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Chapter One

Introduction

New Directions in Latin American Social Movements

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The traditional mold is being broken. Events in Latin America are challenging elitist rule, pacted democracy, and party politics. Much of the radical action that is sweeping through the region comes from below. Social movements force governments out of power, advocating in favor of policies that benefit them, and bring ever more pressure and power to bear in the decision-making process. This work explores many of these new radical social movements, their internal practices and horizontal nature, and how they have developed. From small communities to the streets of São Paulo, radical horizontal politics from below are changing the way the political game is played, if not the way power itself is defined.

Popular resistance to exclusionary governance has been a feature of Latin American societies since the colonial era, but different historical periods have seen upsurges in grassroots mobilization, with distinct social movement dynamics and characteristics in each context. This book examines the importance of the movement away from vertical to more horizontal forms of social (movement) organization. It does so against the background of significant changes in the context affecting twenty-first century grassroots struggles in Latin America.

Horizontal organizing, or horizontalism (*horizontalidad*), is one of the central features of a new wave of social movements. In Latin America these social movements emerged out of the resistance to neoliberal globalization of the 1990s and 2000s and the eventual exhaustion of the neoliberal model, as well as frustration with traditional elitist party politics and with the short-

comings of conventional political institutions. The essays in this volume explore the deeper meanings, practices, and outcomes of the evolving social movements and the increasing horizontalism and other “new ways of doing politics” that are cropping up in a wide range of geographic and thematic case studies. It also features essays that theoretically position horizontalism within the historical development of Latin American social movements, and other essays that illustrate a range of important topics for understanding contemporary social movements.

This volume explores several questions surrounding the changing context of social movements in the region. **First**, we explore the significance of the hegemonic breakdown of the Washington Consensus (neoliberal economic paradigm) for Latin America’s social movements. **Second**, we examine how the internal dynamics and strategies of Latin America’s social movements have been transformed since the publication of our first volume in 2008 (Stahler-Sholk, Vanden, and Kuecker 2008). Here we explore the possibilities and dilemmas involved in movements modeling new social relations rather than directly tackling the more traditional structures of political power. How have the dynamics of resistance and repression shaped the development of social movement strategies, and how are the movements interacting with the recent “pink tide” of left-of-center governments in the region? **Third**, given the longevity of several of Latin America’s social movements—such as the Zapatistas in Mexico and the Landless Rural Workers’ Movement (MST) in Brazil—how can we assess movement outcomes and future directions? In the emerging post-neoliberal era, how have transnational networks of resistance and solidarity changed, and are they as relevant? On balance, what are the continuities in the social movement dynamics we explored in the first volume, and what are the important new tendencies in the context of current changes affecting the region? This volume advances a series of core themes about Latin American social movements that illustrate the continuities in social movements from Latin America’s neoliberal period, but also show the new formation of resistance in the post-neoliberal period.

NEOLIBERALISM AND ITS AFTERMATH

An important part of the background for understanding the contemporary cycle of protest in Latin America has been the impact of neoliberal globalization that swept the region in the 1980s, and the decline and ongoing reformulation of neoliberal policies in the succeeding decades. Under the influence of monetarist economists at the University of Chicago (dubbed the “Chicago boys”) who used Chile after the 1973 military coup as their laboratory for ultra-free market policies, U.S. government and international financial institutions zealously enforced a standard package of economic policies across

Latin America, particularly in the wake of the 1982 Third World debt crisis. Economist John Williamson (1990) famously summarized and labeled the formulaic prescriptions—fiscal and monetary austerity, price liberalization, and privatization—as the “Washington Consensus.”

There is now general consensus that the negative impact of the standard neoliberal program, which fell disproportionately on the poor, was a significant factor in the moral outrage that fueled the resurgence of social movements in Latin America beginning in the 1980s (Eckstein and Wickham-Crowley 2002). The connection between the harsh impact of these policies and direct protest action generated the term “IMF riots,” referring to conflagrations such as those following the imposition of International Monetary Fund structural adjustment programs (SAPs) in the Dominican Republic in 1984, and the Venezuelan *Caracazo* in 1989. The neoliberal downsizing of the state, and reframing of the citizen pact between state and civil society, also allowed for the reassertion of diverse identities as emerging social subjectivities disputed the spaces once considered the commons, a trend that Alvarez, Dagnino, and Escobar (1998) analyzed as “cultures of politics, politics of culture.”

