, is thought to have received a total of US $10.6 million from Montesinos (McMillan and Zoido 81). Evidently, the regulation of news by the Fujimori government has implications for attempting to trace Peru's Indigenous movements through media accounts during this period.

4 Building Alliances in the Amazon

During Huamán's work in the 1980s and 90s, Indigenous

movements in the Amazon were developing. As Velasco's nationalist reforms started to be overturned by Belaúnde's open trade policies (1980-1985), the Amazon became the growing target of transnational corporations (Hogue and Rau 295; Dancourt 54). Throughout the decades of organizing in the Andes by Huamán and other Indigenous leaders, neoliberalism began to take hold in Peru, reaching its peak in the 1990s with the radical reforms of Fujimori's government (Dancourt 54). As Varese demonstrates, transnational corporations were gravitating to places with less environmental regulations, such as the Amazon (262). Varese also emphasizes the impact of the connections that were built between Indigenous peoples of the Amazon and anthropologists during this time (264). An example of this was the synergistic relationship beginning in 1985 between anthropologist Luis Eduardo Luna and Pablo Amaringo—a shamanic visionary painter from the Ucayali River, which is a tributary of the Amazon River (Amaringo and Luna 16). While Amaringo helped Luna accomplish his research in Amazonian shamanism, Luna supplied Amaringo with funds, painting supplies, and helped his paintings reach international awareness, transporting an Indigenous narrative of the Amazon to a global audience (Amaringo and Luna 17; "My Life as a Shaman and Artist").
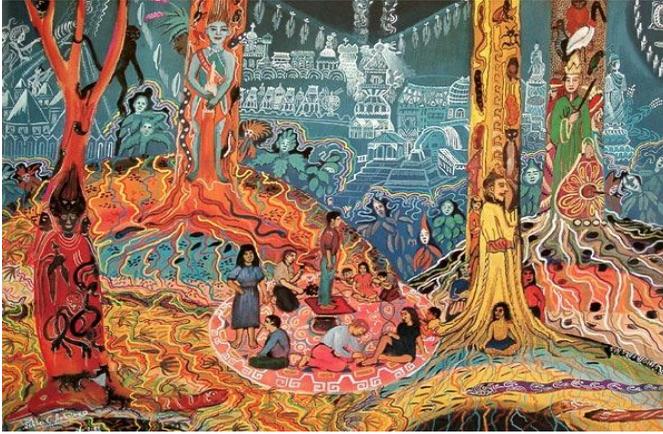
Figure 1. "All is interconnected." Painting by Pablo Amaringo (107). By illustrating his cosmovision of the forest perforated with spirits, Amaringo raises awareness of what is at stake (the multi-dimensional ramifications) with mass destruction of the rainforest.

Beyond helping Amaringo's paintings and worldview reach a larger audience, the alliance between Luna and Amaringo led to a networked resistance through a reclamation of education. When Luna visited Amaringo for the second time in 1988, he saw him painting with his two nephews and their two friends, and he remarked to Amaringo that the scene appeared like he was teaching a painting school (Amaringo and Luna 29). That moment of epiphany marked the conception of USKO-AYAR Amazonian School of Painting (Amaringo and Luna 29). Six months later, the workshop was thriving with several dozen young students, who spent hours each day learning to relate to the Amazon's ecology, affirm cultural values, and express the visions and understandings bestowed by the forest (Amaringo and Luna 29).

