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Indigenous rights to the city struggles in Bolivia: Towards an intersectional and intergenerational approach

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Introduction

The concept of indigeneity serves as an entry point for analysing specific processes through which meanings of being indigenous are constructed in different contexts (Radcliffe 2017). Scholarly definitions recognise the fluid, differential, contested, and constantly changing nature of indigeneity and emphasise that the experience of being indigenous relates to a set of multiple, interconnected and interlocking categories such as ethnicity, gender, age and place of residence (Canessa 2007; Field 1994; Porter and Barry 2016). Such a perspective towards indigeneity links clearly to intersectionality scholarship which draws attention to the interconnections of different social categories of privilege or disadvantage and associated implications for power and inequality (Crenshaw 1991; Olsen 2018).

Legal and policy discourse as well as development interventions by and for indigenous peoples often still rely on static, romanticised and spatially bounded definitions which portray indigenous peoples as 'traditional' subjects living in isolated rural areas and pristine natural settings. For example, a global campaign on climate solutions supported by a conglomerate of organisations such as the Ford Foundation, Green Peace or the Rain Forest Alliance strategically refers to indigenous peoples as 'guardians of the forest'[1], thereby emphasising their ties to natural habitats. International legislation such as the International Labour Organisation's Convention No. 169 highlights that indigenous rights only apply to people who hold ancestral ties to their rural territories.

Such politico-legal understandings of indigeneity are problematic as they do not capture the diverse experiences and lived realities of indigenous peoples. Rural representations of indigenous peoples are particularly misguided as they fail to consider the growing urban indigenous population. Rural indigenous peoples are increasingly affected by territorial displacement, the urbanisation of their lands, and are moving from the countryside to cities. According to UN Habitat (2010), 40 percent of the world's indigenous population lived in cities in 2010, with numbers set to rise to more than 60 percent by 2030. Urbanisation rarely leads to improvements in living conditions of indigenous peoples. While some manage to make a decent income and enter the urban middle and upper classes – something that has been noted particularly for the emerging Aymara bourgeoisie in Bolivia (Maclean 2018; Postero 2017; Tassi et al 2013), most remain trapped in poverty and excluded from education and employment opportunities available in cities (del Popolo, López and Acuña 2009; UN Habitat 2010). Exposed to (neo)colonial, modern or neoliberal regimes, urban indigenous peoples are considered to experience a loss of their traditions, sense of 'community', ancestral knowledge and languages (DeLeeuw and Greenwood 2015; Webb and Radcliffe 2015). Furthermore, especially urban indigenous youth and women are often excluded from specific indigenous

[1] The 'Guardians of the Forest' campaign is an example of what strategic essentialism (Spivak 1996) in that it seeks to minimise differences between groups to support a common agenda around climate change. For an overview of the campaign, see: https://www.purpose.com/guardians-of-the-forest-indigenous-communities-leading-on-climate-solutions/.

development interventions which remain rural in focus and from participation in indigenous movements which are managed by older men and characterised by patriarchal power dynamics (Goldstein 2012; Horn 2019; Speiser 2004). Young indigenous women also tend to be disproportionately affected by domestic violence and by sexual harassment as well as ethno-racial discrimination in public spaces within cities (Cusicanqui 2015).

Building on the trends outlined above, this chapter offers an intersectional and intergenerational perspective towards urban indigeneity. It examines how indigeneity is represented in politico-legal discourse and practice and contrasts this to the interests, needs and rights-based claims of different urban indigenous peoples, with distinct backgrounds in terms of age, class, gender and relationship to the city. Conceptually, it combines an intra-categorical and inter-categorical approach to intersectionality. An intra-categorical perspective can capture intra-group differences and challenge and refine traditional 'master' categories such as indigeneity (McCall 2005). This chapter draws on such an approach to look at indigeneity at the intersection of an often-neglected place of residence for indigenous peoples – the urban. An inter-categorical intersectionality perspective, in contrast, enables documenting 'relationships of inequality among [and within] social groups and changing configurations of inequality' (McCall, 2005: 1773). This chapter draws on such an approach to investigate differences, in terms of power or the ability to access certain rights or resources, among urban indigenous residents and how these differences manifest themselves around other social categories such as residency status, gender or age.

