

Participation, Politics and Technology

Agrarian development in post-
neoliberal Bolivia

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

ACLO	Loyola Cultural Action
AOPEB	Association of Ecological Producers of Bolivia
APAJIMPA	Association of Chili and Peanuts Producers of Padilla
ASPAR	Rice Producer Association
APROSEMCO	Association of Potato Seed Producers
BDP	Productive Development Bank
CAINCO	Chamber of Industry and Trade of Santa Cruz
CAO	Agricultural Chamber of Commerce of Eastern Bolivia
CAPPO	Agricultural Chamber of Small Producers of the East
CAUPAIN	Head Office of the Agricultural Producers United Associations of the North
CEDIB	Bolivian Information and Documentation Centre
CENDA	Center for Andean Development
CEJIS	Center of Legal Studies and Social Research
CEPAC	Centre for the Promotion of Farmer Production
CIAL	Local Agricultural Research Committees
CIAT	International Centre for Tropical Agriculture
CIAT-SCZ	Centre of Tropical Agricultural Research - Bolivia
CIDES	Library of the graduate program on development studies
CIDOB	Confederation of Indigenous People of Bolivia
CIOEC	Coordinating Committee for the Integration of Economic Organizations of Bolivia
CIP	International Potato Centre
CIPCA	Center for Research and Promotion of Farmers
CONAMAQ	Council of Ayllus and Markas of the Qullasuyu
CRIAR	Creation of Rural Food Initiatives
CSCIB	Union Confederation of Intercultural Communities of Bolivia
CSUTCB	The Sole Union Confederation of Bolivian Peasant Workers
DETI	Territorial and Economic Development with Identity
EMAPA	Company in Support of Food Production
EMPODERAR	Productive Enterprises for Self-Managed Rural Development
FENCA	National Federation of Rice-Growing Cooperatives
FFS	Field Farmers School
FNMCB-BS	National Federation of Peasant Women Bartolina Sisa
FSE	Social Emergency Fund

FTAA	Free Trade Agreement of the Americas
GruS	Group of Development Partners of Bolivia
IBTA	Bolivian Institute of Agricultural Technology
IICA	International Service for National Agricultural Research
IDB	Interamerican Development Bank
INC	National Colonization Institute
INIAF	National Institute of Agricultural and Forestry Innovation
IPGRI	International Plant Genetic Resources Institute
LPP	Law of Popular Participation
LRPCA	Law of Productivity Agrarian and Communitarian Revolution
MACA	Ministry of Rural and Agricultural Affairs
MAS	Movement Toward Socialism
MDRyT	Ministry of Rural and Land Development
MNR	Nationalist Revolutionary Movement
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NDP	National Development Plan
OECAs	Peasant Economic Organisations
OECOM	Community Economic Organization
PAR	Rural Alliances Project
PICAR	Communitarian Investment Project for Rural Areas
PITA	Applied Technology Innovation Project
PMP	Participatory Market Polls
PPB	Participatory Plant Breeding
PM&E	participatory monitoring and evaluation
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PROINPA	Promotion and Research of Andean Products
PROSEMPA	National Potato Seed Project
RECREATE	Renewal of the State Role in Food Enterprises
SIBTA	Bolivian System of Agricultural Technology
SINARGEAA	National System of Genetic Resources for Agriculture and Food
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SEPA	Company of Potato Seed Production
Sindicatos Agrarios	Agrarian Unions
TCO	Native Communitarian Territories
TCP-ALBA	Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America - Trade Agreement of the People

TIOC	Native Indigenous and Peasant territories
TIPNIS	Isiboro Securé National Park
UMSS	University of San Simón
UNITAS	National Union of Institutions for Social Work
USAID	Agency for International Development

Preface and Acknowledgments

This research represents not only an academic task but also a political and personal interest to understand the alternatives to development that are built from the South, by reconnecting me with that *patria grande* (great fatherland) that is Latin America. In 2005, when I first visited Bolivia, the country had already lost its anonymity by becoming a pocket of resistance to the neoliberal tsunami that promised to change the socio-economic landscape of the continent. The so-called “wars”, the “Water War” and “Gas War”, put Bolivia, a landlocked country often referred to as the “Tibet of South America”, on the world map. The imminent election of Evo Morales, the first indigenous president of the continent, opened the hope to a process of change of a deeply unequal society.

Beyond the postcards representing llamas and snowy and extremely beautiful mountains, this country opened before my eyes as a place of immense diversity. From the Amazon rainforest, its towering peaks and over 36 indigenous groups, it could not be so close and yet so far from my own country. Unlike Colombia, where political positions need to be almost whispered to protect life, in Bolivia antagonism and confrontation dominate the public sphere and disagreements rarely end in the death of the opponent. Bolivia breathes politics. During my nearly two years living there I witnessed the almost daily social protests in La Paz, seat of government, roadblocks and demonstrations, and daily conversations in public spaces where peasants, workers, intellectuals and students meet to discuss and imagine possibilities for change. I have come to love the country, its people and their way of living and participate in society. This personal experience, though, reshaped my sense of self and this showed me a less romantic side of social change. From the perspective of rural development, this thesis is an effort to understand the limitations of social change, with the intention that the results can help illuminate the options to overcome these limitations towards a more just society.

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Chapter 1

General Introduction



Source: Diana Córdoba, 2011

Introduction

‘Now, we don’t have problems with the government, we have a political instrument [the Movement Toward Socialism] and now we’re in power,’ said Aniceto when he recounted to me his struggles as an agrarian union leader in the department of Santa Cruz, Bolivia, during dictatorships and neoliberalism. To understand the process of getting ‘power’ as referred to by Aniceto, we need to go back to the nineteen eighties, when, driven by an awakening of democracy after a long period of dictatorship, agrarian unions like his started to organize at national level. They grouped in the *Confederación Sindical Única de Trabajadores de Bolivia* (the Sole Union Confederation of Bolivian Peasant Workers, or CSUTCB) created in 1977 to strengthen themselves. Together with indigenous, *cocalero* (coca grower), and popular urban movements, they demanded an end to the structural inequalities in the country and called for their class and ethnic demands to be heard and for a more inclusive representation in the political sphere. These movements were the drivers of a profound transformation of Bolivian society. It sharpened with anti-neoliberal protests in 2000 and 2003 that led to the resignation of two presidents and resulted in the rise to power of the Movement Toward Socialism (MAS) party under the leadership of Evo Morales.

The election of Morales – an indigenous and *cocalero* leader – became the most important political milestone in Bolivia since the National Revolution of 1952. Morales promised to represent the most excluded sectors of the country, challenging the foundations of liberal democracy and the economic development model promoted during neoliberalism. The presidential election in December of 2005 was the culmination of a long period of demonstrations led by peasants and indigenous movements. These protests intensified starting in 2000, with the ‘Water War’ in Cochabamba and especially with the insurrections of 2003 in the ‘Gas War’, or what Bolivians remember as *Octubre Negro* (Black October) for the deaths of more than 60 people at the hands of the state. During this period, the country experienced a popular resistance against neoliberal economic policies that resulted in the resignation and flight to Miami of its president Gonzales Sánchez de Lozada (‘Goni’) in 2003. With the Gas War, so named after popular opposition to the privatization of the gas sector and the export of oil from Chilean ports to the USA, political opposition reached its peak. The repression of Black October sealed the fate of the president who had dreamed of turning Bolivia into a neoliberal economy but was unable to transform the flow of foreign investment into strategies to overcome historical social injustices in the country. With Morales’ arrival to power in 2005, the MAS government proposed to re-found the country through the transformation of the state. Crucial for rural development is the MAS proposal of an agrarian revolution to achieve the country’s food sovereignty, as opposed to the dominant food systems and visions of development imposed by Western nations.

I met Aniceto Segovia at the Conventional Soybean National Day fair in September of 2010. This fair, organized by agrarian unions in the municipality of Santa Rosa del Sar , was presented as an alternative to the dominant agricultural model, as the antithesis of the *Exposoya* (Exposoybean) fair, which promotes genetically modified (GM) soybean seeds and is organized every year by regional elites and agribusiness in Santa Cruz. The fair began with a small opening ceremony presided over by leaders of agrarian unions in the region and was attended by the Vice Minister of Rural Development, Victor Hugo Vasquez. In their opening speeches, the union leaders spoke of the importance of the fair to promote conventional varieties of soybean that were not harmful to the health of producers like ‘the GMOs are.’ The vice minister recounted the efforts of the MAS government to support small producers, as these are seen as a fundamental cornerstone of the country’s food sovereignty, because ‘first [food] is for the domestic market and no[t] to export.’ After the inauguration ceremony, farmers had the opportunity to visit demonstration plots and information stands displaying the technological options for conventional soybean production. Having also attended the *Exposoya*, I was struck by the similarity in the technology offered. Although this fair was much more modest, almost the same agrochemical companies as in the *Exposoya* fair offered technical assistance and technology transfer consisting mainly of agrochemical packages for intensive production, this time adapted to conventional soybean seeds.

When I asked Aniceto about the MAS government’s support for agricultural production and technological development for small farmers, he emphasized that this is where he sees a difference in *el proceso de cambio* (the process of change, as people call the MAS government’s rise to power), since this government ensures that the resources reach farmer organizations because ‘we [social organizations] are who know what should be done.’ He added:

Now it depends on us, if we move forward as a social organization to present projects, the government is asking us to do projects, but unfortunately we lack technical designers so we cannot get and propose projects.

Melean Espinoza, a provincial level union leader in his fifties, interrupted him to clarify and stress this last point, noting the following:

But you need technical staff to advise organizations to obtain resources and for the projects to go well. As general secretary [of the agrarian union], for myself, I need someone who can help me to see what we can do, how we organize ourselves, see what products we grow, what projects we pull for the unions. We need training so that we can propose projects and achieve our goals, we have not studied so we cannot express ourselves, there are technical

words that we do not understand, we cannot do anything. The government says that it wants to support small producers; however, the medium and large producers that are only 20 per cent [of the producers] are getting the projects. The rest? The other 80 per cent, where is it? Most of the beneficiaries [of public resources] are big producers, but the ones that produce 20 bushels, 50 bushels of rice, those do not benefit from projects.

The conversation with Aniceto and Melean and their contrasting views on the MAS interventions illustrate the central themes of this thesis: the issues of participation, politics, and technology in rural development projects. On the one hand, Aniceto sees that the politicized social movements to which he belongs feel that, for the first time, they have power and are getting support for different development projects in the communities. The development projects are seen as an opportunity to improve their living conditions and influence changes at local level. On the other hand, Melean points to the capacity to translate ideas into concrete development plans. Melean struggles with the need for efficiency in project interventions in terms of organizing, accessing, and distributing resources to obtain results that make concrete differences in people's lives and to stimulate the participation of those that most need these projects. How did a highly politicized programme like that of the MAS party in Bolivia come to implement rural development projects once in government? What are the differences between the MAS proposal on participation and other visions of more technical and instrumental views on participation and rural development?

This thesis examines the contradictions and articulations between different views on participation in rural development and their practice in specific project interventions in Bolivia during a period of social transformation. It aims to contribute to the debate on participation and its role in the empowerment of socially excluded people. The first concern of this thesis is the role of different approaches to participation; these may either de-politicize or re-politicize development. This is an issue of politics and power. Participation in rural development interventions shapes and reproduces hegemonic processes or leads to alternative development (in Bolivia in the form of post-neoliberal options). For some scholars, 'alternative actors' like the social movements guarantee that alternative agendas are carried out (Deere and Royce, 2009). However, my conversations with Aniceto and Melean above show some of the difficulties that these social movements face in defining the 'how' of the transformation process. The second concern, strongly linked with the previous one, relates to the technological aspect of participation. Participation and participatory methods are seen as central for putting development into practice, for developing relevant agricultural technologies that suit farmers' needs, and as an alternative to overcome the difficulties of involving citizens and other actors in development initiatives (Neefjes, 2000). The question

here is whether participatory methods are still relevant to promote technological change and rural transformation.

In the following sections of this introduction, I present the principal features of the debate on participation and agrarian development, the main concepts that underline this thesis, the research questions and design, and finally the structure of the thesis. The main lines of analysis and the argument of the thesis are further developed in the following four chapters based on three case studies.

The Debate on Participation and Agrarian Development: Scope of the thesis

The agrarian development model in Bolivia during the 1950s followed the trend of other Latin American countries and was shaped around a move from a pre-capitalistic to a capitalistic agriculture (Trigo and Kaimowitz, 1994; Kay, 2006). Modernization was seen as the solution to rural poverty problems in the country. Farmers had to be persuaded of the inefficiency of their production techniques and had to adopt the techniques suggested by public experimental stations and research centres. State intervention was justified by the need to invest resources in the transfer of technology without having a guarantee of adaptation, diffusion among producers, or the commercial mechanisms that would allow them to recuperate their spending (Godoy *et al.*, 1993; Kaimowitz, 1993; Trigo and Kaimowitz, 1994).

By the mid-1960s and 1970s, there was increasing consensus that food security and economic growth could be achieved in developing countries through the promotion of the agricultural sector (Schultz, 1964). Thus, investments by the Bolivian government during this period concentrated on the development of an agri-industrial sector in the lowlands of the country to increase agricultural supply, since this region showed better potential for agricultural production than the highlands. Agricultural research in the highlands occupied second place in budget distribution (Godoy *et al.*, 1993). Rural development in the highlands was led by NGOs and depended on international cooperation.

Participatory methodologies were introduced in agrarian development in Bolivia by NGOs as a counter-hegemonic discourse against capitalism and dictatorship in the 1960s and 1970s (Kruse, 1994). The basis of these methods is generally attributed to Fals-Borda and Rahman, among others, who draw on popular models like those of Freire (1970) and promote them as an instrument to generate a more democratic and effective empowerment process. Participatory action research was one of the pioneering methods of participation applied in rural areas. Fals-Borda, the leading advocate of this method, describes participatory action

research as a ‘process which combines scientific research and political action to bring about radical changes in social and economic situations and foster the power of the people for the benefit of those who have been exploited’ (Fals-Borda, 1985:85). From this perspective, knowledge is the key to empowering people in order to change power relations for the construction of a people’s democracy. Fals-Borda and Rahman (1991) claimed that participatory approaches would empower people to carry out social transformation processes that built on the rights of the excluded. Participatory interventions focus on strengthening grassroots organizations, endogenous development processes, and radical transformation.

In the 1980s, criticism arose about the low impact of the Green Revolution. Among the criticisms was the claim that capital-intensive technologies worked well where ecological conditions were relatively uniform, e.g. in irrigated areas, and where delivery, extension, marketing, and transport services already existed and were efficient; but this did not hold in most hillside agri-ecosystems in Latin America (Pichón and Uquillas, 1998). Lack of beneficiary participation was identified as a reason for the failure of many development efforts (Bentley, 1994). Participatory methodologies were introduced as an alternative to the ‘pipeline’ model of technology transfer dominant in the Green Revolution’s heyday. The aims were to facilitate the adaptation of projects and technologies to local contexts and to raise the voice of the poor on issues that concerned their lives (Chambers *et al.*, 1989; Bentley, 1994; Ashby and Sperling, 1995; Chambers, 1997).

Participation became a keyword in contesting the hegemonic discourse of development. Major donors and development organizations working in rural areas began to adopt participatory research and planning methods, in recognition of the shortcomings of top-down development approaches. The ostensible aim of participatory approaches was to make ‘people’ central to development by encouraging beneficiary involvement in interventions that affected them, and over which they previously had limited control or influence. Participatory approaches were expected to follow criteria of efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, and equity in development processes and to serve as a mechanism to multiply the power of people to contribute to public decision making (Gaventa, 2004).

Participatory rural appraisal (PRA) is perhaps the most important, or at least the best known, method used in participatory development. It influences development interventions all over the world and many other approaches to, and methods of, development (Chambers, 1992). Chambers, its major advocate, defines PRA as ‘a growing family of approaches and methods to enable local people to share, enhance, and analyse their knowledge of life and conditions, to plan and to act’ (Chambers, 1994:953). This method invites project implementers to listen to the voice of the poor and excluded. PRA, and the different methods born under this umbrella, were presented as a tool for efficient planning and implementation of projects (Chambers and Blackburn, 1996): in other words, as a way to achieve public policy objectives and facilitate efficiency in development projects. PRA was quickly adopted

by powerful organizations such as the World Bank, which saw in these methods the possibility of merging the knowledge of social and natural sciences and applying them to development projects. To Cernea (1994), for example, participation meant not only consulting people about their desires, but also including certain techniques to ensure that different opinions of underestimated people could be heard. He promoted the social sciences in World Bank interventions as ‘useable know-how’ for action and learning (Cernea, 1994). PRA has been applied in different rural development projects, especially in agricultural production and income generation for small farmers, participatory training, capacity building for civil society organizations and technology development, and participatory technical extension services, among others.

In Bolivia, PRA methods have been widely used in agrarian development projects since the mid-1980s. Since then, various NGOs have served as intermediaries between the state and international cooperation agencies. Rural support projects aimed to mitigate the effects of neoliberal policies by facilitating the access of the poor to resources, skills, or income in order to escape from poverty (Kohl and Farthing, 2006:60–83). These projects focused first on improving productivity in farming systems and then on strengthening market-oriented capacities and practices among small farmers and in improving their competitiveness.

During the 1990s, as hundreds of participatory methods flourished across the world, critiques of their use in development projects emerged, especially by NGOs and mainstream organizations such as the World Bank and international development agencies. These critiques questioned whether the participatory methods were fulfilling their original purposes of empowering the excluded, or whether, on the contrary, they were used to establish ‘tyrannies’ in development projects (Cooke and Kothari, 2001). The main critiques of participatory development can be divided into three principal ideas. First, use of these participatory methods tends to displace other legitimate forms of participation, limiting participation to spaces established in the projects and becoming a form of domination rather than a space of liberation (Cooke and Kothari, 2001). Second, the focus of participatory methods on local issues obscures the possibility of seeing structural problems affecting the excluded on a larger scale (Kapoor, 2002). This leads to the romanticization of ‘the local’ as the space for solving development problems (Mohan and Stokke, 2000). Third, the act of promoting the idea of participatory development to ‘uppers’ in the aid agencies led them to stress the importance of efficiency rather than empowerment (Parfitt, 2004).

These critiques coincide in their concern about the power of these methods to de-politicize development. To Rahnema, participation in the hands of powerful institutions serves to legitimate economic and institutional functions and to support a mainstream vision of development. Therefore, he argues, participation had become a ‘Trojan horse’ to limit the possibilities of far-reaching social change (Rahnema, 1997). Ferguson (1990) made an important contribution to this perspective in his well-known book *The Anti-politics Machine*,

which served as a starting point for a broader discussion on the risks of de-politicization of development through planned interventions. Using a Foucauldian approach, he analyses the World Bank intervention in Lesotho, concluding that development programmes are an exercise in power to rewrite the subjectivity of the Third World's poor, disciplining them through a series of participatory procedures. He argues that de-politicization occurs when development projects that start with a political issue switch to technical solutions. Participation within this discourse can adopt many forms to serve the different interests of the project. Therefore, relegating participation to a technical problem (increasing participation spaces to get the opinion of beneficiaries) obscures the politics of participation. Along the same lines, Li (2007) shows that, through projects, different people or organizations adopt the role of trustee, assuming that they know what the best solutions are for people. Arce and Long (1992) challenge the whole concept of 'planned intervention' and the models that most development agencies share when designing, implementing, and evaluating rural development strategies. Nevertheless, these authors present a more moderate view, noting that development initiatives must come as much from above as from below, thus creating an interface between local and technical knowledge. Scott (1998), meanwhile, confronts us with the risks of simplification as inherent in any externally planned intervention.

Practitioners, and those that see opportunities in participatory methods, have tried to overcome these critiques by proposing a re-politicization of participatory development. Hickey and Mohan (2005:1), in their response to 'the tyranny of participation,' state: '[W]e were concerned with the extent to which participation could be re-politicised as a form of development theory and practice.' Most of the authors in their edited volume agreed that participatory processes would be transformative if they adopted a political interpretation of citizenship and allowed critical analysis of the underlying causes of social exclusion, rather than trying to influence individual choices, through 'capacity building,' 'change of attitudes,' or specific development initiatives. They aimed to broaden thinking about participation away from a focus on projects and techniques towards a wider political project of social justice (Cleaver *et al.*, 2001; Hickey and Mohan, 2004). The proposals included reinforcing political capabilities of the poor (Williams, 2004), adopting a focus on citizenship (Gaventa, 2004; Hickey and Mohan, 2005; Cornwall, 2005), and a political contract between the state and civil society to engage with underlying processes of development (involving uneven processes of state-, market-, and 'civil-' society formation) (Vincent, 2004). These revisions sought to prevent development projects from being constrained within the frame of specific interventions in order to propose more radical participatory processes to influence decision makers to change policies. The aim was to extend the notion of participation so that it would become a form of defending the rights of excluded groups.

Although the proposals to re-politicize participation provide insights into new ways of influencing policies beyond the frame of specific development interventions, they do not

resolve the problem of de-politicization within these projects. Furthermore, notably missing from this debate is a reflection on the changes in the participatory processes and technologies needed to implement projects. In general, this separation of more radical and critical projects aimed at changing policies and more technical projects aimed at changing individual choices or material conditions establishes, implicitly, a dichotomy between what we might label as ‘good’ and ‘bad’ politics. ‘Real politics’ involves those participatory processes that are experienced through social movements and that are continuously questioning the causes of social injustice. ‘Token politics,’ on the contrary, is a form of politics that uses participation to implement intervention projects for development in such a way that participation is no more than an instrument (a managerial or technical tool to develop specific projects or to design specific agrarian technologies). Token politics ends with de-politicization, here considered a negative outcome.

My conversation with Melean at the beginning of this chapter suggests, instead, that the ability to access power is not enough to decide what type of projects to do, or how to redistribute the resources for development or adapt the required technologies. Productive aspects and technical questions cannot be subsumed under political positions. Social movements in government also need to have adequate techniques to allow the selection and participation of disadvantaged participants in specific development projects, as well as the right technologies to use according to material (agri-ecological) conditions and needs. In this same line, Bebbington (2010) recognizes a knowledge gap on the extent to which social movements, who come to occupy the state and become government themselves, pose alternatives to participation in concrete interventions as an instrument of management.

The Bolivian situation, after the victory of Evo Morales and his MAS party, offers an opportunity to explore whether the fact of social movements getting into power creates alternative ways of implementing participation, or whether, on the contrary, they too construct processes of de-politicization or simplification when executing development projects. In the following section, I outline the conceptual framework and the general argument of this research.

Framework: Politics, technology, and participation

Most scholars nowadays would not deny that there are interrelations between politics and technology. Co-production has been used as a term to indicate that nature, science, and social dynamics shape the outcome of the interaction between science/technology and society (Jasanoff, 2003, 2005). However, downplaying the role of expertise and technology in the decision-making process avoids the question of how technical project interventions deal with

politics (politics as the unending presence of conflicts and struggles in society). Furthermore, underestimating the role of technology does not allow us to go beyond the dichotomy between ‘good’ and desired politics and ‘bad’ politics led by technocratic project interventions. To investigate the differences between a highly politicized view on participation, as presented by the MAS government, and a managerial and instrumental view on participation, as promoted by mainstream development interventions, it is necessary to flesh out politics and to make a distinction between politics and the technological aspects of planned intervention. Thinking with Postero (2013b), I find the distinction between politics and policy offered by the agonistic views on democracy useful (Rancière, 1999; Moufe, 2005). Rancière (1996) defines politics as a process of emancipation brought about by conflict or disagreement in which the different actors struggle to be heard and counted. Using Tilly’s notion of politics (2002), I add that it is in this space of disagreement that the stories between ‘we’ and ‘they’ are constructed and that the power relations that keep these stories in place are defined. Participation in the political sphere is then a tool of emancipation and resistance through which different social groups try to change ‘the seemingly natural way of restricting who is included and whose voice is seen as legitimate’ (Rancière, 1999:27). Politics is a different notion than policy. Policy can be considered the implicit *order* that forms of participation and exclusion in the world assume (Rancière, 1999). Participation in the policy sphere can also be seen as a tool or mode of governance, forming a fragile order which politics oppose. For Rancière, both concepts can be analysed separately, although politics and policy are always ‘bound up’ by power relations. Social change occurs, according to Rancière, when those who should not speak have the possibility to speak, and when those who should not be recognized in the established order are recognized. It is in the politics space that the course of social change, policies, and the scope of policies are defined, whereas policy is where material conditions for social change are defined and benefits distributed (Rancière, 1999).

In this thesis, I use Rancière’s distinction between politics and policy to differentiate analytically between two views on participation: 1) participation as a tool for liberation and resistance in the political sphere and 2) participation as a technology, a governance tool to operationalize policies and to improve developmental effectiveness. The majority of studies analysing the MAS government’s rise to power in Bolivia have focused on the first type of participation. They tend to approach it by studying the effects on democracy and the role of social movements in the government. For instance, Postero (2010a) focused on what the election of Evo Morales meant for Bolivian democracy; Postero (2010b) and Webber (2011) analysed the discursive changes of this government; Tapia (2011) and Zegada *et al.* (2011) focused on the transformation of the state from the state apparatus; and authors like Pearce (2011) and Grugel and Riggirozzi (2009, 2012) analysed the post-neoliberal model and its placement in the wider global economic context. Although these studies are important for understanding how participation occurs in the political sphere, they pay less attention to how

these changes in politics are translated into changes in policy as the technologies to operationalize these political ideas. The latter issue is precisely the major concern of this thesis.

I adopt the view of technology given by Richards (2009:495) as ‘the human capacity to make (and unmake).’ Here, the participation schema is designed, built, maintained, and worked on by various human task groups. These are shaped by the larger political project and vice versa, placed in a field where different kinds of power are being exercised. Jansen and Vellema (2011:171) further elaborate the concept of technology, adding that the technology-in-use and the associated objectives co-determine the technology as ‘situated action,’ since ‘it is not only the intrinsic characteristics of tools and artefacts that form the basis for explanation but the process of using them to make something.’ These definitions allow for a broader view on technology, by including not only artefacts and technical processes, but also forms of social ‘making’ of intervention and participation.

Taking these definitions as a starting point, I would like to emphasize three aspects of how the notion of participatory technology is defined here. The first is an instrumental use of participation to achieve better project outcomes, meaning how to operationalize policies promoted through development projects. This refers to participatory technologies that allow mobilization of participants in projects and their involvement in the implementation of different project activities. The second is the idea of methods that seek to strengthen the capacity of project participants to use ‘skills, tools, knowledge and techniques to accomplish certain ends’ (Jansen and Vellema, 2011:169). These ends generally relate to objectives established within the framework of development projects and are necessary to evaluate their success. Capacity-building processes might also include different intentions beyond the direct scope of the project, like the ability to negotiate in different areas of social life or to interact with the state. Third, besides their intrinsic characteristics, all of these methods are placed in a field where different kinds of power are being exercised, meaning the product of politics or ‘disagreement.’ In Bolivia, these participatory technologies have generally been applied by NGOs within a framework of research and development that proposes to i) link producers to the market, ii) promote social control of development projects through monitoring and evaluation, and iii) promote farmer participation in research and in the assessment of agricultural technology (Alvarez *et al.*, 2008).

In the political sphere, the MAS government moved away from the notion of civil society as ruled by neoliberal ideas and has made some efforts to move political participation to a place where civil society is the space for citizenship and participation. The MAS government has implemented a political project that I call ‘neocollectivism.’ It puts the state at the centre of the debate and grassroots organizations in direct relation with it to achieve social justice. The state is not seen as opposed to civil society, as two different and autonomous spheres, but in a mutual relationship. That is why Evo Morales likes to refer to his government as ‘a

government of social movements' (Komadina and Geffroy, 2007). To analyse this neocollectivism and its attempt to establish a direct relationship beyond the liberal definition of civil society, I use a 'strategic relationship approach' (Jessop, 2008). This is based on Gramsci's notion of civil society, in which the state is seen not as separate from society but in relation to it, and capable of guaranteeing existing production relations (Gramsci, 1971; Jessop, 2008), or in our case, endowed with the ability to transform hegemonic production relations.

To characterize the political ideas of the neoliberal project and its policies or modes of governance, the Foucauldian concept of neoliberal governmentality is elaborated (Lemke, 2001, 2007; Jessop, 2006; Joseph, 2012). The French theorist Michel Foucault observed the emergence of a new form of governance led by liberal ideas of freedom. This new way of exercising power (or 'the art of government') is not practised from the top down, but from within society. It 'operates through the promotion of freedom, governing from a distance...' (Foucault, 2010:10). Scholarship on neoliberal governmentality, based mainly in the global North, suggests that the mechanisms of self-governance, like participation based on 'good governance,' reform state rule through a range of techniques and an ensemble of new 'institutions' to govern people in freedom, by telling them to be enterprising, active, and responsible citizens (Miller and Rose, 1990; Joseph, 2012). Although neoliberal governmentality is often seen as a new definition of power, Joseph (2012:25–26) argued that this should not lead us to believe that it displaces sovereign and disciplinary powers as more direct and 'coercive regulation' (i.e. state power), but that different modes of governance can co-exist. In this same line, Xu (2011) illustrates how, in China, authoritarian and sovereign power intertwines with neoliberal governmentality in the state management of unemployment. This book explores whether this is also the case in Bolivia at a time when a change is being attempted to shift the political project from neoliberalism to neocollectivism. Figure 1.1 shows the principal concepts used in this thesis.

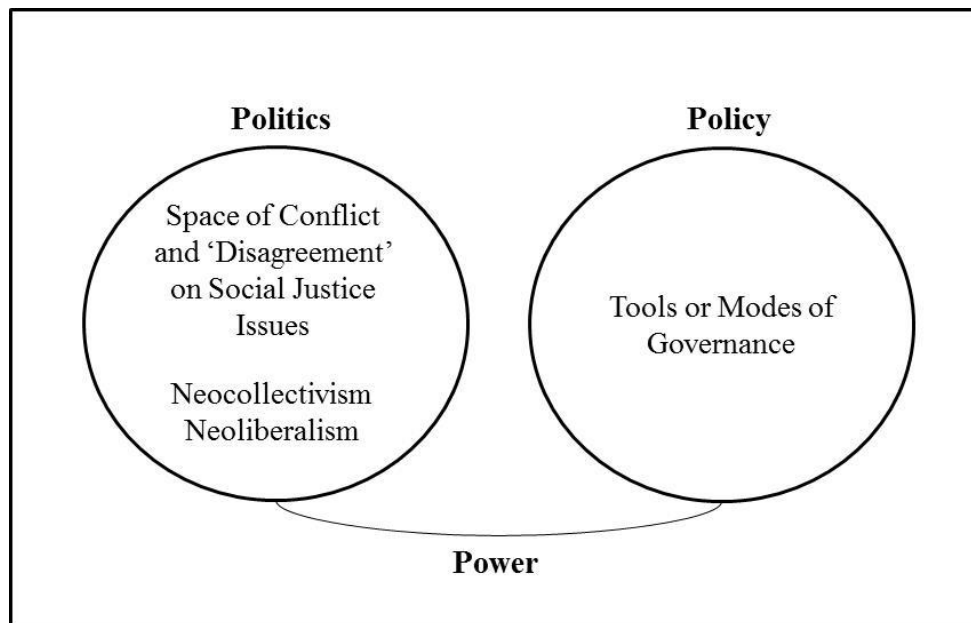


Figure 1.1 Politics and Policy Spheres of Participation

Research Questions

The previous section presented the analytical distinction between two views on participation: on the one hand, a politicized view on participation as a means to empowerment and social transformation, and, on the other hand, a view on participation as a managerial tool for efficiency in development project intervention. This research uses the case of Evo Morales' Bolivia to ask:

What are the differences between participation as a politicized view of empowerment and social transformation and participation as a managerial tool for efficiency, and how do these two approaches conflict and articulate in rural development projects in Bolivia?

This research question will be answered by addressing the following three broad key research questions:

- 1) How does the MAS government shape participation as a political project?
- 2) How does participation as a managerial tool contrast with participation as a political project?
- 3) What are the articulations between these two approaches to participation?

Research Design

The thesis is based on qualitative research to investigate the differences between two views on participation and how they are translated into practice through rural development projects. Qualitative research involves the collection and use of a variety of empirical materials, for example, case studies, interviews, artefacts, and observations that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in people's lives (Rose, 1997; Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). The fieldwork was carried out over 18 months, divided into three phases: i) an exploratory phase from March to July 2010, ii) a case studies phase from August to December 2011 and February to March 2012, and iii) a follow-up and feedback phase in August 2012.

In the exploratory phase, I aimed to take a first look at the main rural initiatives in the country, become familiar with the Bolivian context, and select relevant cases to allow me to answer the research questions. My first contacts were two national NGOs with which I had previously collaborated on development and research initiatives in 2005: PROINPA based in the city of Cochabamba and CEPAC based in the city of Santa Cruz. These two NGOs introduced me to the world of rural development in the country, and they put me in contact with key actors in this sector. In this phase, I visited different governmental and non-governmental institutions that do interventions for rural development in the departments of La Paz, Cochabamba, and Santa Cruz. I also spent three weeks in the city of La Paz, the nation's political capital, interviewing politicians, government officials, former government officials, NGOs, and intellectuals about the processes of change in the country and the different views on rural development.

In the second phase of my fieldwork, I used the extended case method to understand how the two approaches to participation operate in specific project interventions. The extended case method is a case study approach in the tradition of interpretative science. It has been used to expand and inform existing theories through the intensive study of specific cases (Burawoy, 1998; Yin, 2009). Rather than attempting to eliminate contextual effects as in positivist science, Burawoy proposes an alternative – a reflexive science model that builds upon context as a virtue or strength from which it derives its principles of intervention, process, structuration, and reconstruction. To Burawoy, case studies are useful in connecting the abstract with the particular, as they allow a detailed examination of an example for the purpose of informing theoretical abstraction: 'It specifically facilitates moving between micro and macro scales' (1998:5). I chose to use the extended case method in three case studies: Company in Support of Food Production (EMAPA), Rural Alliances Project (PAR), and Promotion and Research of Andean Products (PROINPA) Foundation.

EMAPA and PAR are the MAS government's most important rural development intervention projects in terms of funding (EMAPA) and coverage (PAR). The MAS

government sees these projects as two of the principal pillars that contribute to reaching ‘food security with sovereignty,’ which is the basis of its proposal for rural development. Chapter 2 delves into more detail about these pillars. EMAPA is the primary initiative to strengthen the role of the state in rural development. It was created as a public company in August of 2007. Its goal is to support agricultural production and the commercialization of small farmers’ production. This company supports producers in the buying/selling of agricultural goods, buying of agricultural products, basic transformation of production and commercialization, provision of services for the production system, provision of technical assistance, equipment rental, storage, and other services relating to agricultural production (EMAPA, 2008). PAR, financed by the World Bank, is structured as a series of alliances that link the services that the private sector can bring with the processes and institutional weight that the public sector offers to create strong alliances between actors across agricultural supply chains. The programme offers financial support to farmers’ organizations and other services, such as assistance with business plan development prior to investment.

PROINPA, a former public research programme privatized during neoliberalism, is one of the most important rural development NGOs in the country. I analyse the experience of the application of the participatory plant breeding (PPB) methodology in Morochata-Cochambamba to overcome potato late blight, one of the most devastating crop diseases in the country. I also focus on the participatory monitoring and evaluation (PM&E) methodology and on the participatory methodologies linking small farmers with markets in the Padilla Association of Chili and Peanut Producers (APAJIMPA) in Padilla Municipality-Chuquisaca. The work with APAJIMPA was intertwined with that of Fundación Valles as the latter served as a second-level organization to fund other NGOs, including PROINPA.

The selection of fieldwork sites combined different factors: i) the importance of these sites in terms of investment and duration of selected project interventions, 2) the willingness of the institutions involved to carry out research on these sites, and 3) the active involvement of small farmers in project interventions. Figure 1.2 shows the fieldwork sites by project intervention.

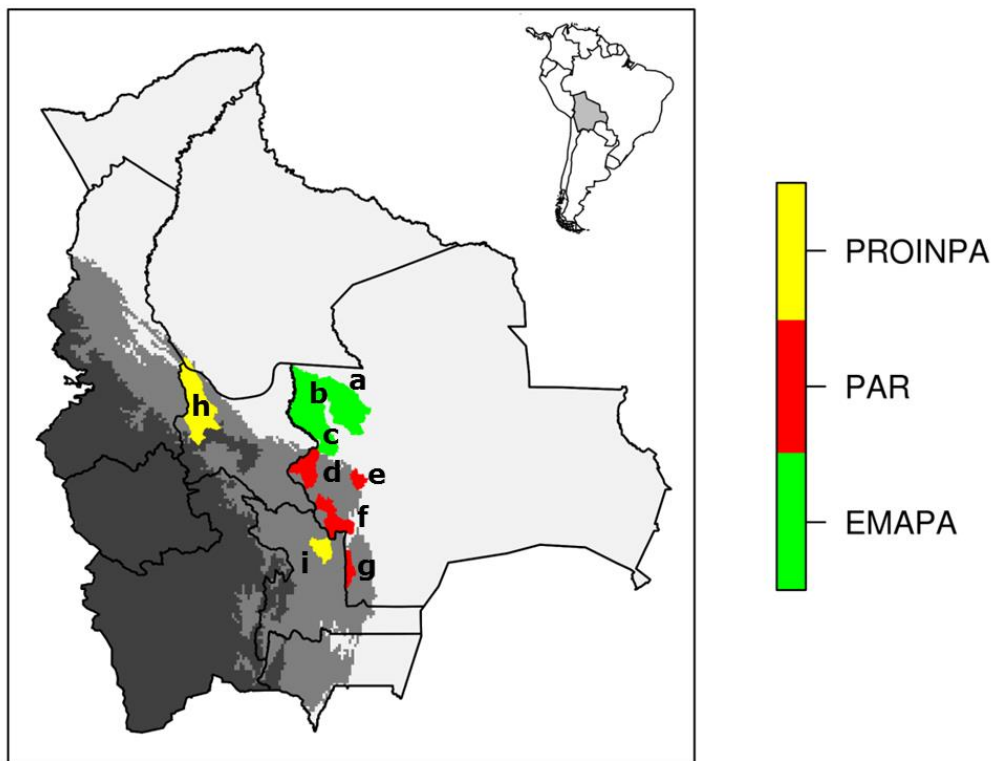


Figure 1.2 Location of research sites

Note: EMAPA: (a) San Pedro, (b) Santa Rosa del Sara, and (c) Yapacaní municipalities; PAR: (d) El Torno, (e) Valle Grande, (f) Comarapa, and (g) Lagunillas municipalities; PROINPA: (h) Morochata and (i) Padilla municipalities

To understand the context of these research sites, it is necessary to describe Bolivian geography. Bolivia is a landlocked tropical country divided into three regions: the Andean highlands (known in Spanish as *el altiplano*) with altitudes between 3200 and 6500m, the valleys or Andean slopes (800–3200m), and the lowlands (<800m) (Seiler, 2013). Colonial Bolivian society first evolved in the highlands around mineral exploitation, whereas the lowlands remained relatively inaccessible to Spanish colonial control (Klein, 2011). Only after the National Revolution of 1952 did both the state and international development agencies channel capital to promote the development of large-scale cash crop agriculture in the lowlands; this in turn fostered migration processes aimed at peasants in the highlands (Gill, 1987). The highlands and valleys (usually referred to as the Andes) and the lowlands followed different paths of agrarian change. Whereas the Andes are characterized by small-farmer agriculture, in the lowlands, small farmers and agribusiness co-exist.