In our previous volume on Latin American social movements, we highlighted the impact of neoliberal globalization in galvanizing resistance, as well as the conjunctural overlap of these policies in the 1980s with the general political opening and transition to electoral regimes in the region during this period. The combination helped explain both motive and opportunity for the upsurge in mobilization. At the same time, the return of conventional political parties and institutions (which mainstream political scientists characterized as part of a wave of “transitions to democracy”) sat uneasily with the empowering experience of grassroots participation and unconventional direct action (Dangl 2010), even if liberal representative democracy of a low-intensity variety (“polyarchy”) could be molded to fit the neoliberal agenda (Robinson 1996).

Revisiting the region’s movements in the 2010s, a major shift in context is the declining hegemony of the Washington Consensus. Alongside the widespread discrediting of several decades of neoliberal policies, the twenty-first century has seen a shift toward the electoral left in much of the region, a trend labeled the “pink tide,” bringing to office governments that ride the wave of grassroots social mobilization. The full implications of that trend for social movements are complex and still evolving, but one of them is the diversification of economic policies now being promoted by Latin American governments.

The decline of neoliberal hegemony (Hershberg and Rosen 2007), however, does not by any means imply that the forces promoting the neoliberal agenda have surrendered, or that there is a consensual new development paradigm for the region. Indeed, there is considerable disagreement among

practitioners and academics about what “post-neoliberalism” might look like (Rovira Kaltwasser 2011), and about whether progressive change can be directed by the state (Prevost, Oliva Campos, and Vanden 2012).

Some see the return of more state-centered development models as a revival of the structuralist thinking promoted in the pre-neoliberal era by the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America, and by Latin American critical thinkers, including those working in the dependency theory tradition. This interpretation has produced a divide between those who take a favorable view of the prospects for a reformist, social democratic future for the region (Levitsky and Roberts 2011; Grugel and Riggirozzi 2012), and those who argue that fundamental change cannot come from what is still essentially the capitalist state, even if self-defined leftists like Lula in Brazil are elected into government (Leiva 2008).

Others see the state-directed projects initiated by presidents Hugo Chávez in Venezuela, Evo Morales in Bolivia, and Rafael Correa in Ecuador as blazing a path toward a new kind of “twenty-first century socialism” (Burbach, Fox, and Fuentes 2013). Mainstream critics of these projects argue that they are little more than an unsustainable new variant of populism, fueled by commodity bubbles and run by charismatic authoritarians (Weyland 2013). On the other hand, some left critics see some of these projects as reformist at best, using the discourse of socialism and the organizational base of social movements for electoral agendas that largely coincide with the interests of global capital.¹

An offshoot of these debates that a number of Indigenous² groups, which have been a major component of the current wave of Latin American social movements (Quijano 2005), have placed on the agenda is the idea that we need to move beyond the goals of conventionally defined “development.” These groups call for refounding the state (Santos 2010b) based on decolonizing our thinking and recognizing a plurality of ways of knowing (*otros saberes*), including various Indigenous concepts of *buen vivir*, or a framework of non-market values of living well collectively in society and in harmony with nature (Gudynas 2011). Some of the “pink tide” governments brought to power with the help of Indigenous mobilizations, for example in Bolivia and Ecuador, have argued that this can be accomplished through “neo-extractivism,” in which left governments nationalized extractive industries such as mining and petroleum in order to redistribute the resources in a more equitable and participatory fashion. Yet the record so far has been decidedly mixed, and some critics argue that neo-extractivism is not really post-neoliberalism but merely a more palatable repackaging of the agenda of global capital (Veltmeyer and Petras 2014).

Despite the unresolved debates about the possible directions of post-neoliberalism, what is clear is that the declining hegemony of the neoliberal paradigm, and the experimentation with more state-directed development

models under pink tide governments, have altered the context for social movement organizing in the region (Webber and Carr 2012; Goodale and Postero 2013; Motta 2013a; Ellner 2014). Movements forged in resistance to neoliberalism that had creatively occupied new social spaces (Zibechi 2012; Katsiaficas and Rénique 2012) and innovated new ways of doing politics through more horizontal social relations based on flattening out hierarchies and broadening participation (Sitrin 2012) now faced a different set of dilemmas in dealing with the post-neoliberal state.