Amaringo's case demonstrates an avenue of resistance to externally imposed education. The institutionalization of modern education in the Amazon has been a central tool of colonization and cause of discrimination and degradation of Indigenous cultural practices (Espinosa 455, 459). Beginning with the inculcation of monotheistic religion by missionaries, institutionalized education in Peru was designed to integrate its Indigenous subjects into Peruvian society and the market economy (Hunefeldt 179). Education was used "to 'redeem' the [I]ndigenous race by teaching Indians [sic] to read and write, which would 'raise' them to Western cultural standards" (Hunefeldt 156). One predominant concept of the non-Indigenous knowledge paradigm taught in modern education is that the natural world is inanimate and can be rationally understood (Quijano 172). From this, the value of the natural world is reduced to the profits reaped in the extraction of its resources. Such capitalist concepts, which are at the heart of the present-day destruction of the Amazon rainforest, tend to differ greatly from Indigenous perspectives (Quijano 174). Amaringo's students instead were assisted in strengthening their cultural identities and fathoming a "cosmocentric" view of the forest, where the natural world is considered sentient and sacred (Apffel-Marglin, "Soils, Spirits" 52; Amaringo and Luna 30).

Within two and a half years, approximately three hundred students were attending Amaringo's school, learning about respect for the rainforest, while manifesting their observations and inspirations on canvas and other artistic mediums (Amaringo and Luna 30; "Inner Visions" 22). As a result, they collectively reaffirmed values of reciprocation with the Amazon, while becoming empowered as stewards and defenders of their Indigenous territory (Amaringo and Luna 30; "My Life as a Shaman

and Artist"). During the operation of his school, Amaringo taught methods of interacting with the spirits, the ancestral past, and the ecology of the forest in ways that characterized respectful and sustainable relationships. The USKO-AYAR school thus served to organize an Indigenous youth-based movement to push back against colonial pedagogies and narratives imposed by the state, which promote individual gain and a utilitarian, exploitive relationship to nature. Amaringo once said that "The best thing you can leave is a seed for others to work with" ("Inner Visions" 52). During his work creating the USKO-AYAR school, Amaringo indeed planted many seeds, both for his students—helping them realize a new narrative as Indigenous actors in Peru—and for anthropologists and the international environmental community to work with.

Figure 2. Photo of the USKO-AYAR Amazonian School of Painting (Amaringo and Luna 31).

The international relationships forged through Amaringo's work are not unparalleled (Hogue and Rau

295). By the 1970s, Indigenous leaders began emerging from "all the major ethnic groups in the Peruvian Amazon (Aguaruna, Huambisa, Shipibo-Conibo, Ashaninka and Cocama-Cocamilla)" in response to state-led colonization on their territories (Greene 339). They entered into close alliances, both domestic and international, which quickly led into a pan-Amazonia political movement that articulated its agenda at the national level through AIDESEP (Greene 340; Hughes 86; AIDESEP). AIDESEP, founded in 1980,[5] unifies the 64 groups of Amazonian Indigenous peoples of Peru and is an umbrella for 109 federations, which represent over 650,000 Indigenous peoples from 1,809 communities of the Peruvian Amazon (AIDESEP). In 1984, sponsored by the international NGO Oxfam America, AIDESEP held a meeting with Amazonian Indigenous organizations from four different countries (Greene 342). This congregation in Lima then resulted in the formation of the Coordinadora de Organizaciones Indígenas de la Cuenca Amazónica (COICA), a transnational organization of Indigenous parties of the Amazon that is now comprised of Indigenous groups from nine countries throughout South America (Greene 342; Hughes 86; Rousseau and Hudon 158). This meeting was also a point of origin for Amazonian peoples to begin working with international laws of Indigenous rights (Greene 342). In fact, it was from the COICA congregation that the legal terminology 'Indigenous peoples', which is now used by the United Nations and in other international agreements (such as the ILO's Convention 169), began to disseminate across the globe (Greene 342). In 1987, the Confederación de

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[5] AIDESEP was the legacy of the Coordinadora de Comunidades Nativas de la Selva (COCONASEP), which was founded in 1979.