Once at the research sites, I followed the advice given by Marcus and Fischer (1986:94): ‘Rather than being situated in one, or perhaps two, communities for the entire period of research, the fieldworkers must be mobile, covering a network of sites that encompasses a process, which is in fact the object of study.’ I carried out interviews and participant

observation of project activities. I formally interviewed 188 people. A complete list of interviews is presented in Appendix 1.1. Most interviews lasted between 30 minutes and two hours. I did not use a fully structured list of questions, but a list of themes that I wanted to cover, because I wanted to be open to new themes that could come from these interviews. These interviews can be described as semi-structured with some flexibility (Silverman, 2008). I also talked in informal settings with a variety of people. These conversations were recorded as memos in a field notebook. The interviews and memos were transcribed and coded using software for qualitative research (NVivo programme).

Fieldwork followed different strategies depending on the degree of collaboration of the organizations involved in each case study. In the case of EMAPA, I attended regional fairs, technicians' field visits, and project activities. Access to documentary material was restricted as EMAPA officials were careful about providing sensitive information. On one occasion, an officer told me that he preferred to omit confidential data because this could be used by political opponents. In the other cases, information obtained through interviews could always be cross-checked with a large amount of documentary material, including project reports, activity summaries, and so forth. I also attended staff meetings, accompanied the technicians in their daily activities, and had the opportunity to spend time in the organization offices to observe the internal dynamics.

The third phase of follow-up and feedback included more visits to each of the case studies, where I did some interviews and a presentation on the main research findings to the local organizations. Additionally, I held two feedback and reflection workshops with project participants, one in the municipality of Yapacani with the rice-producer beneficiaries of EMAPA, and the other in the municipality of Padilla with APAJIMPA and with the support of Fundación Valles. The themes of these workshops included a reconstruction of the timeline of external interventions, the changes carried out in the project interventions, and a reflection among participants on what should be done to improve the results.

I also spent time in the Bolivian Information and Documentation Centre (CEDIB) in Cochabamba and the library of the graduate programme on development studies (CIDES) in La Paz to review newspaper articles, reports, and research published by national and international development organizations, the government, and universities. This literature review allowed me to contrast my data collection with other findings, to look at inconsistencies, and to learn the interests and lines of thought of the interviewed people and their institutions.

Structure and Argument of the Thesis

This thesis is structured around six chapters. Following this introduction, Chapter 2 explores the growing conflicts between the NGOs and the MAS government as an illustration of the politically charged environment of current Bolivian neocollectivism. This chapter differentiates between two types of NGOs: political and technical. Whereas conflict exists in the political sphere between more politics-oriented NGOs and the MAS government, technical NGOs have found ways to adapt to the MAS government's policies by strengthening their technical capacities. The chapter concludes that there is complementarity between the NGOs' technical approach and the MAS government's political approach. Neocollectivism, as a politically driven view on participation, built a vision for social justice (the what), and NGOs' technical approach to participation and agrarian development highlights the enabling factors that allow social change (the how). Chapter 3 analyses the EMAPA case, the most important rural development project to shift from neoliberalism to neocollectivism. This chapter shows how politicized rural development projects, like neocollectivist adaptations of neoliberalism in Morales' Bolivia, cannot escape the strictures of nature and technological efficiency. Chapter 4 focuses on the PROINPA case. It examines specific development projects where participatory methodologies were shaped to accomplish neoliberal objectives, especially projects' managerial efficiency. It also shows, however, that PROINPA was not a passive actor in all these processes of implementing neoliberalism. Its project interventions were the result of different processes of contestation from within and from among groups of actors at local level, where technical success was also important. Chapter 5 takes the PAR case to analyse the articulation of neocollectivism with neoliberalism. It shows how the MAS government has not been able to shape the mode of governance of its development interventions to its political project. Instead, it has appealed to the neoliberal notion of governmentality as a way to operationalize these interventions and push neocollectivism forward. I conclude this thesis by knitting together the threads of my story: participation, politics, and technology.

This research shows that the changes in the political sphere, and consequently in the role of the state and society in development, influence the conditions in which participatory technologies occur. These conditions might enable or constrain the scope of participation in development projects. For example, by influencing the intentions or mechanisms that are created to change power relations, the way of mobilizing resources for development and the relationship between the state and the actors within civil society may change. Furthermore, participatory technologies are still needed to prepare the enabling environment (the skills and capacities people need to face agricultural problems) necessary to operationalize specific projects affecting people's material conditions. Societies cannot escape either the technical projects or the technical strategies required to select participants and to obtain their views to

monitor and evaluate the projects. Technical projects are everywhere, and many of them are (in fact) demands from below, seen as necessary to improve farmers' productive systems, establish fair market conditions, control crop disease, develop varieties, and so forth. In my view, the purpose of separating the political from the technical is not necessarily to analyse them in isolation, but to make visible different aspects embedded in the development interventions and to take them both into account. Thus, this thesis illustrates how the political neocollectivist project cannot escape the technocratic dimensions of government, as for example will be seen in participatory technologies intended to assure more effectiveness, accountability, and participant mobilization in development projects.

The establishment of a close relationship between participatory technologies and political ideas is by no means something new. Postero (2007) has shown how in Bolivia during neoliberalism, especially under the Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada government, democratic liberal ideals of citizenship inspired different laws to enhance participation to generate important social changes in society. The neoliberal political project in Bolivia ushered in the concept of 'multicultural citizenship' as a point of departure to create different participatory mechanisms or technologies aimed at incorporating peasants or indigenous people within the scope of state control. Contestation against these participation mechanisms, in turn, served as channels to allow the re-organization of society as a preamble to social ferment and the search for alternatives.

Why is this important for agrarian development in Bolivia and for development practice more generally? In Chapter 2, I show how the MAS government has tried to politicize development in order to generate structural changes. This politicization has included both redistributive and recognition measures to overcome the structural causes of poverty in Bolivia. In the introduction to the present chapter, the words of Aniceto echo this re-politicization attempt. He highlights the fact that it is the people that should do development, because 'we know what should be done.' The neocollectivism promoted by the MAS government has become a kind of *Political Machine*, almost an attempted antithesis of the *Anti-politics Machine* as conceived by Ferguson (1990). My conversation with Aniceto and Melean presented above, and the later empirical chapters of this thesis, show that, in its concern about what should be done, the MAS government has paid too little attention to how it should be done, if operationalization of policy is to be efficient and have the expected results in development interventions.

Besides helping the MAS government decision makers, the results of this research might also serve to support those who have been part of the anti-politics machine. During my research, I have had the opportunity to work with colleagues, agricultural engineers, and social scientists, who like to think that they are outside of politics, especially in Latin America, where politics is strongly associated with corruption, clientelism, and strong social protests, including violent conflict and disorders. Engineers as well as facilitators and

designers of methodologies and participatory spaces prefer to see themselves as technology developers, and, although they acknowledge and strive to see the political as important, politics tends to be seen as an item that escapes the scope of projects. Just as Ferguson stated (1990), I also argue that de-politicization, in the sense of ‘technocratizing’ problems that are political, is inherent in development interventions. This does not mean, however, that they cannot be accompanied by a process of politicization that shapes these interventions. By showing how participatory development and political participation are different but interrelated spheres of development, this thesis argues that the de-politicization of planning interventions is inevitable. The challenge, then, is how to create bridges between politics and technological interventions, when both (on their separate tracks) are aimed at the construction of more just societies.

Chapter 2

Realigning the Political and the Technical: NGOs and the Politicization of Agrarian Development in Bolivia



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Abstract

This chapter examines the growing conflict between NGOs and the MAS government in post-neoliberal Bolivia. This government proposes to re-politicize agrarian development by favouring a prominent role for the state and sees NGOs as a threat to social transformation. Our analysis engages both with critiques of development intervention that consider technical interventions as de-politicizing and with contrasting viewpoints that argue that politicization of development often leads to a neglect of the technological aspects of planning, intervention, and progress. By using data on three of the most important national NGOs, we analyse how the political and technological fields are being defined and redefined, and how these play a role in the interaction between the three NGOs and the MAS government. We show that the NGOs appear to have found the space to respond to public discursive confrontation and adapt their interventions to post-neoliberal politics. While the MAS government is making efforts to bring the state back in, NGOs are trying to accommodate to a highly politicized environment by highlighting their own technical strengths and filling the current technological services void.

Introduction

The explosion of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the developing world is especially associated with neoliberalism as they were seen as the ideal vehicle with which to replace the state when the latter privatized many of its functions (Hulme and Edwards, 1997). Against the backdrop of the ‘post-neoliberal’ wave that swept over Latin America (Escobar, 2010; Córdoba *et al.*, 2014b) however, the debate on their role in development has intensified. The so-called New Left governments (Venezuela, Ecuador, and Bolivia) started to question the hegemonic development paradigms influenced by neoliberalism (Escobar, 2010) and to propose post-neoliberal alternatives that change the relations between the state and civil society. With the rise to power of Evo Morales and the Movement Toward Socialism (MAS) party in 2006 (re-elected in 2010), the Bolivian case offers an ideal opportunity to examine the conflicts that emerge between a ‘progressive government’ and NGOs. NGOs in Bolivia face a critical backlash. Whereas neoliberalism attempted to de-politicize development by delegating the state’s work to NGOs (Kohl, 2003), the central aim of Morales’ political project is to achieve radical changes through a more prominent role of the state in development to reverse centuries of colonialism and social injustice (Córdoba *et al.*, 2014b). In this context, Bolivian NGOs are now perceived as an obstacle to social transformation.

The first MAS government (2006–2010) increasingly questioned ideas and practices of NGOs. The National Development Plan of 2006 states in the introduction that NGO projects have been instrumental to the neoliberal model. The plan criticizes NGO practices as ‘Western civilizational guidelines, whose formal language hides the devices of domination and social control that endorse the practice of colonial power and knowledge’ (Ministerio de Planificación del Desarrollo, 2007:5). The MAS government’s development view, instead, is rooted in the concept of ‘Living Well’¹ as opposed to the concept of ‘Living Better’ (*Vivir Mejor*), which is seen as being supported by individual rather than collective access to, and accumulation of, material goods (Ministerio de Planificación del Desarrollo, 2007). The Living Better concept is implicitly attributed to NGOs working within the neoliberal model. The second MAS government (2010) sharpened this criticism further and targeted NGOs more explicitly. The two most visible heads of the government, President Evo Morales, a *cocalero* (coca grower) leader and the first indigenous president on the continent, and his vice-president, Alvaro García-Linera, have questioned the legitimacy and capacity of NGOs to represent the real needs of the poor. Morales has repeatedly declared: ‘NGOs use the poor

¹ Living Well, *Vivir Bien* in Spanish, is inspired by the Andean concept of reciprocity and equity where people do not want to live better than anyone else but to live well all together (collectively).

to live well', and accuses them of 'inventing things to receive funding,' making reference to their role as mediator between the state or international cooperation and the poor (Vaca, 2009). Vice President Linera has gone even further and accuses them of working for foreign interests (García-Linera, 2012a).

NGOs felt threatened and attacked by the MAS government. In May 2013, the MAS government expelled the US Agency for International Development (USAID), accusing it of 'interference in public policy' and of conspiring against the 'indigenous' government of Evo Morales. This was followed by the expulsion of the Danish NGO IBIS on similar charges in December 2013. The following quote from a recognized consultant of national and international NGOs plainly illustrates these worries: 'The NGOs are in absolute crisis, we know. President Morales is happy to be destroying NGOs. Today we have a state that did nothing and suddenly wants it all' (Interview, 7 October 2010). The statistics reflect a crisis among NGOs. In the neoliberal period between 1981 and 2005, the number of NGOs increased from 181 to approximately 1,600 (Jica, 2007:23). The number of estimated registered NGOs had decreased to about 465 in 2010 (von Freyberg, 2011). This decrease may not be entirely an effect of MAS policies, but these certainly contributed to a less favourable environment for NGOs.

This chapter examines the confrontation between the MAS government and NGOs. To explore this confrontation, we present the practices of three important NGOs in agrarian development: Fundación Valles, the Foundation for the Promotion and Research of Andean Products (PROINPA), and the Centre for the Promotion of Farmer Production (CEPAC). Whereas during neoliberalism development related to a technical problem (Rodríguez-Carmona, 2008), during the MAS government it has been extremely re-politicized by presenting it as a state responsibility and the result of power relations. In particular, we analyse how political and the technological fields are being defined and how they play a role in the interaction between NGOs and the MAS government. We show that, although there is a confrontation in the political sphere between the MAS government and more politically oriented NGOs, NGOs have found strategies in the technical sphere to align their interventions to the current context. They are trying to adapt to the new situation by offering technological and training services to social organizations allied to the MAS government or to respond to the MAS government's demands for technological services at national level.

The material presented here is based on fieldwork in April and October 2010, September–December 2011, and July–August 2012. It consisted of around 54 open and in-depth interviews, participant observation, attending workshops and events, and reviewing written sources, including NGOs' project documents and regional and national newspapers. The interviews were held with state officials, representatives of the government, NGOs, agrarian unions, and farmer organizations.

The argument is presented as follows: the next section distinguishes between technical and political NGOs and describes their principal characteristics. The third section introduces the MAS government's political project for agrarian development. Then, the fourth section explores the clash between NGOs and the MAS government, and the fifth section presents three case studies of NGO interventions to illustrate tensions and negotiations on the ground. Finally, we conclude by highlighting the need to unravel the technical and political content of NGOs' confrontations with, and adaptation to, the MAS government context.

Different types of NGOs in Agrarian Development

NGOs represent a wide variety of non-governmental non-profit membership and support organizations. According to the emphasis of their interventions, we may distinguish analytically between political and technical NGOs. Political NGOs provide political education and awareness-raising of constraining social relations and aim to create spaces for political participation based on social justice concerns. Technical NGOs foster projects that aim to deliver technologies that solve production problems and to incorporate the poor in production networks. Political NGOs in Bolivia began to strengthen in the early 1970s and were mostly led by activists from the Catholic Church, the predominant leftist political parties, the universities, or independent professional groups. These NGOs were part of the resistance movement against the dictatorship regimes of the 1960s and 1970s (Kruse, 1994:124; Bebbington and Thiele, 1993) and were often anti-capitalist and founded on the basis of a commitment to alternative development (Bebbington, 1997). Their work was inspired by liberation theology and Paulo Freire's ideas on participation as a means of raising the poor's awareness of asymmetric power relations (Kay, 2004). Their methods and practices for intervention focused primarily on strengthening grassroots organizations and social movements, but also aimed to achieve structural change at national level (Kay, 2004). They grouped into networks such as the National Union of Institutions for Social Work (UNITAS).²

The emergence of technical NGOs relates strongly to the shift to neoliberalism. As of 1985, the state implemented neoliberal policies and, one year later, the central government developed a Social Emergency Fund (*Fondo Social de Emergencia*, FSE) to mitigate the social costs and effects of these measures (Kohl and Farthing, 2006). The FSE, created with

² Examples of such NGOs are the Centre of Legal Studies and Social Research (CEJIS), the Centre for Research and Promotion of Farmers (CIPCA), Loyola Cultural Action (ACLO), and more recently the Communication Centre for Andean Development (CENDA).

support from the World Bank, helped to give birth to technical NGOs that were meant to increase the reach of FSE programmes and to attract international aid funding (Kay, 2004; Kohl, 2003). The number of these NGOs grew rapidly to accommodate the available money as approximately one-third of all FSE funds were channelled through them (Van Niekerk, 1992). In the 1990s, President Sanchez de Lozada enabled a new wave of neoliberal reforms guided by the principles of privatization and decentralization. Amongst the most important reforms for our discussion were the Law of Popular Participation and the Administrative Decentralization Law, which together established a new system for local participation in decision making on public investment (Ayo, 2004; Postero, 2007). Technical NGOs expanded their presence at municipal level and introduced participatory development methods in capacity building; training; project design; adaptation of, and experimentation with, new technologies; and monitoring and evaluation (Bebbington, 1997). The underlying idea was that these methods enabled the participation of target populations and would contribute to technology development, sustainable livelihoods, and incorporation of small farmers into the market (Salazar *et al.*, 2004; Santacoloma *et al.*, 2005; Córdoba *et al.*, 2014a).

This distinction between technical and political NGOs is an analytical one. It does not mean that technical NGOs do not have politics; these domains are intertwined (Jansen and Vellema, 2011). In gradations, every NGO is both technical and political, but how much and in what sense has to be defined empirically. Before we do that however, we first describe the different views within the MAS government on agricultural development and the conflicts between the two NGO groups and the MAS government.

The MAS Government and the Rise of Neocollectivism in Bolivia

The twenty-first century began in Bolivia with an intense social upheaval against neoliberal reforms. Peasant and indigenous social movements, together with urban grassroots organizations, spurred a series of events against the neoliberal project that began with the ‘Water War’ in 2000 in Cochabamba, where protesters expressed their disapproval of the privatization of the municipal water supply. The Water War was followed by the ‘Gas War’ in 2003 and 2005, as different social movements protested against the privatization of the country’s natural gas, resulting in the resignation and flight of President Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada in October 2003. The organization of the MAS party is closely linked to these historical moments. The movement originated in the powerful *Cocalero* movement in the Chapare region and was successful in uniting progressively peasant, indigenous, and urban movements in what was called the *Pacto de Unidad* (Unity Pact) towards democratic

elections in 2005 (Komadina and Geffroy, 2007). In 2006, the MAS party, led by Evo Morales, took over state control and a new constitution was approved in 2009. In 2010, Morales was re-elected as president. In its second term, the MAS government aims to reshape fundamentally the development agenda for poverty reduction in rural areas.

The MAS government, as a confederation of social movements, combined three tendencies with different demands and agendas (Postero, 2010b; Komadina and Geffroy, 2007; Molina, 2006): the tendency of indigenous and sustainable development, whose central demand is the decolonization of the state; the left anti-imperialist tendency, which favours a strong state capable of defending the nation against transnational companies and neoliberalism; and the popular tendency, which gives the popular-sector social movements, especially agrarian unions (*sindicatos*) and urban neighbourhood associations (*juntas vecinales*), a key role (Postero, 2010b).

Each of these three tendencies has a different proposal for the rural sector. The first tendency, indigenous and sustainable development, combines the vision of Living Well with the ‘rights of Mother Earth’ to develop environmentally friendly technologies and to retrieve indigenous knowledge of agricultural production. Within this tendency, we can classify the Confederation of Indigenous People of Bolivia (CIDOB) and the National Council of Ayllus and Marcas of Bolivia (CONAMAQ).

The second, leftist, tendency, especially defended by Vice President García-Linera, has proposed an economic model called ‘Andean-Amazonian Capitalism’ (Lora, 2005). This entails constructing a strong state regulating the exploitation of natural resources by extracting its surplus and transferring it to the rural areas for the industrialization and modernization of agriculture (Gómez, 2007). One element of this model is the nationalization of hydrocarbon and natural resource industries and the creation of state companies in the rural sector, most notably the Support Company for Food Production (EMAPA). EMAPA represents a redistributive policy, subsidizing small and medium producers and offering an alternative to vertically integrated systems of commercialization dominated by larger producers. It intervenes through the sale of agricultural inputs (seeds, agrochemicals, and diesel) at preferential prices to farmer organizations, technical assistance, and the purchase of farmers’ output, paying 15 per cent above the established market price (Córdoba and Jansen, 2013).

The third, the popular tendency, primarily represented by Evo Morales, defends a *campesino* (peasant) vision of rural development based on the principles of ‘food sovereignty.’ It rejects the concept of food security that focuses on food supply and instead advocates a form of food sovereignty in which the state plays a major role in promoting the production, preservation, and/or acquisition of food, and develops alternatives for the globalization and corporatization of food systems (Cartagena, 2012). The state should support social organizations that assemble around *campesino* interests by directly transferring resources to them. Two different types of social organizations support this tendency. On one

side, we find politically oriented organizations such as the Sole Union Confederation of Bolivian Peasant Workers (CSUTCB), the most powerful peasant organization in the country, uniting the majority of agrarian unions, especially in the highlands; the Union Confederation of Intercultural Communities in Bolivia (CSCIB), comprising a large proportion of the unions in the lowlands; the National Federation of Peasant Women Bartolina Sisa (FNMCB-BS); and the *Cocalero* Movement represented in the seven union confederations of the Tropics of Cochabamba. On the other side, we find economic support organizations. Economic smallholder organizations (OECAs) are grouped in the Coordinating Committee for the Integration of Economic Organizations of Bolivia (CIOEC) and the Association of Ecological Producers of Bolivia (AOPEB). Community-based peasant unions originated after the National Revolution of 1952 to facilitate the land titling process and since then have represented these communities. The CIOEC has a more recent history linked to the support of NGOs since the 1980s (Bebbington, 1996). The CIOEC seeks to address production problems, especially agricultural, and its members have been trained, especially in production aspects and resource management, to improve their competitiveness in the market.

In the MAS government's public discourse (what is said), the party's organization is linked to a historical moment of articulation attempting to reconcile these tendencies under a common slogan: 'the dismantling of colonialism and neoliberalism and participation in local democratic spaces' (Ministerio de Planificación del Desarrollo, 2007:21). This discourse advocates a notion of social justice that balances redistribution, recognition, and representation claims of indigenous and poor people and seeks to reformulate the meanings of social justice towards social transformation. To achieve this, the MAS government proposes a radical and politically charged approach to participation in rural development that we label as 'neocollectivism.' It comprises different models of collective action for social justice vis-à-vis neoliberal politics: leftist demands, favouring a strong state as resource distributor; popular demands for political representation and direct dialogue with grassroots organizations, especially agrarian unions, as representatives of the communitarian circle to drive production projects; and indigenous collective identities.

Neocollectivism and internal tensions

Tensions among the three tendencies within neocollectivism have not been long in coming. Social organizations in the popular tendency that supported the MAS government during its first term in office, like the CIOEC (the network of economic organizations), have declared themselves 'distanced from the government' during its second term. They primarily complain about the lack of dialogue and that politicians do not recognize the experiences of economic smallholder organizations, the OECAs (CIOEC, 2008). The leftist trend has been critical of

what it perceives to be a conflict of interest. Nina, the national director of the CIOEC, disapproves of the prominent role of the state in agricultural production and commercialization as follows:

With these policies, the state will be in charge of everything, they are state socialist policies. I don't know what it can be called... if the small producers want to reach the market, the state stops us; it doesn't allow us. We are worried. For example, we sell dairy products for the school-feeding programme. Now, the government has created dairy plants to deliver these same products, it is taking the market from us, the small producers. This trend creates a struggle between the state and small producers (Interview, 4 October 2010).

The CIOEC considers the involved state companies as a threat to small farmers' market opportunities.

There are also disagreements within the popular tendency. These concern the selection of organizations that should receive state support. The CSUTCB has publicly pressured the government to support the social movements directly, as representatives of the communities, with productive projects. The CIOEC, on the contrary, has advocated for the recognition of the diversity of groups within a community. Interviewed leaders argue that social movements, especially agrarian unions, have a more political and organizational role, but very little experience in production. Because of this, their projects have little technical viability or only involve products with little added value (rice, wheat, maize, potatoes, and so forth). The following quotation from Suazo, the president of the CIOEC in the department of Santa Cruz, exemplifies this discontent:

We, as the CIOEC, have presented projects, but they aren't approved quickly because the government is embracing the agrarian unions with a Marxist base. For them there is money, for them there is *Evo Cumple* ['Evo fulfils,' a government programme]. But for us, [nothing], because we want to transform, for example to sell processed products, so the government doesn't like this vision, it wants us to sell our unprocessed produce and other people can transform it and earn (Interview, 30 September 2010).

Suazo and his colleagues in the CIOEC believed that the absence of an arrangement between them and the government was due to a lack of power to influence decision makers, in contrast to the agrarian unions, which were represented in the Ministry of Rural Development with two of their leaders: Julia Ramos and Nemesia Achacollo (previous and current ministers). In the years after this interview, the CIOEC continued to advocate for a law that recognizes not only communitarian economic initiatives but also economics-oriented peasant organizations and family farming, and Law 338 on Peasant Economic Organizations and Community Economic Organizations was approved in January 2013. Confusion exists, however, on how this new law will be operationalized and coordinated in practice.

The leaders of the agrarian unions, on the other hand, defended the government's choice of targeting them for support. It complements their claims to access to political representation. This is an opportunity that they never had before. Some of the resources that were channelled through local governments are now allocated directly to social movements. They argue that this streamlines the implementation of production projects and avoids government bureaucracy (Rojas, 2012).

Tensions have also emerged between, on the one hand, leftist and popular tendencies, and, on the other, indigenous movements who direct their claims towards challenging identity-based forms of social injustice. These indigenous movements feel their territories threatened by the exploitation of natural resources and infrastructure projects driven by the state's industrialization and modernization intentions. This is the case for CIDOB and CONAMAQ, the country's two most important indigenous social movements. The tensions reached a peak around the Isiboro Securé National Park (TIPNIS) conflict. The government decided to build a new – approximately 300 km – road that would split this territory in two, despite resistance from indigenous groups that live there. The government argued that this road was necessary for the integration and development of the country, opening new markets, and boosting production in rural communities. Indigenous movements, however, rejected the construction of this road since they regarded it as a government strategy to divide their territory and organizations, parcel out the land, and allow the in-migration of colonists, especially coca growers from the Chapare region, who are key supporters of the MAS government. As a protest, members of indigenous movements marched more than 1,400 kilometres from the city of Trinidad in Beni to La Paz (the seat of the government). They accused the MAS government of being authoritarian and pointed out the contradictions of a government that calls itself indigenous, while closing the lines of dialogue and participation in decision making with them as part of its constituency (*Opinión*, 2011). Meanwhile, agrarian unions staged their own counter-march to support the construction of the road on behalf of the country's development. Finally, in 2013, the MAS government revoked its intention to build this road.

The TIPNIS case represents perhaps the clearest example of the conflicts that emerge when an attempt is being made to unite three different tendencies in a single approach to social justice. In practice, participation within the MAS government is mostly a bottom-up process, relying on mobilization of social movements to accept or reject political decisions. In seeking ways to cohabit with neoliberalism and change it, the tendencies within neocollectivism are not fully subordinated to Morales' authority; on the contrary, they try to impose their claims over other tendencies. Insofar as their social justice claims can be contradictory, as when indigenous rights clash with the agrarian unions' demands for economic redistribution or with the leftists' extractivism, the government is forced to prioritize some claims over others. According to Salman (2011:38), the positions of these social movements vis-à-vis the MAS government depend on 'specific issues, specific facts and tactic uncertainties.' Vice-president García-Linera interpreted these conflicts not as an anomaly but as the nuclear component of politics or, in his own words, as 'creative tensions' inherent in each revolutionary process, alluding to similar situations in Mao Tse-Tung's China (García-Linera, 2011a). With this context of neocollectivist internal tensions and views on participation as the background, the next two sections explore how NGOs align or negotiate with the different tendencies within MAS that cause various concrete clashes, tensions, and complementarities between neocollectivism and NGOs.

The MAS Government and NGOs: A Public Confrontation

The MAS government's criticism of NGOs, outlined in the introduction, built initially on already existing critiques of NGOs, and one would expect that, in line with these critiques, the MAS government would predominantly criticize the technical NGOs for being vehicles of neoliberal ideas. In the late 1990s, the NGO sector faced a crisis of legitimacy in which their role as mediators between the state and civil society was being discussed extensively (Bebbington and Farrington, 1993; Hulme and Edwards, 1997; Attack, 1999). Some questioned the participatory spaces and the ability of NGOs to translate the real needs of the poor (Arellano-Lopez and Petras, 1994). Others considered their interventions to be dominated by external interests in order to fulfil and enact neoliberal discourses (Gill, 1997), in particular through their focus on capacity building and technology, which the neoliberalist discourse considers imperative for sustainable economic growth (Postero, 2007; Andersson and Haarstad, 2009). This legitimacy crisis was also felt in Bolivia and led to suspicion and distrust of technical NGOs in different rural communities (Rivera-Cusicanqui, 1990). NGOs themselves organized events to reflect on and criticize their role during neoliberalism. For example, in an event in 2001, organized by the Association of Promotion and Education Institutions (AIPE) – a network of NGOs – participants concluded that the crisis had

manifested itself on three levels: a) an identity crisis about their role in society; b) a crisis of legitimacy and accountability towards the people with whom they worked (who strongly criticized their interventions); and c) a crisis of sustainability due to dependence on external financing (AIPE, 2001). Indeed, in its early years, the MAS government (2006–2008) criticized technical NGOs for being vehicles of neoliberal policies.

Many political NGOs were allies of the MAS government in this first period. Political NGOs were important supporters of social movements in the process of social mobilization and contestation against neoliberalism in the early 2000s (Rodríguez-Carmona, 2008; Do Alto, 2011). NGOs like CIPCA, CEJIS, and CENDA, among others, participated actively and offered support to the discussions that established a national constituent assembly and culminated in the new constitution enacted in 2009 (Rodríguez-Carmona, 2009; Do Alto, 2011). These NGOs forged an alliance between indigenous groups and the MAS government that developed a politically engaged discourse of indigeneity and an indigenous vision within the government (Página Siete, 2011). In 2006, many political NGO staff became employees of the MAS government (La Razón, 2011). This was, for example, the case with the ministers, Vladimir Sanchez and Carlos Romero, and Chancellor Choquehuanca, some of the MAS government's most important representatives.

As of 2008 however, the relationship between these political NGOs and the government began to deteriorate. Their presence in the government was criticized by social movements and grassroots organizations, who considered it a form of co-optation by middle class and NGO technical leaders, at the expense of peasant, indigenous, and popular sector participation (Do Alto, 2011). This confrontation became clear in 2011 when a group of intellectuals, many linked to political NGOs and once part of the process of change, wrote a manifesto criticizing what they considered the inconsistencies and contradictions within the MAS government (Almaraz *et al.*, 2011). In response to this manifesto, Vice President García-Linera responded with a book called *The NGOism, the Infantile Disease of the Right Wing*, where he criticized the urban, professional, and middle-class origin of its authors and defended the government's results during its first five years (García-Linera, 2011b). Meanwhile, networks of political NGOs like CEJIS and UNITAS publically criticized the MAS government's actions and especially its decision to build a road (as previously discussed) through TIPNIS indigenous territory. They formed alliances with indigenous movements and considered the proposed building of the road as a breach of the new political constitution as it did not follow technical and legal procedures (such as an environmental impact study), and did not consult with the indigenous population.

These discords triggered a media confrontation with personal attacks and harsh language between NGOs and the government. Evo Morales accused some NGOs of being 'the fifth column of espionage' and of defending the interests of 'imperialism' (Los Tiempos, 2010). García-Linera accused them of being enemies of the so-called 'process of change' and of

serving the covert colonialist ideas of international cooperation, especially because of their support of the TIPNIS march (García-Linera, 2012a). The MAS government called for a national debate on the role of NGOs and used congress to promote parliamentary research into their activities. It also supported the enactment of future legislation to regulate their operation, funding, and access to legal status (Molina, 2011), pressing them to adapt their activities to the National Development Plan and the new constitution (Layme, 2013). In a newspaper interview, Juan Ramón Quintana, Minister of the Presidency, called on the NGOs to comply with ‘their task,’ which was, according to him, providing technical services and training and not interfering in decisions of indigenous organizations or in internal tensions within the MAS government. He pointed out that, if they wanted to be political advocates, they should become political parties and not use the ‘NGO mask’ for political opposition to the MAS government (Corz, 2013). For their part, NGOs publically rejected the MAS government’s request to abandon their political activities, which they considered a right. They also argued that the same political activism had strengthened social movements to seize power through the MAS and the Unity Pact. UNITAS, a network of political NGOs, pointed out:

Since when is political action constrained in our country? Without the (non-partisan) political agenda, the structural changes and social transformations historically demanded by workers, indigenous people, peasants, women, and other social sectors in Bolivia would not have been possible (UNITAS, 2013).

Besides this public confrontation in the media between NGOs and the MAS government, we identify three crucial factors (derived from our interview data and document analysis) that impacted upon the conflict between NGOs and neocollectivism. First, the recovery of the state’s role in development as part of neocollectivism has shifted state action from intermediation to direct implementation of development projects. In 2011, state investment reached a historical high of US \$2,400 million: 67 per cent came from internal resources, and donations from international cooperation were below 22 per cent for the first time since 1995 (Banco Mundial, 2011:41). Furthermore, the MAS government has progressively displaced Bolivian NGOs as central channels of resources from international cooperation (Bazoberry and Ruiz, 2010; Devisscher, 2013, Córdoba and Jansen, 2013). To improve the effectiveness of development cooperation, the government created the Group of Development Partners of Bolivia (GruS) in 2006 as a platform to align international cooperation with its National Development Plan (UNITAS, 2010). NGOs have not been involved in the GruS, marginalizing them in the planning and distribution of these resources.

Second, the crisis of NGO legitimacy that became explicit in the 1990s has worsened during the MAS government. The social organizations do not perceive themselves as ‘target groups’ or ‘beneficiaries’ or ‘clients’ of projects (as in the language of NGOs), but as ‘protagonists’ of what they call ‘the process of change.’ Although leaders of social organizations value, in our interviews, the work of NGOs, both technical and political, they perceive them more as service providers than as managers of state resources. They demand that state resources be managed directly by communities. One interviewed NGO technician expressed the progressive change in their relations with communities as follows:

The producers have empowered themselves, especially with the MAS government that has given more power to farmers to monitor NGOs. They even have the ability to ask you for accounts, to oversee the funds that you are managing through the financing of our projects. Once they told me in a large meeting that the NGO technicians, us, that we live thanks to them, to the farmers, that we have money, we get money, thanks to them (Interview, 8 December 2011).

Third, the confrontation in the political field is a conflict between two visions of participation. On the one hand, NGOs – especially the political ones – that fought to strengthen the voice of civil society during periods of dictatorship see their institutions as allies of social organizations and as an important actor in civil society. They perceive themselves as part of the ‘public sphere,’ in Habermas’ words, as ‘opposed to the state’ (1995:7) with the goal of strengthening democracy and deliberation in society. On the other hand, neocollectivism defends direct and radical participation (Córdoba and Jansen, 2013). According to Komadina (2008), this vision of radical participation calls for the construction of an adversary and the permanent appeal of confrontation and antagonism in which the construction of an ‘us’ versus a ‘they’ is vital. The TIPNIS conflict best illustrates this. Whereas indigenous criticisms of the leftists’ tendency within the MAS government were seen as ‘creative tensions’ (still part of the ‘us’), when similar criticisms came from NGOs, they were seen as enemy attacks (the ‘they’), supplanting the voice of legitimate groups in society.

We can conclude that the public confrontation between the MAS government and NGOs was mainly with the political NGOs. This firstly shows the highly politicized environment in the post-neoliberal era where political NGOs are struggling to define their role and spaces for action. Second, it is precisely their low political profile that keeps the technical NGOs out of the public confrontation. This does not mean that they have not changed as a consequence of the political context. The next section discusses the shifts in NGO activities within the

technical sphere, and the negotiations between NGOs and neocollectivism that have redefined what is political and what is technical.

The Political and the Technical in NGOs' Adaptations to Post-neoliberal Politics

The previous section discussed the conflict between neocollectivism and NGOs, focusing on confrontation in the political context. In this section, we describe how Fundación Valles, PROINPA, and CEPAC responded to the tensions and negotiations with neocollectivism in specific rural development interventions. Fundación Valles and PROINPA emphasize technological innovation as the main component of their interventions, whereas CEPAC interventions in economic and technology development are embedded in a rights approach to transform political participation at local level. As follows, we show how these NGOs balanced politics and technology in different ways to adapt to neocollectivism.

Fundación Valles: tensions and negotiations in business models for small farmers

Fundación Valles is a private foundation that worked, from 2001 to 2008, with the Bolivian System of Agricultural Technology (SIBTA) of the Bolivian Ministry of Agriculture. It has been working closely with OECAs, which focus primarily on production objectives, on promoting market-oriented initiatives to increase farmers' incomes. It prioritizes a value-chain approach in which farmers seek collaboration with other actors along the agri-chain and adapt to consumer demands. The key change sought is to enhance OECAs' agricultural business and decision-making skills to increase competitiveness. These organizations are seen as crucial for increasing effectiveness, economies of scale, and facilitating service delivery for agricultural production and marketing.