A central concern in this second volume on social movements is coming to an understanding of the relationship between horizontal social movements and state regimes that gain power through their opposition to neoliberalism. These new state actors, we contend, present a unique challenge to social movements, especially those movements born during the neoliberal period and constituted through the logic of autonomy (Hellman 1992). The progressive and often radical agendas of these new governments mean that they represent powerful potential allies for the grassroots. Yet, these regimes also present the dangers of hierarchy and its associated inequities and inequalities in the relations of power. In this context, horizontal movements may appear to some as reactionary movements, obstacles to progressive or radical state projects, or even threats to the authority and legitimacy of social change from above. For others, truly radical transformation is that which comes from below and is internalized through participatory practices. The relationship between the new progressive governments and horizontal movements is one of the more significant landscapes of social change in the post-neoliberal period.

FRAMEWORKS FOR UNDERSTANDING TODAY'S MOVEMENTS

Latin America saw an upswing in the cycle of contentious politics (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001) in the 1980s and 1990s, and a first generation of scholarship sought to explain the trend in terms of the context of the times: a growing awareness of culture and identity (Slater 1985; Alvarez, Dagnino, and Escobar 1998), social protest against neoliberal austerity (Eckstein and Wickham-Crowley 2002), and the confluence of democratic opening with the contradictory forces of globalization (Johnston and Almeida 2006). Scholars sought to delineate both the changes and the continuities in grassroots organizing (Hellman 1995). In our previous social movement volume, we examined the interaction between these structural factors and the evolving dynamics and strategies of popular struggle.

In the seven years since our previous book compilation appeared in print, a second generation of scholarship has examined several significant new trends affecting social movements in the region. One such trend is the dele-

gitimation of, and retreat from, the neoliberal framework that defined the old Washington Consensus of economic policies for the region (Hershberg and Rosen 2007). A new post-neoliberal paradigm has yet to fully take shape (Goodale and Postero 2013), but a pink tide of progressive and left governments swept into office promising alternatives, often riding the wave of grassroots social mobilization.

On the world stage, the Arab Spring and Occupy-era protest movements in Greece, Spain, Turkey, and the United States have suggested just how contagious are the ideas of social mobilization through social movements that first spread through Latin America. Works like Manuel Castells's *Networks of Outrage and Hope: Social Movements in the Internet Age* have charted their growth and analyzed the new means of electronic communication that have stimulated and fostered these movements and so rapidly helped to make them transnational phenomena (Castells 2012; Mason 2012).

In this new post-neoliberal period, Indigenous groups in particular—from the Zapatista movement in Mexico (Harvey 1998) to Pachakutik in Ecuador (Becker 2012) and the mobilizations that made Evo Morales the first Indigenous president of Bolivia (Webber 2012)—challenged old liberal formulations of citizenship with new claims of group rights (Quijano 2005; Yashar 2005; Postero 2006). Indigenous concepts such as *buen vivir* have begun to find their way into the refounding of the state, while the pink tide governments—and particularly the more radical Bolivarian variants, such as in Venezuela and Bolivia—have proposed controversial development strategies of neo-extractivism, based on nationalization of natural resources and social programs to redistribute the earnings.

New tensions between elected left-of-center and radical governments and the social movements that supported them are a central feature of the Latin American landscape today (Prevost, Oliva Campos, and Vanden 2012; Weber and Carr 2012). Movements in the region have made strikingly different choices regarding their interaction with political parties and governments, ranging from the Zapatista model of autonomy in Mexico that rejects all government programs and electoral politics, to the Brazilian landless workers' uneasy relationship with the Workers' Party, to the Venezuelan movement's embrace of state institutions as vehicles for change. Understanding the shifting relations between states and social movements (Dangl 2010; Johnston 2011; Reyes 2012) is a key challenge for activists and academics today.

An aspect of this evolving relationship that points toward a third generation of scholarship is the way social movements are occupying, physically and metaphorically, new social spaces (Zibechi 2012). Rather than seeing Latin American social movements as reacting only to the specificities of neoliberal policies in the region, they now have to be considered in the broader comparative perspective of global economic, ecological, and other

intertwined crises (Hall and Kuecker 2011) and the corresponding delegitimation of the state (Katsiaficas and Rénique 2012). As part of a broader “alter-globalization” wave, social movements in Latin America today are sidestepping the state in ways that carve out and occupy new spaces (Hesketh 2013). In those spaces, they are practicing new forms of what some have called prefigurative politics (Maeckelbergh 2009), modeling radical participatory-democratic, horizontal practices (Edelman 2001; Santos 2007; Motta 2009; Motta 2013a). A new look at Latin American social movements in the midst of the current global cycle of protest will sharpen our theoretical understanding of the dynamics of how movements operate in social spaces, including transnational spaces, outside the state.