Empirically, the chapter focuses on Bolivia and particularly on illustrations from two peri-urban neighbourhoods – Chasquipampa and Ovejuyo – situated at the Southern periphery of La Paz, one of the country's largest urban indigenous centres (Horn 2019). Bolivia serves as an "illustrative case" (Flyvbjerg 2006) for studying urban indigeneity as it is a highly diverse country composed of 36 officially recognised indigenous peoples. More than half of the population is of indigenous descent and – according to 2012 census data – 42 percent of indigenous peoples live in cities. Bolivia is also a country in which urban indigenous peoples historically resisted and continue to resist patterns of exclusion from specific rights and services, and where urban indigeneity has been recognised by government authorities through constitutional reforms in 2009 (Horn, 2019). La Paz was chosen because of the city's status as seat of the national government which facilitated access to multiple social actors involved in processes of translating indigenous rights to the city, including officials in national and local government institutions but also ordinary urban indigenous residents and their relevant community-based organisations. The peri-urban neighbourhoods of Chasquipampa and Ovejuyo are home to urban residents which are predominantly of indigenous descent (Arbona and Kohl 2004). While most indigenous residents represent migrants who came to these neighbourhoods from other locations, others (who are referred to as *comuneros*) always lived there and experienced a land-use transformation of their ancestral territory from predominantly agricultural to residential. As such, these peri-urban neighbourhoods capture distinct dynamics of urbanisation experienced by indigenous peoples, including rural-to-urban migration, urban expansion and the urbanisation of the countryside (see also Horn 2018).

Methodologically, the chapter draws on qualitative data collected during 6 months of fieldwork in 2012 and 2013 as well as shorter follow-up visits in 2016 and 2018. In total, 70 interviews were conducted with indigenous leaders and urban indigenous community members mainly from the peripheral neighbourhoods of Ovejuyo and Chasquipampa situated in Southern La Paz, national and local government officials, international cooperation experts,

and staff of non-governmental and civil society organisations. This was complemented with content analysis of relevant policy documents, analysis of government censuses and secondary literature, participatory focus groups with indigenous youth and women, and participant observation in urban indigenous communities and during public meetings.

The chapter proceeds as follows: The first part discusses politico-legal definitions of indigeneity, emphasising how these reproduce a colonial and essentially rural understanding of indigenous peoples, thereby failing to incorporate the growing urban indigenous majority. The second part sheds light on what indigeneity means to different members of urban indigenous 'communities'. Being indigenous in the city means different things to different people. This is visible in the ways different indigenous residents articulate distinct interests, demands and rights-based claims. Specific interests and needs particularly vary depending on community members age, gender, class and political position. The third part explores how urban indigenous peoples claim their specific rights to the city. The discussion reveals that indigenous right to the city struggles are processes which produce winners and losers within indigenous communities, often contributing to the exclusion of youth and women. However, indigenous youth and women are not passive victims of exclusion but actively confront uneven power relations within their communities. The chapter concludes by outlining the lessons from this intersectional study on urban indigeneity, emphasising in particular the need for more inclusive policy and planning approaches which embrace conflict and challenge power relations within indigenous communities and between indigenous communities and other stakeholder groups.

The colonial roots of indigeneity as politico-legal category

Current dominant politico-legal representations of indigeneity in Bolivia can only be understood in relation to the country's colonial past and ongoing coloniality, with the latter term referring to social, political, economic and cultural hierarchies that were established during the colonial conquest but outlived colonialism and continue until the present (Quijano 2000). Upon the colonial conquest of Bolivia, the colonisers constructed a system of ethno-spatial stratification with significant implications of inclusion and exclusion for particular people. Bolivian cities such as La Paz were associated with a specific group of inhabitants – 'white' Spaniards or people of 'mixed blood' who were granted citizenship rights. In contrast, the countryside was conceived of as indigenous place, home to the 'non-white' native population which was granted relative political autonomy over internal community affairs but denied citizenship and from living in cities (Platt 1982). In this sense, indigeneity was constructed as anti-thesis of urban life and being indigenous was associated with social exclusion.