In 2003, Fundación Valles began its support to the Association of Peanut and Chili Producers of Padilla (APAJIMPA), an OECA composed of around 240 farmers from different communities in Padilla. This municipality in Chuquisaca department is basically populated by farmers of Quechua origin forced to migrate, temporarily or permanently, to other departments of Bolivia to escape the extreme levels of poverty: 84 per cent (Fernández et al., 2005). The intervention focused on how to encourage collective commercialization of chili and peanuts to bypass intermediaries and improve negotiation skills. With funding from USAID, it supported the construction and equipping of a chili and peanut processing plant to

ensure better product quality, to meet the demands of domestic and export markets, and to create job opportunities in the area to counteract migration. Post-harvest machinery, such as for peanut cracking, was adapted in a joint collaboration of farmers and industrial infrastructure companies. Association members were trained in developing an entrepreneurship vision, administrative capacities, and an organization structure. In 2009, APAJIMPA, through the efforts of Fundación Valles, established a business alliance with Agrinuts Company for peanut exportation. Agrinuts delegated an engineer to support the association with quality improvement in order to comply with international standards crucial for export markets (i.e. good manufacturing practices). APAJIMPA's organizational structure and its commercial alliance with Agrinuts served as a model for other producer organizations and private companies to develop similar chili and peanut processing plants in the Chaco ecoregion in Bolivia. Currently, APAJIMPA manages its own resources, has a board of producers elected by the association in a general meeting, and has administrative and production staff, generating 24 full-time jobs.

In 2010, a new mayor from the MAS party was elected in Padilla, and tensions arose between the local government and Fundación Valles. The national government was trying to reduce the influence of international donor agencies, resulting in 2010 in a prohibition of direct transfer of municipal funds (including those earmarked as the counterpart to NGO programmes) to NGOs' accounts. Local governmental contributions had to be delivered in kind, directly purchased by local government. Following this prohibition, the mayor withdrew support for APAJIMPA from the municipal budget. Some APAJIMPA leaders perceived this as the mayor's rejection of the association and the work of NGOs. At public events, the mayor criticized NGOs for being disconnected from local government aims.

These tensions between local government and Fundación Valles' intervention processes must be seen as partly the result of a national conflict between the MAS government and USAID. This government regards NGOs like Fundación Valles, who have received support from USAID, with disdain and as promoters of neoliberal values. Beyond the national political confrontation however, the issue plays out differently at local level in the end. We observed how, despite the abovementioned incidental strong criticism, the municipality presented APAJIMPA and Fundación Valles' intervention as a successful business model for small farmers and a cause of pride for the town. Field visits were organized by the municipality to show APAJIMPA's experience to other farmers' organization and municipalities; and, even at national level, Fundación Valles is starting to engage with several initiatives of the Ministry of Rural Development (for example in the Programme for the Support of the Productive and Agricultural Sector).

When asked about the conflicts between NGOs and the MAS government, a representative of Fundación Valles argued:

There are two things to differentiate. If the government is involved, there always has to be politics.... But I think we [Fundación Valles] do not have a political position. If so, we would try to impose things, impose models without legitimate request or demand from producers (Interview, 9 September 2011).

The interviewed Fundación Valles representatives locate the political confrontations outside their technical intervention activities and prefer not to get involved. They perceive themselves as ‘apolitical,’ avoiding confrontation and highlighting their expertise. Despite the political criticism, new ways are being explored to collaborate, and apparently the distinction made between politics and technical support works for both sides. It could even be seen as a strategy to adapt to neocollectivism.

PROINPA: adapting to post-neoliberal policies with agri-ecological technology

The PROINPA Foundation is a national NGO that evolved out of the state’s Potato Programme of the Institute of Agricultural Technology (IBTA) after 1989, filling much of the gap left when the state retreated from agricultural research and technology transfer in 1997 (Gandarillas *et al.*, 2007). PROINPA began to rapidly adapt its intervention processes to the rural development agendas of the MAS government and its constituencies. According to an interviewed PROINPA researcher, the adoption of a pragmatic position to ‘respond to the demands of the changing environment’ – in this case, a new political agenda – is one of their keys to success (Interview, 9 December 2011). To adapt to the MAS government’s rural development view, it developed bio-inputs (bio-pesticides and bio-fertilizers) that are consistent with the agri-ecological view on farming. PROINPA had already begun its research on bio-inputs in 2005 as a response to the growing demands from grassroots organizations for alternatives to chemical control and the availability of funding for research on agri-ecological technologies. When the MAS government took power, agri-ecology became one of its priorities (Ministerio de Planificación del Desarrollo, 2007:131; Estado Plurinacional de Bolivia, 2011), making bio-inputs even more relevant to PROINPA’s agenda (Interview, 9 August 2012). PROINPA used participatory methods for the testing and

subsequent adoption of bio-inputs.³ Interviewed PROINPA technicians envisioned these methods as an alternative to previous top-down research and technology transfer models, and an effective way to involve farmers in agricultural experimentation, to teach them different techniques, and to promote more sustainable farming systems. In on-farm validations, researchers tested different blends of bio-inputs on crops like potato, quinoa, onion, bean, and peach. The producers determined the dose, time, and frequency of application.

PROINPA experimented with different models of technology transfer. First, they undertook a strong process of capacity building based on participatory development principles whereby producers learned how to develop bio-inputs. However, the vast majority of participants did not continue developing bio-inputs, either because it was time-consuming or because they did not have the materials. Second, PROINPA worked with agrarian unions, creating a collective mechanism with a rotation of producers in charge of bio-inputs. This decreased the amount of time each producer invested in this task. Although this mechanism was enthusiastically approved by the unions, it did not work because very few producers wanted to distribute the bio-inputs from farm-to-farm without a return for their time. Finally, PROINPA, together with the agrarian unions, created a market mechanism in which each union elected a bio-input promoter. In 2010, PROINPA trained these promoters for a week and installed mini bio-input plants for mass production. Bio-input promoters gave demonstrative lectures to different groups of producers to advertise products and received half of the profits from sales as an incentive to further develop these technologies. Additionally, PROINPA produced radio spots on the benefits of various bio-products.

In 2008, participatory methodologies were deployed for the bio-input validation process in Morochata municipality in Cochabamba, where PROINPA had established a close working relation with agrarian union members since the 1990s. Bio-fertilizers were tested on potato crops, obtaining production increases up to 15 per cent (Interview, 28 October 2011). In our fieldwork, we observed that bio-input technology has been enthusiastically adopted by agrarian unions in Morochata. Benedicto, one of the bio-input promoters, pointed out that he has buyers coming from different parts of Morochata and even from other municipalities in Cochabamba. He describes the technology as a success: ‘I sell 100 litres or more each week. Often what I produce is not enough for the people. They come to buy a lot and it runs out quickly. And I have to make more and more every time’ (Interview, 6 October 2011). This adoption of bio-inputs by farmers cannot prevent unions remaining sceptical about PROINPA. Interviewed agrarian union members perceived that PROINPA absorbs most of its resources in administrative costs and paying technicians to perform training and technical

³ Researchers isolated and tested different micro-organisms for different purposes (plant growth, fertilization, disease control).

assistance; they maintain their salaries without concrete benefits for the material condition of producers. However, these same leaders recognized the much-needed technical support offered and stated that, because of PROINPA's intervention, unions have changed the agenda of their monthly meetings: they now discussed production issues like crop management strategies and seed improvement, and not only political issues.

At national level, PROINPA communicated its participatory methodologies and the resulting technologies (i.e. bio-inputs) to government representatives in different activities (e.g. a national forum organized by PROINPA in 2010, see Bravo, 2010) and publications (Ortuño *et al.*, 2010), but this could not prevent PROINPA from being involved in the tensions between the MAS government and NGOs. Lack of funding and the increasing role of the state in agricultural research and development have generated considerable debate in PROINPA regarding two strategies for its future. The first is to become a consultancy company offering technological services and market technologies, such as improved seeds and bio-inputs. One result of this strategy is the creation of BIOTOP, a bio-input production company owned by PROINPA. The second strategy is to access public resources through the municipal governments with which they have built close relationships. This demonstrates this NGO's pragmatic approach: being flexible with regard to the balance between laboratory-based and on-farm research; engaging in participatory research depending on funding opportunities; being flexible with adapting to technology agendas, e.g. towards agri-ecology, depending on the political environment; and being flexible with regard to acting as a commercial, private market actor or as a service provider in the public domain.

CEPAC: Providing services to social organizations to access government resources

The third case is the NGO, CEPAC. CEPAC, an NGO based in the city of Santa Cruz, began working in urban contexts with food security, literacy, and nutrition. Later, because of its engagement with social movements in the municipality of Yapacani, north of the city, it switched to rural development interventions. It became a key player in the government's decentralization by supporting the implementation of the 1994 Law of Popular Participation in this municipality. Yapacani's ecological context is distinct from those of Padilla and Morochata; as it is located in the lowlands, where a wider range of crops can be cultivated. It has strong agrarian union organizations composed of migrants from the highlands. CEPAC worked on rural territorial development (diversification of agricultural production and livelihoods) and the strengthening of the municipal government's technical capacities. It uses various participatory methods to facilitate access to technical assistance and for the selection of new agricultural technologies. CEPAC adopted an agri-chain approach in 2000 (partly

influenced by its donors, including ICCO, Cordaid, COH, and Caritas). It started with agri-chains that have market and productive potential in the area (i.e. fish farming, coffee, and timber) and worked with individual producers and farmer organizations with the required resources (for instant, access to water for fish farming, suitable land for coffee production, and access to forests for timber production). Similar to Fundación Valles, CEPAC trains producers or local businessmen on how to deliver services and inputs for these chains, on information about prices and markets, on how to write business plans, and on gender equality (the evaluation process monitors not only income increases but also women's participation).

Unlike PROINPA and Fundación Valles, CEPAC engages more actively with social movements at local level, on the premise that farmers and their social organizations can assert their economic rights to the local and national government. For that, social organizations that have historically focused on the redistribution of resources have to make a shift to modernizing agriculture through the introduction of better technologies and access to local spaces of power. According to CEPAC, the latter component is essential to facilitate the politicization of poverty through the exercise of citizenship. Access to technology and capacities helps farmers and organizations to become their own protagonists for the generation of social justice. CEPAC identified the funds from the MAS government for farmer-managed production projects as a strategic opportunity to provide training to social organizations with whom they have already worked for more than 15 years. According to CEPAC's director, they aim to fill the gaps not bridged by the government:

The government's proposal is a direct transfer of resources to organizations. We have seen a specific demand there. We want the organizations we are working with to be able to get support from state resources. ... We have become allies of these organizations because of our technical capacity to support them (Interview, 18 May 2010).

Remarkably, the political content of the work is here translated into CEPAC's technical capacity. Despite the fact that social organizations in Yapacani have been successful in gaining political influence in local government, fieldwork research has found that they are encountering difficulties when proposing specific rural development projects. These become mired in formal applications, project procedures, and mandatory bureaucratic paperwork (all designed to improve accountability to the state). Without the organizational assistance in terms of project management skills provided by organizations such as CEPAC, it is difficult for poorer union members or farmers who are not yet well-organized to get access to project funding. Interviewed representatives from agrarian unions appreciate this role in the formation of these capacities.

Contrasting adaptation strategies to neocollectivism by NGOs

Despite the public discursive confrontation between MAS and NGOs, the above case studies show that NGOs appear to have found manoeuvring room to face this confrontation, in particular by presenting themselves as technical service providers. These NGOs have developed different adaptation strategies that have in common the strengthening of farmers' technical capacity. They use a type of farmer participation that neither conflicts with neocollectivist political aims nor takes a position in favour of one of the MAS tendencies. In consequence, these NGOs envisage the use of participatory development to achieve better technical and production goals rather than political participation and contestation against government decisions. Each one, however, places a different emphasis (see Table 1). PROINPA takes a pragmatic position to develop technologies that are adapted to neocollectivist interests in agri-ecology. PROINPA's methods have attracted the attention of public institutions as a way to incorporate farmers' views in technology development. Fundación Valles operates with a concept of participation in which farmer associations (OECAs) develop business with other agri-chain actors. Despite tensions between this NGO and the MAS government, it has gained a position at national level thanks to its expertise in fostering business alliances, thus addressing a gap in the MAS government policies (Urioste, 2011). Some NGOs like CEPAC, who have a closer relation with social organizations at local level, have adapted their participatory approaches and practices to the new conditions; they channel the demands of these organizations in areas such as technological transfer and training in which the government has a weak presence.

Table 2.1 Contrasting NGOs' views on participation and rural development and their strategies to adapt to neocollectivism

Characteristic	NGOs		
	PROINPA	Fundación Valles	CEPAC
View on rural development	Techno-scientific <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoption of technologies with better fit to farming systems is solution to poverty • Develop capacities to monitor and evaluate planned intervention 	Market-centred (Technical) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The market as redistributor of resources • Foster incorporation into agri-chains • State should facilitate market relationships 	Political <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rights-based approach to rural development • Balance economic development with political participation
View on participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participatory methods required for technological innovations • And for strengthening farmers' skills • Collaborate with social/ political organizations (agrarian unions) • No intervention in political participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associations of farmers are crucial for improving efficiency and competitiveness (through economies of scale) and service delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation to link political and technological processes • Participation to exercise rights and citizenship • Participation to ensure public policy implementation • Participation to enable farmers' participation in markets and technology development
Adaptation to neocollectivism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pragmatic adaptation of activities to political desires of the MAS government and its constituencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No evidence of change; sticks to its technical and market-centred profile • Public presentation as apolitical* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positions itself as provider of technological services (training, technological innovations) to social organizations

Note: * Although we could not collect any data about it, it may be hypothesized that strategies towards the MAS government have been discussed within Fundación Valles.

Conclusion

This chapter examines the conflict between NGOs and the MAS government in Bolivia. MAS's agrarian politics, labelled here as neocollectivism, tries to conciliate different and sometimes contradictory collective demands into a single framework of social justice: leftists' claims for redistribution of state resources; indigenous claims to agri-ecology based on the notions of Living Well and the rights of Mother Earth; and peasant claims that include a radical change in the food system towards food sovereignty. The MAS government sees NGOs as a threat to its political project and a divisive factor at a time when tensions are experienced among these three tendencies. This has generated a public discursive confrontation and national debate on NGOs' role in society, leading to the expulsion of two international NGOs in 2013.

Our study shows that NGOs appear to have found manoeuvring room to face this public discursive confrontation. Each of the three studied NGOs has adopted different strategies. Technical NGOs like PROINPA have to start to play politics and search for ways to negotiate with neocollectivist interests on agri-ecology, whereas more political NGOs like CEPAC stress their technical aspects to serve as service providers and to avoid being seen as a political threat to social organizations. In the same line, Fundación Valles stresses an apolitical image, at least publically, and sticks to its market-centred initiatives and expertise. This helps it to counter its historical association with USAID and distance itself from previous neoliberal regimes. Finally, we conclude that NGOs' emphasis on political and technical aspects are not only influenced by NGOs' nature and aims, but also are particularly driven by the context. During neoliberalism, political NGOs contested neoliberal politics and supported social movements; technical NGOs emphasized even more their technical capacities. With a MAS government that strongly criticizes and attacks NGO activities and political meddling, these organizations need to realign their interventions by stressing their technical strengths to accommodate to the current circumstances. While the MAS government is continuing to make efforts to bring the state back into development, NGOs are exploring new ways to adapt and to fill the gaps still left by the state or to create new spaces for action.

Chapter 3

The Return of the State: Neocollectivism, agrarian politics and images of technological progress in the MAS era in Bolivia



Source: PAR office – Santa Cruz

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Abstract

The Movement towards Socialism (MAS) party promised to break with neoliberal politics when it rose to power in Bolivia in 2006. Using the concept of neocollectivism to characterize MAS agrarian politics, this chapter examines one of its key instruments for achieving rural development: the state enterprise EMAPA. This state company, which supports small producers, envisions a new agrarian structure of production and commercialization, one which will break the power of the Santa Cruz-based agro-industrial elite. Drawing on a discussion of the mechanisms of governance employed by this state entity, we argue that new complexities in state-civil society relations and a low state capacity have constrained its ability to shift power relationships between the state and the agro-industrial elites. Instead of reducing the dependency of small producers on agro-industrial capital, the Bolivian state has increased it, thereby undermining its goal of redistribution. The chapter also analyses different moments of politicization and de-politicization in the intervention process arising from the demand for political change as well as for technically efficient and profitable agricultural production.

Introduction

Alternatives to neoliberal food regimes are often formulated in terms of local endogenous resistance or transnational and bottom-up food sovereignty networks (Borras *et al.*, 2008; Martínez-Torres and Rosset, 2010; Giménez *et al.*, 2011; Altieri *et al.*, 2011). Relatively little scholarly attention has been paid to recent state-led initiatives which redefine neoliberal agricultural modernization. The agricultural and rural development policy of the MAS (Movement toward Socialism) government in Bolivia provides a central case for discussing the return of the state. In 2006, after more than 20 years of neoliberalism and state withdrawal, the MAS government headed by Evo Morales officially rejected the dominant food regime spear-headed by large-scale industrial agriculture in the east of the country. It prioritized peasant and communitarian economies, considering these to be the key actors for achieving food security and food sovereignty, redistributing wealth, combating poverty and historical patterns of social injustice in the countryside. The new political vocabulary adopted emphasises state intervention instead of neoliberalism, small indigenous farmers rather than agro-enterprises, fair markets instead of free markets and the internal market instead of the external market (MDRAyMA, 2007; García-Linera, 2008b; MAS IPSP, 2010).

This study analyses ‘neocollectivism’, the term which we adopt to characterize the response of the MAS to neoliberal politics⁴. Neocollectivism combines different models of collective action for social justice vis-à-vis neoliberal politics: the use of state power in interaction with politicized social organizations (agrarian unions, associations, demands of political representation and direct dialogue with grassroots organizations, and collective identities (*indigenistas*). Although it may bear some resemblance to the collectivist policies of the past (i.e. statism), it is argued here that present day Bolivian collectivism can only be understood within the new complexities of state-civil society relations, modernization ideologies and social-technical configurations enforced during the period of neoliberalism.

To examine how the Bolivian state sought to implement collectivist agrarian policies as an alternative to the prevailing dominant food regime, we have selected the case of EMAPA (*Empresa de Apoyo a la Producción de Alimentos* or Company in Support of Food Production). Established in 2007 as one of 18 new public companies financed from hydrocarbon and mineral revenues, EMAPA supports production, commercialization and stabilization of the agricultural market (Ministerio de Planificación del Desarrollo, 2007). EMAPA is a cornerstone in the strategy of the state called ‘food security with sovereignty’,

4 The term neocollectivism has been used in a slightly different way in China to indicate how collective and private ownership can be valued equally by the Chinese state (Wang 1996).

which aims to gain control over the food regime (Estado Plurinacional de Bolivia, 2011). This strategy combines the concept of ‘food security’ and ‘food sovereignty’ with the Andean concept of ‘Living Well’⁵. EMAPA focuses most of its operations in Santa Cruz department, which accounts for 87 per cent of its budget. EMAPA’s reasons to select Santa Cruz are twofold. First, this department provides 70 per cent of the national agricultural production, being of vital importance for food security (Ormachea, 2009). Second, it is the country’s agro-business heartland where commercial relations are marked by unequal power relations between small-farmers and agribusiness elites. EMAPA provides seeds, agricultural inputs and technical assistance to small and medium producers with interest-free loans and purchases from small and medium producers rather than from the vertically integrated systems of commercialization dominated by the agribusiness sector. With a budget of US\$ 148 million in 2011 EMAPA is, by far, the most important government project underpinning the modernization of agricultural production (Ministerio de Desarrollo Productivo y Economía Rural, 2012)⁶. Fieldwork was carried out in Santa Cruz during April and October of 2010 and September and November 2011 and included: a) archival research, b) 56 in-depth interviews with technicians; small, medium and large producers; EMAPA representatives and technicians; agrochemical companies; research centres; and producer organizations in the cities of Santa Cruz and La Paz and the municipalities of Yapacaní, San Pedro, Cuatro Cañadas, Santa Rosa del Sará, Mineros, and San Julian, c) participant observation in meetings and training sessions for producer associations and during visits to individual farms and d) a focus group with rice producers in the municipality of Yapacani in August 2012.

The case study of EMAPA contributes to a wider analysis of states in the global South, especially the rise of the ‘New Left’ in Latin America (Argentina, Bolivia, Ecuador, Nicaragua and Venezuela) and its room for manoeuvre to develop alternatives to neoliberal globalization (Grugel and Riggirozzi, 2012). In the course of the 20th century, several Latin American countries have espoused strong state intervention and control of agricultural production and commercialisation to meet the domestic demand for food. In some cases, marketing boards operate as a monopoly, purchasing all production and controlling exports (Araóz, 1983). The National Rice Company (*Empresa Nacional del Arroz* – ENA)

5 The New Bolivian Constitution (approved in February 2009) in its article 16 recognized access to food as a fundamental right of the population. The *Suma Qamaña* or Living Well is also recognized in the Bolivian constitution as an ethical and moral principle of society, assumed and promoted by the state (Bolivian constitution 2009 - Chapter 2, Article 8). The Ministry of Development Planning defined the concept as follows: ‘[Living Well] is the access and enjoyment of material goods in harmony with nature and people. It is the human dimension of emotional and spiritual fulfilment. People do not live in isolation but in a family, social and natural environment. One cannot live well if others live badly or if we destroy nature’ (Ministerio de Planificación del Desarrollo, 2009)

6 The budget includes support for small farmer agriculture (credits and purchases) as well as infrastructure and commercialization.

established in 1972 is one such example (Ossio, 1977). A dominant approach to analysing state intervention has conceptualized the state as an autonomous sphere with exclusive control over people and territory, such that its actions are often beyond the reach of societal actors (Stepan, 1978; Mann, 1984; Skocpol and Amenta, 1986). Recent developments, however, cannot be understood within this framework. Since the mid-1980s state intervention in rural development has declined as a marked process of liberalization took hold. In addition, the dynamics of the MAS government and the implementation of neocollectivism can only be understood in relation to the wider social formation. In this study we undertake a strategic-relational analysis (Jessop, 2008) in which the capacity of the state to intervene does not simply depend on the nature of its apparatus but results from strategies and interactions with different actors and forces that lie beyond the state. Thus, state intervention cannot be analysed in isolation but must take into account the state's changing articulations with different forces in civil society since power relations within society influence the state and are in turn influenced by state power (Jessop, 2008; Cannon and Kirby, 2012). In our analysis of EMAPA, we examine several interrelated aspects of state intervention a) the mechanisms of governance employed by the state to meet its goals (strategies); b) the capacity of the MAS government to formulate and implement alternative views on agrarian production and its independence from actors who may hinder the fulfilment of its objectives; c) the interaction with civil society to carry out these alternatives and compete with dominant agro-business elites; and d) the shaping of technological agricultural trajectories by shifting state policies (Jansen, 2003; Toleubayev *et al.*, 2010; Novo *et al.*, 2011). In our analysis, we attribute agency not only to individuals but also to collective actors.

Although this chapter mainly addresses the actions of the Bolivian state in a public enterprise such as EMAPA, the next section first discusses how 'neocollectivism' has become embedded in political discourse in Bolivia. As EMAPA aims to change the agrarian structure, the third section outlines two periods in the historical formation of the Santa Cruz agrarian structure. The fourth section describes the practices of EMAPA by focusing on four mechanisms of governance. The two final sections analyse the outcomes of neocollectivism in terms of contrasting images of agricultural modernization, state-civil society relations and state capacity. To conclude, we argue that the MAS government has been unable to develop an independent alternative to that of the agro-industrial elites and the agribusiness model owing to the complex relationship between the state and civil society that influences state capacity and its technological vision. On the contrary, EMAPA's current intervention serves to strengthen rather than weaken dependency ties between supported producers and the agro-industrial sector.

Neocollectivism despite its Critics

Bolivian neocollectivism as a political alternative to neoliberalism was promoted in particular by the faction of MAS led by vice president García-Linera. This intellectual and leftist activist was receptive to new forms of socialism which combined Quechua and Aymara visions⁷. In January 2006, when the MAS government rose to power, García-Linera outlined his concept of ‘Amazonian Andean capitalism’ in *Le Monde Diplomatique* as follows:

Amazonian Andean capitalism is the construction of a strong state that regulates the expansion of the industrial economy, extracts the surplus and transfers it to the community to promote forms of self-organization and the development of their own market in the indigenous communities (García-Linera, 2006).

According to García-Linera, Amazonian Andean capitalism is a temporary and transitory mode but one which is necessary to develop socialism or communism in Bolivia (García-Linera, 2008a, 2008b; Lora, 2005). The notion was further developed in the MAS government’s second term program (MAS–IPSP, 2010), which proposed an ‘industrial jump’ to industrialize agrarian production, the inclusion of Bolivia in the modern Western project and the reduction of poverty. It implied that state companies should be attached to and directed by the state during a first phase and later transferred to social organizations with a collective interest (agrarian unions, communities, associations) in the form of communitarian companies (MAS IPSP, 2010). García-Linera’s main argument for a state-led ‘modernization’ project lies in the potential he sees it as holding to transform the economic hierarchy of the neoliberal period characterized by a high level of participation of foreign companies and by agribusiness development (García-Linera, 2012).

A first group of critics of García-Linera’s line of thinking defends the neoliberal model claiming that experience worldwide indicates that productive transformation has rarely occurred with a significant state presence, whereas the ‘dynamic private’ sector unleashed during the neoliberalism period has proved effective for the economy and for the competitiveness of the country (Arias, 2011; Molina and Oporto, 2011). This criticism omits the negative impact of neoliberal politics on food security and food sovereignty (Pérez, 2008).

⁷ Quechua and Aymara people, located in the Andean highlands and valleys, are the two most important indigenous groups in Bolivia.

A second group of critics consists of indigenous movements and researchers, many of them from within the MAS government itself. As an alternative to García-Lineras' model, they contemplate a more sustainable and 'de-colonized' rural development as reflected in the concept of 'Living Well'. Researchers from this viewpoint criticize the priority given to an extractive and industrialized agriculture, the commoditization of agriculture and the export of raw materials. They consider these processes to contradict the principles of 'Living Well' and to be similar to the 'extractivism' promoted by the capitalist state in the 1970s (Gudynas, 2010; Albó, 2011; Pacheco, 2011; Soliz, 2011). The two most important indigenous movements, the Confederation of Indigenous People of Bolivia (CIDOB) and the Council of Ayllus and Markas of the Qullasuyu (CONAMAQ), see the proposed neocollectivism as an imposition on indigenous practices and as a restriction on indigenous participation and autonomy.

Finally, a third group of critics consists of left-wing intellectuals who point out the limited impact of the proposed land reform which hardly affects landowners nor facilitates peasantization. They argue that state policies which support agrarian capitalism in Santa Cruz department reduce the significance of peasant production and cannot be considered as a real alternative for rural transformation (Orellana, 2006; Ormachea, 2008, 2009).

Despite these critics, the MAS government has proceeded to implement neocollectivism, transferring the economic surplus of strategic sectors (hydrocarbons, mining, electricity and environment) to financing social policies (for conditional cash transfers) and to sectors which generate income and employment (manufacturing, farming, tourism, etc.) thereby reducing poverty (Córdoba and Jansen, 2014). Between 2006 and 2010 the MAS government nationalized 12 companies which had been privatized during the neoliberal period and created 18 new state companies defined as 'strategic' for the country (including companies for processing coca, citrus, dairy, palmettos, almonds, basic foods, agricultural fertilizers, seeds, paper and cardboard). It has started to develop new projects in iron and steel, metallurgical and sugar production. Within the same period, state participation in the economy grew from 16 per cent to 34 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product (García-Linera, 2012b).

The Formation of Agrarian Classes in Santa Cruz

MAS neocollectivism confronted a long process of agrarian class formation. We distinguish two different formative periods.

The capitalist state (1953-1985) and national agribusiness elites

Peasants and indigenous people of the Andes (highlands and valleys) played a leading role in the ‘Agrarian Revolution’ of 1952, expelling large landowners and occupying and dividing their haciendas (Ormachea, 2008). After the revolution, the government directed by the *Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario* (MNR, Nationalist Revolutionary Movement) implemented a series of reforms to accelerate capitalist development. Firstly, the MNR encouraged individual ownership of land, as opposed to Indian and collective forms of land tenure (*ayllus*), and the establishment of agrarian unions (*sindicatos*) as the legitimate representatives of the heterogeneous rural population before the state. Rivera (1990) argues that the unions were a top-down MNR project to ‘civilize’ the Indians and redefine them as ‘campesinos’ to promote ‘mestizaje’ in the country. Over time, the unions established a ‘pact’ with the state to channel their demands directly (García-Linera *et al.* 2005). Secondly, in line with the wider continental trend, MNR adopted an import substitution strategy with a strong state presence in the economy and industrial development, and an emphasis on the expansion of the internal market (Ormachea 2008; Prado *et al.* 2007; Valdivia 2010). MNR liberal reforms, seen as an essential part of a comprehensive agro-industrial project, targeted the eastern part of the country (lowlands), especially the department of Santa Cruz, assuming that the region possessed useless land (*tierras baldias*) and unproductive estates. The state encouraged and strengthened agro-industry through public investment (with US support) in machinery, infrastructure and credit, in particular for sugar cane and cotton cultivation (Ossio, 1977).⁸

MNR policies played a fundamental role in creating two new agrarian classes in the lowlands (Urioste and Kay, 2005; Gustafson, 2006; Soruco 2008; Valdivia, 2010). First, former *hacendados* were turned into capitalist entrepreneurs, mainly Cruceños and Paceños (from Santa Cruz and La Paz cities respectively) with strong links to political power. These new entrepreneurial farmers engaged in rather extensive agriculture in this period: mainly sugar cane, cotton, livestock and forest exploitation. This so-called Cruceño elite obtained large extensions of land and state support for agricultural production. However, the Cruceño elite were in fact more urban and agro-industrial than rural and agricultural. They not only exercised power in the departmental government, but also through gremial organizations such as the Agricultural Chamber of Commerce of Eastern Bolivia (CAO) and the Chamber of Industry and Trade of Santa Cruz (CAINCO).

8 Classical problems such as very low levels of return on public investments, along with indiscriminate land donations as political favours, especially during the government of President Banzer, have been reported (Soruco, 2008).

Second, the ‘March to the East’ politics encouraged peasants and indigenous people from the Andes (Quechua and Aymara ethnic groups) to migrate to the lowlands and become farmers, thereby extending the agricultural frontier, or to become part of a cheap labour force for the rising agro-industry (Ormachea, 2008).⁹ These colonists or ‘small farmers’, referred to as ‘Kollas’ (pejorative), received relatively little state support, infrastructure and land (less than 50 has per farmer).¹⁰ The National Colonization Institute (INC) distributed individual plots of between 30 and 50 has to colonists in the two largest state-sponsored frontier settlements of Andean migrants: Yapacani in the North of Santa Cruz, and San Julian to the East (Fifer, 1982). This planned colonization was followed by a spontaneous colonization process, comprising eventually at least 80 per cent of new agricultural settlements since the revolution of 1952 (Fifer, 1982). Both government and ‘spontaneous’ forms of colonization were largely based on individual land tenure, cultivating rice and corn for the national market. Copying the peasant organizational structure of the Andes, ‘small farmers’ organized themselves into class-based ‘agrarian unions’ (*sindicatos agrarios*) to address the lack of state support and to facilitate colonization and land titling. At the national level these unions were grouped into two major confederations: the *Confederación Sindical Única de Trabajadores de Bolivia* (the Sole Union Confederation of Bolivian Peasant Workers, or CSUTCB) and the *Confederación Sindical de Comunidades Interculturales de Bolivia* (the Union Confederation of Intercultural Communities of Bolivia, or CSCIB). At the local level, these unions organized the territory and demanded public services in the new colonization zones¹¹.

Neoliberalism (1985-2005) and multinational capital

In the mid-1980s, the capitalist state gave way to neoliberalism, reconfiguring the territory and agricultural production and changing the landscape of the lowlands. The axis of change was the soy boom, made possible by the combination of a favourable global market for soy, neoliberal reforms —deregulation of markets, and privatization of nearly all large state companies— and development intervention. The Eastern Lowlands Project promoted and financed by the World Bank (World Bank 1997), invested in silos, processing facilities, roads and technical assistance, as well as land-use planning (Killeen *et al.* 2008). It provided the

9 The Interamerican Development Bank (9.1 million dollars) and USAID (2.3 million dollars) financed the “March to the East”, whereas the Bolivian government provided land valued at 10 million dollars (Suárez *et al.*, 2010)

10 “Small farmer” often refers to the origin of the farmer (a migrant from the highlands) than to farm size. According to ANAPO, a small farmer in Santa Cruz has up to 50 has, a medium farmer between 51 and 300 has and a large farmer more than 300 has.

11 The agrarian unions are grouped into ‘centrals’ at the provincial level and into ‘federations’ at the departmental level.

infrastructure for a monoculture, export-oriented agribusiness. In addition, the formation of the Andean Community of Nations (Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia) as a free trade zone promoted tax-free exports to Colombia, the major market (Fabricant, 2010). At the beginning of the 21st century, soy is Bolivia's most important export crop, with one million hectares in Santa Cruz (52 per cent of the department's cultivable land); more than 90 per cent of which is produced in the colonization zones known as 'Integrated North' and 'Expansion Zone' (Urioste, 2010).

The soy sector consists of different types of producers but is dominated by a few capital groups. There are approximately 14,000 producers, of which 3 per cent are large producers (more than 1000 ha) who control approximately 56 per cent of the land sown with soy. Small and medium producers represent 97 per cent of all soy producers and control 45 per cent of the sown area (Suárez *et al.*, 2010). Large companies and investment funds controlled and administered the production and commercialization. In part they emerged from the Cruceño elite discussed above, but Brazilian, Colombian and Argentinian producers have become increasingly important (the first arriving in the mid-1990s, the latter more recently).¹² Foreign capital is even more important in the wider commodity chain: a few multinationals dominate industrialization, exportation and financing of soy production, whereas the Cruceño elite is only a small partner (Medeiros, 2008; Urioste, 2010).¹³ According to Urioste (2010, 2011), foreign control of land has not led to clashes as the new foreigners integrate well with the culturally heterogeneous Cruceño elite, who identify more with a cosmopolitan culture than with Andean *indigenismo*. In their view it is the Andean peasants who are the 'immigrants' rather than the Brazilian soy producers.

Multinational capital works with small as well as large producers. Financing production is a key mechanism of subsumption of smallholders (Jansen, 1998)¹⁴. Agribusiness companies offer loans for buying inputs and renting agricultural machinery, under the contractual requirement that they will receive the production (Pérez, 2007). For example, the multinational ADM SAO S.A., one of the largest soybean, corn and wheat processors in the world, allocates around US\$20 million annually as loans to smallholders to buy agricultural inputs and diesel. Contracts stipulated that ADM takes possession of the land if production is not carried out well and that the company sets the price and standard of beans harvested

12 According to Medeiros (2008), the number of large producers (who cultivate more than 1000 has) does not exceed 300, the majority of whom are Brazilian, with a powerful nucleus of no more than 100 producers with farms between 3,500 and 8,000 has.

13 Core companies are American (ADM-SAO S.A. and Cargill Bolivia), Colombian (Gravetal Bolivia), Peruvian (Industrias Aceiteras S.A.) and Bolivian (Industria Oleoginosas, Intergrain, El Productor, CAICO, CAISY and Granos del Oriente).

14 60 per cent of loans for production are financed by export and oil companies, 21 per cent by agricultural firms and only 3 per cent by formal banks (Suárez *et al.*, 2011).

(usually leading to high discounts owing to dampness or impurities). Such binding contracts lessened small producers' ability to negotiate the best price or more favourable buying conditions (Catacora, 2007; Pérez, 2007; Medeiros, 2008).

This subsumption process not only created the dependency of small producers on transnational capital for credits and markets but also set the standard for production technology. Soy is only profitable when mechanically cultivated on large plots. Producers must mechanize, use agrochemical packages to control pests, diseases and weeds, and sow high quality seeds in order to obtain a return on investments. Inputs as well as corresponding agricultural extension services are controlled by companies closely linked to transnational capital (Kaimowitz *et al.*, 2001, Urioste *et al.*, 2001; Hecht, 2005, Mackey, 2011). Public sector agricultural research and transfer is scarce and has failed to adapt to this reality. The soy sector is an example of technological monoculture (Richards, 2004) as the actors involved imagine a single technology optimum for all soy farmers (both small and large). For example, ANAPO, the organization that unites large soy producers, has publicly declared that the implementation of agricultural policies in Bolivia should focus on producers who incorporate this type of technology in their harvests (ANAPO, 2010).¹⁵

Neocollectivism: The case of EMAPA

The MAS government aimed to reverse the growing differentiation between smallholders and large-scale farming, a result of the capitalist state period, and the growing dependency on multinational capital during neoliberalism. In August 2007, the government created EMAPA with the goal of facilitating access of small producers to capital, technology and markets with a fair price. EMAPA had to modify the economic structures in the lowlands and reduce the power of agribusiness, which in turn would transform political power within the state.