Scholarship on the region’s social movements is only beginning to drill down into the micropolitics of these new practices while exploring their potential for fundamental change at the macro level (Sitrin 2012; Zibechi 2012), recognizing the complex interplay between the global and the local in “glocal” struggles. Careful work is needed to link case studies to social movement theory in order to consider the polemical question posed by John Holloway (2002) about whether it is possible to “change the world without taking power,” that is, whether or how new practices of horizontalism in social mobilization can bring about larger systemic change. The advantages and pitfalls of focusing horizontally on social relations rather than on state power echo, in some ways, classic debates on the left between anarchists and communists. Is vanguard leadership or mass grassroots mobilization more important in achieving profound and lasting changes? While many will recognize that as a false quandary, examining interactions between different visions for how to organize social movements remains a useful exercise for understanding social change in Latin America. These strategic dilemmas will be of keen interest to comparativists seeking theoretical frameworks for understanding the region, as well as activists seeking to apply their analysis to struggles for social change (Hale 2008). The evolving power configurations may herald new ways of doing politics in Latin America and beyond, and may radically affect global political culture and a myriad of political institutions throughout the world.

CENTRAL QUESTIONS AND THEMES

This new formation of resistance has several defining features. To begin, it is characterized by organizing “from below,” where varying degrees of autonomy from conventional political institutions define the disarticulation of the grassroots that is historically rooted in Latin America, and more specifically in the ways the neoliberal period separated the state from society. Among these points of disarticulation, we count the distance and disconnect between

the grassroots and the apparatus of the state, traditional political parties that contest for state power, old-line labor unions that the state recognizes, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). These entities constitute the “formal” institutions of society that serve to organize divergent groups and interests of society into a regulated, regimented, and hierarchical system within the power constellation of the modern nation-state. Processes of creating community and new subjectivities from below—what Hardt and Negri (2001) call “constituent power” (as opposed to constituted power)—shape identities in reclaimed social spaces that characterize the new social movements of the post-neoliberal period. This process places them outside modern mechanisms of regulation, regimentation, and hierarchy. It makes ample use of informal means of communication through social interactions and through the (decentralized, horizontally based) electronic media and social media in particular (Castells 2012).

The nonvertical, nonelitist, popular, horizontal essence of Latin America’s contemporary social movements is a core theme of this book. Horizontalism here connotes the flattening out of relations of power that promote equity and equality within society and the social movements. It is, to varying degrees, a rejection of the modern revolutionary strategy of vanguardism, where an elite leadership is deemed necessary for creating the conditions of social change, leading revolutionary participants through the destruction of the *ancien régime*, and governing once the revolution has seized state power. It is also a means of contesting the power that national and international financial elites and the corporations to which they are linked have accumulated. The horizontal approach to social change further rejects the strategy of taking state power as the primary goal of radical change. Instead, these contemporary social movements seek to create change without taking state power (Holloway 2002).

A central premise of horizontalism is the rejection of hierarchical relations of power that are created and reproduced through vanguardism, political and economic elitism, and the goal of seizing rather than transforming state power. Feminist and postcolonial theories have made a major contribution to rethinking the concept of power, which can be understood not simply in conventional hierarchical terms as power-over but instead power-to, or empowerment from below. Horizontalism seeks to eliminate the inequities and inequalities of leadership and decision making, and explores forms of radical/participatory democracy as alternatives to both Leninist and liberal representative models. Yet social movements still face challenges in dealing with the sometimes latent power structures within organizations, in national societies and states, and in transnational networks.

In advocating for an understanding of contemporary social movements from the horizontal lens, we are concerned with issues of continuity and change. Horizontal approaches, for example, have deep roots in radical

thought, reaching back to the great debates between Lenin and Luxemburg at the start of the twentieth century. Our concern, however, is for contemporary articulations, especially how recent forms of horizontalism were born from the particular social, political, economic, and cultural contingencies that neoliberal globalization has created in Latin America, which was a major focus of our efforts in our first volume. In this context, we see a continuity from the struggles against neoliberal reforms, where people began to form highly autonomous methods of organizing and resisting in the spaces that the neoliberal reconfiguration of state-society relations created. We see these evolving social relations, their practices, and their mentalities as a key continuity in current social movements.