Such strict ethno-spatial divisions have, of course, never been fully sustained. In the colonial period, some indigenous peoples resided in the peripheries of cities, contributing to the construction of colonial cities which were often situated on the ruins of ancient pre-colonial cities (Hardoy 1989; Morse 1978). Contemporary La Paz, for example, is situated on the ruins of the city of Chukiyapu which was an important administrative centre of the Inca empire. Indigenous peoples were also never passive victims of exclusion but actively resisted oppression and expulsion from urban habitats, as was the case during the siege of La Paz by indigenous leader Tupak Katari and his wife Bartolina Sisa (Albo 2005; Reinega 1970). Ethno-spatial divides further blurred throughout the post-colonial period and especially since the second half of the 20th century where previously isolated rural indigenous territories have been

affected by urbanisation, and indigenous peoples have increasingly migrated from the countryside to the city because of a variety of push and pull factors. Push factors include, among others, the expansion of agriculture and extractive activities on indigenous territories and resulting consequences for displacement. Pull factors include aspirations for better work, educational opportunities and housing (for a detailed discussion see Horn 2018, 2019).

The move to the city did not automatically lead to an improvement in indigenous peoples' living conditions. In a context of increasing indigenous urbanisation, previously established rural-urban ethno-racial divisions increasingly manifest themselves *within* urban areas, leading to a situation of urban coloniality. In La Paz, indigenous peoples mainly self-constructed new homes and neighbourhoods in the urban periphery – with most of these sharing characteristics of informal settlements (Gulyani and Talukdar 2008) – while the urban core remains predominantly 'white' and 'formal' (Arbona and Kohl 2005). Indigenous peoples also remain disproportionately poorer than other urban residents and continue to be confronted by historically established patterns of exclusion and discrimination (Cusicanqui 2010). Crucially, in urban settings, indigenous peoples remained outlawed from specific indigenous rights-based agendas ratified by international organisations and the Bolivian government since the 1980s (Andolina et al 2009). Such indigenous rights-based agendas reproduced colonial understandings of indigeneity as a rural category and, as a consequence, specific indigenous development interventions around bi-lingual education, territorial governance and autonomy were mainly implemented in the countryside.

In a context of an expansion of rights for indigenous peoples in the countryside and ongoing exclusion within cities, urban indigenous peoples engaged in struggles for political recognition and ethno-racial justice which escalated during the 2003 gas war in the cities of La Paz and El Alto. As part of these insurgent uprisings, indigenous peoples "demanded formal recognition of specific indigenous rights around self-governance and prior consultation, (…) universal rights to shelter, tenure and basic services" and their right to "involved in decision making processes within the cities in which they live" (Horn 2019: 3). These claims are defined here as the indigenous right to the city as they closely resembles what French critical theorist Henri Lefebvre (1968) refers to as the right to the city – a cry and demand to appropriate urban space according to people's interests and an assertion of people's right to participate in urban politics. The insurgent uprisings in La Paz/ El Alto led to the ousting Bolivia's government and to the election of a new government in 2005 which was led by President Evo Morales who is himself of indigenous descent.

One of the first actions of Morales's government was to confront patterns of ethno-racial discrimination and exclusion through the ratification of a new constitution in 2009. The constitution recognises a set of specific rights for so called indigenous native peasants (INPs), namely rights to own and govern their territories collectively and autonomously, to freely practice their culture and traditions, to be consulted prior to interventions taking place on their territories, and to exercise indigenous justice. While the INP category creates a synergy between different rural indigenous groups assembled in peasant or indigenous movements (Fontana 2014), it still fails to acknowledge urban indigeneity. However, the new constitution recognises cities as urban intercultural communities composed of indigenous and other ethno-racial groups whose rights, interests and needs should be addressed in all policy sectors,

suggesting for the first time in Bolivia's history a legal recognition of indigenous peoples in cities.