The selection of sites for EMAPA intervention is politically driven. The political elites in Santa Cruz have been the strongest opponents of the Morales government. EMAPA concentrated on the department of Santa Cruz, and in particular on those territories called colonization zones where power relations between the agro-industry and 'small farmers' were very unequal (the municipalities of Yapacaní, Mineros, San Pedro, and Santa Rosa del Sara in the integrated north and San Julián and Cuatro Cañadas in the expansion zone). Of the

15 Soy modernization has been criticized for causing environmental destruction (more than a million hectares have been deforested for soy during the last 15 years). Easy and cheap access to land, low property taxes, and uncertainty in property rights (that favour a non-sustainable short-term vision), provided favourable conditions for continuous deforestation (Urioste *et al.*, 2001; Killeen *et al.*, 2008).

266,903 hectares supported by EMAPA up until 2011, 232,482 (87 per cent) are located in Santa Cruz. Figure 3.1 shows the degree of overlap between those municipalities where MAS won the local elections (in grey) and those municipalities where EMAPA has intervened (the dotted areas). According to our interpretation of the results of the last municipal elections (April 2009), EMAPA selects municipalities with a high concentration of people who identify themselves with the MAS political plan and who elected a MAS candidate as mayor. In these zones, the EMAPA government supported the production of four crops: soy, wheat, corn, and rice¹⁶. Each small farmer can request a loan for sowing up to three crops per agricultural cycle and a maximum of 80 has; 3,856 producers were supported in 2009 (figures supplied by EMAPA-Santa Cruz).

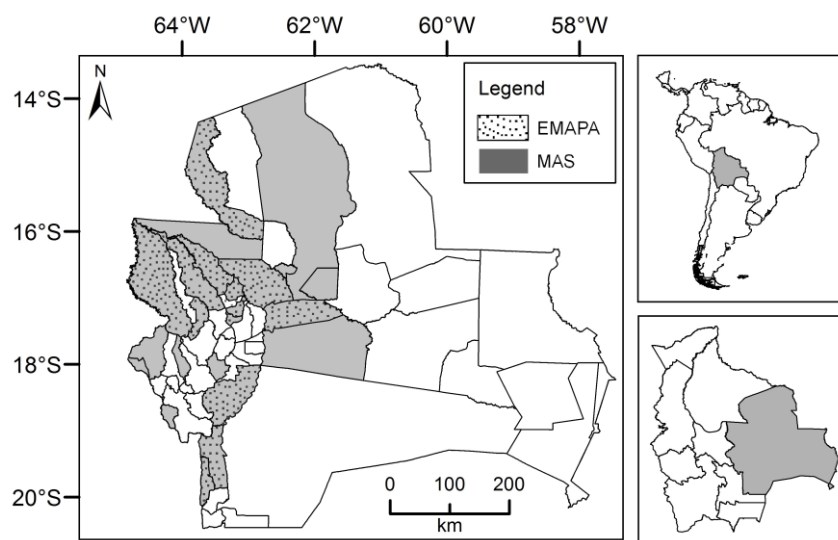


Figure 3.1 EMAPA and MAS presence in Santa Cruz

Data from the National Electoral Court of Bolivia (www.cne.org.bo) and EMAPA regional office in Santa Cruz de la Sierra.

To analyse how EMAPA has operated we distinguish four mechanisms of governance. The first one concerns the distinction made between two categories: associations of producers (groups of individual farmers) and agrarian unions (generally the political constituencies of MAS at the local level). Unions (*sindicatos*) are a collective form of local governance that channel demands directly to the state and provide new spaces of political participation to peasant communities. EMAPA engages first with agrarian unions who are in charge of putting the neocollectivist ideas to work. EMAPA requires union members to organize in

¹⁶ EMAPA supports two agricultural cycles a year: a summer cycle from October to December and a winter cycle from April to June. Soy and corn are cultivated in both cycles; rice only during the summer and wheat only during the winter.

legally constituted economic associations. These maintain a strong relationship with the unions, although not all union members are part of the associations. Associations have between 15 and 270 members (sometimes including members from two or more unions), grouping together only those producers who are able to practise commercial and mechanized agriculture. Smallholders refer to the unions as the political branch of the communities and to the associations as the economic branch. The following statement by a leader of the peasant association CAUPAIN (Head Office of the Agricultural Producers United Associations of the North) illustrates how political strategy is interwoven with technical support measures:

CAUPAIN was born from the government, from the socialism that exists right now. They were the producers whom the government launched. [...] An invitation arrived from the government for producers to form groups and associations to receive support, especially for storage and commercialization of grains. It was a program with Venezuela, if I'm not mistaken. The government would buy the grain at a fair price. The program was called TCP ALBA.¹⁷ In the past, companies paid us what they wanted and we just about covered the costs of production. A need was seen for more financing for and political strengthening of small producers. [This] was more of a political question (Interview, 11 August 2010).

This quote accentuates the political character underlying the moves to improve agricultural production. EMAPA preferred to work with newly-created associations rather than with older or more experienced groups like cooperatives and peasant economic organisations (OECAs). During the fieldwork, we recorded complaints from members of cooperatives and OECAs that EMAPA had formed these new associations along political lines, excluding those groups which did not openly support the MAS or have authorization from the unions.

MAS strategy has been to create alternative local powers in the economic sphere and to weaken already existing productive organizations. For example, the National Federation of Rice-Growing Cooperatives (FENCA)¹⁸ and the Rice Producer Association (ASPAR)¹⁹, both of which are made up of 'small producers', are affiliated to CAO and CAINCO, organizations which are politically represented and economically controlled by the Cruceño elite. Ortiz, an

17 In 2006, the MAS government formed producer associations to commercialize basic foodstuffs with the support of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America - Trade Agreement of the People (TCP-ALBA; ALBA consists of Antigua and Barbuda, Bolivia, Cuba, Dominica, Ecuador, Nicaragua, San Vincent and Grenadines and Venezuela) based on fair prices and food provisioning via the state. EMAPA expanded these earlier interventions.

18 FENCA, created in 1964, brings together 63 cooperatives and 3500 families of small and medium rice producers.

19 ASPAR, created in 1984, covers the rice producers in Santa Cruz.

agricultural researcher who is knowledgeable about FENCA, commented in an interview (16 December 2011) that a proposal which EMAPA had submitted to the government to work with producer cooperatives affiliated to FENCA had been disapproved. The president of FENCA confirmed the government's negative response to this proposed collaboration: 'Even though we (FENCA) tried, we could not have a relationship with EMAPA for political reasons. We are affiliated with CAO; all FENCA and ASPAR groups are affiliated with CAO, that's why we weren't able to work with the government through EMAPA' (Interview, 23 August 2011).

This form of exclusion was driven by the MAS national political strategy which, in this case, overruled EMAPA's proposals. EMAPA had the task of supporting those associations which belonged to the Agricultural Chamber of Small Producers of the East (CAPPO). CAPPO was set up as an alternative to CAO and CAINCO—the chambers of commerce that had historically represented the agro-industrial Cruceño elite. Through CAPPO, which defends smallholder interests, associations have gained improvements in basic productive infrastructure such as roads and the construction of silos for the storage of basic grains.

A complex pattern of politicization and de-politicization has emerged. On the one hand, unions continue 'the pact' to channel their claims directly through the state. On the other hand, the relationship between EMAPA and the associations is pictured as a 'business', a relationship which needs to be de-politicized if EMAPA is to carry out the technical requirements involved in modernizing agriculture and to ensure government access to basic grains for its urban food distribution programmes. The formation of associations allowed EMAPA to benefit from economies of scale (delivering inputs, infrastructure and services to organized groups rather than individual producers). One EMAPA official interviewed thought that *unions* 'are very politicized' and 'are moved more by political than productive interests'. Interestingly, those union leaders interviewed shared this view and added that since not all producers in a community receive EMAPA's support, the selection of potential beneficiaries can cause conflict amongst members and distract organizations from their political claims. In sum, not unlike the Lesotho case described by Ferguson (1990), the MAS government turned development into a technical problem by supporting EMAPA's focus on associations rather than unions. EMAPA's exclusion of subsistence producers (19 per cent of rice producers in Santa Cruz) and farmers without land can be seen as one result of this de-politicization. On the other hand, as described earlier, the selection of sites where EMAPA intervenes as well as the organization of associations into alternative chambers of commerce were politicized acts of intervention.

A second mechanism of governance has been the diffusion of a collective vision to promote social cohesion among the associations. This collective vision sought counter the atomization of agricultural production engrained in the unions and to facilitate the creation of community enterprises in the near future (García-Linera, 2012b). A main instrument for

achieving this consists of what EMAPA calls the ‘social guarantee’ (*garantía social*). Producers cannot obtain access to EMAPA’s resources without the support of an association that acts as guarantor. Should a producer default, the whole association is burdened with the debt and is entitled to rent or auction the debtor’s land (interview with Ordoñez, EMAPA employee, 7 October 2010). The social guarantee was introduced to give associations ‘an incentive’ to form a collective vision which enables the group to exercise social control over its members. Where associations meet their commitments with EMAPA, they can more easily negotiate additional resources for new productive infrastructure. In vice-president García-Linera’s view, associations, when formed into communitarian enterprises, will eventually be able to manage these productive infrastructures which strengthen local production (García-Linera, 2012). If, on the other hand, an association should default through one of its members not paying, it is ‘punished’ and excluded from EMAPA support in the following agricultural cycle. This at least is the case in theory, as some associations have been able to reschedule their debts with EMAPA and thus continue to receive support.

A third mechanism of governance works to make producers dependent on EMAPA by means of offering a ‘fair price’ (i.e. higher price than market value) for their production. By offering a higher price, the government seeks several goals. First, higher prices improve the livelihoods of small producers. Second, it forces the agribusiness sector to revise its prices and improve the terms of their commercialization contracts with small-farmers. García-Linera (2009) regards EMAPA as a strategy to break with the mechanisms of patronage and subordination in Santa Cruz and sees the sale of produce to EMAPA by smallholders as evidence of a successful new alliance between state and producer. Producers are attracted by receiving 15 per cent more than the market price. For example, in 2009, producers sold rice to EMAPA at US\$ 57 per bag, while the agro-industry paid only US\$ 37. Higher prices are also an incentive for producers to sell their production to EMAPA rather than to agribusiness markets in order to repay any outstanding debts with EMAPA. Fourth, the produce captured by offering higher prices goes on sale in EMAPA’s own stores in popular neighbourhoods in cities, rural communities and towns to contribute to national food security with sovereignty²⁰.

Finally, the fourth and most important mechanism of governance concerns the way in which EMAPA organizes the supply of inputs and technical assistance to ‘small producers’. By supplying diesel, the MAS government makes sure that producers mechanize their lands and use the appropriate seeds and agrochemicals. Moreover, the technical services aim to direct and monitor the different stages of the productive process and the correct use of inputs. EMAPA extends state support for agricultural activities to places where it was previously

20 In 2010 EMAPA supplied 462 sales centres in the whole country; 22 were state property and 440 were private property.

non-existent. Offering credits with zero per cent interest puts EMAPA in a stronger position with respect to agroindustry and other suppliers of similar services.

EMAPA Shaping Images of Agrarian Modernization

An assessment of the prospects of neocollectivism requires a discussion of the capacity of EMAPA to transform the local agrarian structure and construct an alternative modernization process. This section discusses the view of modernization central to EMAPA's programme and then reflects on the reception of collective approaches versus individualist approaches and the creation of new technological dependencies.

Adopting the dominant image of agrarian modernization

On several occasions, Evo Morales has blamed capitalism for fomenting an industrialization process which destroys nature (Los Tiempos, 2010). In October 2012, the MAS government enacted the 'Law of Mother Earth and Integral Development' inspired by the indigenous values of 'Living Well'. This law aims to promote an 'integral development' model that balances the exploitation of natural resources with the rights of mother earth (El Deber, 2012). In principle, this model conflicts with that of Cruceño agrarian capitalism and its image of agricultural modernization based on 'Green Revolution' principles: new crop varieties, agrochemicals and machinery. This vision is well captured in the documentary 'Histories of successful migrants in the Agro-Cruceño' produced by the Bolivian Institute of Foreign Commerce in 2010 and supported by CAO and CAINCO, two organizational structures of the Cruceño elite. This documentary depicts the Santa Cruz department as a land of opportunities, drawing on the testimonies of 33 indigenous migrants from the highlands who overcame poverty and went on to become important agricultural producers in Santa Cruz. A typical account is that of Jacinto Arellano, who arrived from Oruro (in the western part of the country):

Poverty was all that he brought in his pockets, even though his heart was full of hope. The 'promised land', as Santa Cruz is called even now, was what fed his hope for better days. *Determination* and *hard work* did the rest. Almost four decades after his arrival on Cruceño soil, Jacinto is now just one agricultural producer among many in Santa Cruz, with thousands of hectares, a good fleet of vehicles and his own agricultural machinery (author's emphasis).

The documentary tells a story of agricultural modernization based on large tracts of lands, mechanization and high chemical inputs, reproducing the illusion that natural resources, especially land, are infinite and available in sufficient quantity for everyone. Those producers who did not succeed either lacked determination or did not work hard enough.

Paradoxically EMAPA's propaganda has systematically adopted and reinforced the Cruceño model of intensive agriculture as the way forward. An example is the photo of President Evo Morales which appears in EMAPA's promotional literature (Figure 3.2). Morales is shown wearing a blue poncho, representing the indigenous Aymaras of the Altiplano, driving a tractor (a symbol of success) with, in the background, a field of intensive rice cultivation, the principal crop of small producers in the lowlands. Morales used this image when visiting rural communities in Cochabamba and Santa Cruz during his 2009 re-election campaign. When asked about its significance, Morales responded: 'This big tractor sends out a message that the national government will guarantee food security and sovereignty, that we produce our own food' (Macher 2009).

The view of mechanization as the way to achieve food security with sovereignty was underlined in the program of the MAS government's second term. The Plan highlighted how during its first term in office, MAS had allocated 1,661 tractors, 20 combine harvesters and 40 grain drillers to producer organizations and communities as an important step towards the industrialization of agrarian production (MAS IPSP 2010).



Figure 3.2 President Evo Morales in EMAPA's promotional literature

Our field data reveal how small farmers themselves have adopted and believe in this model as the standard for success (Richards, 2004) and see EMAPA as the means to achieve it. For instance, Huaylla, a producer from San Pedro, stated:

Now our vision is to form a small business so as to sustain ourselves as a small unit of producers, God willing, [within] 4 or 5 years from now, because Evo will not be in government for his whole life. Maybe he will stay 5 or 10 more years, but after that the right might topple him. This would affect us because we don't want to produce basic grains [of low quality], but high quality, selected grains for export (Interview, 12 August 2010).

Carballo, in Santa Rosa del Sara, echoed Huaylla's wishes: 'We, as a family, have other objectives, trying to grow agriculturally, and even trying to save and industrialize in order to be able to export' (Interview, 25 April 2010). Such farmer narratives reflect the desire to industrialize and improve quality and quantity in order to export as way of achieving higher profits from agricultural production. Producers see governmental support as an opportunity to shift production and gain access to export markets.

Both EMAPA and small producers seemingly share the view that the only way to compete with the agro-industrial power of the Cruceño elite and the multinational companies is by adopting their model of agricultural modernization. This involves directly increasing productivity through technical assistance and inputs (pesticides, fertilizers, seeds) as well as converting existing forests into land for the production of basic grains and oilseeds. As yet, EMAPA has not been concerned with advocating sustainable technological alternatives based on the concepts of food sovereignty and 'Living Well', claims of indigenous and peasant movements. Furthermore, EMAPA's objectives of meeting domestic food demands first and achieving food security conflict with the export orientation of both small-producers and the Cruceño elite. The MAS government has confronted the aspirations of the Cruceño elite by restricting the export of some products (among them soy).

Technological dependency

Based on the Cruceño model of agrarian modernization, EMAPA has spent a large part of its budget intervening (mainly through credit and technical services) in places where the state had not been present before. However, it has only been able to set up a relatively small organization. In 2011, EMAPA-Santa Cruz had only nine outreach workers providing technical assistance, covering on average 11,000 has while the recommendation is for one outreach worker to cover 3,000 has. In addition these technicians undertake administrative

tasks, verify planting areas, carry out geo-referencing of land and provide support for the formation of producer associations. Apart from its limited capacity to provide technical assistance, the state has no special technology to offer. As a result of neoliberal policies, the national system of agricultural research was dismantled. For example, seed certification services were co-opted by the agro-industry sector and many technical services were put in the hands of NGOs or market actors. Hence, notwithstanding its aim of developing a political and economic alternative, EMAPA is almost entirely dependent for the supply of technology on the despised agro-industry controlled by Cruceño and international capital.

EMAPA has tried to control the provision of technology by entering into contracts. It selected 25 agro-chemical companies to supply agro-chemical inputs; in 2009, 10 of these companies signed a 'supply of agricultural inputs contract'.²¹ The producer associations are responsible for choosing which of these companies they want to work with. The contract specifies the inputs, the price, and the kind of technical assistance. This technical assistance consists of a monthly or bimonthly visit to the field (the frequency depends on the size of the association) and three training sessions per agricultural cycle. A technician, accompanied by a representative from the particular association, visits an average of 20 producers a day. Most visits involve a quick visit to the crop site with recommendations for chemical controls to be carried out. The technician takes photographs to monitor progress and to provide a record of the visit. In turn, legal representatives of the associations monitor how the agrochemical companies do their job. Representatives of these companies indicated that thanks to EMAPA's intervention they have been able to expand their markets to small farmers. The transaction costs of reaching these farmers used to be too high but their organization into associations means that they can now reach this new customer group.

A major contentious issue arising out of the contracts has been the embedded technological package. Before each campaign, EMAPA technicians, representatives of the producer associations and of the agro-chemical companies define the input package, based on the availability of products stocked by these companies. EMAPA simplifies the agricultural package offered by grouping them into three types, according to region of intervention (the north, the northeast and east zone). In rice, for example, the standard package only targets a mechanized system of non-irrigated land. This system, however, has been characterized as inadequate owing to poor soil tillage practices, inadequate pest control and indiscriminate use of pesticides (Ortiz *et al.*, 2007). These agricultural packages are an example of 'simplification' in the sense of Scott (1998) as they reduce the complex reality of farming systems to a single standard. Producers indicated that they would like to have the option of

21 These companies were: Guaraní Agriculture Defensive, Mega Agro, Agro-impulse, Artist Life Science, Agro-Bolivia, Agroinco, Agropartners, AGRIPAC, FABIMAC, and AI Group.

returning unneeded inputs. The agro-chemical companies would like to be able to make different recommendations when new problems arise (disease, pests, and climatic events).

The agro-chemical companies find the contracts with EMAPA excessively rigid as they cannot adapt sales to needs nor sell more than specified. Some producers interviewed commented that agro-chemical companies make technical recommendations with the sole purpose of getting the producer to apply agro-chemicals and consume the whole standard package on offer. Five technicians, from four different companies, agreed in interviews that this practice did occur (though not in their companies). The EMAPA employees interviewed are conscious of overdosing and inconsistencies in the productive package: ‘What we have seen is that some companies try to get the farmer to overdose. There are [crop protection] products that are very expensive: an increase in dosage from 100 to 200 ml [of a product in an application] changes the production costs’ (interview, 15 May 2010). According to EMAPA, making contracts more flexible by allowing inputs to be adjusted to the needs of individual producers, would be practically impossible. Each change or return of product would require approval by the central office in the city of La Paz, plus verification by an EMAPA technician: EMAPA serves approximately 3800 producers in Santa Cruz. The EMAPA manager in Santa Cruz explained that EMAPA simplifies farming systems into three intervention zones because of the lack of administrative capacity and financial resources.

Since the capacity of EMAPA is limited, it can only work with very simplified technological packages and is, in fact, completely dependent on the input industry for specifying the technologies to be used. Producer associations are likewise placed in an unequal relationship with agro-chemical companies; not just because of differences in capital but also because producers may lack knowledge of the proposed agrochemicals and have little means of challenging these companies’ technical recommendations. Thus, many producers feel they are forced to sell or exchange these inputs to pay their debts with EMAPA. This shows that technology not only has the power to emancipate as stressed by Ribot and Peluso (2003) but also to deepen dependency ties. The lack of an alternative proposal to the dominant model of agricultural modernization together with inappropriate technical advice, low quality inputs and expensive, oversimplified agriculture packages weaken the position of small producers in relation to other actors in the agro-food chain. EMAPA’s attempts to break dependency ties on agro-industry and weaken its power may backfire. In this case, it is control over input delivery and technology rather than capital or land which is crucial.

Collective versus individual visions

Neocollectivism faces the challenge of surmounting the contradiction between a commitment to collective strategies in which associations may potentially become

communitarian enterprises, and individual aspirations. Mamani, a leader of an association expresses a typical justification for upholding a collective vision: ‘A stronger association has greater decision-making power to confront EMAPA and the *aceiteras* [oil companies], individually this is very difficult (interview, 13 August 2010). Interestingly the collectivist vision presented by Mamani is seen as strengthening their hand not only with the dominant agro-industry but with EMAPA/the state itself. While we have not researched this quantitatively, field data suggest that those who defend a collective vision are often leaders with strong links to the MAS party and small producers who do not have access to credit from agro-industry as they lack the necessary collateral; for these producers EMAPA is the only source of support. According to this viewpoint, the association acting as a collective force is the only way to improve market options. On the other hand, those association members with more land and resources and strong ties to agro-industry may harbour individual ambitions to become profitable by the Cruceño agrarian capitalism model, possibly drawing on resources provided by EMAPA to do so.

One bone of contention is the ‘social guarantee’. This was a recurring theme in the meetings we attended as most associations are indebted to EMAPA. (In 2011 of the 45 associations supported by EMAPA only one is free from financial obligations). In these meetings, representatives of associations often highlighted the disadvantages of being ‘excluded’ from EMAPA and from other government support, such as road construction, storage facilities and processing plants. Although most people agreed to pay the debts fearing that otherwise the government would legally enforce the ‘social guarantee’ and seize their land, some voices argued that ‘the money is ours’, ‘this money is from Evo’ or ‘in the end I think we are going to write off these loans, as the government has done before’. Associations participating in EMAPA have been strong supporters of President Evo Morales and the MAS party. The politicization of the debt issue by linking it to the larger political project of MAS may hinder EMAPA’s ability to collect outstanding loans.

Besides the political, collectivist resistance to debt repayment, EMAPA also faces individual acts of evasion. Interviewees acknowledged that it was better to sell part of their production to agro-industry in order to avoid EMAPA debt (since this must be paid in kind rather than cash). Some argued that they preferred to sell to agro-industry because the buying process is much faster (no long queues to deliver the product). Others wanted to invest in machinery or farm improvements or just solve a farm crisis. For example, rice producer Huaylla admitted that he had sold part of his production on the ‘black market’ (agro-industry) because he needed the money to recover from a bad harvest; he now owes EMAPA 42,000 Bolivians (approx. US\$6,100).

The social guarantee and debt issue indicate that EMAPA’s attempt to separate the functional (de-politicized) associations from the unions who form political constituencies of MAS is not yet complete. In 2010, after strong pressure from those producer associations

directly related to the MAS network, EMAPA rescheduled debts and set a new deadline of 2012 for debt cancellation. It remains unclear whether EMAPA will be able to develop the mechanisms to enforce payment of debts.

State-Civil Society Relations and EMAPA's Capacity to Intervene in Rural Development

An important challenge for neocollectivism is to develop an alternative to bureaucratic and inefficient state services which have been the subject of neoliberal criticism. This has not been an easy task, mainly because the state has lacked the capacity, implementation failures on the part of EMAPA, and tensions with different civil society actors, including agro business elites.

EMAPA's intervention is characterized by a centralized and inefficient decision-making process as well as a lack of capacity in infrastructure and technical advice. EMAPA's service delivery is often held up because of the time taken to reach a decision. For example, in 2009 some producers received seed too late for the planting season. The head of the unit of inputs of EMAPA in Santa Cruz timidly gave the following reason for slowness in input delivery:

Applications and folders from each association must pass across at least 30 desks to obtain approval, expenditure, and purchase.

A technician added:

EMAPA is too centralized. Santa Cruz manages 80 per cent of what EMAPA does. The centre should be here, but it is not, it is in La Paz. All the decision makers are in La Paz. We have to send all the papers to La Paz and some get lost on the way (interview, 03 December 2010).

EMAPA has also not been able to set up completely the infrastructure needed for storage and processing. During the rice harvest of 2009, long lines of trucks waited for more than three weeks to unload their rice in front of EMAPA's facilities. Desperate producers expressed concern about damage to their production arising from the loss of moisture in the grain. They remained because they needed to pay off their debt to EMAPA even though they would have preferred to sell to private companies. Producers also commented on instances of corruption by EMAPA technicians who sought bribes in return for speeding up the reception of their harvest. This situation forced EMAPA to rent silos and processing plants from the traditional agro-industry.

The associations, like the unions, have contested these failures. On more than one occasion, they have blocked the principal highway linking Santa Cruz with Cochabamba and La Paz to show their discontent and to pressure for changes in EMAPA's intervention. Among other changes, these protests have led to the resignation of the minister of rural development and to a revision of EMAPA's purchase prices (Villarroel, 2008).

The complex process of politicization and depoliticization proposed by the MAS government to facilitate the implementation of neocollectivism has caused discontent among the associations. According to them, EMAPA officials come to these meetings with a pre-prepared technical plan without any intention of adopting suggestions from the associations. During a meeting between EMAPA and an association in the town of San Pedro, a peasant leader energetically showed his displeasure as follows:

They invite us to participate, but they present plans without any attempt at joint planning. We read the plans but they do not take our views into consideration at all. It should not be like this if we are real partners. Planning should be agreed on, without military instruction, with participation. The minister should be invited to attend these planning meetings (fieldwork notes, October 2011).

The reference to the minister in this quote is particularly interesting. At this meeting, the minister, owing to her rural background and union history, was seen as the person who really knew the farmers' problems. Technicians meanwhile are seen as adopting a rigid (military) position and depoliticizing the participatory process. Despite threatening to end their relationship with EMAPA, most small producers are not demanding a withdrawal of the state. On the contrary, farmers' demands are for greater participation of the state in the regulation of food prices, an improvement of agricultural services or the expansion of EMAPA's support to producers not yet covered by the programme (Energy Press, 2012)

The most critical backlash from civil society came in early 2011 when the MAS government withdrew the fuel subsidy in a measure known as the '*gasolinazo*' (big fuel). Food prices shot up and cities suffered from food shortages and speculation. Mass mobilization across the country pressured the MAS government to withdraw this measure. In the aftermath of these mobilizations, EMAPA changed its role from that of supporter of food production to that of importer and intermediary so as to ensure the supply and distribution of food. These new functions which exceeded EMAPA's capacity to carry them out might even have deepened the food crisis. Merchants organized in *gremios* (guilds) and urban supporters of the MAS government protested in the streets demanding EMAPA's closure. These actions generated intense debate on the role of EMAPA in food security and sovereignty and on its economic viability (Arias, 2011; García-Linera, 2012b).

The '*gasolinazo*' demonstrated how the complex relationship between state and civil society actors, including the agro-industrial elites, contested and shaped neocollectivism. The agro-industrial elite saw the crisis as an opportunity to cut back state intervention in agricultural production. CAO and CAINCO warned of a new food crisis if export restrictions, state interference in price controls and in oil production continued (El Dia, 2011). The MAS government was forced to enter into a 'new productive alliance' with agro-industrial elites to bring down domestic food prices. By entering into this alliance, the government abandoned its confrontational posture towards this sector and promised financial support and legal security for their land. This change in MAS' radical discourse will not necessarily lead to the demise of neocollectivism nor erode the influence of neoliberalism in agrarian modernization (Cannon and Kirby, 2012). It can be better seen as part of a 'state in transformation' (Jessop, 2008) in which the state's room for manoeuvre depends on continuous interaction with its local constituencies and on a variety of forces in society, especially those strengthened during the era of neoliberalism. The outcome will also depend on the capacity of the MAS government to present an alternative model of agrarian modernization, which does not rely on technological dependence on agro-industrial elites.

Conclusions

This chapter has examined the most important attempt by the MAS government in Bolivia to shift from a neoliberal to a neocollectivist agrarian development. To do this, EMAPA had to become the cornerstone of an alternative agrarian structure which would undermine the power of the Santa Cruz-based agro-industrial capital. This new state company had to forge a productive alliance between the state and small producers organized in associations, and integrate production into larger state networks to increase food security with sovereignty.

We conclude that the results of this state intervention have been marginal and that it has reproduced dependency relationships with agro-industrial capital. The implementation of neocollectivism in Bolivia has been shaped by the new complexities in state-civil society relations that emerged during neoliberalism. First, the dominant position of agro industry and its control of technology (seeds, agrochemicals, technical knowledge) and markets constrain state capacity, forcing the state to rely on resources and services controlled by agro-industrial capital. Second, the MAS government has been unable to develop alternatives to the technological monoculture and the industrialized form of production imagined and driven by agro-industrial capital. Paradoxically, it has facilitated rather than hindered the integration of small producers into this internationalizing agro-industrial complex. The agricultural companies set the standards for which inputs to use and which practices, services and technological packages to adopt. It undermines the MAS government intention of recovering

state's sovereignty of the food regime. Third, the government's aim to create associations with a collective vision has led to tensions within these associations. The politics of a collective vision to confront the power of agribusiness regularly clashes with the vision of individual entrepreneurship favoured in a capitalist economy in which growing numbers of small producers develop strong ties with the agro-industry for credit and services, using EMAPA as a transitional stage for access to resources.

We selected EMAPA as an interesting case of rural transformation targeting changes in the class structure and pattern of class domination which prevailed in Santa Cruz, a centre of dynamic agro-industrial capitalism. The part played by the state in developing alternatives to neoliberal capitalism deserves more scholarly attention, whether perceived as complementary to or as an alternative to the multiple calls for endogenous, local level initiatives for food sovereignty. The state's limited room for manoeuvre to advance neocollectivism appears to result from the complexities in the relations between a 'state in transformation' and civil society. Nevertheless, the MAS government has extended the state's presence and welfare programmes to places and people where it previously did not exist. One major unresolved problem, however, concerns the relationship between technology and politics. The MAS government has encouraged moments of politicization whereby agricultural production is politicized and the goal is set to change the particular agrarian structure of Santa Cruz. At the same time, intervention in agricultural production has its de-politicizing moments as EMAPA also seeks to increase economic and technical efficiency (although not always with success), for example by separating the associations from the unions. This case study shows that the balance between politicization and de-politicization, and the interaction between shifts in political power and technical progress are not yet fully understood or well handled.

Chapter 4

The Malleability of Participation: The politics of agricultural research under Neoliberalism in Bolivia



Source: Diana Córdoba, 2012

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Abstract

This chapter analyses how neoliberal restructuring encouraged the use of participatory methods in agricultural research in Bolivia and how, at a later stage, participatory development initiatives had to be adapted to prevent conflicts with the post-neoliberal views of farmer organisations. This chapter contributes to the debate on the normalization of participatory methods in agrarian development. Engaging with Foucault's work on governmentality and neoliberalism our analysis goes beyond interpretations of participation which conceptualize it exclusively as a technology of power to discipline subjects. Drawing on a distinction between a liberal and a neoliberal moment in the restructuring of agricultural research, we study the case of PROINPA (Foundation for the Promotion and Research of Andean Products) a national NGO that was once part of the state system for agricultural research but was then privatized. Although PROINPA employed participation mainly to enhance managerial effectiveness, it also facilitated moments of participation from below. We argue that participation designed by this type of NGO is not just 'technical' as PROINPA professionals would like to perceive it, nor is it simply 'political' as critical views on participation hold. Instead it is malleable in the sense that each actor is involved in finding a new balance between technical, economic and political considerations.

Introduction

Neoliberal restructuring and the popular protests it gives rise to can have a marked impact on agricultural research and farmers' participation therein. Recent history in Bolivia provides an instructive case. Inspired by popular protest against water privatization (Water War) in Cochabamba (Assies, 2003), the coca farmer blockades in Chapare region (Albó, 2003), and the 'Gas War' (Perrault, 2007), peasants under the leadership of Felipe Quispe and the Pachakuti Movement invaded several agricultural research stations (Patacamaya station in August 2002, Kallutaca and Huayrocondo stations in September and October of 2003, and Belén station in 2004; El Diario, 2003, 2004, 2005). Gene banks of important crops and animals (including Andean camelids –llamas and alpacas) were attacked and documents and passport databases were lost, making it impossible to continue with any on-station research (Coca, 2010; Quispe, 2005). The resulting material damage came on top of already declining state support for research stations and led to a de facto dismantling and decay of infrastructure, machinery and laboratories. These events left a strong imprint on agricultural researchers. As one interviewed researcher who lamented the destruction of her technically successful experimental station stated:

After the invasion [my research station] remained a shell. It makes you think that you can do a lot of research, much development, but if you do not address the pertinent social issues there won't be anything. You have first to look at the social issue before [deciding whether] other systems of research or development will bear fruit. (..) This research station was invaded by people from the community, because the producers did not see any fruit from the research processes. (..) [This] strengthens the idea that you have to address the needs and demands of farmers, and that they really participate and take decisions about the research. (Interview, 5 October 2010).

The last sentence of this quote refers to the on-going restructuring of the relationship between applied research and society as a consequence of neoliberal policies, which favoured a particular form of participation by farmers in agricultural research. What is at stake here is a complex interaction between notions of participation, research design and popular politics. This chapter discusses how neoliberal restructuring of agricultural research in Bolivia embraced an increased use of participatory methods by research organizations which had once been part of the public system of agricultural research but were now privatized. Our analysis

hinges not so much on the heated events of invasions but on the normalization of participatory methods in agricultural technology innovation and the implications for thinking about technological improvement and politics.²² The chapter builds on a case study of PROINPA, once part of the state but later transformed into a national NGO. PROINPA is a forerunner in agricultural research in the Bolivian Andes and has developed significant initiatives in the field of participatory plant breeding.

Participatory development, once the leitmotif of the more progressive part of the development community (Galjart, 1981; Vío-Grossi *et al.*, 1981), has become increasingly mainstream and subject to reflexive critique (Hickey and Mohan, 2005). What is now regarded as ‘participatory development orthodoxy’ has been criticized for too readily assuming that motivations and behaviour in participatory processes are authentic. On the contrary the language of empowerment may mask an underlying concern for managerial effectiveness, and the emphasis on micro-level interventions may obscure broader macro-level inequalities and injustices (Cooke and Kothari, 2001: 14). These critics also argue that participatory development obscures politics by keeping participatory practice within the frame imposed by project interventions (Cooke and Kothari, 2001). Along these same lines, Cornwall (2006: 50) refers to participation as ‘[an] infinitely malleable term’ since it can be used as a vehicle for different kinds of purposes and can be framed to suit almost any situation. Below we will assess if this also applies to the experience of PROINPA during the neoliberal period in Bolivia. We also aim to contribute to the debate on participation. Much of the criticism of participatory development draws upon ideas from Foucault (e.g. Kothari, 2001; Williams, 2004) and particularly on his early work on disciplining and power/knowledge (e.g. Foucault, 1977). According to the critics ‘participatory development can encourage a reassertion of control and power by dominant individuals and groups’ (Kothari, 2001: 142). However, using Foucault’s later work on governmentality and neoliberalism one can develop another reading of participatory development than that of the rather unified Machiavellian anti-politics machine of development in which participation only disciplines. Conceptualizing participation as a productive way of governing people rather than as being simply repressive and negative, we will explore how PROINPA has created new forms of linking technological innovation to small farmers and how it has sought ways to ‘improve populations’ (Li, 2007a).

The discussion on governmentality is useful here in three ways. First, to understand the role of participatory development in neoliberalism we examine not so much how power is constituted in and by the state through ‘particular and identifiable individuals’ as in sovereign

²² Invasions as such had their historical roots in disputes over land tenure, land taken from communities by the state, but were triggered by the national anti-neoliberal protests. The land question falls outside the remit of this chapter.

and disciplinary power (Foucault, 1977), but how power circulates through a range of institutions rather than being concentrated in one. This means that elements of the agricultural research system (such as PROINPA) can be seen as sites where micro-technologies of power are constituted. Governing people through science management at micro-levels (Phillips and Ilcan, 2003) is not a way of forcing people but is a versatile, complementary and conflictive equilibrium between techniques of coercion and those of constructing and modifying the self (Lemke, 2001: 5). Below we will focus in particular on how a new researcher is constructed in the course of participatory development. Second, complementing studies that focus on the analysis of micro-technologies of intervention and everyday relations of power (Dean, 1999; Miller and Rose, 1990), we draw upon recent work that reads Foucault as a genealogist of statecraft and examine relationships between micro-technologies and the exercise of macro-power (Jessop, 2006; Lemke, 2007; Tyfield 2012), in our case the restructuring of agricultural research in the era of neoliberalism. Third, this task requires a clear notion of neoliberalism. For Foucault neoliberalism is a form of government in which power works not by force as in more authoritarian regimes but through the use of freedom to create responsible citizen-subjects (Foucault, 1991; Ferguson, 2010). We distinguish below a liberal and a neoliberal moment in the recent restructuring of agricultural research (Lemke, 2001) in which the former is mainly concerned with rolling back the state, while the latter is concerned with redefining the boundaries between the state and civil society and between the state and the economy. Neoliberalism is not so much about getting rid of the state (or publicly funded agricultural research) but about making the market the organizing and regulatory principle underlying both the state and other domains of decision making (ranging from professional agricultural research to the family and the Andean ‘community’) (Flew, 2012; Lemke, 2001).

The chapter is organized as follows. The next two sections describe the liberal and neoliberal moments in the recent restructuring of agricultural research in Bolivia (from state-led to more decentralized and demand-driven agricultural research). Section four reviews the PROINPA case, not simply as an organization implementing a neoliberal plan but as a form of self-organization within a context of national and international ideas on participation and economic (funding) influences. The final sections discuss the balance between the technical and the political in contrasting views of participatory agricultural research.