We understand that neoliberal globalization continues throughout Latin America and the world. However, it is clear that in Latin America the hegemony of the Washington Consensus is over, a reality that has fundamentally shifted the landscape of political economy that defines the relationship between state and society. From this perspective, we see an important rupture within Latin America's political economy. This rupture creates new historical contingencies for the region's social movements that highlight horizontalism as a key social movement formation in the post-neoliberal period.

The theme of continuity and change points to the ways social movements have evolved since the neoliberal period began. This volume explores how grassroots movements have matured in recent decades, especially through the school-yard of resistance where better forms of communication, internal processes of conflict, contestation, and developing the practice (praxis) and meaning of being autonomous have deepened the process of social change, both within the movements and in the relationship between movements and society. We see the internal processes of continuity and change, the "revolutions within the revolutions" (Reyes 2012), as fundamental to understanding social movements in the post-neoliberal period, but "structurelessness" (Freeman 1973) can create its own challenges and hidden hierarchies.

We also find great importance in understanding how the internal processes interact with the external, especially the vexing problem of how horizontal movements relate to the external world. We find two important themes in the external articulation. The first concerns how horizontal movements link with allies through social networks, many of them forged during the neoliberal period. Here, we consider the importance of how particular social movements interact with other domestic grassroots movements, and how these connections hold the promise of larger societal transformation. Likewise, we find importance in the topic of transnational social movements and transnational communication, especially how the grassroots connect with transnational networks of organizations, activists, and solidarity seekers. In this context, an important question is how horizontal movements work with non-governmental organizations that are their allies. Forming transnational move-

ment networks may be strategically necessary in an era of globalization, but it remains to be seen whether this scale shift undermines the empowerment and identity of local communities. Second, we consider how horizontal movements face their enemies, especially more hierarchically constituted structures of authority where the mechanisms of power actively threaten horizontalism with tactics of co-optation, appropriation of discourse, deceitful negotiation, or direct forms of repression. We see a dialectical process of internal and external influences, where each is constitutive of the other, and we see this dialectic as important to understanding the process of continuity and change within the landscape of post-neoliberal social movements.

Given the thesis that horizontal practices of social movements expanded during the neoliberal period, one core theme we explore is the issue of transformation. Revolutionary movements in the past were defined by the challenge of consolidation, a process that comes about after the initial period of energy, enthusiasm, and optimism that follows a victorious seizing of state power. Consolidation confronted revolutions with the problem of creeping inequalities and inequities, the reemergence of prerevolutionary problems and stratification, and the ossification of practices and mentalities that limited the innovative and transformative power of revolutionary change. Horizontalism confronts similar issues of consolidation, which threatens to undermine their very ability to be horizontal movements. This point is especially relevant for the discussion of internal processes, but it also concerns the topic of how horizontal movements confront external enemies, including hostile states and the forces of global capital. We explore how horizontal movements keep themselves fresh, relevant, and innovative.

While contemporary Latin America can be interpreted as a post-neoliberal period, in some parts of Latin America neoliberalism is very much present. What has changed, however, is the understanding that neoliberalism is weakened. It has lost its hegemonic grasp. In this context, we examine how horizontal movements persist in resistance to neoliberal forms of capitalism and the ways it organizes politics and society. Likewise, we consider the importance of the hybrid states, those that have progressive elements contrary to the extreme forms of neoliberalism that dominated during the period of the Washington Consensus. From a comparative perspective we see a landscape of horizontal movements struggling to craft strategies to confront an arc of states that range in their positioning relative to neoliberalism: those that reject it, those that embrace certain aspects, and those that are full supporters of the neoliberal project. This volume highlights the fact that this arc of regimes marks today's social movements as distinct from those in our first volume.

A notable feature of Latin America's social movements during the neoliberal period was the importance of identity politics as the quality distinguishing many of these movements from their antecedents. Issues of gender, race,

ethnicity, sexual identity, *campesino* and other class positions, as well as causes such as the environment, housing, health care, or education tended to define how movements came into formation and their agendas into play. This volume retains a focus on issues of identity and the ways in which “the culture of politics and the politics of cultures” (Alvarez, Dagnino, and Escobar 1998) are core dynamics that nurture and sustain social movements. On this theme we bring focus to the challenges that identity politics present, especially the predicaments that emerge with bringing change to society at large. As neoliberal, progressive, and radical states have gained experience with deploying multiculturalism in their arsenal of power, horizontal movements defined by identity find complicated landscapes of resistance and perseverance.