There remain, however, significant gaps between constitutional rhetoric and policy and planning practice. In practice, legislative, policy and planning interventions hardly addressed urban indigeneity. This is particularly evident at the level of national government. Here, officials introduced new laws to implement the 2009 constitution. Legislation which specifically incorporated indigenous rights (ie for autonomy, indigenous justice, the application of intercultural education, and indigenous participation) continues targeting rural areas. Understandings of indigeneity as a category associated with INPs only represent one of the justifications for this rural bias. In addition, it is government officials' perceptions of indigeneity as a static, essential and spatially-fixed category that lead to the restriction of new legislation on indigeneity to rural areas. This was evident in a testimony by a deputy minister in the Ministry of Autonomies:

> In cities where modernity has been developed (…) [we] respect private property and individual rights according to the liberal model. (…) By contrast, in the rural areas and particularly in our indigenous territories, where we as well have individualism but to a lesser degree, we subordinate individualism to collective indigenous rights (Interview, January 2013).

This testimony replicates spatialised understandings established already by the Spanish colonisers. Similar to this official, most national government staff interviewed in La Paz mentioned that they associate cities as places which are 'white', western, and modern. This provides a justification for why new urban legislation such as the 2012 'Law to regulate property rights over urban estates' remains guided by western property models and only recognises individual tenure rights but not collective indigenous land rights.

At the local level, municipal governments in La Paz replicates these spatialized understandings of indigeneity. Municipal authorities in La Paz fail to recognise specific indigenous rights and instead focus on providing citizens, independent of their ethnic background, access to universal rights and services. While planners and policy makers are often guided by an understanding of the city as non-indigenous space, they also mention that they simply followed national legislation which has so far not provided guidelines on how to address urban indigeneity. Following existing legislation such as the LRPUEH, the municipal government of La Paz only recognise individual tenure rights in spatial planning and land management interventions. Similarly, in participatory processes – following the new LCP - processes it involved urban residents (vecinos) organised in neighbourhood associations and did not invite indigenous CBOs such as indigenous peasant unions.

Yet some local government authorities (many of whom are indigenous urbanites themselves), have participated in struggles for more ethno-racially just urban politics. In 2009, for example, a group of elected councillors and administrative staff in La Paz formed the "intercultural unit", a local government initiative focusing on the translation of Bolivia's ambitious ethno-racial justice agenda outlined in the constitution. To achieve this, members of the "intercultural unit" co-produced an alternative city plan with indigenous civil society groups from across the city. This alternative city plan offers guidelines on how to implement

specific indigenous rights in an urban context, including the right for collective ownership of rural territories affected by urbanisation, for prior consultation about interventions on indigenous territories, and for culturally appropriate healthcare. The "intercultural unit" already started implementing this plan. A new centre for traditional indigenous medicine which provides free healthcare for every urban resident was established in 2010. Dialogues were also commenced between the intercultural unit and municipal authorities to ensure that elements of the plan are mainstreamed into the work of relevant policy sector units. The director of the intercultural unit described these dialogues as beginning of a long-term struggle of confronting and changing established 'planning truths' which prioritise universal over indigenous rights (Interview, December 2016).

An alternative approach on how to translate indigenous rights in cities could be noted in predominantly rural local jurisdictions that border with La Paz and which are affected by the physical expansion of this city. For example, the municipal government of Palca – also responsible for the administration of peri-urban areas south of La Paz due to unresolved municipal boundary conflicts (see Horn 2019) – does not follow a universal-individual-human rights-based approach. Instead, this municipal government openly recognises constitutional rights for INPs such as the right to exercise indigenous justice and to manage land collectively and autonomously. Instead of *juntas de vecinos*, it predominantly involves indigenous peasant unions and other indigenous community-based organisations (CBOs) in participatory processes. A civil servant from Palca justifies this political approach as follows:

> Of course, we respect collective indigenous rights. We are mainly a rural municipality and indigenous rights apply here. Some of the residents here still perceive themselves as rural peasants and original owners of this now urbanised land. We address this group to get back full control of our land. We lack resources because La Paz is growing and taking our land away. We are about to get back what belongs to us. By regaining control over this area, we can increase our budget and address the needs and concerns to our indigenous residents (Interview, January 2013).