Data collection in Bolivia (between August and October 2010 and August and December 2011) consisted of (a) content analysis of literature and policy documents, including PROINPA project documents; (b) semi-structured interviews with different types of actor in the agricultural research system in the cities of La Paz, Santa Cruz, Cochabamba and Sucre; and (c) semi-structured interviews and participant observation in Morochata, one of PROINPA’s intervention sites. In total fifty-two interviews were analysed.

Building Technostatist Agricultural Research and the Liberalization Response

The agricultural research system pursued in Bolivia in the second half of the twentieth century followed a technostatist approach to science policy (Tyfield, 2012). Accordingly science was seen as an expert system functionally separate from the market and as such to be organized by the state as part of its modernization strategy. As in many other parts of Latin America, external aid played an important steering role. Prior to the 1950s, agricultural research centres in Bolivia were practically non-existent. The report of the U.S. Bohan Mission recommended agricultural modernization to end the country's economic dependence on non-renewable natural resources and to transform Bolivia's indigenous agriculture. It led to a US\$26 million loan from the Export-Import Bank of the United States, crucial for setting up experimental stations in the Andes (Gandarillas, 2001; Godoy *et al.*, 1993).

This 'pipeline' model of knowledge considered agricultural research to be the exclusive domain of scientists. It focused on importing technologies from advanced countries and adopting them after testing for suitability in different local agro-ecosystems. Use of improved varieties and agrochemical inputs as advocated by the Green Revolution approach were important elements. Central to this modernization model was the building of expertise, in particular through the Bolivian Institute of Agricultural Technology (IBTA) created in 1975 by the Ministry of Rural and Agricultural Affairs (MACA) (Gandarillas, 2001; Gandarillas, *et al.*, 2007)²³. IBTA researchers were trained abroad with a view to enhancing their capacity to carry out research (World Bank, 1999)²⁴. On account of its efforts to train new agricultural engineers, IBTA became seen as a relatively solid entity that enjoyed prestige among researchers.

The technostatist approach to agricultural research became subject to reform as part of the liberalization drive that started at the end of eighteen years of dictatorship (1964-1982). In a period of political instability, profound economic crisis and hyperinflation, structural adjustment policies as advocated by the International Monetary Fund were adopted in 1985 (Kohl *et al.*, 2006; García-Linera, 2008). The so-called New Economic Policy aimed to stabilize prices and develop a market economy. It announced a wave of privatization of

23 FAO, the International Service for National Agricultural Research (IICA), Interamerican Development Bank (IDB), World Bank, Swiss Cooperation, and USAID, among others, funded laboratories and basic equipment for the experimental centres and financed the establishment of the country's gene banks, especially for potato, quinoa, forage, cereals, and Andean grains (Coca, 2010; Gandarillas, 2001). International cooperation aimed at creating and sustaining a research system that would resist battering from the dictatorship periods and institutional crises.

24 Three PhDs and twenty-four MSc were trained in European and American universities (World Bank, 1999)

public companies and imposed severe budget cuts in agricultural research. State funding of agricultural research dropped from US\$ 12 million in 1980 (Bebbington and Thiele, 1993:70) to an average of just US\$ 4.5 million between 1985-1990 (Crespo-Valdivia, 2000:29). The justification for this was provided by an ISNAR/IICA evaluation supported by the World Bank (ISNAR, 1989; Quijandría, 1989). This evaluation argued that IBTA lacked the administrative autonomy to deal with recurrent changes in government and the political instability resulting from a long period of dictatorship. Each change in government was preceded by changes in the composition of national and regional management boards and even of technical staff along party and clientelist lines. ISNAR/IICA (World Bank, 1991) points to a high turnover of professional staff who lacked professional breadth and depth. The institution did not have the personnel to carry out scientific work; only 8 per cent of researchers had a postgraduate degree (2 per cent had a PhD - one of whom was the director, and 6 per cent had an MSc degree), 20 per cent were fully trained agronomists while 72 per cent were technicians (World Bank, 1991). Crucial in the reform process was a US\$21 million loan from the World Bank in 1991. This imposed a reduction in both the thematic and geographic coverage of IBTA's research so that in place of researching almost all highland crops, the emphasis shifted to five national programmes: potato, quinoa, cereals (wheat and barley), leguminous plants (beans and peas) and camelids. External funding from international cooperation was restricted to potato and quinoa, both subsistence crops for which the Andes is a centre of origin and biodiversity (Quijandría, 1989). Research on rice, corn and soybeans was delegated to the Centre of Tropical Agricultural Research (CIAT-SCZ),²⁵ supported by the Santa Cruz provincial government, and the privately funded Centre for Phylogenetic Research of Paurumani in the department of Cochabamba. The remaining research areas either disappeared or only survived when attached to a specific state development project. Restructuring policies abandoned fundamental research projects and only continued to support adaptive or applied research. Thus out of eleven experimental stations, IBTA kept only three, considering that these represented a 'sufficient' agro-ecological coverage. Other stations were handed over to universities or departmental governments (Coca, 2010).²⁶

Restructuring policies aimed to make IBTA independent from the Ministry of Agriculture in the recruitment of technical personnel and to raise wage levels to attract well-trained professionals at the start of their careers. The reality, however, was quite different. Although

25 This chapter uses the acronym CIAT-SCZ to distinguish it from CIAT (International Centre for Tropical Agriculture – a CGIAR centre).

26 IBTA selected the following stations: Patacamaya (quinoa), San Benito (cereals, legumes, and the fruit transfer programme) and Toralapa (potato).

IBTA reduced its personnel by 40 per cent, jobs, especially at managerial level, continued to be the preserve of political sympathizers. And although more than thirty professionals received postgraduate training, there were serious complaints about research conditions. In a letter to the Minister of Finance, one researcher protested against the cut in IBTA's budget as follows:

The real concern is the consequence of trying to continue at current levels of compensation [from the state]. For example, at current salary levels, we would have to reduce salaries by 35 per cent on average or alternatively reduce the payroll (positions). For operational costs, the required reduction would be around 90 per cent. If it were necessary to take these actions, the current staff would not be able to produce appropriate technology, negatively affecting institutional prestige, as well as our efforts at agricultural extension and decentralization (Posner, 1994).

This letter and researchers' reports on the consequences of budget cuts made no difference. The adjustment policies did little more than create a lack of interest and unwillingness by the state to support agricultural research, implying continued job instability, low salaries, and growing rather than diminishing political interference in the selection of personnel.

Neoliberal State Restructurings and Participation in Agricultural Research in Bolivia

While reducing the role of the state in agricultural research can be seen as part of liberalization and privatization, the neoliberal moment also involved restructuring the relationship between technical expertise and the end-user. The World Bank intervention was not only directed at the 'retreat of the state' in agricultural research but also aimed to improve IBTA's technical capacities, increase its autonomy vis-à-vis the central government and create new forms of articulation and communication with its end users. Extension services were cancelled and consequently IBTA's regional extension offices were closed down. The introduction of the notion of 'pre-assistance' (World Bank, 1991) –or no direct assistance to farmers– was instrumental in writing off the model in which technology is transferred from the experimental stations to the regional extension offices and thence to end users. It meant the establishment of new lines of communication with end users of technologies (farmers and rural entrepreneurs) via NGOs and agribusiness, or 'intermediate users'. In the late 1980s, technically-oriented NGOs also received funding from the *Fondo Social de Emergencia* (Social Emergency Fund) for small projects which aimed to mitigate the social costs and effects of neoliberal economic policies (Kohl *et al.*, 2006) or what Li (2007b:21) calls 'managing the fallout from capitalism's advance'. IBTA researchers started to instruct

trainers within the NGOs. This helped NGOs to develop operational relations with IBTA, although the process of becoming intermediaries between IBTA and the farmers was not always effective (Bebbington and Thiele, 1993). Financial resources were unequally distributed – while NGOs carried out extension and rural development on a total budget of about 10 million US\$ per year (Godoy *et al.*, 1993:7), government support to IBTA did not amount to even half of this (Bebbington and Thiele, 1993:120).

IBTA ceased functioning in 1998 as a result of the administrative decentralization law of 1995 and after the government determined that the institution had not demonstrated sufficient impact on producers. In fact, it meant a complete withdrawal by the state from serious involvement in agricultural research until 2001 when IBTA was replaced by the Bolivian System of Agricultural Technology (SIBTA), a partnership between the ministries of Economic Development, Rural Affairs, and Foreign Trade and Investment. SIBTA dispensed with the remaining experimental stations and transferred them to the departmental governments (which had neither the budget nor experience to run them). SIBTA identified a gap between researchers and producers due to the verticality of the research process and the maladaptation of research to the demands of producers and the market (Gobierno de Bolivia, 2000; Hartwich *et al.*, 2007). It proposed implementing a neoliberal rationale in the agricultural research system, preventing external values and politicization from influencing the efficiency and technical character of research. Management of agricultural research and extension shifted from the state to semi-autonomous regional foundations created in the four eco-regions of the country: highlands, valleys, tropics, and Chaco. These private foundations with ‘public interest’ could administer and manage public, private and international cooperation resources (Gobierno de Bolivia, 2000).

SIBTA’s contribution to restructuring the relationship between technical expertise and end-users contained three important elements: invoking the language of innovation systems and participatory development, trusting service providers (mostly NGOs) as the key agents of change, and implementing market mechanisms for the allocation of funds. First, the language of *innovation systems* worked to include private actors (agribusiness firms and consultancy firms) in the research/extension–farmer link, thereby reducing the role of the state to one among many actors in the system. Innovation systems respond to changing contexts and require interaction between multiple actors and sources of knowledge without having a single central conductor (World Bank, 2012). The concept of innovation emerged from evolutionary economics but was adapted by the application of systems theory in agriculture (Jansen *et al.*, 2004; for a critique see Jansen, 2009). Crucial notions in this approach are stakeholder participation, coordination and trust, with the ‘end-user’ of the pipeline model being redefined as a ‘stakeholder’. In development discourse, innovation systems applications draw heavily upon earlier notions of farmer participation (Chambers *et al.* 1989), farming systems research (Brouwer and Jansen, 1989), and social learning and iterative, adaptive thinking (Ashby,

2003; Leeuwis, 2000). Second, participatory action involved a conceptualization of NGOs as being best placed to carry out research and extension activities due to their attributed independence from the political manoeuvring inside state agencies, their flexibility to choose their working areas, their efficiency, technical profile, transparency, and accountability (Gandarillas, 2006). Third, market rationality in terms of competition, tendering, cost-benefit analysis, short term projects and measurable outputs became central to three new mechanisms for funding research and extension projects. The most important one in our study was the Applied Technology Innovation Project (PITA), which selected and funded technological innovation proposals from producer organizations. The PITA procedure looked primarily at technical feasibility and the potential of integrating producers and their products into the market (chain approach)²⁷.

PITAs were based on a competitive market mechanism (bidding) to facilitate farmers' participation. Between 2002 and 2007 SIBTA supported 263 PITAs. To access PITA project funds, producer associations supported by NGOs had to present projects that typically elaborated concrete demands, competitiveness in national and export markets, project ownership by farmers' associations, and adequate counterpart (15 per cent of the project budget). SIBTA selected for funding thirty productive chains or products, which showed potential for the export market. However, potato and corn, fundamental to national food security, were not included within PITAs (in the Andean region only quinoa and camelids were included) (Lema, *et al.*, 2006; Ranaboldo, 2002). SIBTA established bureaucratic bidding rules that regulated the participation of farmer associations and their relations with service providers. Farmer associations played an active role as they were responsible for identifying demands and contributing to research. PITA's beneficiaries, who were mainly poor farmers, often contributed in kind or via third-party donors (Hartwich, *et al.*, 2007). Service providers were in charge of organizing research and technological services as well as designing the participatory spaces in which technological demands had to be defined. In this way, service providers in partnership with the public sector were crucial in shaping farmers and associations into neoliberal subjects (Lemke, 2001). Training and capacity-building became crucial for ensuring that these subjects had the necessary entrepreneurial and market skills to pursue their proposed innovations. As we will see below, SIBTA's neoliberal model was not simply handed down from above but adapted, engaged with and even contested by different actors.

27 The other two mechanisms were the National Strategic Innovation Project (PIEN) and the National System of Genetic Resources for Agriculture and Food (SINARGEAA) (Estado Plurinacional de Bolivia, 2009). SINARGEAA consisted of six germplasm banks: High Andean Grains Roots and Tubers, in custody of the PROINPA Foundation; Cereals and legumes, in custody of the Patiño Foundation; Valley Fruit, in custody of the Prefecture of Tarija; Camelids, in custody of the Technical University of Oruro; and Forestry, in custody of the University of San Simón (UMSS) in Cochabamba (FAO, 2009).

From State to NGO: PROINPA and potato research and extension

The national and international significance of the potato, its wide geographical distribution, bio-diversity and economic contribution, gave it special prominence in the neoliberal restructuring process.²⁸ During the restructuring, public potato research at Toralapa station was reorganized as PROINPA (the Potato Research Program) managed by IBTA but with strong technical and financial support from the International Potato Centre (CIP) and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). To maintain job stability, SDC-funded projects topped up the low salaries of PROINPA's researchers. PROINPA collaborated closely with the National Potato Seed Project (PROSEMPA), a Dutch-funded potato seed development project, which was in charge of extension services (Gandarillas *et al.*, 2007).²⁹ During the 1990s, PROINPA was organized into departments (eg nematology, physiology, pathology, etc.) to carry out applied research in selected impact zones. Its social science department helped to identify the main constraints on potato cropping among potential technology users. Furthermore, PROINPA worked on restructuring the Potato National Gene Bank (located in Toralapa) (Gabriel *et al.* 2006). With IBTA's closure in 1997, potato research was in danger of disappearing. To avoid losing skilled human resources and technological innovation in this key crop, an external evaluation mission of the programme led by the Swiss Cooperation in 1998 recommended turning PROINPA into a private, non-profit foundation with public, donor, and self-generated resources (Gandarillas *et al.*, 2007).

The ensuing transformation made PROINPA the largest national NGO dedicated to agricultural research and development in Bolivia. In 1998, PROINPA kept its acronym but became the 'Foundation for the Promotion and Research of Andean Products' (Garandillas *et al.*, 2007). When SIBTA started in 2001, PROINPA became one of its principal suppliers of research and development services. It competed and won various PITA projects due to its accumulated experience and in-house technology developed during the IBTA period. It stood well above other newly established, less experienced NGOs. Most of the principal PROINPA researchers whose careers had begun in the early 1990s and who had attained post-graduate level stayed. SIBTA projects, along with other projects sponsored by international cooperation³⁰, allowed PROINPA to expand its activities to other Andean crops and

28 With more than 4000 native varieties (landraces) Bolivia, together with Peru, is a potato biodiversity hot spot of global importance. Potato is crucial for national food security and 30–40 per cent of farmers grow potatoes (Meinzen-Dick and Deveau, 2009).

29 This and the next paragraph draw heavily from Garandillas *et al.* (2007).

30 International partners were CIP, IPGRI (International Plant Genetic Resources Institute), CIAT (International Center for Tropical Agriculture) and European and US universities.

geographic areas, increasing its personnel from sixty to around 180 staff. In addition, as part of SINARGEAA, PROINPA received from the state the potato and Andean grains gene banks in Toralapa (Cochabamba) and Quipaquipani (La Paz) experimental stations and the funding for their maintenance (Gandarillas *et al.*, 2007)³¹. PROINPA is currently present in thirty-six municipalities (especially concentrated in the Andean region). In 2011, it had 157 workers of whom 46 per cent were researchers, 33 per cent consultants, usually hired to support research and extension projects, and 21 per cent administrative staff.

After becoming an NGO, PROINPA reduced its applied research projects and focused more on so-called ‘research for development’ (in contrast to top-down research and extension). This implied identifying local problems and using this feedback to design research agendas. PROINPA’s success became less dependent on the quality of its research and contribution to national research priorities and more on its ability to adapt or ‘tune’ research proposals to funding sources. PROINPA shifted from simply applying technologies (most of which had been designed or adopted during the IBTA period) to more development-oriented projects that responded to central demands from farmers and the market.

Technologies of the self: Shaping a new researcher

The shift in PROINPA from being a state programme, whose researchers were civil servants, to an NGO, whose activities lacked a fixed mandate but responded to international and national funding opportunities, was not simply externally imposed but actively initiated from within. This shift was a form of self-regulation or a ‘technology of the self’ in Lemke’s words (2001:12). Institutional change became paramount for PROINPA; an internal group made the label of ‘change’ central and shaped a new PROINPA researcher (Oros *et al.*, 2002). A photo of the ‘change group’ printed in Oros *et al.* (2002) shows five relatively young researchers. Interacting with CIP and the New Paradigm programme of ISNAR, PROINPA incorporated the innovation system language in a series of strategic workshops focusing on institutional change.

The following quote expresses this neoliberal form of governing as introduced from above:

The greater freedom on the part of the Foundation [PROINPA] as an autonomous organisation to set its own agenda, and the reliance on competitive funding, triggered institutional innovation. Foundation staff commented in

³¹ PROINPA had three experimental stations: in Toralapa, El Paso in Cochabamba, and The Quipaquipani Center for Research and Training Facilities in the department of La Paz.

planning meetings that generating research results, publishing scientific papers and relying on intermediary organisations of technology transfer were not enough. Strategic planning led the Foundation management to the conclusion that it was imperative do build credibility with farmers and a broad range of stakeholders (Gandarillas *et al.* 2007:267).

The language of freedom, autonomy, strategic planning, competitive funding and institutional innovation and staff who themselves seek closer contact with ‘clients’ expresses very well the contemporary shift in research governance. As part of the change process, researchers now had to propose and manage new projects to maintain their research activities and finance their own salaries. A researcher from PROINPA describes this change of governance in the following words:

Demand is considered the origin of the research process. This was a fairly complicated topic within PROINPA because we went from being employees who always received a monthly payment to not having a guaranteed source of monthly income the following day. We had to really change our ‘chip’ [mind set] and say ‘well, now I have to find it [salary] myself.’ For you to find it yourself you have to understand the demands, the work in your environment, and give it what it needs from you. (Interview, 9 December 2011).

The change in the ‘chip’ suggested in this quote expresses the transition process from a basic research model supported by the state which was seen as ‘vertical’ and ‘discipline-bound’ to a trans-disciplinary research model open to the demands of producers, proposals, and donors. PROINPA exchanged the laboratory for the peasant community as the new space for action. To win projects, investigators had to go out to different communities, identify partners willing to participate in the research process, and jointly determine their specific demands. To facilitate this process, PROINPA researchers had to acquire new training in the social sciences and rural development. Entomologists and phytopathologists had to ‘open’ their minds to new disciplines so as to be more ‘sensitive’ to farmer demands.

Creating demand

While implementing several projects, PROINPA researchers found that meeting producer and association demands was not as simple as PITA and SIBTA had portrayed (Bentley *et al.*, 2004; Gandarillas *et al.*, 2007). First, while SIBTA assumed that producers were organized in associations and were market-oriented, PROINPA researchers found that the vast majority of

producers were organized in agrarian unions, which focused more on political and community rights than productive rights. Organizing associations that focused on productive themes involved an extra effort for PROINPA. Second, generating new technology did not fall within SIBTA's time and budget allocation. PITA projects, for example, had a maximum duration of 18 months, making research on perennial crops impossible. PROINPA decided to work basically with already-existing technology and introduced the notions of 'implicit demand' and 'explicit demand' in which it assumed that there is a demand for available technology (implicit demand) but that producers generally are unable to make their demand explicit (Bentley *et al.*, 2004). Implicit demand was defined as 'a need for research that people have not requested, but that they recognize if explained or shown in an appropriate form' (Bentley *et al.*, 2004). In this sense, implicit demands do not simply respond to the researchers' interests but are identified by the researcher through analysis and reflection of local problems and are reaffirmed in collaboration with the community or farmers. To identify implicit demands, researchers organized workshops, and exhibitions, among other activities, with communities and producer organizations, demonstrating available technology to see if it was of interest to them. Available technology was metaphorically called the slipper that would fit Cinderella.

Malleable participation: Shifting the objectives of farmer participation in Morochata

Participation, as a new technology of governing, does not have a fixed meaning. In PROINPA the need for participation and the specific tasks this involved varied from potato technology innovation to market incorporation. The language of participation gained prominence in PROINPA as part of the IBTA restructurings. It first referred to participatory research in the sense of including farmers and farmers' knowledge in research design and implementation (to various degrees and at various moments). Interactions with CIAT and CIP were crucial. As of the late 1980s, these centres worked on developing participatory methodologies in natural resource management in marginal agro-ecosystems in Latin America. Farmers and scientists collaborated as colleagues in jointly generating knowledge and technology in response to farmer demands, whereby farmers had to diagnose their situation and experiment with and adapt possible solutions. Similar to Green Revolution technology, scientists first developed new participatory methodologies and tested them on pilot sites in Central America and Colombia before transferring them in a user-friendly format to other countries for dissemination (Gottret, 2007). Researchers from national research centres were trained to implement and validate these methodologies in their respective countries.

PROINPA adapted the participatory methodologies termed Local Agricultural Research Committees (CIAL) and Field Farmers School (FFS). A CIAL consists of farmers to whom the community delegates research on the agricultural problem which most concerns them. CIAL members then relay possible research recommendations back to the community. PROINPA received support from CIAT, the Kellogg Foundation and FAO to work with agrarian unions. The FFS is presented as a ‘people-centred approach’ which helps to develop farmers’ ‘analytic abilities, critical thinking, and creativity so that they would learn to make better decisions’ (Kenmore, 2002). Unlike previous top-down research and extension, CIAL and FFS are seen as bottom-up strategies in which farmers acquire the necessary research and problem-solving skills. Based on the logic of transforming farmers into active and capable investigators, PROINPA initiated Participatory Plant Breeding (PPB) in 1999 whereby farmers and scientists, in a ‘knowledge dialogue’ between indigenous knowledge and Western science, evaluate and select genotypes according to farmers’ needs, available resources and market demands (Almekinders *et al.*, 2007; Gabriel *et al.*, 2007).

An important case for PROINPA to apply PPB was that of Morochata. PROINPA had already been working with small farmers of Quechua origin in the municipality of Morochata since 1994, especially in the communities of Piusilla-San Isidro and Compañía Pampa. Morochata, located in the Bolivian inter-Andean valleys 70 kilometres from Cochabamba city, has a population of 34,134 (in 2001) living in communities at altitudes ranging from 2750 to 4250 meters above sea level. Agricultural production connects with the markets of Quillacollo and Cochabamba cities. Morochata farmers are organized in agrarian unions, which are a complex amalgam that combines the structure of the Andean *ayllu*³² and the model of agrarian unions of the Cochabamba valleys formed during the Agrarian Reform after the 1952 revolution (CENDA, 2005; Van Cott, 2008). PROINPA’s participatory research in Morochata focused on finding alternatives to the chemical control of late blight in potatoes (*Phytophthora infestans*) (Thiele *et al.*, 1997; Torrez *et al.*, 1997). Morochata is known at national level for potato production, especially for the native *Waycha* variety, which is much appreciated for its quality and flavour. However, this variety is highly susceptible to late blight, with reported crop losses of up to 100 per cent³³. In the FFS and CIAL, farmers learned, among other things, that late blight is a fungus with an invisible growth cycle. Farmers observed the fungus growth process through microscopes and learned to recognize the disease as ‘a living organism’ and identify the best time for chemical control.

³²The community of Piusilla-San Isidro still preserves the aynoqas indigenous rotary agricultural system.

³³Late blight, the most important potato disease in humid zones in Bolivia, affects approximately 20,000 ha (Torrez *et al.*, 1997).

One of the activities most highlighted by PROINPA in Morochata has been the work on participatory plant breeding, which during a five-year period (1998-2002) was financed through short-term projects.³⁴ In monthly meetings with farmers, researchers explained the aims and activities of the PPB methodology and how to carry out research. Farmers received training in breeding principles, flower morphology, botanic seed management, seedling management and crop selection. Subsequent training sessions included hybridization techniques, management and selection of seedlings in household seedbeds and in the field to obtain new varieties. Farmers identified and evaluated clones according to features such as plant height, number of stems, flowering, and tuber characteristics such as shape, culinary qualities, marketability, storability, resistance to late blight, and yield. Farmers planned their monitoring and evaluation of genotypes in field activities and gave feedback to their communities through agrarian union assemblies.

Participatory plant breeding in Morochata succeeded in generating enthusiastic participants, at least in the beginning, and in meeting the demand for new varieties, similar to the landrace Waycha, but resistant to late blight. Participating farmers called themselves ‘potato breeders’ and, paired with ‘experienced’ researchers, they carried out the breeding process. In interviews some of these farmers enthusiastically related the breeding techniques they had mastered. During five years of participatory research, farmers and researchers generated six new varieties, all of which are clear of virus and four of which have been registered in the formal seed system. PPB participants were also trained in seed production, using protected seedbeds to multiply small amounts of high quality seed.³⁵ They also shared the results with their communities, explaining the advantages of the new varieties. Participating farmers travelled to places as far as China and Japan to pass on the success story of participatory research. PPB in Morochata also achieved positive gains in encouraging the equal participation of men and women in the PPB events. Some women interviewed still remember this experience as a space that allowed them to gain the skills to interact publicly in community meetings. PPB participatory spaces were considered different from decision-making in male-dominated agrarian union assemblies. Participating researchers also called PPB in Morochata a ‘unique experiment’ (Gabriel *et al.*, 2004).

Although the PPB experience in Morochata is an interesting example of what a ‘dialogue of knowledge’ between farmers and scientist can achieve, it could not escape the conditions and context of rural life. After the initial enthusiasm, the number of PPB participants dropped

34 Donors included PREDUZA (Proyecto de Resistencia Duradera en la Zona Andina), PRGA, BMZ, IFAO, Fontangro, CIAT, and CIP.

35 Protected seedbeds are boxes built of stone or adobes filled with fresh and clean soil and fertilized with organic manure. They protect against frost and hail storms.

from year to year since farmers felt that, apart from the training, there were few concrete results. One researcher interviewed pointed out that initially farmers saw PROINPA as a source of material goods or concrete productive projects to overcome poverty. ‘They were expecting to receive, as a gift, fertilizers, seeds and inputs’ (Interview, 25 September, 2011). Instead, participating in training sessions cost farmers’ time that could otherwise be dedicated to economic activities. Furthermore, even though the new varieties responded to producer demands and farmers had received training to reproduce them, their spread was limited. Our field data show that only one of the eight farmers who participated actively in the PPB in Compañía Pampa reproduced seed potato of the new varieties; in Piusilla 3 of the original six new varieties were kept by at least three of the sixteen PPB participants³⁶ (see also Puente-Rodríguez, 2008). The following interview excerpt illustrates the research leader’s struggle and frustration with the reproduction and dissemination of the new varieties:

I didn’t think this would happen, that the farmers would lose the new seeds [obtained during the PPB], but it happened. It also happens with the conventional programmes of plant breeding. The great bottleneck is who takes the challenge of disseminating the varieties to make a massive diffusion. In this sense, what we have tried to do is to construct a process, because we don’t have one. We don’t have the capacity to do it: we have to join forces with someone, be it the municipality, institutions, NGOs; someone to spread the technology (Interview, 26 September, 2011).

This PROINPA researcher’s comment suggests that both in conventional and participatory breeding, the likelihood of success in spreading new varieties depends on the goodwill not only of farmer but also of other actors. Commercial seed multiplication by poor farmers is more difficult for potatoes than for, for example, grain or pulses, due to the quantities required, storage needs, and transportation costs (Torrez *et al.*, 1997). Replacing varieties is also slower in these crops since potato seed attracts viruses and other diseases, and its multiplication ratio is low (harvest ratio of 1:20) (Bentley and Vasques, 1998:1). The procedures and costs of registering varieties in the formal Bolivian seed system and of the viral clearance required to maintain this register are high and unaffordable for poor farmers. Apart from the *Empresa de Producción de Semilla de Papa* (SEPA- Company of Potato Seed Production), a semi-private seed enterprise in charge of the sale and dissemination of commercial seeds, there are no public institutions that support the dissemination of new

36 A few farmers in Piusilla conserve and multiply the varieties *Aurora*, *palta chola* y *puka waycha*, while in Compañía Pampa we found a farmer producing *puyjuni imilla* y *palta chola* (fieldwork observations).

varieties to small-farmers. PROINPA approached SEPA, but they were reluctant to multiply these varieties commercially due to uncertainty over their adoption and the economic risks involved. PROINPA then proposed that the municipality of Morochata should allocate local government resources on multiplying these improved varieties, but without success.

Notwithstanding the limited possibilities of turning the PPB experience into a far-reaching economic activity, PROINPA shifted further to working on development-oriented projects. If PROINPA's participatory research projects aimed to develop research skills among farmers, so they could find solutions to their own agronomic problems, its participatory development projects aimed to prepare farmers to cope in a neo-liberal environment. Rather than organizing its work around crop specific knowledge, PROINPA deployed teams that focused on solving problems in so-called 'impact zones' (poverty, disorganization, food supply, etc.) and on implementing institutional and organizational innovations at the level of agro-food chains (Gandarillas *et al.*, 2007). The reasons for PROINPA's shift in focus to development projects are twofold. First, few farmers were able to invest time in research projects without receiving material support. Second, PROINPA, as many other NGOs in Bolivia, was largely dependent on development aid funds and SIBTA. It became more difficult to obtain funding for research alone (even if this included participatory research) as donors prioritized projects directed at poverty reduction.

The new emphasis on poverty reduction projects meant a shift towards productive projects that aimed to integrate smallholders in larger agro-food chains, and the application of two additional types of participatory methodologies, the first oriented to enhancing social control over development projects and the second to creating access to markets for low income farmers.

The first type included community-managed participatory monitoring and evaluation (PM&E). It involved farmers in monitoring the progress of externally funded innovations in order to generate a sense of co-responsibility for the implementation and success of the intervention (Polar *et al.*, 2007). Farmer involvement was seen internationally as useful for monitoring the deployment of funds. PM&E was also important for PROINPA in the context of national politics as it contributed to enhancing legitimacy at a time when PROINPA, like other NGOs, were being heavily criticized by social movements and seen as allies of the economic neoliberal model. PROINPA justified the importance of PM&E as follows:

In a 'turbulent' period [the civil unrest against neoliberal policies between 2000 and 2005] in which social movements continually put pressure on government structures in search of greater equality, representation, and legitimacy, it is necessary to incorporate social control tools that allow technological innovation recipients [farmers] to freely express and transcend up to decision-making levels (Polar *et al.*, 2007:1; emphasis by authors).

According to PROINPA, PM&E helps farmers to use ‘social control tools’ to channel their demands and express their disagreements with development planning, rather than engaging in violent pressure and protests, which were frequently employed by social movements in Bolivia. However, in PROINPA’s projects, farmers’ views did not reach very far up the decision-making ladder. The reason for this is because projects had already been designed by PROINPA as a prerequisite for funding, so the flexibility to change activities and resources was restricted. Furthermore, projects were selected as the spaces in which farmers could participate and participation was framed in terms of them being co-responsible for the success of the projects. This limited the potential to link participation to different or larger processes of social transformation.

The Participatory Market Polls (PMP), a second type of participatory method, was also based on tools developed by CIAT and CIP. This method aimed to empower farmers in the market and included a range of activities to analyse different market opportunities, and to develop innovations (Mamani *et al.*, 2007, Oros, 2010). In Morochata, PROINPA supported the creation of the *Asociación de Productores Andinos* (APRA: Association of Andean Farmers) and provided training to strengthen market-oriented organization with funds from Fontagro, the *Papa Andina* (Andean Potato) and *Consorcio* projects. With APRA they established a marketing committee that identified new markets for potato products and promoted the consumption of native potatoes in bigger cities³⁷. Participatory market polls, implemented between 2005 and 2008, allowed APRA farmers to visit supermarkets and regional markets to determine the primary characteristics of native potatoes that potential buyers required (quantity, quality, frequency of sale, presentation of the product, etc.). APRA began to participate in market fairs and to sell different native varieties of small potatoes called ‘gourmet potatoes’ or ‘*Morochatitas*’, to the main supermarkets of Cochabamba and La Paz. As the quantities bought by supermarkets were low, weekly orders were rotated between the members of the association. Gourmet potatoes offered an alternative income to association members but one which was not enough for the eighteen APRA members to make a living from.

Participation: Making agricultural research social without politics

In the previous sections we described a subtle, small-scale process of turning the poor farmer into a new improved agent capable of operating successfully in a neoliberal

³⁷ APRA had also collaborated in the reintroduction of native potato varieties.

environment: a free individual who can imagine new technologies and productive activities and who can mobilize resources. The participation and innovation thrust gave agricultural research a social slant, moving it from the laboratory to the field, from thence to the farm household and, finally, to the regional economy. Many documents point to the impact of this shift (for example, Fontagro, 2013). However beyond the level of the individual, the impact on the wider political domain is more difficult to conceptualize and act upon for the interveners. In this particular case, the wider political picture refers not only to advancing neo-liberalism but also to its opposing forces. Here we discuss two interrelated issues: individual progress versus the group, and the implicit positioning in local and national politics.

Preparing poor farmers for market integration may be successful in some cases but not all. A local case is that of Don José³⁸, one of the founding members of APRA who has worked in PROINPA interventions since their inception. Don José decided to become independent of the association and to form his own company to market gourmet potatoes. Using the knowledge he had acquired while contacting supermarkets for APRA, he expanded his business to other cities and other products (vegetables and other Andean roots: ulluco and arracacha). His company, registered as Papas Gourmet®, sells products to the country's largest supermarkets. Thanks to the profits of his company, his sons can go to college and he could buy a house in the city of Quilacollo. Don José's individual entrepreneurship has brought him into conflict with APRA as some members accused him of being disloyal for taking away part of the potential market share of the association. Don José's success is difficult to replicate for other APRA members. While Don José expanded his business, at least four members of APRA were forced to out-migrate temporarily due to their inability to secure a livelihood from agriculture. Don Javier, an outstanding APRA leader who collaborated closely with PROINPA, first emigrated to Argentina and later to Spain where he was for the past six years. In our interview, he told us that his main constraint was lack of land. Temporary migration allowed him to save money and to buy more land in his community. Stories of temporary and permanent out-migration are repeated by many of the producers interviewed. Land has become a valuable resource in Morochata. The community of Piusilla-San Isidro is a typical case of Andean 'minifundio' (smallholding)³⁹ and migration. Although individual PROINPA researchers are very familiar with this kind of agrarian problem, the participatory methods do not, and probably cannot, address them and instead of producing a social benefit may result in individualized capital accumulation.

38 Pseudonyms are used for all individuals mentioned in the chapter.

39 The unions, whose membership is related to land, divide members into two classes: those with land, who can have on average two hectares in different agro-ecological zones; and those without, called 'leftovers'.

There are also frictions between PROINPA and political organizations based on large group formations such as the agrarian unions. Unlike PROINPA, agrarian unions in Morochata do not see capacity-building and the promotion of the market and technical solutions as the prime engine to rural development, as providing an effective solution to people's problems. Agrarian unions have focused their demands on state support primarily on the basis of class (Ormachea 2008; Postero, 2007; Córdoba and Jansen, 2014). During the 1952 revolution, communities in Morochata struggled to expel large landowners and recover their land (CENDA, 2005). During the neoliberal period, and using the tools provided by the law of popular participation of 1994, they petitioned the state around complementary demands such as autonomy, indigenous rights and local political control. In the first years of this century, agrarian unions were key actors in the civil protests against neoliberal economic policies. They expressed their frustration with liberal democracy and the neoliberal economic project for excluding indigenous populations and peasants from its universal promises of participation, consensus and representation in the decision making process (van Cott, 2008; Córdoba *et al.*, 2014b). In the 1990s, agrarian unions combined to form the Movement Towards Socialism (MAS) party, a political instrument that brought Evo Morales to the presidency in 2005. These agrarian unions, as a social movement, pursue a form of radical democracy, in the sense given by Mouffe (2005), in which citizenship is seen as part of a political identity and not merely as a legal and entrepreneurial status related to markets as in neoliberal notions of citizenship (Dagnino, 2003:11). The tensions between the agrarian unions' post-neoliberal vision and PROINPA's vision on rural development are highlighted in the following comment of a PROINPA researcher. According to him, solutions for rural poverty come from 'innovative' leaders and not from 'claimant' leaders (from the agrarian unions). When asked about the differences between these two types of leader he replied:

An example: Don Villazón is the representative of the political party MAS in Cochabamba (...). He developed claimant leadership qualities. Don Villazón says in his speech: 'we farmers need associations; we farmers are against GMOs [Genetically Modified Organisms]; we need plant breeding and better varieties; NGOs clear out [from our communities]'. *But these are political leaders because in the end they do nothing.* Being a claimant leader does not mean they cannot innovate, but they use innovation as a clear attempt to ask the state for things but not to do things. (...) Who are the innovation leaders? A concrete example: you must have talked to Don José. Don José is an innovation leader, I don't mean that he doesn't think politically, he does; *but his efforts are innovative, they are a change in technology.* We refer to these as innovation leaders... (...) the [innovation] leader sees *technological change*

as an option, one of the primary options (Interview, 6 December 2011; emphasis by the authors).

According to this researcher, farmers need to concentrate on innovation rather than politics, since technological innovation contributes better to poverty reduction. Politics is defined as making demands on the state, while technological innovation is presented as being removed from politics, driven by the farmers' own agency and 'empowerment' (as capacity, without power/politics). Moreover, politics can and should be avoided by farmers in dealing with everyday issues. From the interview data most researchers seem to understand the political as referring to street blockades, demonstrations and actions undertaken by social movements or as a product of political projects manipulated by politicians' personal or party interests. They consider that this kind of politics leads to chaos in society and should be avoided. In contrast, PROINPA's participation without politics is presented as an ideal type of 'public sphere' (Habermas, 1995) in which individuals communicate in a power-free, rational way and exchange opinions so as to resolve problems and produce agricultural improvements through consensus.