A final theme that this second volume explores is the relationship between resistance and repression. In the first volume we identified a dialectical pattern between resistance and repression that found escalation between them to be a defining feature of how social movements of the neoliberal period were constituted. In this volume we continue with this theme, but add the variable of different regime types to the mix. We also explore the more nuanced and sophisticated ways that state oppression operates, as well as the strategies that capitalist interests deploy in confronting the challenges that horizontalism presents. We examine how social movements respond to these new forms of repression, and how that response has an important influence on internal dynamics within social movements striving to practice new social relations and new ways of doing politics.

ORGANIZATION OF THE VOLUME

This book is a follow-up to our previous edited volume, *Latin American Social Movements in the Twenty-first Century: Resistance, Power, and Democracy*. This new volume includes revised essays from a special edition of the journal *Latin American Perspectives* (“A Second Look at Latin American Social Movements,” January 2011), as well as solicited new essays that include discussions of the importance of the movement away from vertical to more horizontal forms of organization.

Part I of this volume provides a theoretical framework for understanding the changing political contexts that require new responses for social movements. Sara Motta’s chapter analyzes the theory and practice of what she calls “reinventing revolution” in Latin America today, highlighting “the emergence of subjects historically rejected and ignored by capitalist colonial modernity.” She uses decolonial theory to reveal the ways in which subaltern actors and their “other” forms of knowledge are invisibilized, and to focus on the experiential dimension of popular struggles, including the feminization of

resistance. This chapter frames the study of contemporary movements in terms of “prefigurative epistemologies” in which social subjects themselves, through their everyday practices (including horizontalism), challenge the dominant discourses of inevitability and put forward an alternative methodology to the existing academic and political representations of their struggles.

In part II, authors examine the new dynamics, strategies, and identities that social movements are putting forward. Raúl Zibechi takes a case of urban popular organizing in Mexico City after the 1985 earthquake as a point of departure to analyze the political culture of community building through the everyday practices and dynamics within the Frente Popular Francisco Villa Independiente (FPFVI). Building on his earlier work on “territories in resistance” (Zibechi 2012), he shows how carving out autonomous community spaces and experiences (based on nonhierarchical, reciprocal, and solidarity relationships) can empower new collective subjects in antisystemic struggles.

Maurice Magaña’s study of the legacy of the 2006 Oaxacan uprising highlights the role of youth in the creation of alternative political cultures of protest. He argues that youth, including graffiti artists and the punk movement, set a vital example in creatively defying Mexico’s prevailing “authoritarian clientelism.” Magaña applies a “meshwork” analysis to the complicated interaction between horizontal and vertical organizing styles, in examining the movement’s ultimate inability to hold occupied spaces. Yet he concludes that the experience on the barricades changed the consciousness of participants in a way that persisted even after massive state repression dislodged protesters from the city’s physical spaces.

Daniela Issa examines the motivating *mística* of Brazil’s Landless Rural Workers’ Movement (MST) as it developed from Latin American liberation theology and rural practice. She finds that the term is generally interpreted as love for a cause, solidarity experienced in collectivity, and belief in change, and that it helped to buttress the horizontal nature of the movement. It not only has an emotional element, but also a praxis of pedagogy and culture, developed by the movement to construct its collective identity and preserve its cultural roots against the homogenizing impact of globalization. Activists use art and symbolism in practices that not only educate, but also empower by example and reflect the collective memory of the landless. The movement incorporates these practices into its struggles, keeping the inspiration alive without institutionalizing the *mística*.

Alicia Swords examines the transnational organizing practices of civil society networks that emerged in opposition to the Plan Puebla-Panamá (PPP), a development proposal to integrate more fully the Mesoamerican region from southern Mexico to Panama into the global market. Swords surveys how grassroots activists and NGOs that were opposed to the PPP’s vision of development created local, regional, and transnational networks to

oppose the plan and propose development alternatives. While these organizing strategies were successful in terms of halting PPP plans and forcing a change in strategy by investors and government leaders, Swords also points to potential risks involved with transnational organizing. She highlights the need to study moving targets, vulnerabilities, and contradictions of regional development plans.

Suyapa Portillo Villeda's analysis of the National Popular Resistance Front (FNRP) that coalesced after the 2009 coup d'état in Honduras documents the exuberance of an extraordinarily diverse constellation of social forces. Particularly noteworthy is the central role of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTTI) community, which effectively marshaled transnational alliances around a human rights discourse to frame their struggle in the wake of massive repression. While breaking down many of the divisions that hampered unity of the old left, new lines of fracture within the LGBTTI and feminist communities and differences over whether to back the electoral option of the Libertad y Refundación (LIBRE) party in 2013 left the movement in a state of flux.