Hence, in addition to replicating spatialised understandings of indigeneity, Palca makes strategic use of an indigenous rights-based approach to gain political control and increase its municipal budget through collecting property taxes from residents in an area that is rapidly densifying due to urban expansion.

In short, then, the legal recognition of indigenous rights to the city in Bolivia's constitution has not automatically induced a shift in policy and planning practice. Instead, urban policy and planning processes remains dominated by actors who (1) hold a range of preconveived colonial understandings of cities as non-indigenous spaces, (2) prioritise individual and universal rights over particular group rights, (3) lack clear legislative guidelines on urban indigenous planning, and (4) operate in political environments characterised by municipal boundary conflicts.

The multiple meanings of being indigenous in the city

In peri-urban La Paz it is not only possible to denote tensions between legal rhetoric on indigeneity and policy and planning practice. Here, residents who self-identify as indigenous

articulate distinct, conflicting and sometimes contradictory interests, needs and demands which make it complicated to come up with one coherent approach towards urban indigeneity. By deploying an intersectional approach (Bastia 2014; Collins 2015; Yuval Davis 2006), this section argues that indigenous peoples are not a homogenous collective but a group of diverse individuals whose situated experience – related to their ethnicity, gender, class, age and residential status as migrant or *comunero* – lead them to articulate distinct interests, needs and rights-based claims.

In the neighbourhoods of Chasquipampa and Ovejuyo, most indigenous residents referred to the important role of land when articulating their specific interests, needs and demands. Such claims reflect distinct, and at times conflicting demands for resources, including financial (money generated from reselling land), physical (tenure as precondition for access to housing, water, electricity or roads), social (public space as site for community meetings), economic (land as source for agricultural activities), political (land rights, territorial autonomy rights) or cultural (festivals or art displays within public spaces) resources.

Intra-group differences frequently complicate indigenous claims making processes. For example, elderly members of former rural indigenous communities whose territories are affected by urban expansion of La Paz (from now on referred to as comuneros) tend to associate land with opportunities to preserve traditions and practices which are considered stereotypical for a rural and authentic indigenous lifestyle. Francisco (Interview, November 2012), an elderly *comunero* from Ovejuyo, illustrates this point: “This land was agricultural land and it belonged to us. We want the state to recognise this land again as our collective territories. We want to manage our land according to our own ancestral principles and traditions.” Like Francisco, other elderly *comuneros* often sought to preserve collective ownership rights over their lands. They also wanted to manage their territories autonomously and according to their own governance principles. Hence, the urbanisation of their territories and the increased influence of the municipal governments of La Paz were generally perceived as a threat to their political autonomy.

Land ownership claims by indigenous residents in these parts of La Paz should, however, not always be conflated with aspirations to preserve a traditional indigenous lifestyle. For example, younger *comuneros* frequently expressed that they sought to preserve or regain access to collective land in order to later subdivide and sell plots to new residents in order to generate profit. Hence, threats to disrupt traditional land governance mechanisms not only emerge from external actors but from representatives of indigenous communities.

Most younger *comuneros* as well as indigenous migrants who moved to Chasquipampa and Ovejuyo often highlighted that they aspire to receive individual tenure rights from the municipal government of La Paz as this was considered a precondition to gain access to better services as well as physical and social infrastructure such as paved roads, schools, and health care centres. Such demands are not significantly different from those of other low-income residents living in informal settlements who aspire to access to basic urban services. Luciano, an Aymara indigenous migrant residing in the neighbourhood of Chasquipampa, explained this as follows:

> Yes, we have traditions and want to preserve them, but this does not mean we want to lead a backward life in the city. For the people here it is important to have a nice house

and a land title from the municipality of La Paz. This helps them to get the necessary services. We want better water services and that the roads here are paved. This will allow us to lead a good life in the city (Interview, December 2016).