Despite the strong emphasis on separating politics from technology and innovation, in practice innovation developers had to collaborate at different levels with the political environment around them. Over time, PROINPA and the MAS government have found ways of realigning participatory innovation and new political realities. PROINPA modified its interventions to meet agrarian union demands. It has done this by consulting unions over the relevance of their projects and engaging union leaders in their activities. The introduction of participatory monitoring and evaluation methodologies discussed above was in part a response to the demand for accountability and research relevance from these farmer organizations. PROINPA researchers who were interviewed also stated that they had had to adapt their interventions to fit new government priorities. On the other hand, the MAS government, despite its earlier critique of NGO interventions, increasingly relied on PROINPA's technical capacity, for example, to transfer the gene banks to state agencies⁴⁰ since, as INIAF's national director pointed out, PROINPA is 'a source of excellent researchers and we [INIAF] would like to work together with those resources' (Interview, July 28 2012). Hence, despite disagreements on technology and the role of politics in rural development, boundaries were crossed and participatory innovation was remodelled. This

40 In 2008, the MAS government established the National Institute of Agricultural and Forestry Innovation (INIAF) proclaiming the return of the state in agricultural research (INIAF, 2010). PROINPA co-operated with INIAF and transferred the two most important gene banks (potatoes and Andean roots, and Quinoa and highland Andean grains) to INIAF and trained INIAF's staff to maintain these banks.

illustrates an important aspect of the malleability of participation: depending on the context it can acquire a more neutral, technologist outlook or a more political outlook.

Conclusions

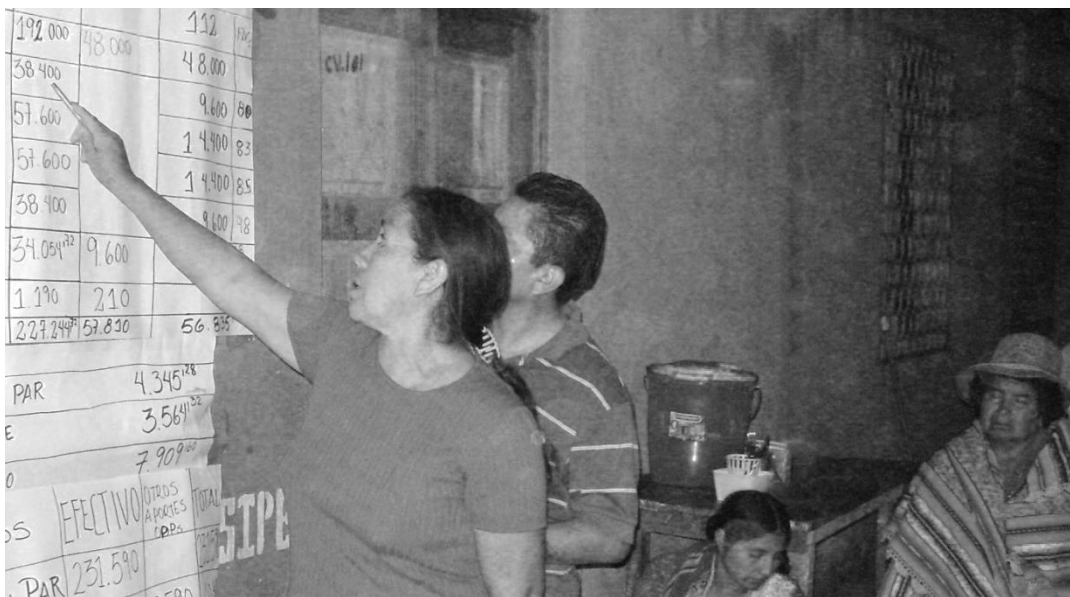
In this chapter we analysed the emergence of participatory research and development methods by PROINPA, an NGO and former state agency. PROINPA employed participatory methods mainly to enhance managerial effectiveness. The methods were seen as effective in developing new technologies (for example, new crop varieties arising from farmer involvement in breeding) or integrating (some) farmers into the market. This type of participation obscures macro-level inequalities and focuses on individual responses to market conditions. As a micro-project, participatory research embraces modes of thinking and action that are congruent with a neoliberal restructuring of agricultural research and extension. As the participatory approach unfolded, it modified the identity and practices of the researchers, turning them into development agents. Researchers only became successful when they linked their research and development intervention to global agendas (Jackson, 2005).

Does this mean that participation in a micro-project is simply an outcome of macro-economic/political restructuring and globalizing international cooperation? Was PROINPA merely an agent of neoliberalism? Our approach differs in that it emphasized PROINPA's self-organization and the coupling of their notions of technical expertise to a changing environment and shifting opportunities. PROINPA effectively managed three key issues. First, participation led not only to research objectives desired by globalizers and developers, but also generated these from below by local demands. Farmers were not misled, they effectively 'participated'. Participation is neither a static nor a one-way process. Secondly, PROINPA had to make room for two different types of politics. Participation or empowerment as capacity building (of technical and economic expertise and skills) versus participation as a national project, or a political party project (in this case the MAS government) had to be, and were, reconciled. Hence, despite the researchers' formal anti-political stance, they had to play politics. Finally, PROINPA kept the technical moment intact. Participation in research and development is not only about social relations and processes. It cannot simply be assessed in terms of power/knowledge but involves reconnecting people and matter (crop varieties, inputs, soils): whether it makes sense to people, researchers and farmers alike, depends on technological success. For this reason the MAS governments, despite blaming NGO interventions of the PROINPA type as neoliberal – and thereby negative – ended up making use of engineering work as carried out by PROINPA.

These three key issues are the reason for adopting the notion of malleability of participation in this chapter and of expanding its meaning beyond Cornwall's (2006) original use. The term malleable does not just refer to bending participation to fit an actor's objective or to the idea that everyone may perceive participation differently. Our point is that in practice every form of participation seeks a new balance between reshaped subjects, technical and economic considerations, and political strategies and action (even though one element may be discursively prioritized). As we have shown, this counts for both politicized and managerial or 'technical' views on participation.

Chapter 5

Empowerment through articulations between post-neoliberal politics and neoliberalism: Development of value chain alliances in Bolivia



Source: PAR office – Santa Cruz

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Abstract

During the Bolivian presidential election of 2005, the Movement Towards Socialism (MAS) campaigned against neoliberal politics, regarding the World Bank (the Bank) as one of its key promoters. Instead the MAS advocated neocollectivism, a post-neoliberal agenda based on the active intervention of the state in the economy and the development of close ties between the state and social movements. Paradoxically, the MAS when in power joined with the Bank in several development interventions to generate empowerment in rural areas. Taking the case of the Rural Alliances Project (PAR), considered to be the most successful intervention, we examine how neocollectivism and the Bank articulated around a seemingly common objective: the empowerment of poor farmers. We study empowerment using a four-mode analytical distinction of power, ranging from power as individual capacity (mode one) to power to carry out the transformation of social structures (mode four). We demonstrate that, although on paper neocollectivism and the Bank represent two opposing modes of empowerment, in practice the PAR project articulated their respective intervention goals. While neocollectivism seeks to realise its political goals by establishing a direct relationship with social movements, elements of neoliberal governance which seek to regulate and execute this relationship are present in the PAR. We conclude that there is an imbalance between political power shifts and technical progress that limits the potential for social transformation.

Introduction

In 2012, at Tiawanaku near La Paz, Bolivia, President Evo Morales and Hasan Tuluy, Vice President of the World Bank for Latin America and the Caribbean inaugurated the National Farmers Fair for the Rural Alliances Project (PAR). The PAR programme, financed by the World Bank (hereafter the Bank) since 2007, aims to strengthen small farmers by providing them with financial resources and technical support. The focus is on creating alliances between buyers and farmers and ensuring that farm production complies with market requirements. Addressing nearly 3,000 attendees, including producers and social organization representatives from around the country, Morales said:

We are not only strengthening ourselves socially through unions, but we have also strengthened ourselves with a political tool [the MAS party]. But if we have two tools – one that is the social organizations [social movements], the other electoral politics that is the political tool, it is now time to empower ourselves economically (La Razón, 2012).

Morales praised the financial support given by the Bank, a portfolio of 14 investment programmes totalling US\$450 million, and considered the Bank to be a strategic ally of the MAS government in the field of poverty reduction. He added that the support received would foster the economic freedom of small farmers and stated: [if we were to promote] ‘social liberation and electoral or political liberation without the accompanying economic liberation, we would surely make a mistake’. In his turn, the Bank representative, sporting a traditional red poncho, praised the economic development model of the MAS government which ‘focused on social inclusion with the objective of eradicating extreme poverty’ and the outstanding results of the PAR programme.

This was a surprising turn of events as President Evo Morales had up to then been a staunch critic of the Bank’s policies for Latin America. For example, at the XXI Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State in Paraguay he held the capitalist policies pursued by the Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) responsible for the subcontinent’s recent economic problems. Morales said:

The Bank and the International Monetary Fund are responsible; some day they will have to compensate for the damages caused by implementing the policies of the Washington Consensus, policies such as NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement), the FTAA (Free Trade Agreement of the Americas) which created problems in the region’s economy (Opinion, 2011).

The strategic partnership with the Bank is also surprising given the trajectory leading up to the election of Evo Morales as president of Bolivia in 2005. His election marked the culmination of a period of popular protest, which peaked in 2000 with the so-called ‘Water War’ and in 2003 with the ‘Gas War’ (Kohl and Farthing, 2006). As the leader of coca growers of the Chapare region and as a presidential candidate in 2002 and 2005, Morales campaigned against the neoliberal economic policies of the then incumbent presidents, accusing them of serving the Bank, the IMF and the imperialist interests of the US. In 2006, once in power, he ignored the Washington Consensus by nationalizing the country’s hydrocarbon sector and ending its agreement with the IMF (Buxton, 2007). His government designed a National Development Plan (NDP) with two main objectives: to replace the primary export model and to end social inequality, poverty and exclusion (Molero-Simarro and Paz-Antolín, 2012 p. 531). Morales declared a new national constitution in 2009, redefining the foundation of Bolivia as a pluri-national state. The reforms included a transformation in state-civil society relations. This new model upholds, at least in formal speech, an anti-neoliberal agenda, with an interventionist role of the state in the economy directly related to social movements (labelled elsewhere as ‘neocollectivism’: Córdoba and Jansen 2013).

In contrast, the Bank was one of the main proponents of neoliberal policies in the continent based on the principles of the Washington Consensus (Harvey, 2005). This process of neoliberalization was not only a set of economic strategies but also a political project ‘to re-establish the conditions for capital accumulation and to restore the power of economic elites’ (Harvey, 2005 p. 19). The political project encapsulates a mode of governance or neoliberal governmentality in which rational entrepreneurial individuals seek to meet their needs and wants through the market (Lemke, 2001; Valdivia, 2005). The first wave of neoliberal reforms in Bolivia started in 1985 with a structural adjustment to ‘roll back’ the state and to open up the economy. In the mid-1990s, after evidence showed that the advantages of the market had not ‘trickled down’ to the poor but instead had made life even harder for them (Murillo, 2008, Pérez, 2008), a second wave of reforms was launched. These advocated a more ‘efficient’ and decentralized state and an autonomous civil society (Murillo, 2008).

We have outlined these two positions in a rather simplified way to highlight their differences. In this chapter we examine how these two contrasting views on development articulate to empower the poor and create post-neoliberal alternatives. Following Hart (2002 p. 28-29), by articulation we refer to the way in which distinct ideologies composed of different subjects, projects, identities and aspirations are joined together through situated practices. Some scholars have interpreted such interventions as evidence of contradictions between discourse and practice or as proof that Evo Morales, despite some reforms, wants to continue with a strong neoliberal agenda (Andersson and Haarstad, 2009; Kaup, 2010; Webber, 2011). These interpretations have some shortcomings. We argue that the PAR

project is not simply an extension of neoliberalism but a mixed model that intertwines interventionist politics, market economics and efficiency mechanism to facilitate government in favour of the poor. This active state intervention encourages farmers' participation in the national economy by providing technology services to poor farmers, without changing the rules of the game that regulate the market. The PAR intervention shows the paradoxical and complex nature of the social transformation processes carried out by the 'New Left' in Latin America (Enriquez, 2013). The case illustrates the major tensions, contradictions and risks involved in balancing the political empowerment of social organizations with their incorporation into market economic activities (Córdoba and Jansen, 2014-forthcoming).

This chapter draws upon qualitative research (46 in-depth, semi-structured interviews and over 50 open, informal interviews, participant observation and documentary analysis) carried out in different periods during 2011 and 2012 in the department of Santa Cruz. In January and February of 2011 the first field visits and in-depth interviews were conducted with PAR officials in Santa Cruz and La Paz (the seat of the government), as well as with technicians and beneficiaries. From June to September of 2011 we participated in numerous activities of sixteen associations supported by PAR⁴¹, conducted open-ended interviews and accompanied PAR officials in the tasks of planning, monitoring, and evaluation. We also studied the Iupaguasu indigenous organization in Lagunillas municipality. Key actors interviewed included project beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries, technicians and outreach workers from public and private organizations, representatives of NGOs, state officials and buyers. Additionally, we spent time in the PAR offices in Santa Cruz observing interactions between the PAR team, technicians who offer technical assistance and project beneficiaries. In August of 2012 we conducted follow-up visits to the selected sites.

This chapter is organized into the following sections. Section two explores how the Bank and the MAS government frame empowerment while section three analyses the PAR programme in practice. Section four discusses how the neocollectivism of the MAS government articulates with the World Bank view on empowerment.

Neoliberal and Neocollectivist Views on Empowerment

Empowerment has become a buzzword in transnational development circles, being hailed as a panacea, a means and an end of development, by both governments and powerful

41 These associations were: a) Comarapa: Aposemco, Asogacom, Asofrumac, Torrebal b) Valle Grande: Aprovalle, Asociación de Ganaderos Rurales; c) Yapacaní: Asople, Competitividad de La Cadena Apícola Comunitaria; d) El Torno: Asapai, Junta Piraí, Nueva Asociación Surutú-Yungas, Asoprop, Asopega; La Guardia: Asapiguardia, Lechería 'Naranjillos', Apromat.

institutions like the World Bank (Cornwall *et al.*, 2005). The flexibility of the concept has allowed it to be mobilised both for and against hegemonic projects. In response to the mainstream uses of the term in development practice, feminists stress power as a highly political notion and associate the process of empowerment with the interests of those who have little power (Kabeer, 1997; Young, 1993). We will draw an analytical distinction between four modes of thinking about power, as summarized by Wolf (1999 p. 5), to analyse the divergent views on empowerment of the Bank and the MAS government as well as their articulation in the PAR intervention.

In the first mode, empowerment is equated with capacity-building, in which power is seen as an attribute of individuals, such as the ability of farmers to produce or make informed decisions that allow them to interact with the market. A second mode of empowerment refers to an increase in the capacity to impose one's will on others. In this case, the effects of the programme will be reflected in the ability of producers to improve their marketing and/or production conditions so that the requirements of buyers and service providers are met. A third, stronger mode sees empowerment as the capacity of farmers to have their viewpoints included in the agenda and circumscribe the actions of others so as to improve tactically their position in the market and agricultural production and services. Finally, a fourth mode refers to the development and use of power to change the structure of the setting in which production relations are established.

How has empowerment been framed in the development texts of the Bank and the MAS government? In 2001, the Bank, in its World Development Report, adopted empowerment as a key priority of its development policy (Narayan, 2002; Mansuri and Rao, 2012). Building upon Sen's approach on freedom to choose (1999), empowerment was defined as: 'the process of increasing the capacity of individuals or groups to make choices and to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes' (World Bank, 2011). Central to this view of empowerment is a non-relational view of power that focuses on strengthening individual and group capacities in four key areas: a) access to information, b) inclusion or participation in decision making, c) accountability of organisations to people, d) capacity to organize at the local level to resolve problems of common interest (World Bank, 2011).

To enhance empowerment, the Bank introduced participatory development, partly in response to criticism of its top-down approach (Mansuri and Rao, 2012). This shift to participatory development has been criticized as a move to depoliticize development (Ferguson, 1990), to instrumentalize participation (Cooke and Kothari, 2001) and to push the neoliberal agenda from below (Harris, 2002; Carrol, 2009 p. 459).

In the Bank's development model, implemented via PAR, empowerment means strengthening the productive and organizational capacities of farmers to improve production, to gain access to productive assets and to comply with 'modern' supply requirements (quality, safety, quantity, and timely delivery) such that they can compete in the market economy

(World Bank, 2005). The state plays a facilitating, not controlling, role in line with the so-called post-Washington consensus that considers ‘healthy’ states essential to the well-functioning of markets (Joseph, 2012). This means that states, while maintaining a market-centred vision, must facilitate access (either directly or through third parties) to technical support, rural credit, infrastructure and commercial logistics services. In this model, the market and not the state is the distributor of resources to the poor (Collion and Friedman, 2010). Alliances with agribusiness are presented as an effective way to enhance the entrepreneurial capacity of small farmers (World Bank, 2009; Collion and Friedman, 2010; Labaste and Weber, 2010). Parties establish ‘win-win’ relations in which each benefits by developing solutions they could not achieve on their own.

The PAR programme frames subjects as ‘participants’ in projects and markets rather than as citizens. The PAR intervention facilitates the search for solutions by the poor themselves and promotes individual ‘self-governance’ crucial for neoliberal governance or ‘governmentality’ (Lemke 2001; Foucault, 2010). Neoliberal governance emphasizes technocratic administration in which the proper functioning of the market and ‘good governance’ of the state depend on and contribute to forming empowered ‘entrepreneurs of themselves’ (Lemke, 2001). Farmers pass from being passive recipients of resources to becoming effective producers able to make decisions that improve their agricultural production and access to markets, as in mode one of power (Córdoba *et al.*, 2014a-forthcoming).

While the Bank’s approach is primarily a non-relational framing of empowerment in terms of ‘self-governance’, the MAS government, links empowerment to historical notions of collective citizenship that question power relations and structures. The MAS government was elected with the support of an archipelago of indigenous, social, peasant, and urban movements with diverse class and ethnic demands. These movements have a long historical tradition of exercising collective citizenship through their political and territorial organizations such as agrarian unions, *ayllus* and Native Indigenous and Peasant territories (TIOC) (Postero, 2007; Farthing and Kohl, 2013). At least two key historical moments have shaped this collective citizenship (Assies *et al.*, 2005). The first was the 1952 revolution that granted voting rights to Indian people and pushed for a land reform led by liberal notions of citizenship linked to individual land tenure (Rivera, 1993). Indians were redefined as *campesinos* and the state-sponsored peasant unions became the main vehicle for interacting with the state and demanding civil, political, and social rights and participation (Wanderley, 2009). Peasant unions, later grouped at the national level into the *Confederación Sindical Única de Trabajadores de Bolivia* (the Sole Union Confederation of Bolivian Peasant Workers or CSUTCB), supported various governments in the past and played an important role in the 1980s democratization process. They have come to form a corporatist movement, with deep roots in class claims and strong powers to mobilize rural society at the local,

departmental and national level (Wanderley, 2009). The second moment of strengthening collective citizenship occurred during the neoliberal restructuring of the 1990s when the MNR government led by Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada triggered a series of reforms such as the Law of Popular Participation (1994) and the National Institute of Agrarian Reform (INRA) Law. These reforms, together with the mobilization of indigenous people from the lowlands, recognized indigenous organizations as interlocutors with the state within what has been called ‘neoliberal multiculturalism’ (Kymlicka, 1995; Hale, 2002; Postero, 2007)⁴². This development changed the terms of citizenship by focusing rural demands on cultural recognition and difference, and on the right to communal ownership rather than on class demands.

The current (third) moment of citizenship, which we label neocollectivism, began with the social upheavals since 2000 and the rise to power of the MAS. Neocollectivism refutes the separation of the state and politics from civil society and economy and is based on strong state intervention. The Productive Revolution Law, approved in 2011, proposes a change of food system to include ideas of ‘food sovereignty’, ‘Living Well’⁴³ and the rights of the ‘Mother Earth’. This post-neoliberal framework for implementing rural neocollectivist policies emphasizes that social movements should present their economic demands not to the market, but directly to the state and press for the transfer of public resources. Their social organizations, with a community character, are responsible for managing these resources, generating development processes and developing technical capacities (Estado Plurinacional de Bolivia, 2011). The main difference with previous regimes of collective citizenship in Bolivia is the focus on balancing social movements’ class-based and cultural recognition demands with a quest for economic empowerment; highlighting that productive aspects and organizations are dependent on the political organizations of rural communities. Although the MAS government does not deny the role of the market in a capitalist economy (Fabricant, 2012), it argues that the market alone cannot ensure ‘Living Well’ and that is why the protagonist role of the state is justified to achieve collective well-being through redistributive policies (Córdoba and Jansen, 2013).

In terms of the four modes of power outlined above, the Bank and the MAS government have contrasting views on empowerment. While the former primarily subscribes to the first mode of empowerment, the latter addresses the fourth mode in its political discourse. The Bank highlights individual capacities and de-emphasizes the collective, while the

42 Governments across Latin America supported recognition and cultural rights but were reluctant to accept their class-based claims. Hale (2002) refers to it as the *indio permitido*, or the authorized Indian in neoliberalism.

43 The ‘Living Well’ term refers to a conceptualization of the economy as subordinate to the need to live in harmony with the surrounding environment and gives priority to the development of just and reciprocal human relations (Fabricant, 2012).

neocollectivist view highlights the reverse. In the Bank's view, empowerment does not question unequal power relations or the economic system. Disempowerment is not understood as a consequence of unequal political-economic and social structures, but as the lack of capacity of the poor to articulate itself to the market, the lack of human and social resources, and of capital that would allow them to make better decisions. In contrast, the MAS government perceives empowerment strategies of the social movement–state nexus as a means to change structurally the dominant market-oriented and economic-growth based food system and as a contribution to the strengthening of a collective citizenship. But how do these two contrasting frames of empowerment, come together in practice? And do the other modes of power also play a role? In the next section, we explore these articulations in the PAR programme and the extent to which the Bank and the MAS government adhered to their respective views on empowerment.

The PAR Programme and its Empowerment Strategies

The PAR model in Bolivia

The PAR is one of the MAS's principal strategies for economic empowerment. It aims to balance and complement the strong focus on the political empowerment of social movements. Much of the technical institutional organization and implementation of the PAR are, however, set by the Bank. The programme was designed by a small community in the Latin American and Caribbean section of the Bank, including the Bank's senior representative in Bolivia, interested in how to incorporate poor producers into the market. Implementation started in 2002 in Colombia (Córdoba, 2012) and extended to 10 countries in Latin America with variations according to national policies and contexts (Collion and Friedman, n.d.). In Colombia, the model strengthened commercial agreements between farmers and buyers, focusing on agro-chain constraints, while in Bolivia it concentrated on the productive level, improving farming systems so that farmers are able to respond to concrete market demands. Since its inception the model did not include the poorest of the poor. Prospective beneficiaries must already be engaged in markets and have the potential to generate income (surplus) and jobs (World Bank, 2005).

Once the MAS government assumed office, the Ministry of Rural and Land Development (MDRyT) took over the PAR programme proposal initiated by its predecessor. The first US\$28.4 million Bank credit for the PAR was approved on 26 May, 2005 and implemented in 2007 (MDRyT; 2009). In the first phase PAR launched four calls for proposals including a pilot in 2004. In 2007, the programme covered 65 municipalities from the Tropics, the

Valley, and the Salt-flat sub-regions. In 2009 coverage of the programme expanded to 110 municipalities, and the intervention area doubled including the Chaco, North and Lake Titicaca regions. Currently, the programme supports around 700 productive alliances reaching approximately fifteen thousand producers in all departments of the country, except Pando (See Figure 5.1). In 2013, a second phase started with a US\$50 million loan from the Bank. Figure 5.1 shows the distribution of the project around the country.

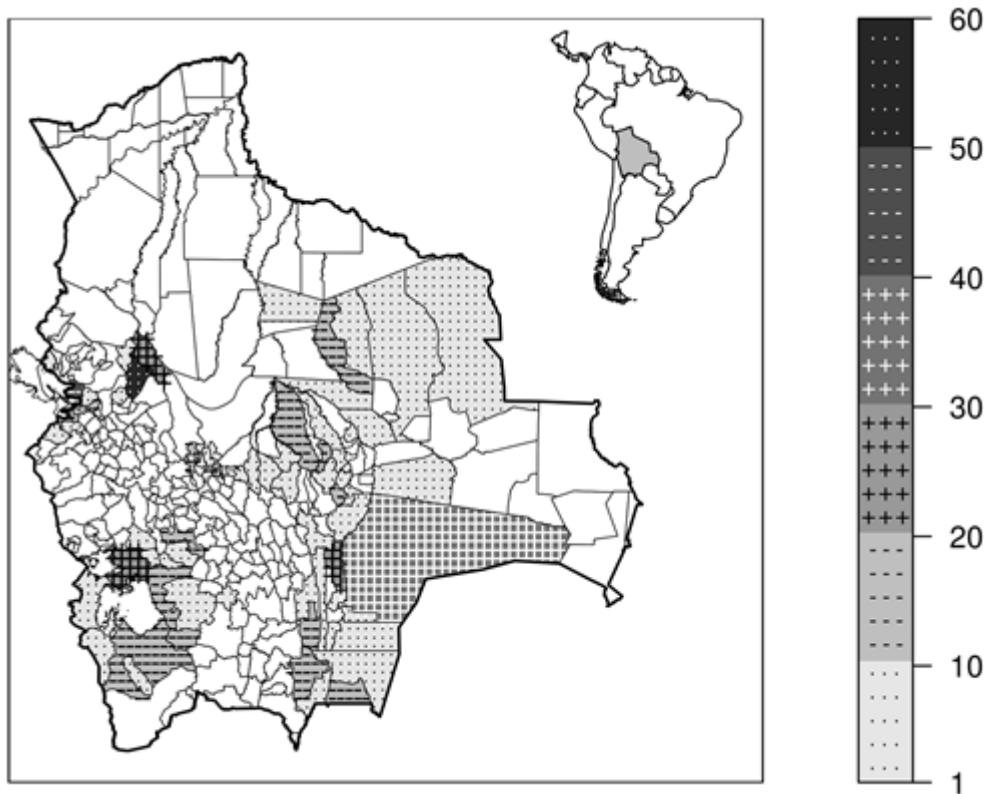


Figure 5.1 Number of PAR Projects by Municipalities 2011

*Data supplied by the PAR office – La Paz – August 2011

The PAR model was adapted during the MAS government. First, PAR changed the name of beneficiaries from ‘small producers’ to ‘indigenous people’, thereby recognizing the context of indigenous villages. This name change did not imply a reformulation of the content of the programme as PAR offered the same support mechanisms and management formats to all participating producers regardless of their ethnicity. Second, the programme expanded its intervention areas during the first six years of implementation. The MAS government argued that the programme should be more inclusive, alleviate poverty and support the poor. While the Bank emphasized the productive technical area, the MAS attempted to expand the programme to include poorer municipalities and not only those sites with greater economic potential. Third, PAR increasingly focused on business opportunities

in the domestic market whereas the initial PAR proposal had emphasized the support of export initiatives.

The PAR, although linked to the Ministry of Rural and Land Development (MDRyT), operates as an autonomous programme. Once the Bolivian government receives funding from the Bank, the programme manages these as a decentralized entity with operational autonomy from the MDRyT. The fact that PAR is completely funded by the Bank makes its administration and operational management responsive to the Bank's general guidelines rather than to the Bolivian state. The PAR representatives interviewed found that this brought greater financial independence and management flexibility as well as independence in choosing beneficiaries and intervention sites on the basis of technical rather than political criteria. However, this also isolates them from other state institutions. PAR's central offices in La Paz are located in a small house in a residential neighbourhood at some distance from the MDRyT. The recruitment of programme managers and technical staff is based on merit. For example, members of the technical team of the PAR were selected by an external private company that evaluated the candidates according to merit and not political affiliation. The current PAR general manager has been in the job since 2004, allowing greater stability than occurs in other government jobs where rotation is high. This is in line with 'building a capable bureaucracy' (Joseph, 2012 p. 220) that contributes to a healthy state. As such the PAR technicians occupy an unusual position, working in accordance with both the technical dictates of the Bank and the needs of the MAS government and its constituency.

Depoliticizing social movements: Individual entrepreneurship vs collective citizenship

Central to the PAR programme for 'economic empowerment' is the depoliticization of social movements by organizing them into market-oriented associations. The Productive Revolution Law of 2011 aimed to support Community Economic Organizations (OECOM), which are strongly linked to social movements. The Law gives OECOMs the power to manage and approve rural projects and channel financial resources for communitarian economic initiatives, a demand expressed by the Sole Union Confederation of Bolivian Peasant Workers. Rather than waiting for the slow process of endogenous development to take place through the strengthening of communitarian economies (i.e. OECOM) as advocated initially by neocollectivism, the Bank proposed market-centred associations comprising market-oriented producers interested in improving farm income, productivity, marketing and local processing activities and participating in value chains (Collion and Friedman, nd). For one Bank representative interviewed, the involvement of social movements would distort the purpose of the programme which, according to him, is

productive not political. The main challenge for PAR, he highlighted, is precisely the creation of depoliticized economic organizations. He said:

We [the Bank] have insisted, and eventually the Bolivian government supported this view, that the economic transfers from the PAR go directly to the producers, with an economic purpose (...) The Unions can co-opt and hinder productive resource management (Interview, August 1, 2011).

He also stressed that using social movements as intermediaries could divert part of the resources to purposes other than those intended. This view on supporting economic organizations in the PAR programme, instead of more communitarian organizations such as OECOM, was finally accepted by the MAS government.

The prioritization of market-oriented associations over communitarian enterprises created tensions within the communities studied. In the presence of PAR representatives, community leaders voiced their concerns about divisions in the union structure arising from the top-down imposition of new associations, which have a different *modus operandi* from that of life in the communities. As the associations organize individual farmers by agricultural product, it is difficult to link them collectively to the community as a whole. One union leader held that PAR sought to do the same as the NGOs, ‘create associations with the intention of dividing the unions’. The distinction between collective and productive organizations is perceived as a divide and rule strategy.

External interventions, however, can be developed and appropriated in different ways by different actors (Nuijten, 2002). Our observations suggest that in places where individual land tenure is dominant, forms of coordination and negotiation with social movements have been generated in practice. In Yapacani, a town of predominantly Andean migrants (Quechua and Aymara origin) and where the unions are the dominant form of organization, emerging associations have maintained strong ties to the unions. In August 2012, we attended a workshop conducted by a local NGO to train women from the Union Federation on how to organize themselves into productive associations. Yolanda⁴⁴, a representative of the federation, told us that those attending had created three women’s associations so as to access the PAR resources. One group of women proposed a project of poultry for eggs, another involved pigs, and a third, with more economic resources, opted for genetically-improved livestock and pasture. Each group worked separately on these productive projects and organized their association around market opportunities, while simultaneously continuing to form part of a single active political union. She added:

44 Pseudonyms are used for all individuals mentioned.

The members of the Union Federation get together and inform us that there is a call from the government to access resources. The leader goes and gets the PAR forms and calls a meeting. In the meeting it is announced what the possibilities are and we decide what we want to do, if we want to raise chickens, pigs, cattle, etc. (...) not all want the same thing' (...) With the Union Federation we work on gender issues. The Ministry of Justice supports us. We have been actively involved in the formulation of five national laws. In the union, women raise gender issues and the need to participate in power spaces; from the unions emerge local government representatives, councillors and ministers. In the town we have a new secretary of gender: for women to learn how to empower ourselves in power positions. Productive projects are also important to position women within the family, to gain independence and contribute financially (Interview, August 17, 2012).

While the unions highlight the significance of collective citizenship and political empowerment for social transformation, the associations focus on managing state-resources to improve individual production. This is one example of what Albó labels 'individualism within the group' (quoted in Lazar, 2008 p. 179), and what some scholars (Zoomers, 2006) point to as part of the *Andinidad* (the Andean way of doing things). Here individual land tenure, individual agricultural production and strong market orientation do not necessarily conflict with collective political projects and aspirations.

The case of lowland indigenous people who are trying to strengthen their collective land-ownership and values, however, is different. An illustrative example is the Iupaguasu captaincy (a form of indigenous organization), which is a member of the Guaraní People's Assembly in Lagunillas. This community, like other Guaraní communities, has historically experienced strong oppression. People were held as semi-slaves, and worked under the yoke of large landowners. The struggle of the Guaraní to recover their lands and territory started in the late 1970s (Gianotten, 2006), with the support of NGOs. Today, the community of Iupaguasu owns 38,229 hectares entitled as Community Territories of Origin (TCO - Tierras Comunitarias de Origen) under the National Agrarian Reform Law of 1996. When we studied this community in 2011 they were proposing a productive project to PAR and other government programmes. The project aimed to create a strategic alliance between the community and AGRINUTS, a company based in Santa Cruz dedicated to the production and export of Bolivian peanuts. The Guaraní community owned land suitable for intensive peanut cultivation and AGRINUTS needed to increase its production area to meet export orders. CEPAC, a local NGO, facilitated the partnership between AGRINUTS and the Iupaguasu community. CEPAC was concerned because the Guaraní did not cultivate their land themselves but rented it out to others, even to those who were once their landlords. The

alliance with AGRINUTS could potentially terminate these leases. AGRINUTS would contribute capital and the Guaraní land and labour. The profits would be shared equally. Guaraní leaders saw it as an opportunity to empower themselves productively and alleviate poverty. However, the land recovery process was not easy. Tenants refused to return the land and the captaincy had to hire a lawyer to dissolve the contracts. Although the community wanted to receive support from PAR, they had doubts about being divided into associations. As a member, the captaincy receives support from the Guaraní People's Assembly but associations may not receive such support as they are economic initiatives in which only some participate.

Additionally, the MAS neocollectivist project presents new threats for the Guaraní of Iupaguasu. The Law of Popular Participation (LPP) of 1994 helped them to increase their representation at the local political level and the agrarian reform law of 1996 awarded them collective land rights (Wanderley, 2009). Their collective territories were entitled Community Territories of Origin (TCO) in 2001 but with the new constitution of 2009 (art. 30 and 394) they became Native Indigenous and Peasant territories (TIOC). Today they consider this change in the constitution to be detrimental since it includes peasant communities, based on individual land tenure, who may want to seize and divide their lands. According to an Iupaguasu leader:

Now all laws are changing, now we are TIOC. Also, the migrants [peasants from the highlands] are going to be able to enter our territories, then we will never have real land access and they are going to take it from us (Interview, July 29, 2010).

Currently, the Guaraní from Iupaguasu find themselves caught between their struggles for recognition of indigenous territories and rights, the need to fight poverty as a community and the pressure from neocollectivism to become productive and incorporate into markets.

The emphasis of the PAR on economic-oriented forms of organizations based on individual land tenure has placed the MAS government in a contradictory situation with regard to its constituencies. On the one hand, the PAR structure can serve the redistribution (class) claims of agrarian unions who seek greater governmental economic support for their individual productive projects. On the other hand, it creates tensions within indigenous group organizations, weakening their efforts for structural change through collective governance and cultural recognition as in mode four of power.

Improving capacities and self-governance to demand state support

Once farmers are grouped into market-oriented associations, the PAR officials visit the communities to explain how to formalize the association and to build capacities and skills, different from those involved in social movements. For Carmen, the PAR social specialist for the department of Santa Cruz, this capacity-building is like the birth and upbringing of a baby. ‘Being grouped together is not enough’—she explains to producers during her visits to the communities— ‘just as it is not enough for babies merely to be born’. To be ‘brought up’ it is necessary to follow a series of steps so that associations can garner programme support. First, just as each baby needs a birth certificate, so the association, to be recognized by the PAR, needs to secure a legal personality (*personería jurídica*) by formally registering as a productive organization with the signature of the governor of the department.

Second, the association must meet certain requirements: 1) a minimum of 20 members, 2) at least two years’ experience in the selected productive activity, and 3) a contribution of about US\$560. The latter is a subtle filter to select those association members with sufficient economic resources and better market connections. Additionally, the association must have a Tax Identification Number and be registered with the Integrated System of Administrative Management and Modernization (SIGMA). When these requirements are fulfilled, the association can open a bank account and be in a position to receive financial resources from the PAR.

Third, members have to identify business (market) opportunities on their own and submit a summary business plan setting out what they will buy and when. The PAR does not provide any technical advice at this stage but it does offer plainly written manuals on the required business skills, such as how to open a bank account, write a check, prepare vouchers, manage bank accounts, and how to present accounts to the PAR. Most producers lack such managerial skills and only a few have attended school for some years. Some associations receive support from agricultural technicians in their area or rely on members with more experience with development projects or higher educational qualifications, to design their first plan.

The use of these tools to achieve ‘self-governance’ drew heavily on the discourses on participation advocated by the Bank. Central to participation is stakeholder control and decision-making for ownership and efficiency of the projects, giving voice to the poor and collective action, or ‘social capital’ (Bebbington *et al.*, 2004). But this participatory process also serves neocollectivist redistributive aims. An official from the ministry of rural development related how farmers benefit from participation in the programme and learn how to manage public resources. For him, this improves farmers’ access to current and future state resources (primarily economic) and liberates them from social exclusion. He added:

We do not want technicians managing money or for the NGOs to manage their resources. We want farmers entering the formal system, that when there is an interesting business they can invoice. [we want them] to decide (...) decide which technicians to hire, that they take risks, that they decide the things they want to buy, and that they carry out all the processes (Interview, July 7, 2011).

This quote illustrates the continuity between neoliberal governance (self-governance) and the transition to post-neoliberal neocollectivism and its concerns to incorporate social movements' demands into the state apparatus. Farmers must be prepared to handle and manage resources and to be citizens capable of having a direct relationship with the state without the mediation of external actors like NGOs.