In her chapter on popular feminism in contemporary Brazil, Nathalie Lebon notes that the generally shared narrative about the origins of Brazilian women's movements revolves around the confluence in the 1970s of middle-class feminist groups with roots in left-wing opposition parties, and organized women in urban popular movements during the dictatorship. She argues that organized women in other settings, in particular "popular feminisms" rooted in urban and rural trade unions, have often been overlooked in general accounts of early mobilization. With time, while some brought feminism "into the fold," other women from the working-class and working-poor sectors started organizing autonomously and later claimed a feminist identity. Lebon finds that popular feminisms are partly a response to the challenges encountered by mainstream feminisms in working toward horizontalism.

In his chapter on the Black cultural politics in Salvador da Bahia, Kwame Dixon examines Afro-Brazilian social movements and the rise of civil society in Brazil from the middle of the 1970s until the present. He analyzes the burgeoning rise of *blocos afros* (carnival blocks or clubs) as horizontal Black social movements that burst onto the scene in Brazil, and specifically Salvador, in the 1970s and 1980s. Many of these movements were deemed "cultural" as they emphasized Afro-diasporic music, religion, identity, and Black consciousness. At the same time, similar but more politicized Black movements arose in Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, and Salvador, with a discourse explicitly framed around questions of racial equality, social discrimination, and citizenship. These various formations—*blocos afros*, Black social movements, and the rise of Black electoral politics—have their early foundations in the emergence of Brazilian civil society during the transition to democracy

in the mid- to late 1980s. They were central not only to expanding concepts of citizenship, but also to developing new means of participation that were more horizontal than vertical in nature. In this context the *blocos* in the early days (1970s to 1980s) represented grassroots, horizontal structures organized alongside already existing structures of Brazilian politics and civil society. Dixon argues that Afro-civil society in Brazil and more specifically in Salvador emerges as a specific response to a broad set of complex issues and conditions deeply embedded in Brazil's unequal vertical social relations, political institutions, and cultural formations.

A key issue that Latin American social movements are currently facing is how to confront the new challenges that pink tide governments present to grassroots activists. In Part III, authors examine how social movements have responded to these new state structures. Two decades after the uprising in Chiapas, Mexico, the Zapatista challenge to an electoral authoritarian regime still resonates across Latin America as a model expression of organizational demands for autonomy. In his chapter, Richard Stahler-Sholk explains how Zapatista distancing from electoral politics and formal government institutions opened space for horizontal forms of organization. Rather than negotiate with the government, Zapatista communities empower themselves by practicing *de facto* autonomy in their everyday lives. A result is a social movement that is less hierarchical and less institutionalized than many others, and one that is resistant to co-optation by outside forces or domination by a small cadre of leaders.

Marina Sitrin roots her discussion of horizontalism in a discussion of autonomous social movements that emerged in Argentina in the aftermath of economic crisis and the collapse of neoliberal governing structures in 2001. Sitrin explains what it means for activists to reject traditional forms of political power, and to create alternative autonomous models of people power (including worker takeovers of factories and innovative civil disobedience of the *puquetero* movement) in its place. In Argentina, these debates have been particularly intense as the Kirchner governments attempted to rebuild a political consensus based on progressive notions of social justice. Most importantly, Sitrin builds a social movement critique of cultural hegemony as activists negotiate maintenance of their own autonomous political agenda.

Harry Vanden analyzes how social movements in Brazil attempted to gain the attention of the government and the Worker's Party leadership to change the neoliberal economic model that concentrated wealth in the hands of the better off while leaving the marginalized rural and urban masses behind. Vanden critiques the government for squandering scarce government resources on stadiums and megaprojects while neglecting schools, health care, and employment for the newly trained sons and daughters of workers. This message dramatically emerged into the national consciousness after massive June 2013 street demonstrations.

The Bolivarian Revolution is the best example of the state-centered political changes currently sweeping across Latin America as part of the rising tide of leftist governments, but as George Ciccariello-Maher explains, this is only part of the story in contemporary Venezuela. “Chavismo,” a political ideology associated with the late President Hugo Chávez Frías, does not represent the entirety of the revolutionary movement, and the movement is not simply one aimed at seizing state power. Rather, the political changes that emerged in Venezuela over the last several decades represent a negotiation between grassroots movements and centralized governmental structures. As Ciccariello-Maher argues, the success of the Bolivarian Revolution is built on walking a fine line between horizontalism and government structures that allows for political changes to surge forward through pressure from below.