Understandings of indigenous traditions and cultural practices also differed amongst different urban indigenous residents, including within the same indigenous communities. Elderly men and women, representing both *comuneros* as well as first-generation migrants to the city, mainly highlight that indigenous tradition is maintained through involvement in folkloric associations and through participation in one of La Paz's folkloric street parades. The *Fiesta de la Virgen de Merced* is one of these street parades which takes place annually in September. Starting in the neighbourhood of Chasquipampa, thousands of people drink excessively, dance and march towards more central neighbourhoods. In the present context the festival represented not only an act of dancing and drinking; it also helped indigenous migrants to take over public spaces with their indigenous traditions and practices. Diana expressed this as follows: "The fiesta brings the countryside to the city. During the festival we, the indigenous peoples of the neighbourhood, rule this place" (Interview, November 2012). According to Pascual (Interview, November 2012), the festival also helps in preserving the ancient traditions of indigenous people who migrated to cities: "Back in my home in Achacachi we celebrated well. We celebrated our animals and plants. To make them grow you have to share your drinks with the *Pachamama*. At the *Fiesta de la Virgen de Merced* we do the same."

While elderly men and women often considered such festivals as highlights of the year, youth and particularly young women often perceived the annual festival as problem as they associated the excessive drinking that came with this event with an increase in sexual abuse within public spaces and domestic violence at home. In addition, younger indigenous residents – who were often born in the city and lack attachment to their rural communities of origin – often disliked the music and dances of folkloric parades, portraying them as outdated. Instead, they fused indigenous traditions and languages with popular urban culture. This is visible during Aymara Rap shows that take place frequently on public squares throughout La Paz. Similar to folkloric parades, these different cultural practices by youth also seek to transform ethno-racially divided spaces. This is neatly summarised in a testimony by Maria (Interview, October 2016): "Through our [rap] performances we take over a city which was always dominated by whites and *mestizos* [people of mixed race]. This is a conscious decolonial act by which we turn this city into an indigenous and intercultural place".

The above illustrations highlight how indigenous residents, of different age, gender, or relationship to the city, articulate specific interests, needs and rights-based claims as well as engage in different cultural practices. Most indigenous residents articulate a common need for improved access to basic services such as electricity, water, or road infrastructure. Otherwise, important intra-community differences must be noted. While some the elderly *comuneros* seek to preserve preservice collective land rights, indigenous migrants mainly aspire individual tenure as this is seen as a pre-condition to access basic services provided by the municipality of La Paz. While elderly indigenous men consider folklric parades and collective drinking rituals as important means to preserve traditions, young indigenous women associate these practices with a rise in domestic abuse. While preserving traditions and customs seems to be of importance for elderly residents (men and women alike), local youths seek to fuse tradition

with modern urban culture, as is the case for Aymara rap. An intersectional perspective towards urban indigeneity helps to emphasise such differences; it departs from static understandings of identity and community and, instead, shifts attention to the situated articulations of indigeneity by different community members.

Uneven power relations within urban indigenous 'communities'

Urban indigenous communities in La Paz are not only composed of different members with distinct interests and needs but also characterised by uneven power relations. Power, as understood here, refers to the relevant political (e.g. knowledge of a system) and social (e.g. friendships, connections, capacity to put forward one's position etc.) resources needed to engage in processes of participation and political negotiation (Bourdieu, 1986). In La Paz, it was mainly elderly men who made use of existing rights to participation and played a key role in engaging in political negotiations. Women we considered to "not qualify for leadership positions as they role is to take care of the children, the family and the home" (Interview with Francisco, indigenous *comunero* and leader in a local peasant union and junta de vecinos, January 2013). Such inequitable gender dynamics resemble principles of machismo and marianismo according to which men often take a stronger political position within the community than women whose role is more reduced to domestic affairs (Moser 2009; Sieder and Sierra 2005). Specific characteristics, associated more with mature age, were also considered core criteria for taking on leadership roles, justifying the exclusion of younger residents from such positions. Bernado – an elderly *comunero* and peasant union leader from Ovejuyo – put this as follows: "Leaders need to be authentic. They need to speak *Aymara* and know and practice traditions and customs. Our youngsters increasingly depart from their traditions. Until they change their attitudes, they cannot become leaders". Such understandings of "authenticity", as indicated in this testimony, deny the multiple expressions and experiences of being indigenous discussed in the previous section and lead to a misrepresentation of what counts as indigeneity.