Two actors are important in bringing association members closer towards 'self-governance' and in incorporating the social movements into the state: the facilitator and the *acompañante* (companion). With the participation of the association, the facilitator, hired by PAR, develops a technical proposal. This proposal sets out a technological package that includes a market and environmental assessment and the association's strengths and weaknesses. Facilitators call themselves '*proyectistas*' (project designers) because they are in charge of rallying the associations to submit the technical proposal for PAR approval and of bringing the association into contact with buyers. The buyer does not participate except to specify product characteristics: quantity, quality and frequency.

Once the proposal is approved, PAR appoints the *acompañante* to provide technical services to the association. *Acompañantes*, usually individual technicians who help associations choose technology packages and innovations, are seen as 'the eyes of the PAR in the communities', since they permanently monitor and report to PAR. However, contrary to the image of 'extensionist' or 'technician' associated with top-down methods, farmers associate the word '*acompañante*' with being more bottom-up and less controlling. This shifts the professional's stance away from directing farmers' opinions and decisions towards facilitation.

The PAR programme ends the participatory development process with an evaluation workshop guided by PAR officials. This workshop is seen as the end of the contractual relationship with the PAR, i.e. with the state. We accompanied a PAR team for eight closing evaluations in different communities in the municipalities of Comarapa, La Guardia and El Torno. These workshops had a festive air, association members providing food for the PAR representatives as a sign of reciprocity for the support received. A PAR official calculated the economic impact that the PAR had had on the association, including investment of the project, costs, sales prices, and transaction costs. Efficiency in the use of project resources was calculated by quantifying investments and profits and converting them into the format required by PAR. Participation was understood in terms of the average number of members

who participated in association meetings and the percentage of women or indigenous people involved in the project, illustrating the project's intention that they should benefit from the intervention. Participants regarded one of the most important results in terms of empowerment to be the fact that they managed resources by themselves and decided on the destination and distribution of these resources within the group. They also highlighted the credibility and transparency of the PAR, which allowed them to view the allocation of the budget. An association member spoke about the contribution of the PAR in the following way:

I learned how to manage resources, though it has been difficult since the vast majority of us do not have a high level of education. Many institutions came, did things, and left. But with the PAR things are clear, this and this were bought, and this money was left over. I like it, there is no one to distrust, not as in other institutions' (Fieldwork notes).

At the evaluation workshop, Carmen, the PAR official, again used the metaphor of comparing the associations to raising children. She reminded the producers that the association, like a child, is now walking and that further steps forward depend on them. Finally Carmen said: 'today you have ended the contractual situation with the PAR because your association is now established, the PAR helped you to improve your product. Now you have to seek other resources to help you to improve other aspects, seek other financing opportunities'. In these evaluation sessions the PAR was described as a learning process that empowers farmers to interpellate the state and present claims for projects.

We observed strong support for the programme's aims among participating associations and agrarian union representatives. People were enthusiastic about the PAR programme because of the financial resources provided, which they could not get through the banks. Many producers had entered PAR to obtain more cattle or to extend or improve their cropping systems. According to the union members interviewed, the greatest contribution of PAR was that it allowed access to productive assets (purchase of animals, seedlings, agrochemicals, tools, productive infrastructure), as opposed to past interventions, especially those of NGOs, in which project resources were mainly devoted to training and technical support. PAR support was, instead, tangible and perceived as fundamental for their productive activities. An agrarian union leader related that they do not defend capitalism as such. Rather 'what we defend is a plebeian capitalism, a capitalism that works for the poor' (Interview, August 09, 2011). Although they link their material demands to questions of rights and redistribution, union members do not see their interests as going against the capitalist economy (cf. Jansen 2014). They use the associations to access PAR resources and see this project as a way of

tactically organizing their operations within capitalism without aspiring to wider structural changes in the food system.

The limits of 'self-governance': Confronting government failures

While the PAR programme forges capacity-building through facilitating participation, its relationship to the provision of technical support is ambiguous. When we asked a senior member of staff of the Bank in Bolivia about the neglect of technical aspects in the PAR projects, he argued that PAR resources only suffice to improve meagre productive conditions in the country and that these productive investments do not require strong technical support to be effective since producers know what they need and how they will use these resources.

While in PAR, technology is reduced to the minimal conditions needed to ensure production, programme participants struggle to access even these minimal services. In the transition to neocollectivism, the NGOs' role as providers of technical services has been cut back (Córdoba and Jansen, in preparation). PAR has few relations with municipal governments, neither do these provide a source of funding for hiring technicians. (Although assigned a role in strengthening technical services in rural areas, municipal governments lack the required capacity and resources; Kay, 2004). For example, the Association of Potato Seed Producers (APROSEMCO) in Comarapa has experienced serious problems in continuing their PAR project due to the lack of local technicians. They have put out seven invitations to hire a potato seed production expert. The association leader told us:

We need the technician; we could not find one with the required experience in the area. (...) The problem with technical support is that there are no technicians in the area and the ones that are here do not meet the requirements, with the terms of reference. Those from Santa Cruz ask for a lot of money and are not interested in moving to live here', (interview, 19 February, 2011).

The PAR recognized that the lack of technical support is a crucial constraint, especially in remote locations. One of the PAR's strategies for solving this problem is the creation of a database of service providers. However, as an APROSEMCO leader commented, as farmers have to contribute 30 per cent of the costs of technical support, they could not attract technicians from other regions who are only willing to move for a good salary.

Local NGOs, who are the only providers of technical service in many regions, criticize the PAR intervention. According to an NGO technician in the Chaco region:

The MAS government is not interested in the technical side; they are interested in giving things and making politics. It's very nice that they give things; this was never seen with previous governments (...) before it was the other way around, you got good technical support and the projects only spent money on the technical part. This has drastically changed, but it should not be an extreme change' (interview, 9 August, 2012).

PAR has shifted the nature of support from one extreme to the other, away from providing technical support and knowledge towards giving material goods such as animals and agricultural inputs. According to this critical view, the role of the 'gift' is driven by the MAS government's desire to exchange material resources for votes to stay in power. Material goods foster local production and are perceived by producers as tangible aid. Therefore, PAR support affects the political fortunes of the MAS government. The problem is that capacity building, farmer participation and productive material goods, although important, do not compensate for the government's failure to provide farmers with the necessary technical support.

Articulating Empowerment as Capacity-Building with Structural Empowerment

The previous section discussed the implementation of PAR and its empowerment strategies. In this section, we examine how these strategies articulate with the MAS government's view on empowerment. The problem of this articulation can be illustrated by the encounter between the Minister of Rural and Land Development Nemecia Achacollo, members of the association Junta Piraí and PAR technicians during a project evaluation in El Torno in August 2011 (see Figure 5.2). The Junta Piraí association grouped together twenty-five producers who had requested the construction of two warehouses with a production capacity of 15,000 broiler chickens. About ten members of the association were waiting for us sitting on wooden benches in a makeshift shelter near the newly constructed warehouses. Another three were adding finishing touches to a commemorative plaque which thanked the PAR, the Bank and President Evo Morales for their support. PAR technician Marcelo installed a banner with the image of the PAR programme. The minister arrived accompanied by the mayor of El Torno (from the MAS party). Four producers, including the association president, the treasurer and the secretary spoke words of appreciation for the programme, the government and the president for the support given to small producers. They mentioned that it was the first time that resources had been transferred directly to them and that they had received concrete goods. Cesar, representing the PAR, took the floor and said that the project

would not have been successful without the producer organizations and that it was the associations not the government, who should take the credit for this.



Figure 5.2 The Minister of Rural and Land Development Nemecia Achacollo (right) uncovers the commemorative plaque.

Marcelo, who privately expressed his disagreement to us with what he called the ‘politicization’ of an event that should be about technical evaluation, intervened to highlight the productive nature of the project. While for Marcelo the objective of the project was to assess compliance with and effectiveness of productive goals, for the minister, the project meant something else. Having remained silent during the earlier interventions, the minister only started talking once the public television cameras arrived. She hailed the PAR as President Evo Morales’ most successful programme, and thus a success for the most excluded sectors of the country. She reminded the audience that while previous governments had not been concerned about peasants, this government was doing everything possible to reverse that. She continued by saying:

You have to thank Brother Evo Morales. The PAR exists thanks to the political stability that we have in our country, thanks to the credibility of the president. Today we are supported by many loans. So far we are working with concession credits (...). There are 11 decentralized units, 11 programmes like the PAR (...).

The minister explained that the PAR sought to provide farmers with an initial stage of support, a first relationship with the state and after that they were to find funding from other agencies created by the MAS government. She went on to say:

We have the BDP [Productive Development Bank] from whom you can continue to borrow money. I think that because of this, brothers, you have managed a project. You know how to manage a project, you have followed the path and the government has shown you the way. We believe that you have to take this forward. You, who have already received support, should give space to other comrades who have not yet received any; hand in hand we are going to make a change, to achieve food sovereignty.

These interchanges illustrate how different views on empowerment are combined. The MAS government strongly increased the role of the state in redistributing resources; the state being seen as the central agent and the small producer as the one who should ‘receive support’. This fits into the neocollectivist perspective whereby the Bolivian state played a significant role in rural development by increasing expenditure on social grants (Riggirozzi, 2010), creating or recovering state companies and development initiatives (Córdoba and Jansen, 2013; Domingo, 2009; Postero, 2013a). To strengthen small-scale production economic resources were directly transferred to productive organizations, responding to the demands of agrarian unions as set out in the Productive Revolution Law (Rojas, 2012). The implementation of PAR is part of this wider process.

This state-led redistribution and transfer of resources is seen as political, as a change of system (mode 4), because of the ties with social movements and participation of local organisations in the formulation of demands and implementation. The PAR intervention helps the MAS government regulate contentious politics, or what Tapia (2008) calls the ‘*política salvaje*’ (wild politics) of social movements in Bolivia, i.e. collective action that goes beyond both state spaces and those social spaces that normally serve to organize state-society relations. These wild politics question the expansion of state politics and may collectively imagine alternatives. Once in power, the MAS government has to channel this opposition or keep the wild politics within certain limits in order to be able to govern amidst the deeply contradictory claims of the different participating social movements. Being a social movement and a government at one and the same time is potentially conflictual. As part of the state, the MAS government encourages demands to be made through the established channels so as to impose some order over the ‘wild politics’. PAR is one of these ordering mechanisms. It binds the MAS constituency to the MAS ruling power by demonstrating that there is a flow of resources from the state to local communities.

As the case of El Torno shows, the MAS government wants farmers to regard the PAR as a mechanism freeing them from social exclusion and enabling them to become the country's providers of food sovereignty. The measure of success seems to lie in how much support the state gives to local communities. In contrast, the PAR team emphasizes a different measure of success of the programme, one which relies on efficiency and entrepreneurship. According to this view, producers have to learn to deal with modern bureaucracies and to adhere to the rules of the market economy by managing bank accounts, budgets and cash flows. PAR officials must evaluate project efficiency under the guidelines established by the Bank, i.e. in terms of improvements in productivity and business opportunities. In this view, the state is basically a facilitator, enabling individuals to assume responsibility for their own development (neoliberal governmentality) rather than being dependent on the state.

At the time of this study (2012), both the government and the PAR administration seemed satisfied with the programme's impact despite adopting different measures. However, neocollectivism, like similar post-neoliberal projects elsewhere on the continent (Radcliffe, 2012), has not been able to make a definitive break from neoliberalism. The PAR programme reinforces a market-centred approach to rural development in ways that echo neoliberal and colonialist policies of the past. The PAR market spaces are not designed to change the basis of economic power and the dominant patterns of production as in mode 4 of power. Furthermore, the balance between political and economic spheres, mentioned by Morales in the ceremony in Tiawanaku and referred to in the introduction, may present a risk for the MAS government in the long-term. Producers quickly learned that to gain real access to resources they had to integrate with productive associations and not political ones; associations had to de-emphasize their collective claims.

Conclusions

This chapter examines how the different ideas of empowerment of the MAS government and the Bank articulate in practice through the PAR programme. Using an analytical distinction of four modes of power, we argued that the MAS government and the Bank represent two different ways of framing empowerment. The MAS government advocates a post-neoliberal framework in which the state collaborates directly with social organizations to achieve structural social change (a mode 4 view on power). By contrast, the Bank's emphasis on strengthening capacities to meet markets requirements and self-governance means that it largely upholds a non-relational view of power (mode 1). The implementation of the PAR programme in Bolivia combined three strategies related to the issue of empowerment: a) depoliticizing social movements by supporting market-oriented associations, b) focusing the participatory process on capacity building, and c) redefining project support as a 'gift' which

would benefit the MAS government politically, despite PAR's efforts to promote bottom-up processes and local capacities. The depoliticization of social movements is at times disempowering (a shift from mode 4 to mode 1) as social organizations to receive PAR support have to trade in collective values and political aspirations for more individualist perspectives. At times, however, it is also empowering as when producer associations collaborate with social movements (especially agrarian unions) to prepare tactically the political agenda for social change (as in mode 3 of power). One could argue that for the MAS constituency the PAR programme implies a shift from discursively propagated structural change in power relationships (mode 4) to that of improving farmers' economic and political position vis-à-vis other actors without changing the rules of the game (modes 2 and 3). Rather than being contradictory, strengthening farmers' capacities (mode 1) is very helpful for achieving this aim.

The case of the PAR programme shows that neocollectivism has not been able to imagine alternative options for development practice which go beyond neoliberal mechanisms of governing (e.g. self-governance). This confirms the position of those scholars who argue that the MAS government has not been able to synchronize its rhetoric and practice (Bebbington and Humphreys-Bebbington, 2010; Kennemore and Weeks, 2011). However, this does not necessarily mean that neocollectivism is completely submissive to neoliberalism. One could argue that the trajectory being followed is what is currently needed to achieve success. The image from Greek mythology of Ulysses who ties himself to the mast to resist the lure of the sirens, may be appropriate here. By binding social organizations to the government, the managerial tools embedded in the PAR programme and the reduction of empowerment aspirations to capacity-building and technological efficiency, as well as the strategic alliance with the Bank, may help the MAS strengthen, or at least maintain, state-social movement relations and avoid the 'madness' that might result from pursuing the contentious politics of the Sirens. This could lead to chaos and undermine the MAS government. Furthermore, the trajectory followed furthers the distributive aims of neocollectivism. The contradiction is that by doing so the MAS government disengages with the alternative path to development based on food sovereignty, Living Well and Mother Earth rights.

Chapter 6

General Conclusions



Source: Diana Córdoba, 2012

Introduction

This thesis set out to investigate what are, and what sustains, the differences between two views on participation: on the one hand, a politicized view, in which participation is seen as a means to generate social transformation and radical changes; on the other hand, a view on participation as a ‘social technology,’ in which participation is seen as a managerial tool for project development efficiency. I chose the case of Bolivia to analyse these differences in practice through specific project interventions. These two views on participation have been in tension since the rise to power of Evo Morales and his Movement Toward Socialism (MAS) party in 2005. Morales’ government defends what I have labelled a ‘neocollectivist’ approach to participation that favours the direct relation between the state and social movements and grassroots organizations to generate a radical political process of social transformation. I contrast this politicized view on participation with the interventions conducted by PROINPA, a national NGO focused on research and development initiatives. Specifically, I analysed its interventions using participatory methodologies in Morochata and Padilla municipalities.

My investigation on the differences between these two views on participation has focused on answering the following three sub-questions:

- 1) How does the MAS government shape participation as a political project?
- 2) How does participation as a managerial tool contrast with participation as a political project?
- 3) What are the articulations between these two approaches to participation?

In this final chapter, I propose to go beyond the dichotomy between ‘good’ and ‘bad’ politics in participatory practices, as suggested by some authors who seek to re-politicize participatory processes. I argue instead that each view on participation represents different and autonomous but complementary spheres for social transformation. Whereas a politicized view on participation is essential to define the ‘what’ to do in rural development, participation as a social technology provides the ‘how.’ Next, based on the empirical chapters of this thesis, I answer the research questions proposed in the introduction. I then summarize the main argument about participation raised in this thesis. Finally, I offer a short discussion of what could be done in further research.

The MAS Government and Neocollectivism in Rural Development Interventions

For centuries, peasant and indigenous movements in Bolivia have organized to challenge the structures of social exclusion that came from colonial times. As suggested by different authors, collective rights based on class and ethnic demands have been achieved by steps in a process that included struggles, tensions, and alliances with the state and power (e.g. alliances with power elites) (Rivera-Cusicanqui, 1984; Assies, 2005; Postero, 2007). These steps include the Tupac Katari uprisings in the seventeenth century, and the national revolution of 1952 that granted the right to vote to indigenous and peasant people and fulfilled some of their demands through land reform and other various reforms in the 1990s that allowed the recognition of indigenous peoples' territories and rights, especially in the lowlands. Although these efforts have been important for distributing rights to excluded sectors of society, some people/groups continue to be excluded, especially in the political sphere, from processes of decision making.

How does the MAS government shape participation as a political project? The MAS government has tried to bring together, in one political project, different models of collective action of different excluded sectors, vis-à-vis neoliberal politics, to generate a comprehensive view of social justice and a concept of citizenship that is more meaningful for Bolivians. In the process of giving voice to the voiceless, or as Rancière (1999) calls them 'the part with no part' (p. 64), the MAS government gathered different sectors of society to rewrite the constitution and to participate in what it calls 'the re-foundation of the state.' In the Communitarian and Productive Agricultural Revolution Law approved in 2011, the MAS government reinforced these intentions. These attempts to politicize rural development reflected the recognition of indigenous peoples' demands, peasants' class demands, and the demands for political representation of popular sectors in general to participate in the decision-making process. This research shows that in rural development these different demands can be classified into three tendencies or visions of social justice (Chapter 2): first, a vision of indigenous and sustainable development, whose central demand is the 'decolonization' of the state and the adoption of the 'Living Well' concept of collective rather than individual well-being; second, the left anti-imperialist tendency favouring a 'strong state' capable of defending the nation against the dominant food systems managed by transnational companies and neoliberalism; and third, the popular tendency defending a farmer-based vision of rural development based on the principles of food sovereignty.

The MAS government has struggled to balance the three spheres of social justice: recognition, representation, and redistribution. The fact that the MAS political programme met different and sometimes contradictory demands has provided grounds for disagreement.

This disagreement has been characterized by the practice of a ‘radical’ democracy *à la Boliviana*, in which different social movements deal with each other in seeking ways to cohabit with neoliberalism and change it. The tendencies within neocollectivism are not fully subordinated to Morales’ authority; on the contrary, they measure their strengths in the streets through manifestations and confrontations. One example of this was the case of the TIPNIS, referred to briefly in Chapter 2, where lowland indigenous communities’ claims for recognition and respect of their territory conflicted with peasant movements’ demands for rural development. Protests and marches guided this ‘disagreement’ in a dispute that has not been resolved.

The neocollectivism proposed by the MAS government contrasts with the characterization that some authors have made of ‘post’-neoliberalism. Some scholars, adopting a poststructuralist understanding of post-neoliberalism, point to a scenario where development would no longer exist (Escobar, 2010). Others, instead, see it as a space-time where there is a process of deconstruction and decolonization of the liberal and Western ideas of society, including the state (Mignolo, 2012). This research showed, instead, that neocollectivism brings the state back into the centre of the debate (Chapters 2 and 3). The state has a prominent role in rural development as an arena of power where the social organizations reclaim space for their own purposes. It is not seen as opposed to civil society as two different and autonomous spheres, but in mutual relation. This is illustrated in Evo Morales’ famous phrase on the night of his first election to the presidency: ‘Indigenous Comrades, for the first time, we are Presidents!’ (quoted in Postero, 2007). The analysis of EMAPA, as the MAS government’s most important rural development project, shows the return of the state as a strategic actor in rural development and the shift from neoliberal to neocollectivist agrarian development (Chapter 3). EMAPA’s intention is to change the power relations between regional elites in Santa Cruz and small producers, giving the state a strong role in the economy, while seeking to create conditions for national food sovereignty.

Throughout the process of strengthening the state, neocollectivism has been faced with an inability of the state apparatus to govern. This thesis highlighted the EMAPA case and the inability of the state to offer adequate technical assistance services, agricultural production storage, and distribution of necessary resources for production. This generated not only dissatisfaction among its constituents, but also unexpected consequences. On the one hand, the MAS government, rather than weakening the dependence relationship between small producers and agribusiness, as was its intention, has strengthened this dependence. Technology transfer and the path of technological development for agricultural production depend on the latter. On the other hand, because state intervention remains under pressure from agribusiness, the MAS government has been forced to reverse some of its political decisions and negotiate with the Santa Cruz elites.

The success of the neocollectivist project in rural development will depend not only on achievements in the political sphere, but also on the capability of the state and farmers to solve their different technical problems. So far, the MAS government has not given sufficient importance to participation either as a social technology to facilitate project management or as a way to achieve innovative agricultural technologies to solve acute problems affecting productivity (pests, diseases, soil erosion, and so forth). It has relegated the provision of these services and the solution to these problems, including the decision-making processes, to external actors, whether agribusiness (Chapter 3) or international institutions like the World Bank (Chapter 5). Neocollectivism has not attempted to generate technologies to shape rural development alternatives. On the contrary, it has preferred to travel the same path towards technological development as the dominant food regime ruled by agribusiness, relying heavily on the principles of the Green Revolution (Chapter 3).

Representations of post-neoliberal options as ‘post’-capitalist and ‘post’-development often fall short of representing the complexities, connections, and demands of different social movements, in this case those movements that make up the MAS party. This thesis has shown that the adoption of the agribusiness technological development path and the image of ‘success’ based on capitalist principles do not necessarily contradict the demands of agrarian unions, especially in the lowlands. Agrarian unions, key supporters of the MAS government, have had long-standing claims of sovereignty over the use and redistribution of natural resources in order to release the great majority of the country from poverty and solidify their class claims. Interventions like EMAPA (Chapter 3), financed by the revenues of state-owned extractive industries, make up part of this new form of redistribution of resources. Some academics and environmentalists, instead, have called this a ‘neo-extractivism’ common to the progressive governments of the continent, where social justice aims are combined with exploitation of non-renewable natural resources and reproduction of global capitalist patterns (Gudynas, 2010; Postero, 2013a). This is posited as contradictory to Living Well, food sovereignty, and the ‘rights of Mother Earth’ principles, and consequently to a real post-neoliberal option. This thesis has presented neocollectivism as an open-ended process where the possibilities of creating technological alternatives that go in line with these principles will depend on the contending forces within the MAS government and its technological ability to put post-neoliberal ideas into practice.

Participation as a Managerial Tool and Political Participation

Participatory methodologies have been actively deployed in Bolivia since the 1970s. NGOs have been important actors in the use and dissemination of these methodologies to

meet different purposes, from political empowerment in times of dictatorship to serving as an instrument for the implementation of projects in neoliberal times (Chapter 2). Since then, participatory methodologies used as a managerial tool in project intervention have been increasingly associated with the mode of governance established by neoliberalism. It has been argued that these methodologies were used as instruments to put neoliberal ideas into practice and that they have become a 'Trojan horse' for disempowering and de-politicizing civil society initiatives (Harriss, 2002). In this research, we have argued that this is not inherent in participatory methodologies, but that it has been possible because of their malleability to serve different purposes (Chapter 4).

Participation is not only useful to fit different actor or project objectives; it is also malleable in the sense that each actor is involved in finding new balances between technical, economic, and political considerations. Neoliberalism in Bolivia, for instance, stressed participation as a managerial tool for project efficiency, to focus on solving local problems as well as to strengthen farmers' capacities to have better control of daily life. Farmers needed to become more self-reliant and less dependent to be able to take better decisions to escape from poverty. Neocollectivism, in contrast, politicized development by questioning and challenging the structures that lead farmers into oppression. It highlighted participation as a political project to address collective problems and connect them with power and power asymmetries. As this thesis tries to elucidate, these contrasting approaches are reconciled in practice. Project interventions, either under neoliberalism or neocollectivism, pass through processes of politicization and de-politicization where actors need to play politics and introduce technical considerations for project efficiency. Here, participation is not only about power but also about finding a balance with the material conditions and expertise fundamental for project implementation and success. The emphasis on the political and technical aspects of participation, however, will depend on the political context in which project interventions evolve.

This thesis introduces the case of PROINPA to illustrate how participatory technologies in Bolivia have taken hold since the neoliberal political project began to unfold (Chapter 4). I analyse PROINPA interventions specifically in the town of Morochata-Cochabamba to explore the progressive state retirement from agricultural research and the transformation of PROINPA from a public project on potato research into an NGO. Morochata became a place of experimentation for different participatory methodologies, especially participatory plant breeding (PPB). This method was envisioned as an alternative to previous top-down research and technology transfer models, but also as an effective way to involve farmers in agricultural experimentation and to teach them different techniques, build their capacities, and promote more sustainable farming systems. Participatory methodologies for monitoring and evaluation were also used to improve project efficiency by providing information on the implementation of project activities and by contributing to the achievement of project

objectives. In the case of PROINPA, this thesis has shown how participatory methods were essential for project success and implementation as well as to imagine technological solutions adapted to local problems and farmers' desires.

Taking the case of PROINPA, Chapter 4 showed that the implementation of neoliberal ideas was not one-way. On the contrary, PROINPA researchers played politics. The rolling back of the state in agricultural research generated the deployment of different 'technologies of governance' (Chapter 4). Researchers adopted participatory research and development methodologies to work with farmers and drew from their experiences to accommodate to an agricultural research system that was actively changing around them. They reworked the different forces of power from above and below, enabling transformations from within. PROINPA researchers were active interpreters of neoliberal ideas. At times they contested them, and at times they engaged with them. The concept of governmentality is critical to explain this, because it helps to elucidate the links between the expressions of power, in the case of PROINPA, the reforms made to the agricultural research system and the state, and the lived experience of researchers and agricultural research and development practices. Neoliberal reforms failed, however, to connect these reforms with power issues, with local political demands and ideas, and with a concept of citizenship and democracy more meaningful for Bolivians.

Neocollectivism and its Articulation with Neoliberal Governance

Left-wing critics of the MAS government – and of progressive governments in Latin America in general – have also claimed that there is no real intention to decolonize development. On the contrary, they argue that these governments seek only to reform the neoliberal project (Webber, 2011). From my research, I agree with these sceptical authors that, even though the take-off of neocollectivism was caused principally by social movements' rejection of neoliberal economics and political projects, implementation of these political ideas was not an interruption of neoliberalism. The MAS government has not produced a revolution that will radically change the established patterns of development. In contrast to these critics, I argue, however, that the neocollectivist project has tried to ride two horses at once. On the one hand, it has sought to generate an open-ended process of social transformation that can reconcile the different demands of social movements towards neocollectivism. On the other hand, it has resorted to certain modes of neoliberal governance, such as self-governance and capacity-building processes (Chapter 5), in order to facilitate government.

The MAS government articulates with the World Bank's neoliberal ideas of empowerment to enable producers' self-governance and to teach them to interact with the state apparatus within the available policies (Chapter 5). Self-governance refers to the ability and skills of farmers and their organizations to find solutions to their own problems. The development of this self-governance by producers is fundamental to push project interventions forward, from the bottom up. In the Rural Alliances Project (PAR) intervention (Chapter 5), the World Bank offered the necessary participation tools to generate self-governance through a capacity-building process. This process allowed farmers to cooperate for the success and efficiency of projects, assuming certain tasks and organizing themselves to be eligible for state aid.

The MAS government, however, does not see self-governance by individuals as the solution to historical inequities in the country. It has tried to complement interventions such as PAR with an increasing role of the state in rural development, particularly in redistributing resources (Chapter 3). State-led redistribution and transfer of resources is seen as political by this government as small producers are targeted as the ones who should receive support.

The MAS government's articulation with neoliberal governance involves a risk to the processes of social transformation (as argued in Chapter 5), as it restricts state intervention to the context of development projects, while structural factors change slowly. Although the MAS government wants farmers to see state support as a mechanism to free them from social exclusion and as a means towards Living Well and food sovereignty, neocollectivism, like similar post-neoliberal projects on the continent (Radcliffe, 2012), has not been able to make a definitive break from neoliberalism. Interventions are based on ideas of progress influenced by historical colonist policies and have done little to change the basis of economic power and dominant patterns of production. In addition, an important void, as mentioned above, is the lack of importance placed by the MAS government's interventions on agricultural technology that facilitates the generation of technical assistance and training and alternative technological trajectories.

Neocollectivism is not free of contradictions and tensions between rhetoric and practice. Fabricant (2012), for example, shows how social movements have adopted certain indigenous ways and customs to access 'political and agrarian practices of distribution' (p. 185). This includes the co-option of historical collective structures of governance such as the *ayllu*. Other scholars point out that the creation of a new indigenous language and the idealized Andean Living Well concept are hard to find in 'the empirical reality of the country' (Radio Paris La Paz, 2013, radio interview). The activist and sociologist Rivera-Cusicanqui, for example, says in an interview (Erbol, 2014) that in the MAS government there is a 'show of decolonization' in which certain spectacles of indigenusness have been reinvented and distorted in practice to strengthen the MAS government's political project. Along these same lines, this thesis found that, even though the MAS government discourses have defended the development of communitarian economies – for example, represented by the Community

Economic Organizations (OECOMs) – based on collective values and cultural difference, in practice it has tried to combine or balance the historical forms of collective organization of peasant of indigenous origin with associations with a productive focus and organized around specific agricultural projects. This can be seen as a process of de-politicization: grouping social organizations in associations is meant to speed up economic development and facilitate government in the policy sphere. At the same time, it shores up Bolivian radical democracy based on these social movements (Chapters 3 and 5). This top-down process of the MAS government, driven in interventions like EMAPA and PAR, has brought conflict to the collective political organizations. First, some social organizations see this strategy of de-politicization as a threat and a division of their organizations. Second, because the generation of development interventions necessarily involves the selection of beneficiaries, a process of social differentiation emerges to a point where the social movements feel that they are breaking with communitarian organizations. Third, the process of de-politicization of collective organizations carries the risk of reducing or extinguishing the desire for transformation and social change born within these organizations.

In summary, this thesis has highlighted three aspects of the neocollectivism project for rural development: the strengthening of the state to satisfy the MAS government constituency's demands for social justice, a radical political democracy that seeks to continue in a strategic relation with the state, and the adoption of certain neoliberal governance mechanisms, like self-governance and capacity building, to be able to facilitate government and effective resource management.

Politicized Participation vs. Participation as a Social Technology? Implications for development practice

As noted in Chapter 1, several scholars in critical development studies have complained about the de-politicizing power of external interventions. In contrast to this criticism, this thesis argues that even the political processes of development must necessarily go through a process of governing, and in consequence to de-politicization. Thereby, taking as our starting point Rancière's distinction between politics and policy, we can argue that participation that facilitates the involvement of citizens in the political sphere is distinct from participation as a social technology contributing to a mode of governance that operationalizes policies. These two forms of participation are interrelated and should not be analysed in isolation. Politics produces participatory processes that are part of the disagreement, where different societal groups present their parameters of social justice for discussion. These participatory processes are linked to historical struggles and are therefore contextual.

Participation used as a technology could improve project results and enable the conditions for social transformation. Intervention projects for rural development are in consequence the result of intertwined processes of politicization and de-politicization. For example, politics defines the scope of a project and its beneficiaries, but the operationalization of this project requires the use of participation as a social technology (e.g. participatory methodologies to facilitate capacity building, monitor and evaluate projects, stimulate the participation of underrepresented groups within society). This version of participation can help to prepare the enabling environment (the required skills and capacities people need to face agricultural problems) and the appropriate technology to trigger changes for social transformation. It is necessary to find a balance between political and technical strengths to achieve success.

In the Bolivian case, this thesis has shown the MAS government's efforts to politicize agrarian development practice. The country is facing a historic opportunity to generate socially just transformation processes. A new constitution enacted in 2009 was intended to meet the demands of indigenous people and peasants and build the base for a pluri-national state. The Communitarian and Productive Agricultural Revolution Law approved in 2011 prioritizes national food production, creates incentives for local production via state food purchases, and proposes state support to small producers in technical assistance, agricultural insurance, and rural credit through rural financing networks. Poverty reduction in rural areas, however, does not simply require the enactment of generic laws and rights. This, although important, is not enough to produce social justice outcomes. As this thesis has argued, the MAS government has not been able to generate a mode of governance that allows its proponents to govern according to their political principles. Productive aspects and technical questions are becoming subordinated to political positions.

In my view, the terrain of action lies as much in the political as in the technical field. In practice, and outside the heated moments of politically charged participation by social movements, the relationship between reaching technical efficiency and social justice is largely contingent; there is no one-to-one relationship between politics and technology. As this thesis shows, concrete interventions like EMAPA and PAR have technical aspects where both versions of participation have to collaborate. This is expressed in the necessity of the MAS government to work with the World Bank and implement participatory development to realize rural development interventions. In the case of EMAPA, where the use of certain technologies to generate social participation has not been so clear or was missing, this kind of intervention has been accused by social movements of being authoritarian, and, as this research shows, also increases the ties of dependence with powerful actors in the dominant food system. It also means that technological views on participation, such as those embodied in PROINPA, could be adapted and shaped to different political contexts and, therefore, would be of great value for agrarian development with social justice in Bolivia. From this

research, I delineate four aspects that in my view must be taken into account to push forward the neocollectivist political project for agrarian development.

First, the technical aspects of agrarian development for rural transformation must be addressed. Pests, disease, indiscriminate use of agrochemicals, deforestation, erosion, and climate change are just some of the problems plaguing the Bolivian food system and agrarian society. To foster neocollectivist politics, it is necessary to incorporate a productive efficiency criterion. The transformation of rural production will implicate, therefore, the promotion of research with a long-term vision and strong state support. Here, however, state intervention will not be enough. It will be necessary to work with different actors (producers, scientists, technicians, and policymakers) at different scales to inventory and validate native technologies, adopt external technologies, and promote the participative adoption of technological knowledge under the identified social justice criteria.

Second, the MAS government should take a look at areas like the market, which have been dismissed and made nearly invisible in their policies. In the case of EMAPA (Chapter 3), the market was limited to state purchases. In the case of PAR (Chapter 5), its scope was limited to preparing farmers to respond to market demands. This research found no initiatives by the MAS government aimed at transforming the unequal power relations that exist in the markets to which small producers have access. The MAS government has equated the market to a 'free market' with neoliberal policies, ignoring market realities and constraints, insisting instead that producers must meet market demands (supplies and services) and offer their produce for sale.

Third, the tendency within the social movements that make up part of the MAS government is to assume that the ways in which they will affect poverty pass through the state. I suggest that the use of power towards social justice needs to operate at different levels, according to the definition of power given by Wolf (1998:5), ranging from power as individual capacity (mode 1) to power to realize transformation of social structures (mode 4). Change might occur in the structural domain through an active engagement with the state by recognizing and changing the underlying causes of social exclusion (mode 4); by shaping the conditions for political practice to provide resources for contestation (mode 3); and by supplying the capabilities, skills, and change of attitudes required to incorporate people into the political and policy spheres (modes 1 and 2).

Finally, this thesis advocates in favour of the laborious task and art of governing proactively as a political process to prepare an adequate environment for a more just society. Governing mechanisms are necessary to facilitate the inclusion of – sometimes contradictory – views and interests of different grassroots organizations in the participation platforms. This will help to avoid these views being squeezed out from development practice by power relations. Advocating for governing mechanisms does not mean being against endogenous and bottom-up development. Rather, to my mind, these processes are the ones that finally

lead to development at local level – the place where development ideas and concepts need most to be implemented. I suggest that a strategic relationship between the state and grassroots organizations is now necessary. This will involve not only a deepening of democratic processes in the political sphere but also better policies and technologies at local level.

What's Next?

Much is currently happening in the fields of politics and technology in Bolivia, and in Latin America in general. In this final section, I outline three ways in which the findings of this thesis can be taken further and interrogated in these fields. A first theme that deserves further analysis is how post-neoliberal alternatives perceive science and technology, and to what extent they are able to break with colonial conceptualization of science and technological progress. In 2008, the MAS government established the National Institute of Agricultural and Forestry Innovation (INIAF) under the coordination of the Ministry of Rural Development. This is the first step taken by this government to regain public leadership of agricultural research. Are such organizations able to produce and design alternative approaches to science and technology based on local knowledge and Western science and expertise?

A second area of interrogation is the strong influence of an extractive vision of development in the progressive governments of the continent (Gudynas, 2010), which promotes the reproduction of historical patterns of natural resource exploitation in combination with social justice aims. The recent conflict between the MAS government and lowland indigenous groups because of the proposed building of a road that would split the TIPNIS territory shows the deep contradictions between environmental discourse and protection of the rights of Mother Earth and what is done in practice. Other progressive governments on the continent face similar contradictions. One example is Ecuador, and the conflict between the government and Amazonian indigenous groups and NGOs who oppose to government's intentions to exploit oil in the Yasuni National Park. An investigation of the ways in which this new extractivism shapes, for example, development technological trajectories conflicting with different social movements' claims could provide rich perspectives on the limitations to creating post-neoliberal options.

Finally, this thesis has already described the limitations to creating alternative food regimes. Agribusiness, which retains its protagonist role and participation in national agricultural production, increasingly influences the MAS government, pressuring it to roll back the possibilities for changing the food system. In the same line, Urioste (2010) stated

that the ‘foreignization’ of land has increased in recent years as part of the rapid expansion of soybean cultivation. More research is needed to underscore the complex relations between transnational capital and local elites. Such investigation will shed light on how these processes of alienation affect the MAS government’s redistribution intentions and the country’s technological trajectories and visions of rural development, especially in line with the goal of achieving food sovereignty and Living Well.