Nacionalidades Amazónicas del Perú (CONAP) was founded as a progeny of AIDESEP, uniting 25 Indigenous federations at the time (a number which has since increased to over 40) (Rousseau and Hudon 159). Through the work of both COICA and AIDESEP, international eco-ethnic alliances were decisively strengthened with Amazonian Indigenous voices speaking to even the "world's premier development institutions" (Greene 342). COICA, guided by Peruvian leader Evaristo Nugkuag, was also responsible for soliciting the major international environmental and Peruvian Indigenous advocacy bodies to sign the Iquitos Declaration in 1990 (342-343). This declaration was the foundational document for the strategic alliance between environmental NGOs and Indigenous peoples of the Amazon[6] (343). Hogue and Rau claim that "Despite the various forms of populist indigenism and the legal recognition of Indigenous land titles, neither a Peruvian nor an [I]ndigenous consciousness formed a basis for unified political or social action in Peru during the 20th century" (295). However, these developments, all occurring in the 20th century, show that this claim is far from the truth.

To bring these advances into the context of this paper, Toledo's indigeneity program and the 2009 Bagua protests that were swept up by popular and scholarly attention were not the first appearances of Peru's Indigenous movement, let alone of its pan-Amazonian counterpart. Peru's organized ethnic struggles were long in the process and Indigenous communities were not "'new'

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[6] Amaringo was part of the growing international environmental alliance. In 1992, he received the United Nations' Global 500 Roll of Honour, which recognizes "members of a broad and growing environmental movement that is flourishing around the world" (UNEP; "Inner Visions" 52).

social actors" (Lust 196). Although Peruvian elites have imposed their truth and political interests, often in ways that silence the voices of Indigenous peoples, Peru's Indigenous communities have constantly fought to secure their rights to their identity, their lands, and to weave their own autonomous narratives. As demonstrated in this paper, Indigenous narratives have been constrained by such mechanisms as Peru's social class discourse, the symbolic appropriation of ethnic identity by elites, and the regulation of media. Yet, García notes how, in the "struggle over narrative control," alternatives to national narratives do not always come in the form of "public pronouncements" (220). They come, for instance, in the vision painted on canvas, in the discussions with anthropologists, in the first private and later published memoirs of Indigenous women, and in the communications at eco-ethnic alliance meetings.

5   Conclusion

The events summarized here, stemming from Indigenous movements in the post-World War II *Pax Americana*, are examples of a growing narrative control by Indigenous peoples in Peru. If there was indeed a "historical turning point," as Rumrill called the 2009 Bagua uprisings, it did not consist of one moment, but rather, many consistent moments over centuries (Rumrill qtd in Rénique 117). Nonetheless, it can be said that Indigenous peoples from the Amazon and Andes continue to come together in unprecedentedly powerful unions to eminently denounce the Peruvian government's neglectful agenda (Greene 353; Rénique 127). Recalling Condori, who remarked that the Bagua uprisings have "shown us that we Indians, when unified, can establish our own worldwide networks," it is important to realize that Indigenous peoples of Peru have

long understood the effects of unification and have hence been establishing both regional and global networks (284). The unification of the Amazonian-Andean movement will likely have immense effects in Peru and worldwide. As Amaringo notes of his artistic and spiritual journey, "The little things are what matters, the little things are important, and that's what leads eventually to the spiritual awakening, this knowingness that it is all interconnected" ("My Life as a Shaman and Artist"). Evidently, the little things are also important in the context of Indigenous movements. This is a noteworthy point for future scholars analyzing Indigenous movements in Peru and elsewhere to consider. Maintaining a sensitivity to the seemingly "little" narratives and quiet organizing will be key for researching Peru's Indigenous movements and the growing Amazon-Andean alliance, just as it has been important to those observing the eco-ethnic, anthropologist-Indigenous, and intercommunity alliances that have significantly shaped the political landscape of Peru.