Marc Becker’s chapter on Indigenous movements and the writing of a new progressive constitution in Ecuador in 2008 examines the document and what it meant for the country and the movements. Indigenous leaders questioned whether the new constitution would benefit social movements or strengthen the hand of President Rafael Correa, who appeared to be occupying political spaces that they had previously held. The chapter shows that Correa’s relations with Indigenous movements point to the complications, limitations, and deep tensions inherent in pursuing revolutionary changes within a constitutional framework. Although the Indigenous movements, as well as most social movements, shared Correa’s stated desire to curtail neoliberal policies and implement social and economic strategies that would benefit the majority of the country’s people, they increasingly clashed over how to realize those objectives. The political outcome of the new constitution depended not on the actions of the constituent assembly, but rather on whether organized civil society could force the government to implement the ideals that the assembly had drafted.

In the chapter on Bolivia’s MAS (Movement Toward Socialism) and its relation to the movements that brought it to power, Leonidas Oikonomakis and Fran Espinoza note that when Evo Morales and his MAS party took power in 2005, the national and international left cheered. The formation of the first government cabinet of 2006, with strong participation by union and Indigenous leaders, made clear that the MAS was bringing to the political frontline the movements that helped it grasp state power. Vice President García Linera famously argued that “the MAS represents a new form of government, one which is run by and for Bolivia’s social movements,” which “are now in control of the state apparatus.” The chapter examines what has happened to this “government of movements” eight years later. The authors argue that, within the cabinets of the Morales administrations, participation by people with grassroots or social sector backgrounds has dropped steadily over eight years. Additionally, the party’s structure has imposed top-down control over the very groups that conceived it as a political tool—the *cocale-*

ros of Chapare—and in this way exposed the limitations of the “state-power road” to social change.

In the final part of the volume, we turn to transnational organizing efforts. Rose Spalding’s examination of the antimining movement in El Salvador shines a critical spotlight on the neo-extractivist development policies being pursued by left-of-center as well as neoliberal governments throughout the region. She highlights the circumstances that led a horizontalist grassroots movement to engage with the state and to expand its network of domestic and international linkages, focusing on the ways in which external actors can undermine democratic decision making at home. This interplay between the “scale shifting” that can boost movement impact in the era of globalization, and the struggle to maintain community control, holds important lessons for today’s Latin American social movements.

María Elena Martínez-Torres and Peter M. Rosset analyze a transnational social movement, the Latin American Coordination of Peasant Organizations-Vía Campesina (CLOC/VC). They show how, in light of the breadth of the coalition, horizontal processes of decision making and consensus building foster a “*diálogo de saberes*,” a dialogue among diverse political cultures that valued local knowledge about concepts such as agroecology. They argue that this approach, stemming from a critique of the hegemonic colonial cosmovision, offers a promising model for flexibly resolving internal movement differences that will inevitably arise in confronting global capitalism.

Taken together, the cases and themes examined here offer a cross-section of a vibrant and diverse wave of grassroots mobilization sweeping Latin America. Focusing on social movements—loosely structured agglomerations of groups and individuals taking collective action for social change, outside the framework of conventional institutions and forms of participation—is a good way to take the pulse of social and economic change, as well as to highlight by contrast the shortcomings of existing political institutions. This volume is intended to provide accessible and provocative contributions to reflections and debates among scholars, students, and activists. The authors’ arguments will be of interest to anyone concerned with the comparative politics, political economy, sociology, and anthropology of Latin America, and to all those struggling to envision and bring about a better world.

NOTES

1. See for example on Bolivia, the critique of the Evo Morales government in Webber 2012, and the polemic between Jeffery Webber and Federico Fuentes in the journals *International Socialist Review* (<http://isreview.org/issue/73/rebellion-reform> and <http://isreview.org/issue/76/government-social-movements-and-revolution-bolivia-today>) and *International Socialism* (<http://www.isj.org.uk/index.php?id=856>; all accessed 26 April 2014).

2. The *Chicago Manual of Style* (15th edition, 2003, section 8.41) indicates that names of ethnic and national groups are to be capitalized, including adjectives associated with these

names. Because “Indigenous” and “Black” refer to such groups, the editors have decided to capitalize these terms in this book.