While being indigenous "authenticity" seemed to be a key criterion for community leadership roles, such characteristics did not automatically guide the interactions between leaders and government representatives. In such interactions, indigenous leaders often adjusted their negotiation tactics to the specific political agenda and to spatialized understandings of identity and rights which guides the work of different institutions involved in urban governance in urban and peri urban La Paz. As part of neighbourhood associations (*juntas de vecinos*), leaders negotiated access to services such as water, sanitation or electricity with the municipality of La Paz. Jose, an elderly indigenous leader in the neighbourhood of Chasquipampa and leader of a *junta de vecinos*, described how one should interact with staff in this municipality:

> Here in La Paz racism prevails. On paper, they should now respect us but in practice they don't. I have to make the most out of this. I know how to talk to my neighbours and to the municipality. It's like two different worlds. Here we are Aymara but there you cannot be Aymara. Do you understand me? When I went to the municipality, I learned to become one of them (Interview, December 2016).

Being 'one of them' meant wearing a suit, a batch supporting the mayor of La Paz, and speaking in Spanish to municipal staff. Hence, unlike in community meetings with residents in the neighbourhood where Jose would speak Aymara and wear a *poncho* typical for indigenous residents in the neighbourhood, in negotiations with La Paz he would act like a 'white' Spanish speaking resident.

The political negotiation tactics were different for leaders of peasant unions and folkloric associations (who often also had leader roles in *juntas de vecinos)* who predominantly approached the municipal government of Palca in order to gain access to rights and services, such as collective tenure rights or to receive permissions for folkloric festivals, which this municipal government of La Paz would normally not provide. In negotiations with actors in the municipal government, leaders would now emphasise their 'authentic' indigenous identity and act like indigenous native peasants even when their actual intentions were to dismantle their 'indigenous community' in the future. This was made explicit by elderly indigenous peasant leader and *comunero* Roberto:

> Palca helps us in protecting the land of our community. All you need to do is show that you are part of the community. They know that in my case. I am a native indigenous person from here who speaks Aymara and who has the documents which prove that we are owners of the land here. I do all this so that I can protect the land in the present. (…) My plans for the future, well they are a bit different. With more people wanting to move here, the price of the land will rise so at some point I will sell my share of the land to earn some cash. Palca won't help me with this but I can always go to La Paz then (Interview, November 2012).

The above illustration not only shows how leaders tactically engage in spatialised identity politics to manoeuvre between different institutions of urban governance to address their distinct interests and needs. It also sets an example which explains why indigenous residents (who did not hold leadership positions) often perceived CBO leaders operating in the neighbourhood with scepticism. On the one hand, leaders facilitated access to much needed services such as electricity, water or improved road infrastructure. On the other hand, relationships between indigenous leaders and community members were rarely straightforward but complex and characterised by a set of contradictions and conflicts of interest. Some residents perceived leaders as threat for community cohesion, accusing them to "abuse their role by engaging in speculative land transaction with private companies and people in local government" and, in doing so, "they destroy what is left of the collective territorial integrity of this community" (Interview with Monica, an elderly comunero, November 2012). Particularly women and youth mentioned that leaders did not always distribute resources equally to all members of their CBO, let alone to the residents of the neighbourhoods. Instead, leaders of *juntas de vecinos* mainly ensured that urban infrastructure and services would reach their own homes or those of close friends who predominantly were – like most of the leaders themselves – elderly men. Consequently, women and younger residents often felt excluded and neglected by the work of their leaders. All this suggests that leaders did not *per se* use participation and political negotiations to represent their community. Instead, confirming wider trends around

participation, elite capture and community diversity (see Hildyard et al 2001; Rigon 2014), they engaged in these processes and used their bargaining to serve their own agenda.