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Las Cholas de Bolivia:
The Uphill Battle Against Racism, Sexism and Commodification in Contemporary Bolivia

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Cholas, Indigenous Bolivian marketplace women recognized for their distinct traditional dress, have seen the commodification of their image both domestically and internationally. Their long colourful skirts, *polleras*, have been used by others as a way to censor, label, stereotype and exploit their position in a hierarchical society. Foreigners travel thousands of miles to consume what they hope to be an authentic representation of the *chola* identity. The creation of *cholita* wrestling has allowed some upward mobility for a small number of individual *chola* women, yet it perpetuates the foreign consumption of the Indigenous female body. Throughout their history of marginalization, these women have fought for recognition and equality within Bolivia. This essay will examine how the definition of what it means to be *chola* in Bolivia is ever-changing as they face one hurdle after another.
Keywords: Bolivia; chola; Andean; Indigenous; pollera; commodification; cholita wrestling

1   Introduction

The image of women in bowler hats with long colourful skirts is ubiquitous around the world when picturing Bolivian Andean women. Known as *cholas*, these women have faced an uphill battle against racism, sexism and commodification in contemporary Bolivia. Once a derogatory term for women of mixed heritage but now a celebrated representation of Indigenous identity, the term *chola* has consistently been manipulated to serve the political goals of the upper class. Locating the *chola's* place within Bolivian society is a complex issue, and requires an understanding of their history, field of work and current image. Throughout the entirety of their tumultuous past, the *cholas* have been committed to their cultural identity, which is an integral part of Bolivian society. The term *cholo* was originally a social class created by Spanish colonizers, neither Indigenous nor *criollo*, a person of pure Spanish descent. While the term no longer has the pejorative connotation that it used to, the Bolivian *cholas* still have a long way to go before achieving equality in society. This essay examines how the symbolic image of the *chola* has developed to present day.

2   The History of the C*hola*

The term *cholo/a* has seen many definitions and manipulations since the Spanish colonization of the Americas. The original category of the *cholo* was designated by the Spanish to classify the Indigenous population. A caste system was created in the sixteenth century under Spanish rule to categorize the population of Upper Perú (now modern-day Bolivia) (Dalence 2) according to racial characteristics (Varallanos 21-66). José Varallanos identifies the criteria upon which these caste

categories were based: "From the male Spaniard and female indian [sic] results a royal *mestizo*; from the royal *mestizo* and female indian [sic], a *cholo* is born; from a *cholo* and a female indian [sic], a common *mestizo*" (29). Under the *encomienda,* the Spanish colonial legal system, any individual whose heritage was more than half-Indigenous was forced to pay tribute to the Crown (Encyclopaedia Britannica). Given that most of the colonizers were men, there were high levels of intermarriage and informal unions between Indigenous females and male Spaniards. Over time, caste distinctions for *cholos* were harder to trace given that the biological distinctions between Indigenous and non-Indigenous became difficult to maintain. *Cholos*, belonging to neither a pure-Indigenous nor a pure-Spanish caste, inconvenienced the Spanish Crown because they threatened the purity of the castes and the protection of cultural and economic privilege (Varallanos 81). Around the seventeenth century, the distinction between *mestizos* and *cholos* became distinguishable through clothing and language. *Mestizos* shifted towards the European social status as the *cholos* began to identify more closely with their Indigenous roots (Chen 3).

      At the start of the nineteenth century, there were several political measures surrounding communal land holding in the Andean region. This forced many Indigenous people to move into the urban centres of the country. The *cholos* began working in the urban service sector, which brought an expansion of their roles within the Bolivian economy (Barragán 34; Klein 65). One of the main occupations that females in the *cholo* class filled was that of street vending. Thus, the term *chola* began to connotate women street vending in their traditional wear and became a recognizable part of the urban working class. Urban *cholas* began to separate themselves from the rural