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Appendix 1.1 List of Interviews

No.	Complete name	Place	Date
1	Gonzalo Colque	La Paz	March 22, 2010
2	Juan Pablo Chumacero	La Paz	March 22, 2010
3	Javier Guzmán	La Paz	March 23, 2010
4	María Quispe	La Paz	March 23, 2010
5	Gilberto Aguanta	Saavedra	April 4, 2010
6	Rene Sanchez	Santa Cruz	April 12, 2010
7	Florencio Flores	Santa Rosa del Sara	April 12, 2010
8	Nestor Velasco	Santa Rosa del Sara	April 13, 2010
9	Ximena Sandy	La Paz	April 14, 2010
10	Tiberio Pizarro	Santa Rosa del Sara	April 16, 2010
11	Gladys Velasco	Yapacani	April 20, 2010
12	Jerónimo Mamani Huanca	San Pedro	April 21, 2010
13	Eduardo Castro	San Pedro	April 21, 2010
14	Carlos Ordoñez	Litoral	April 26, 2010
15	Celso Huaylla	Sagrado Corazón	April 27, 2010
16	Marco Mejía Teherán	San Pedro	April 29, 2010
17	Angélica Martínez	Santa Cruz	May 4, 2010
18	Javier Rivera	San Pedro	May 5, 2010
19	Fredy Garnica	Yapacani	May 15, 2010
20	Widen Abastafior	Santa Cruz	May 18, 2010
21	Raul Aguirre	Santa Cruz	May 18, 2010
22	William Holsters	Santa Cruz	May 18, 2010
23	Bernardo Cruz	Santa Cruz	May 20, 2010
24	Eulogio Nunez	Santa Cruz	June 14, 2010
25	Margot Valverde	Santa Cruz	June 16, 2010
26	Alcides Vadillo	Santa Cruz	June 16, 2010
27	Claudia Montaña	Santa Cruz	June 17, 2010
28	Rolando Cuellar	Santa Cruz	July 11, 2010
29	Elbin Gonzales	Muyupampa	July 14, 2010
30	Marcelo Amaya	Muyupampa	July 15, 2010
31	Gustavo Salazar	Muyupampa	July 15, 2010
32	Jose Luis Urseda	Lagunillas	July 16, 2010
33	Patricio Ortiz	Lagunillas	July 16, 2010
34	Pablo Chavez	Lagunillas	July 17, 2010
35	Jocias Coria	San Pedro	July 27, 2010
36	Rufino Yuera	San Pedro	July 27, 2010
37	Faustino Aramayo	Lagunillas	July 28, 2010
38	Dionisio Vivarico	Lagunillas	July 29, 2010
39	Fisser Burgos	San Pedro	August 11, 2010
40	Hernan Carvallo	Santa Rosa del Sara	August 12, 2010

41	Leoncio Mamani Segovia	Sagrado Corazón	August 13, 2010
42	Jorge Rosales	Santa Cruz	August 19, 2010
43	Agapito Montaña	Santa Cruz	August 19, 2010
44	Antonia Rodriguez	Litoral	August 19, 2010
45	Jorge Valverde	Yapacani	August 26, 2010
46	Cecilia Aguilar	San Pedro	September 7, 2010
47	Cecilia Aguilar	Santa Rosa del Sara	September 8, 2010
48	Melean Espinoza	Santa Rosa del Sara	September 9, 2010
49	Jairo Palomino	Santa Rosa del Sara	September 9, 2010
50	Aniceto Segovia	Santa Rosa del Sara	September 10, 2010
51	Victor Hugo Vasquez	Santa Rosa del Sara	September 11, 2010
52	Janeth Miranda	Santa Rosa del Sara	September 14, 2010
53	Zacarías Anagua	Santa Rosa del Sara	September 15, 2010
54	Silvia Quispe	Yapacani	September 20, 2010
55	Cyntia Castellón	Yapacani	September 21, 2010
56	Nicolas Romero	Yapacani	September 21, 2010
57	Alfredo Moya	Yapacani	September 22, 2010
58	Grover Sotar	Yapacani	September 22, 2010
59	Emilio Chileno	Yapacani	September 23, 2010
60	Segundino Suazo	Yapacani	September 30, 2010
61	Perico Pérez	La Paz	October 4, 2010
62	Primo Nina	La Paz	October 4, 2010
63	Vivian Polar	La Paz	October 5, 2010
64	Hernán Zeballos	La Paz	October 5, 2010
65	Fernando Rivero	La Paz	October 5, 2010
66	Elba Terceros	La Paz	October 6, 2010
67	Marta Arciniegas	La Paz	October 6, 2010
68	Roberto Ordoñez	Santa Cruz	October 7, 2010
69	Rodolfo Soriano	La Paz	October 7, 2010
70	Jorge Albarrazin	La Paz	October 7, 2010
71	Bishely Elias	La Paz	October 8, 2010
72	Einstein Tejada	La Paz	October 9, 2010
73	Gonzalo Vásquez	Santa Cruz	November 17, 2010
74	Jhonny Delgadillo	La Paz	November 18, 2010
75	Alvaro Tapia	La Paz	November 18, 2010
76	Luis Morales	La Paz	November 26, 2010
77	Alberto Florez	La Paz	November 27, 2010
78	Erwin Cruz	La Paz	November 28, 2010
79	Juan Carlos Lopez	La Paz	November 29, 2010
80	Roberto Zambrano	Santa Cruz	December 3, 2010
81	Bernardo Torres	Santa Cruz	December 4, 2010
82	Maria Ligia Montaña	Santa Cruz	December 5, 2010
83	Rodolfo Ayala	Santa Cruz	December 8, 2010

84	Roger Taboada	Santa Cruz	December 9, 2010
85	Limbert Burgos	San Pedro	December 12, 2010
86	Paulino Moreira	Comarapa	February 19, 2011
87	Paulino Moreira	Comarapa	February 20, 2011
88	Antonio Mérida	Comarapa	February 21, 2011
89	Nancy Llano	La Guardia	February 22, 2011
90	Rolando Cabrera	Santa Cruz	February 22, 2011
91	Jose Crispin Arnez,	La Angostura	February 25, 2011
92	Álvaro Flores	Santa Cruz	March 3, 2011
93	Nelson Romero	Santa Cruz	March 3, 2011
94	Marco Escalante	El Torno	March 4, 2011
95	Josías Coria	San Pedro	April 26, 2011
96	Luis Cuellar	Santa Cruz	May 18, 2011
97	Juan Carlos Benavides	La Paz	July 7, 2011
98	David Tuchsneider	La Paz	August 1, 2011
99	Maria Helene Collion	Washington D.C.	August 2, 2011
100	Teresa Chávez	El Torno	August 3, 2011
101	Yolanda Soliz	Padilla	August 3, 2011
102	Isidoro Barrientos	Cuatro Cañadas	August 9, 2011
103	Tito Villaroel	Padilla	August 12, 2011
104	Walter Fuentes	Sucre	August 15, 2011
105	Alberto Carvallo	Padilla	August 16, 2011
106	German Ovando	Padilla	August 16, 2011
107	Valentín García	Padilla	August 17, 2011
108	Constantino Nina	Padilla	August 18, 2011
109	David Pérez	Santa Cruz	August 23, 2011
110	Alejandro Bonifacio	Cochabamba	September 2, 2011
111	Enzo Pacheco	Cochabamba	September 6, 2011
112	Rodrigo Paz	Cochabamba	September 6, 2011
113	Eloy Salas	Padilla	September 9, 2011
114	Faustino Fermín	Cochabamba	September 9, 2011
115	Juan Arévalo	Cochabamba	September 9, 2011
116	Claudia Sáenz	Padilla	September 11, 2011
117	Ariel Ayllon	Padilla	September 12, 2011
118	Milenka Ruiz	Padilla	September 12, 2011
119	Agustín Vega	Padilla	September 13, 2011
120	Federico Cárdenas	Padilla	September 13, 2011
121	Enrique Roda	Padilla	September 15, 2011
122	Eulogio Rodas	Padilla	September 15, 2011
123	Juan Cárdenas	Padilla	September 15, 2011
124	Ramiro Ortiz	Padilla	September 15, 2011
125	Romelio Chinaut	Padilla	September 15, 2011
126	Santiago Serrudo	Sucre	September 17, 2011

127	Rodrigo Burgoa	Muyupampa	September 22, 2011
128	Orlando Gutiérrez	Yapacani	September 23, 2011
129	Yolanda Ortiz	Yapacani	September 23, 2011
130	Roger Rojas	Padilla	September 25, 2011
131	Sabino Salazar	Padilla	September 26, 2011
132	Julio Gabriel	Cochabamba	September 26, 2011
133	José Salazar	Padilla	September 27, 2011
134	Teresa Ramírez	Padilla	September 27, 2011
135	Miguel Machaca	Cochabamba	September 27, 2011
136	Magaly Salazar	Cochabamba	September 27, 2011
137	Pablo Mamani	Cochabamba	September 28, 2011
138	Justo Lopez	Morochata	September 28, 2011
139	Crescencio Calle	Cochabamba	September 28, 2011
140	Felicidad Rodríguez	Morochata	September 29, 2011
141	Jaime Herbas	Cochabamba	September 30, 2011
142	Epifanio Villarroel	Morochata	October 4, 2011
143	Crispin Ruiz	Padilla	October 5, 2011
144	Geronima Vega	Padilla	October 5, 2011
145	Edmundo Soliz	Padilla	October 5, 2011
146	Jorge Villarroel	Morochata	October 5, 2011
147	Benedicto Almanza	Morochata	October 6, 2011
148	Cristina Villarroel	Morochata	October 13, 2011
149	Jorge Antezana	Morochata	October 14, 2011
150	Gunnar Chavez	Morochata	October 15, 2011
151	Judith Antezana	Morochata	October 18, 2011
152	Miguel Florido	Cochabamba	October 21, 2011
153	Juan Cerda	Morochata	October 25, 2011
154	Jose Espinoza	Morochata	October 26, 2011
155	Saulo Suarez	Morochata	October 28, 2011
156	Ademar Salazar Mendoza	Padilla	November 8, 2011
157	Alcides Ovando	Padilla	November 9, 2011
158	Ramiro Alvarado	Morochata	November 9, 2011
159	Celestino Vegamonte	Morochata	November 9, 2011
160	Juan Ruiz	Morochata	November 10, 2011
161	Dario Andia	Morochata	November 10, 2011
162	Juan Lopez	Morochata	November 11, 2011
163	Jorge Buendia	Morochata	November 11, 2011
164	Antonia Benavidez	Comarapa	November 16, 2011
165	Enrique Ormachea	La Paz	November 22, 2011
166	Marco Octavio Ribera.	La Paz	November 24, 2011
167	Wilfredo Rojas	La Paz	November 24, 2011
168	Edson Gandarillas	Cochabamba	December 6, 2011
169	Juan Vallejos	Morochata	December 8, 2011

170	Rudy Torrez	Cochabamba	December 9, 2011
171	Carlos Jiménez	Yapacani	December 14, 2011
172	Salome Tupa	Santa Cruz	December 14, 2011
173	Ana Ortiz	Santa Cruz	December 16, 2011
174	José Luis Soto	La Paz	July 18, 2012
175	Paola Flores	La Paz	July 25, 2012
176	Lucio Tito	La Paz	July 28, 2012
177	Silvia Coca	La Paz	July 28, 2012
178	David Morales	La Paz	July 29, 2012
179	Nemesia Achacoyo	El Torno	August 3, 2012
180	Rodrigo Burgoa	Padilla	August 7, 2012
181	Max Cuba	Lagunillas	August 9, 2012
182	Segundino Salazar	Padilla	August 9, 2012
183	Noel Ortuño	Cochabamba	August 9, 2012
184	Gualberto Villarroel	Padilla	August 11, 2012
185	Pastor Ovando	Padilla	August 11, 2012
186	José de la Cruz	Cochabamba	August 15, 2012
187	Antonia Olpo	Yapacani	August 17, 2012
188	Eusebio Zipe	Yapacani	August 17, 2012

Summary

This thesis analyses what are, and what sustains, the differences between two views on participation: on the one hand, a politicized view, in which participation is seen as a means to generate social transformation and radical changes; on the other hand, a view on participation as a ‘social technology,’ in which participation is seen as a managerial tool for project development efficiency. I chose the case of Bolivia to analyse these differences in practice through specific project interventions. These two views on participation have been in tension since the rise to power of Evo Morales and his Movement Toward Socialism (MAS) party in 2005. Morales’ government defends what I have labelled a ‘neocollectivist’ approach to participation that favours the direct relation between the state and social movements and grassroots organizations to generate a radical political process of social transformation. I contrast this politicized view on participation with the interventions – conducted by the Promotion and Research of Andean Products (PROINPA) Foundation, a national NGO – that focus on research and development initiatives. I concentrate on three aspects to elucidate the differences between these two views on participation: a) how the MAS government has shaped participation as a political project, b) how participation as a managerial tool relates to participation as a political project, and c) the way in which these two approaches to participation articulates in rural development interventions. The research design combines analysis of interviews at national and regional level and detailed case studies of the following project interventions: on one side, the Company for the Support of Food Production (EMAPA) and the Rural Alliances Project (PAR), the MAS government’s most important rural development intervention projects in terms of funding (EMAPA) and coverage (PAR); on the other side, PROINPA’s intervention using participatory research in Morochata and Padilla municipalities

Using the term neocollectivism to characterize the MAS government politics on agrarian development, **the second chapter** explores the confrontation between this government and NGOs. Despite the heated and politicized moments that have led to public discursive confrontation between the MAS government and NGOs, this chapter argues that NGOs have found ways to adapt to the MAS government politics by realigning their interventions. More technical NGOs start to play politics and search for ways to negotiate and adapt to neocollectivism, whereas more political NGOs stress their technical aspects to provide services to social organizations in order not to be seen as a political threat to the MAS government.

The third chapter analyses the EMAPA case as an example of the neocollectivist approach to participation and agrarian development. This project, presented by the MAS government as an alternative to neoliberal food regimes, combines the use of state power and intervention in primary production and trade through the creation of state companies that interact with politicized social organizations (agrarian unions, associations, communitarian companies). EMAPA aims to become the cornerstone of an alternative agrarian structure that will undermine the power of the Santa Cruz-based agri-industrial capital. It seeks to forge a productive alliance between the state and small producers organized in associations to increase food sovereignty towards redistributive goals. This chapter shows that the MAS government has been unable to develop an independent alternative to the

agribusiness model of the agri-industrial elites. This is due to the complex relationship between the state and civil society that influences state capacity and to the lack of an alternative technological trajectory to defeat elites' control over technology. Furthermore, this chapter shows how EMAPA's current intervention serves to strengthen rather than weaken dependency ties between supported producers and the agri-industrial sector.

The fourth chapter analyses how neoliberal restructuring in Bolivia embraced an increased use of participatory methods in agricultural research. It studies the case of PROINPA and its process of transformation from a public research institution into a research NGO under neoliberalism. PROINPA used participatory methods to build farmers' capacity and skills to contribute actively to project success as well as to facilitate the design and adaptation of technologies to solve local problems. Although these participatory processes prioritized technology development, capacity building, and project effectiveness, they also reconnected and sought new balances between reshaped subjects, technical and economic considerations, as well as political strategies and actions. This chapter argues that participation designed by technically oriented NGOs like PROINPA is not just 'technical' as its professionals would like to perceive it, or simply 'political' as in critical views on participation. Instead, it is malleable in the sense that each actor is involved in finding new balances between technical, economic, and political considerations. As this thesis tries to illustrate, this is true for both PROINPA's technicians and EMAPA's politicized interventions.

The fifth chapter examines how two contrasting views on empowerment, that of the MAS government and that of the World Bank, articulate in practice through the PAR program. The PAR, one of the MAS government's most important interventions for rural development, aims to support small farmers with financial resources and technical assistance, and to create productive alliances to comply with market requirements. In the PAR intervention, there is a mixture of these contrasting views on empowerment. The MAS government seeks to achieve structural empowerment by strengthening the role of the state in redistributing resources, and by positioning the small producer as the one who should receive support. In programme implementation however, the managerial tools and model of rural development handed down by the World Bank reduce empowerment aspirations to capacity building and technological efficiency oriented towards generating farmers' self-management to link them to markets. This chapter concludes that there is an imbalance between political power shifts and technical progress that limits the possibilities of making a definitive break from neoliberalism towards an alternative path to development.

This research shows how participatory development and political participation are different but interrelated spheres of development. The changes in the political sphere, and consequently in the role of the state and society in development, influence the conditions in which participatory technologies occur. Such conditions might enable or constrain the scope of participation in development projects. This investigation indicates, however, that even the political processes of participation and development must necessarily go through a process of governing, and consequently of de-politicization. In practice and outside the heated moments involving the politically charged participation of the social movements, the relationship between reaching technical efficiency and

achieving social justice is more contingent; there is no one-to-one relationship between politics and technology. Concrete interventions like EMAPA and PAR have technical aspects where both views on participation have to collaborate. This also means that technological views on participation, such as PROINPA, could be adapted and shaped to different political contexts and, therefore, would be of great value for agrarian development with social justice. In conclusion, the purpose of separating the political from the technical is not necessarily to analyse them in isolation, but to make visible different aspects embedded in planning interventions and to point to the need to take them both into account.

Samenvatting

Deze dissertatie analyseert wat de verschillen tussen twee visies op participatie zijn, en hoe deze in stand worden gehouden: Enerzijds een gepolitiseerde visie, waarin participatie wordt gezien als een middel om sociale transformatie en radicale verandering te bewerkstelligen; anderzijds een visie op participatie als een 'sociale technologie', waarin participatie wordt gezien als een bestuurlijk gereedschap voor het ontwikkelen van project efficiëntie. Ik koos de casus van Bolivia om deze verschillen te analyseren in de praktijk door specifieke project interventies. Deze twee visies op participatie verhouden zich gespannen tot elkaar sinds het aan de macht komen van Evo Morales en zijn Movement Toward Socialism (MAS) partij in 2005. Morales' regering verdedigt wat ik heb genoemd een 'neocollectivistische' benadering van participatie, die de voorkeur geeft aan de directe relatie tussen de staat en sociale bewegingen en lokale organisaties om een radicaal politiek proces van transformatie te genereren. Ik contrasteer deze gepolitiseerde visie op participatie met twee interventies - uitgevoerd door de Promotie en Onderzoek van Andes Producten (PROINPA), een nationale NGO - die zich richt op onderzoek en ontwikkelingsinitiatieven. Ik concentreer me op drie aspecten om de verschillen tussen deze twee visies op te helderen: a) Hoe de MAS regering participatie heeft vormgegeven als politiek project, b) hoe participatie als een bestuurlijk gereedschap zich verhoudt tot participatie als een politiek project, en c) de manier waarop deze twee benaderingen van participatie tot uiting komt in rurale ontwikkelings interventies. Het onderzoeksontwerp combineert analyse van interviews op nationaal en regionaal niveau en gedetailleerde casus studies van de volgende project interventies: aan de ene kant de Onderneming voor de Ondersteuning van Voedsel Productie (EMAPA) en het Rurale Allianties Project (PAR), de belangrijkste rurale ontwikkeling interventieprojecten van de MAS regering in termen van financiering (EMAPA) en bereik (PAR); aan de andere kant, PROINPA's interventie gebruik makend van participerend onderzoek in de gemeenten Morochata en Padilla.

Gebruik makend van de term neocollectivisme om de politiek van de MAS regering over agrarische ontwikkeling te karakteriseren, exploreert het tweede hoofdstuk de confrontatie tussen deze regering en NGO's. Ondanks de verhitte en gepolitiseerde momenten die hebben geleid tot publieke discursieve confrontatie tussen de MAS regering en NGO's, beargumenteert dit hoofdstuk dat NGO's manieren hebben gevonden om zich aan te passen aan de politiek van de MAS regering door hun interventies opnieuw en anders af te stemmen. Meer technische NGO's beginnen politiek te spelen en zoeken naar manieren om om te gaan met en zich aan te passen aan neocollectivisme, terwijl meer politieke NGO's de nadruk leggen op hun technische aspecten om diensten te verlenen aan sociale organisaties, om niet te worden gezien als een politieke bedreiging voor de MAS regering.

Het derde hoofdstuk analyseert de EMAPA casus als een voorbeeld van de neocollectivistische benadering van participatie en agrarische ontwikkeling. Dit project, gepresenteerd door de MAS regering als een alternatief voor neoliberale voedselregimes, combineert het gebruik van staatsmacht en interventie in primaire productie en handel door het creëren van staatsbedrijven die interacteren met gepolitiseerde sociale organisaties (agrarische vakbonden, verenigingen, communitaristische bedrijven). EMAPA streeft er naar om de hoeksteen te worden van een alternatieve agrarische

structuur die de macht van het in Santa Cruz gebaseerde kapitaal zal ondermijnen. Het probeert een productieve alliantie tussen staat en kleine verenigde producten te smeden, om de voedselsoevereiniteit te verhogen voor re-distributieve doelen. Dit hoofdstuk laat zien dat de MAS regering niet in staat was om een onafhankelijk alternatief voor het agribusiness model van de agro-industriële elites te ontwikkelen. Dit is te wijten aan de complexe verhouding tussen de staat en het maatschappelijk middenveld die overheidsbevoegdheden beïnvloed en het gebrek aan een alternatief technologisch traject om de controle van de elites over technologie te overwinnen. Verder laat dit hoofdstuk zien hoe EMAPA's huidige interventie dient om de afhankelijkheidsbanden tussen ondersteunde producenten en de agro-industriële sector te versterken in plaats van te verzwakken.

Het vierde hoofdstuk analyseert hoe neoliberale herstructurering in Bolivia een toenemend gebruik van participerende methoden in agrarisch onderzoek heeft omarmd. Het bestudeert de casus van PROINPA en diens transformatieproces van een publiek onderzoeksinstituut tot een onderzoeks-NGO onder neoliberalisme. PROINPA gebruikte participerende methoden ter verbetering van de capaciteiten en vaardigheden van boeren om actief aan project-succes bij te dragen, evenals het faciliteren van het ontwerp en de aanpassing van techniek om lokale problemen op te lossen. Hoewel deze participerende processen technologische ontwikkeling, capaciteitsopbouw en project-effectiviteit prioriteerden, verbonden ze ook opnieuw en zochten ze nieuwe balansen tussen opnieuw gevormde subjecten, technische en economische afwegingen en politieke strategieën en acties. Dit hoofdstuk beargumenteert dat participatie, ontworpen door technisch georiënteerde NGO's zoals PROINPA niet slechts 'technisch' is zoals professionals dat graag zien, of simpelweg 'politiek' zoals in kritische visies op participatie. In plaats daarvan is het smeetbaar in de zin dat elke acteur is betrokken bij het vinden van nieuwe balansen tussen technische, economische en politieke afwegingen. Zoals deze dissertatie probeert te illustreren, is dit juist voor zowel de technici's van PROINPA's als voor EMAPA's gepolitiseerde interventies.

Het vijfde hoofdstuk onderzoekt hoe de contrasterende visies op empowerment, die van de MAS regering en die van de Wereldbank, in de praktijk tot uitdrukking komen in het PAR programma. De PAR, een van de belangrijkste interventies van de MAS regering voor rurale ontwikkeling, probeert kleine boeren met financiële bronnen en technische ondersteuning te ondersteunen en om productieve allianties te creëren om aan de eisen van de markt te voldoen. In de PAR interventie bestaat een mix van deze contrasterende visies op empowerment. De MAS regering streeft er naar om structurele empowerment te bereiken door de rol van de staat in het herverdelen van hulpbronnen te versterken en door het positioneren van de kleine producent als degenen die ondersteuning zouden moeten krijgen. Echter, in de implementatie van het programma reduceert het bestuurlijke gereedschap en het model van rurale ontwikkeling zoals verstrekt door de Wereldbank empowerment aspiraties tot capaciteitsontwikkeling en technologische efficiëntie in de richting van het genereren van zelf-management van boeren om hen aan markten te koppelen. Dit hoofdstuk concludeert dat er een onbalans is tussen politieke machtsverschuivingen en technische vooruitgang die de mogelijkheden van een definitieve breuk van het neoliberalisme richting een alternatief pad naar ontwikkeling limiteert.

Dit onderzoek laat zien hoe participerende ontwikkeling en politieke participatie verschillende, maar onderling gerelateerde sferen van ontwikkeling zijn. De veranderingen in de politieke sfeer, en daarom in de rol van de staat en de maatschappij met betrekking tot ontwikkeling, beïnvloeden de voorwaarden waaronder participerende technologieën voorkomen. Zulke condities zouden de omvang van participatie in ontwikkelingsprojecten mogelijk kunnen maken of beperken. Dit onderzoek laat echter zien dat zelfs het politieke proces van participatie en ontwikkeling noodzakelijk door een proces van besturen gaan, en daaropvolgend van depolitisering. In de praktijk en buiten de verhitte momenten van de politiek geladen participatie van de sociale bewegingen, is de verhouding tussen het bereiken van technische efficiëntie en het bereiken van sociale rechtvaardigheid meer contingent; er is geen een-op-een relatie tussen politiek en technologie. Concrete interventies zoals EMAPA en PAR hebben technische aspecten, waar beide visies op participatie samen moeten werken. Dit betekent ook dat technologische visies op participatie, zoals PROINPA, kunnen worden aangepast en gevormd aan verschillende politieke contexten en daarom van grote waarde zouden kunnen zijn voor agrarische ontwikkeling inclusief sociale rechtvaardigheid. Tot besluit, het doel van het scheiden van het politieke van het technische is niet perse om ze opzichzelfstaand te analyseren, maar om de verschillende aspecten die komen kijken bij het plannen van interventies zichtbaar te maken en om het belang van beiden te benadrukken.

Resumen

Esta tesis analiza cuáles son, y qué sostiene las diferencias entre dos enfoques sobre la participación: por un lado, una visión politizada, donde la participación es vista como un medio para generar un proceso de transformación social y cambios radicales en la sociedad; por otro lado, un punto de vista sobre la participación como “tecnología social”, en el que ésta es vista como una herramienta de gestión para mejorar la eficiencia de los proyectos desarrollo. Para analizar estas diferencias en la práctica a través de intervenciones de desarrollo específicas se presenta el caso de Bolivia. Estos dos enfoques sobre la participación han estado en tensión desde la llegada al poder en 2005 de Evo Morales y su partido el Movimiento al Socialismo (MAS). El gobierno de Morales defiende lo que he denominado un “enfoque neocollectivista” sobre la participación que favorece la relación directa entre el Estado y los movimientos sociales y organizaciones de base para generar un proceso político radical de transformación social. Esta visión politizada sobre la participación es comparada con las intervenciones realizadas por la Fundación de Promoción e Investigación de Productos Andinos (PROINPA), una ONG nacional que se centran en iniciativas de investigación y desarrollo. Para dilucidar las diferencias entre estos dos enfoques sobre la participación, esta investigación se concentra en tres aspectos: a) la manera en que el gobierno del MAS ha dado forma a la participación como un proyecto político, b) cómo la participación como herramienta de gestión se relaciona a la participación como un proyecto político, y c) la forma en la que estos dos enfoques se articulan en intervenciones de desarrollo rural. El diseño de la investigación combina el análisis de entrevistas a nivel nacional y regional y los estudios de caso detallados de los siguientes proyectos de intervención: por un lado, la Empresa de Apoyo a la Producción de Alimentos (EMAPA) y el Proyecto de Alianzas Rurales (PAR), las dos iniciativas de intervención para el desarrollo rural más importantes del gobierno del MAS en términos de financiación (EMAPA) y cobertura (PAR); por otro lado, la experiencia de PROINPA en investigación participativa en los municipios en Morochata - Cochabamba y Padilla – Chuquisaca.

Usando el término neocollectivismo para caracterizar la política del gobierno del MAS en el desarrollo agrario, el **segundo capítulo** analiza el actual enfrentamiento entre este gobierno y las ONGs. A pesar de los momentos de politización que han llevado a una álgida confrontación en la esfera pública entre el gobierno del MAS y las ONGs, este capítulo sostiene que las ONGs han realineado sus intervenciones para adaptarse a la política del gobierno del MAS. ONGs con una orientación más técnica comienzan a jugar a la política buscando formas de negociar y adaptarse al neocollectivismo, mientras que las ONG con una historia más política subrayan sus aspectos técnicos para proporcionar servicios a las organizaciones sociales, con el fin de no ser visto como una amenaza política para el gobierno del MAS.

En el **tercer capítulo** se analiza el caso de EMAPA como ejemplo de la implementación del enfoque neocollectivista y de sus visiones sobre la participación y el desarrollo agrario. Este proyecto, presentado por el gobierno del MAS como alternativa a la visión neoliberal sobre la producción de alimentos, combina el uso del poder del Estado para intervenir en la producción primaria y la comercialización a través de la creación de empresas estatales que interactúan con organizaciones sociales con una orientación política (sindicatos agrarios, asociaciones, empresas comunitarias).

EMAPA aspira a convertirse en la piedra angular de una estructura agraria alternativa que logre socavar el poder del capital agroindustrial basado en el departamento de Santa Cruz. Esta intervención busca forjar una alianza productiva entre el Estado y los pequeños productores organizados en asociaciones para aumentar la soberanía y seguridad alimentaria y generar procesos redistributivos. En este capítulo se muestra cómo el gobierno del MAS ha sido incapaz de desarrollar una alternativa independiente al modelo de agronegocios impuesto por las élites agro-industriales. Esto se debe a la compleja relación entre el Estado y la sociedad civil que influye en la capacidad del Estado así como a la falta de una trayectoria tecnológica alternativa para derrotar el control de estas elites sobre la tecnología. Además, este capítulo demuestra cómo, paradójicamente, la intervención de EMAPA sirve para fortalecer en vez de debilitar los lazos de dependencia entre los productores apoyados y el sector agroindustrial.

El **capítulo cuarto** analiza cómo durante el periodo neoliberal de ajuste estructural en Bolivia se adoptaron y usaron un mayor número de métodos participativos en la investigación agrícola. Se estudia el caso de PROINPA y su proceso de transformación durante el periodo neoliberal, de una institución pública de investigación a una ONG de investigación. PROINPA usó métodos participativos para fortalecer la capacidad y las habilidades de los agricultores para que estos contribuyan activamente al éxito de los proyectos, así como para facilitar el diseño y adaptación de tecnologías para resolver problemas locales. Aunque estos procesos participativos priorizaron el desarrollo de tecnologías, creación de capacidades y la eficacia de los proyectos, también lograron conectar y crear nuevos equilibrios entre los actores, las consideraciones técnicas y económicas, y las estrategias y acciones políticas. En este capítulo se argumenta que la participación diseñada por una ONG con orientación técnica como PROINPA no es sólo “técnica” como a sus técnicos les gustaría percibirse, o simplemente “política” como en las visiones críticas sobre la participación. En cambio, es maleable, en el sentido de que cada actor está involucrado en la búsqueda de nuevos equilibrios entre las consideraciones técnicas, económicas, y políticas. Dado que esta tesis trata de ilustrar este punto, esto es cierto tanto para los técnicos de PROINPA como para intervenciones más politizadas como EMAPA.

El **capítulo quinto** examina cómo dos puntos de vista contrastantes sobre el empoderamiento, la del gobierno del MAS y la del Banco Mundial, se articulan en la práctica a través del programa PAR. El PAR, una de las intervenciones más importantes del gobierno del MAS para el desarrollo rural, tiene como objetivo apoyar a los pequeños productores con recursos financieros y asistencia técnica, y crear alianzas productivas para cumplir con las exigencias del mercado. En la intervención del PAR, hay una mezcla de puntos de vista contrastantes sobre el empoderamiento. El gobierno del MAS busca lograr el empoderamiento estructural mediante el fortalecimiento del papel del Estado en la redistribución de los recursos, priorizando al pequeño productor como sujeto de apoyo. En la ejecución del programa, sin embargo, las herramientas de gestión y modelo de desarrollo rural impuestos por el Banco Mundial reducen las aspiraciones de empoderamiento al desarrollo de capacidades y la eficiencia tecnológica orientada a la auto-gestión de los agricultores para vincularlos a los mercados. En este capítulo se concluye que existe un desequilibrio entre los cambios de poder

político y el progreso técnico que limita las posibilidades de hacer una ruptura definitiva con el neoliberalismo hacia un camino alternativo al desarrollo.

Esta investigación muestra cómo el desarrollo participativo y los procesos políticos de participación aunque representan diferentes esferas, están estrechamente relacionados en las intervenciones de desarrollo. Los cambios en la esfera política, y en consecuencia, en el papel del Estado y de la sociedad en el desarrollo, influyen en las condiciones en que se producen las tecnologías participativas. Tales condiciones podrían permitir o restringir el alcance de la participación en estas intervenciones. Esta investigación señala, sin embargo, que incluso los procesos de participación política deben necesariamente pasar por un proceso técnico, y por consiguiente de despolitización, para generar gobernabilidad. En la práctica y fuera de los momentos álgidos de confrontación política liderados por los movimientos sociales y grupos contestatarios, al final la relación entre la eficiencia técnica y los logros en términos de justicia social es más contingente; no existe una relación de uno a uno entre la política y la tecnología. Intervenciones concretas como EMAPA y PAR tienen aspectos técnicos en que ambos enfoques sobre la participación tienen que colaborar. Esto también significa que visiones técnicas sobre la participación como las de PROINPA se podrían adaptar y moldear a diferentes contextos políticos y, por lo tanto, podrían contribuir enormemente al desarrollo agrario y a la justicia social. En conclusión, el propósito de esta investigación de separar lo político de lo técnico no es necesariamente para analizar estos dos aspectos de forma aislada, sino para hacer visibles diferentes aspectos involucrados en la planeación de los procesos de intervención para el desarrollo y para resaltar la necesidad de tener a ambos en cuenta.

About the Author

Diana Marcela Córdoba was born in Palmira, Colombia on May 31, 1980. She received a BSc in Sociology at the Universidad del Valle in 2003. Parallel to her studies in Sociology, she actively participated in local politics in Florida, her small town in Colombia and was selected as President of her Department Council. Since then, she felt the need to prepare and improve her capacities to better influence development and therefore she joined the Master in International Development at Wageningen University in 2005. Her master thesis on 'Innovation System in Banana Research in Brazil and Colombia' was part of a collaborative research project between EMBRAPA - Brazil and Plan Research International (PRI) – Wageningen University.

Before joining doctoral studies in Wageningen University at the end of 2009, she worked in several research and development projects in Latin America. In Honduras and Nicaragua, she helped to facilitate the development of technological innovation processes to improve small-farmers market oriented strategies using an agro-chain approach. In Colombia, she worked closely with peasant organization in creating alliances among different actors to enable post-harvest process and market innovations in cassava crop. She spent two years working with the International Centre for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) and carried out collaborative research with National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS), universities and farmers organizations in Uruguay, Argentina and México on participatory processes and rural development. She also assisted the CGIAR Challenge Program on Water and Food and its local projects in Colombia on issues such as collective action, participatory evaluation and communitarian water management. She received several scholarships and research grants including Social Science Latin-American Council (CLACSO) and Comparative Research Program on Poverty (CROP) fellowship in 2004; Netherlands Organization for International Cooperation in Higher Education (Nuffic) fellowship in 2005, Wageningen University PhD Scholarship in 2009; and McKnight Foundation - Collaborative Crop Research Program research grant in 2011.

Diana is interested in interdisciplinary research that combines natural science with social science approaches and the use of applied sociology in agricultural science and food system analysis. Her major research interests include international development and agrarian change, and participatory processes for community and technology development.

WASS Trainig and Supervision Plan

Diana Marcela Córdoba Blandón

Completed Training and Supervision Plan

Wageningen School of Social Sciences (WASS)



Wageningen School
of Social Sciences

Name of the learning activity	Department/Institute	Year	ECTS*
A) Project related competences			
Proposal Development and Literature Review	WUR	2010	6
Social Movements in the South	WASS	2011	1.5
Rural Property, Inequality and Exclusion	Roskilde University, Denmark	2011	4
Visiting Research Fellow at CCCBE, University of Victoria, Canada	CCCBE	2012	4
B) General research related competences			
Review of Literature on research methods on social sciences and data analysis	WUR	2010	1.5
“Participation and Social Justice Conflicts in Rural Development Projects during the MAS Era in Bolivia”	Conference, University of South Florida, Florida, USA	2011	1
Brown Advance Research Institutes: Development and Inequality in the Global South	Brown University, Providence, RI, USA	2011	4
“Participation and Social Inclusion in Research and Development Projects in Rural Areas in Bolivia”	CoP7, McKnight Foundation, Cochabamba, Bolivia	2011	1
“From Neoliberalism to New Collectivism in the MAS Era in Bolivia: Contradictions, dissatisfactions and contestations in seeking alternatives for rural development”.	Canadian Association for Latin American and Caribbean Studies (CALACS), University of British Columbia, Canada	2012	1.5
“The Return of the State: new collectivism and rural development in the MAS era in Bolivia	WASS PhD Day	2012	1
“Participatory approaches for agricultural research" Is farmer participation enough?”	CoP8, McKnight Foundation, Cuenca,	2012	1

	Ecuador		
“The Politics of Participation and Capacity Building: Socializing Agricultural Research in Bolivia”	WASS PhD Day	2013	1
“Innovation in Rural Development Policies in Bolivia for the empowerment of small farmers: the case of the Rural Alliance Programme (PAR)”	CoP9, McKnight Foundation, Quito, Ecuador	2013	1
STEPS Centre Summer School	STEPS Centre, University of Sussex, UK	2014	3
Discussion groups and seminars	WUR	2009-2013	1.5
C) Career related competences/personal development			
Scientific Writing	WGS	2012	1.5
Reviewing a Scientific Paper	WGS	2013	0.1
Techniques for Writing and Presenting a Scientific Paper	WGS	2013	1.2
Total			35.8

*One credit according to ECTS is on average equivalent to 28 hours of study load

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