Leaders were not only perceived to misrepresent their communities but to ignore and act against the personal safety needs of women and youth. Ana Claudia, a young indigenous migrant from the neighbourhood of Chasquipampa, explains this as follows:

> The old men say they negotiate for all of us but in the end, they just care about themselves and their friends. Their land, their houses, their cars, their driveways. (…) The old men think that they represent us, but they really don't. All they care about is money, alcohol, old-fashioned festivals and football. For us young girls in the neighbourhood this normally just brings problems. When they are drunk, they want to kiss us and have sex with us. If we refuse, they threaten us. Many girls can tell you their own experience. To bring about long-term change, we have to follow our own pathways.

In recent years, young indigenous women like Ana Claudia have indeed started raising their voice and confronted problems of sexism, domestic violence and abuse within their own indigenous communities. They do this by, for example, participating in activities by local feminist groups such as *Mujeres Creando*, joining marches that make connections to regional feminist movements such as *Ni Una Menos* (for an overview see Gago 2019), or engaging in national indigenous youth networks which, with support from local non-governmental organisations, provide youth leadership training and learning exchanges on how to confront gender inequalities and challenge patriarchal structures within established local, national and international indigenous movements that have their basis within Bolivian cities. Through such practices, indigenous youth and women seek to lay the groundwork for a new urban indigenous politics which not only confronts unjust government practices that reproduce ethno-racial exclusion and coloniality but also problematises patriarchal relations and intergenerational conflict within urban indigenous communities.

Conclusion

Focusing on peri-urban neighbourhoods in La Paz (Bolivia), this chapter deployed an intersectionality perspective to the study of indigeneity. Three core lessons emerge from this discussion: First, any policy and planning approach should shift from *a priori* to situated and processual definitions of indigeneity. This requires departing from static understandings of indigenous peoples as a relatively homogenous group characterised by specific characteristics such as rurality, language, ties to land or ancestral traditions. Such tropes are misleading and fail to consider a growing number of indigenous people who lives in urban areas and, as outlined for the peri-urban neighbourhoods of Chasquipampa and Ovejuyo in La Paz, articulate distinct claims and aspirations, often combining demands to lead a modern life in the city with requests for the recognition of specific rights such as the right to territorial autonomy or the right to preserve specific traditions and customs. An intersectionality perspective can capture these different urban indigenous experiences as it reveals how a set of interlocking categories – such as age, gender, class or residency status – shape indigenous peoples varied articulations of identity, needs, interests and associated political struggles.

Second, the findings from this chapter point towards the need to consider alternative policy and planning approaches for urban indigenous peoples. While some existing policy and planning interventions may well meet the needs of some community representatives (such as basic service interventions by the municipality of La Paz or cultural policies by Palca), there is a need to depart from established standards or solutions towards an approach which engages with the diversity of perspectives of all community members and not just those of indigenous leaders who act as community representatives. Findings from La Paz also demonstrate that indigenous rights to the city are unlikely to be translated into policies and planning interventions in contexts in which public officials responsible for their implementation continue to hold preconceived views of cities as non-indigenous spaces, follow different political priorities, or operate in a political environment characterised by conflicts between different local authorities. Overcoming some of these concerns requires changes in attitudes among policymakers and urban planners. Some officials within La Paz's municipal government already lay the groundwork required for such changes. This is evident in the example of the intercultural unit which seeks to mainstream indigenous rights and promote ethno-racial justice within all sector departments.

Third, promoting the indigenous right to the city also requires confronting inequalities and uneven power relations within indigenous communities, with emphasis on strengthening the voices of women and youth. As highlighted in the discussion on community representations processes in Ovejuyo and Chasquipampa, it is mainly elderly men who play a more influential role in participatory and political negotiation processes. As part of these processes, leaders may address some shared needs (eg for improved basic services such as electricity, water or road infrastructure) but they also (ab)use their position to advance their own interests (eg engaging in speculative land transactions or promoting certain cultural activities over others) while ignoring or acting against those of other community members, especially women and youths. Consequently, there is a need to seriously consider alternative struggles such as those by young indigenous women in Chasquipampa and Ovejuyo who, through their engagement in indigenous youth collectives and feminist organisations, confront multiple axes of oppression and challenge patterns of exclusion. To leave no indigenous person behind in our increasingly urbanising world, more attention has to be paid towards such practices that confront intra-community conflict and uneven power relations within and beyond urban indigenous 'communities'.

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