Indigenous population. By working in urban centres and learning Spanish, the *cholas* became distinct from the Indigenous population in the rural parts of the country (Fléty 5). The *pollera*-wearing image of the *chola* was appropriated and used as a symbol of elegant nationalism by *criollos* in Bolivia who were seeking independence from Spain in the first half of the nineteenth century.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the term *chola* saw a return to its pejorative origins. Previously used to represent hard-working Bolivian women, the term changed to signify "unhygienic" and "dirty." Political powers denoted the term as something to move away from, creating the stigma of "dirty women" living in squalor (Chen 5). This stemmed from the paranoia of the ruling class in regards to the increasingly large Indigenous population, thus marginalizing *cholas*. As the twentieth century progressed, the *pollera* became a symbol of resistance. Facing oppression, racism and poor working conditions, the *cholas* organized the *Federacíon Obrera Feminina* and protested in public spaces, demanding the improvement of their living and working conditions (Fléty 5). What it meant to be a *chola* was put in a position of incongruity. The women, using their *polleras* to distinguish themselves as urban workers confronted their own image being used by politicians to represent the poor, rural and "dirty" Indigenous world.

There has been a recent shift in the connotation of the term *chola,* returning it to a symbol of national pride. Following the 2006 election of Evo Morales, Bolivia's first Indigenous president, Indigenous issues were brought to the fore (Albro 285). Several laws and policies were implemented to combat racial discrimination, support sexual and reproductive rights, meet quotas concerning equal gender representation in politics and better the overall social standing of *cholas*.

3   *Chola* Fashion

The *chola's* dress, which over time has become very distinguishable, differs from that of their male counterparts, who dress in poorer versions of contemporary dress (Nash 312). The *chola* status as it is understood in Bolivia is more clearly related to the clothing and the female body. The social differentiation created by wearing a garment like the *pollera* is a feminine practice, but the *cholo* men have no significant equivalent. Because of this, the *cholas* face a more obvious mark of Indigeneity (Fléty 8). There are many Indigenous women who wear contemporary clothing and are indistinguishable amongst the majority of the Bolivian population; therefore, the *cholas* of modern-day Bolivia are identifiable by their purposefully-worn traditional dress. This dress consists of long, layered colourful *pollera* skirts made from cotton velveteen, brightly-coloured shawls, two long braids and a bowler hat. Since its introduction by British Railway workers in the 1920s, the bowler hat has become a distinct part of the *chola* outfit. Originally manufactured in and imported from Italy, the bowler hat is now made in Bolivia and sold in the marketplace. The traditional dress was first forced upon the *cholas* by the Spanish, who required the Indigenous population to adopt the European dress of the era (Baudoin 18). Today, this dress is a fashion in its own right. Women save up and spend hundreds of dollars on *polleras* for special occasions (18). The *pollera* distinguishes the urban *chola* identity from the rural Indigenous world and from the majority of urban women who have adopted Western fashion.

4   Redefining Women in the Marketplace

Since the *cholos* of the nineteenth century moved to the urban centres due to industrialization, the roles of men and women have become distinct. The women dress to show their ethnic cultural attributes and are the noticeable administrators of the outdoor marketplace. The younger generations of *cholas* work alongside the older generations, selling anything from popcorn to electronics.

Over the past three decades, marketplace conditions have improved considerably. Multicultural and neoliberal policies have created political opportunities for the Indigenous population and encouraged a free market economy (Scarborough 87). All vendors are taxed under the state's simplified tax regime (89). The "informal" outdoor markets are defined collectively by anthropologists as "an important sector...characterized by its extra-legality'' (Tranberg-Hansen and Vaa 10). In Bolivia, these markets are operated within the law, yet are given significant tax breaks, given the small scale of their operations. These policies have resulted in upward mobility for the youngest generation of market vendors. For the first time in history, Bolivian marketplace *cholas* have been able to earn enough money to send their children to university. Thus, the young *chola* women are able to receive an education in business and economics, and return to vending with a better understanding of the economic market (Scarborough 88).

Under neoliberal policies, the *chola* marketplace has become a crucial part of the Bolivian economy (Scarborough 90). This shift in policy started with the government's implementation of economic reforms promoted by the International Monetary Fund. *Cholas* benefited from such reforms because they were afforded access to small business loans, allowing them to expand

their businesses (92). Similarly, neoliberal policies proved advantageous when the country saw a decline in government subsidies and price controls (Wanderley 85). Because of this, *cholas* could set the price for their own imported goods, which quickly raised their overall income.

Despite these neoliberal benefits, the *cholas* actively worked in support of anti-neoliberal political parties, including that of the *Movimiento al Socialismo* (MAS), headed by Evo Morales (Pozo 17). The reason for their support of MAS was due to the continuous ethnic discrimination they endured (Scarborough 91). Morales' campaign included the promise of empowerment of Bolivia's Indigenous majority. The *cholas*, still facing oppression, used their improved marketplace capital to fund and support Morales in his rise to power (Scarborough 92). New generations of better-educated *cholas* have helped with the overall prosperity of the market women. Under the Morales administration *cholas* have benefitted from a less discriminative social standing. The *cholas* have dominated Indigenous entrepreneurship by identifying their traditional history and becoming active members of the modern Bolivian economy. The informal markets have created an Indigenous merchant middle class of women who are mastering their traditional workplace, and thus modernizing their country.

5   The Commodification of the *Chola*

With new policies benefiting the Indigenous majority, *cholas* have experienced an improved quality of life. The *chola in pollera* is now a positive symbol of national identity (Albro 302). While Bolivian politics have come to promote the *chola* as a positive female symbol, they still live in a patriarchal society wherein they have become a token of Indigenous identity. Gender-based policymaking

intersects with ethnicity to promote specific aspects of the "Andean Nation'' (Albro 303). By constructing this symbolic image of Indigenous women, other social inequities are obscured (Paulson 2006). Appealing to community roots, politicians place themselves closer to *cholas*. Using Indigenous women symbolically in political discourse takes away their individual agency and categorizes a large number of people as rhetorical objects of state action (Albro 300).

The image of the *chola* is not just seen domestically, but also internationally as a symbol of Bolivian tradition. Tourists visit Bolivia with misguided notions that the *pollera* and bowler hat have persisted from before colonial times. Throughout the country, postcards with pictures of *cholas* seemingly untouched by modernity are widely sold. Representations of Indigenous life are made to appear exotic rather than reflect the actual day-to-day lives of the Indigenous population (Canessa 244).

6 *Cholita* Wrestling

The commodification of the Indigenous identity can be analyzed using the example of *cholita* wrestling. Started in 2001 by Juan Mamani, *cholita* wrestling is far from an Indigenous tradition, yet it has become a must-see attraction for tourists visiting La Paz. Inspired by *lucha libre,* a style of professional wrestling that originated in Mexico in the early 1900s, it is characterized by elaborate costumes, masks, storylines, characters and crowd interaction. While *cholita* wrestling follows the *lucha libre* guidelines, it is distinct in that fighters are primarily Indigenous women wrestling in full traditional garb (Bieri 8). Mamani's wrestling group, *Titanes Del Ring*, draws a crowd of over 500 people, with approximately 40 percent being foreigners and 60 percent working class locals

(Haynes 433). This event takes place in El Alto, near La Paz, where seventy-four percent of the population is Indigenous (Lazar 25). Given that few elite or middle-class *paceñas* (residents of La Paz) attend the wrestling, it is choreographed for the local working class and tourists.

The performances are designed to be humorous, but also provide social commentary on issues such as gang violence, undocumented immigration and military brutality; this is a highlight for the locals and a commentary which many travellers with limited knowledge of Bolivia would not pick up on (Haynes 434). The tourists, who pay substantially more than the local price (12$ vs 2$ USD), come by the busload expecting an authentic experience of market women in Indigenous dress performing some traditional Bolivian practice. In reality, the wrestling is similar to that of the United States, where the *luchadoras* wrestle both each other and the male *luchadores*, all the while playing the part of a scripted character. Although the *luchadoras* dress as marketplace *cholas,* most dress *de vestido* when not acting as their character. In the English-language advertisements found in nearly every hostel in La Paz, the events are referred to as "Fighting *Cholitas*" (434). There is no mention of the male wrestlers, only pictures of the *luchadoras* dressed in traditional *chola* clothing, pulling each other's braids in the ring. The women are marketed using their ethnic background, and these women are who the audience comes to see. At the event, the men dress up in spandex and masks, following the traditional Mexican *luchadores* outfits. La Paz had wrestling companies before 2001, some of which had women dressed in spandex, and it was not until Mamani's incorporation of the *pollera* that *luchadoras* became uniquely distinct (435). The *polleras* brought this weekly performance its international success, marking these women as "different" and thus motivating tourists to

experience the "authenticity" of Bolivia. As Jane Desmond asserts, "many people are willing to pay a lot of money to see bodies which are different from their own, to purchase the right to look, and to believe that through that visual consumption they have come to know something they didn't before'' (xiii).

Ironically, the *cholita luchadoras* have come to use the commodification of the Indigenous identity to their advantage. Upward social mobility is more difficult for women to achieve due to the gender inequality of the country; thus, they have found ways of highlighting their "otherness'' to foreigners within the tourist industry. This is accomplished by capitalizing on tourists' preconceptions of Bolivian tradition and their interest in "authentic" experience (Haynes 434). The women in the ring have achieved a social status and mobility that would have been otherwise unattainable to them had they not begun wrestling. This is where the issue of exploitation becomes difficult to pin down. There is a complicated relationship between female Indigenous identity, touristic consumption and the possibility of an exploitative nature of tourist practices. The *cholita luchadoras* are using tourists' desires for experiencing Bolivian "authenticity" to gain social status and capital. The wrestling ring has allowed these working-class women a fairly lucrative employment option and the opportunity to strategically claim their own versions of cosmopolitan modernity (434). There exists a belief that *cholita* wrestling is a platform to empower the women of El Alto (Bieri 9). However, the problem is the method in which they claim this empowerment. The message of the feminist struggle does not translate to the tourists attending the wrestling. Instead, *cholita* wrestling is successful because it plays on the traditional oppression of the Indigenous women. The wrestling has a violently sexualized nature, with

performers simulating behaviour such as a man grabbing a woman's genitalia or pretending to rape a *cholita* as she struggles to get free (63).

The layout of the arena segregates the foreign tourists from the local Bolivian spectators. The tourists have ringside seating and are able to walk around freely during matches, while the local audience must remain in their barricaded section. This layout is a physical manifestation of the value placed on the tourist audience and the privileged status they hold (Bieri 73). Ultimately, it is the blatant segregation of race in which tourists are made to feel entitled at events that promote the consumption and commodification of the female Indigenous body. Promoting the consumable image of the *cholita* as "the other" only perpetuates the categorization of Indigenous women as tokens, thereby limiting their own agency.

7   Conclusion

The Bolivian *cholas* have a tumultuous history filled with oppression, racism and discrimination. They were first categorized as Indigenous under the Spanish caste system and by extension a social status inferior to the ruling class. Cultural, social and economic characteristics of *cholas* and *cholos* differ greatly. *Cholas* face discrimination as part of the Indigenous population, but also encounter sexism within a patriarchal society. The easily-identifiable *pollera* is used as a way to stereotype their placement in society, yet it persists as an expression of the *cholas'* struggle for recognition. In order to fully understand Bolivian history, one must understand the plight of the *cholas*. As an internationally recognized symbol of Bolivia, *cholas* have experienced many forms of oppression. From the Spanish designation and degradation of Indigenous blood, to

ostracized symbols of rural uncleanliness, to a commodified tourist attraction, *cholas* have endured centuries of exploitation and persecution.

As an impressively enduring group of women, *cholas* have also garnered some success. They have learned to master their trade and to control the marketplace. *Cholas* have worked together in support of political movements that have benefitted themselves and their fellow Indigenous countrymen. They have accessed political positions and have seen important anti-discrimination laws passed in their favour. Overall, the battle for equality is ongoing and complex, yet the *cholas* have made significant strides in controlling their destiny and defining what it means to be a *chola* in Bolivia.

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