

Introduction

Shortly after midnight, early on Christmas Day 2010, the Cultural Centre of San Andrés Pisimbalá, a small town nestled in Colombia's western mountain range, was transformed into a battlefield. Celebrations were interrupted by gunshots that left four people seriously injured, and machete attacks that left another dozen with minor wounds. This would be the first of many violent episodes in a conflict between indigenous and peasant residents over territorial control and the implementation of ethnocultural education in schools. For almost a decade now, life in San Andrés has been disrupted by a series of land invasions, house and crop burnings, forced displacement, and threats. Ten years after that fateful episode, the local school is still closed to peasant children and the conflict remains unresolved.

In a similarly remote region, this one bordering the northern Bolivian Amazon, in the early morning of 16 May 2007 around 600 peasants marched from the town of Apolo towards Madidi National Park. Armed with chainsaws and rifles stolen from the local police, they threatened to start logging this internationally famous biodiversity hotspot, in protest against the issuing of a land title that granted a large portion of the community territory to a newly constituted indigenous organisation. The park's occupation marked the culmination of a long-lasting dispute between the local peasant union and the Leco indigenous people that completely altered the coexistence of families and communities, who were suddenly split along new ethnic boundaries.

A few years earlier, some 3,000 km north of Apolo along the western edge of the Peruvian Amazon, a conflict between an Awajún indigenous community and peasant settlers ended in one of the deadliest episodes of

civil violence in recent Peruvian history. On 17 January 2002, a few dozen peasant families living in a settlement called Flor de la Frontera awoke to find themselves under siege from a group of armed Awajún. The siege, intended to evict the settlers from illegally occupied indigenous land, left sixteen people dead and seventeen wounded – most of them women and children.

These three episodes are paradigmatic examples of inter-communal conflicts that have emerged over the last thirty years across the Andean region. These disputes are between peasants and indigenous peoples – groups identified along class and ethnic lines – who occupy remote rural areas characterised by widespread poverty, social marginalisation, environmental fragility and a deep colonial history. Most of these conflicts tend to become endemic and protracted over time, generally remaining at relatively low-intensity levels with occasional escalations and peaks of violence. That they take place in remote settings and have relatively moderate levels of violence may help explain why they fall outside the radar of the national media, public debate and scholarly attention.

Yet these conflicts deserve attention not only because of the negative impact they have on local communities, but also because they open up new and important questions in contemporary debates on equality and diversity. Why are groups that have peacefully cohabited for decades suddenly engaging in hostile and violent behaviours? What is the link between these conflicts and changes in collective self-identification, claim-making and rent-seeking dynamics? And how, in turn, are these changes driven by broader institutional, legal and policy reforms? To address these questions, this book employs extensive empirical material that delves into stories of recent inter-communal conflicts in three Andean countries: Colombia, Peru and Bolivia. It maps the actors, motives and time frames of these conflicts and situates them in the broader context of the socio-political transformation that the region has undergone in recent decades. In particular, the book shows how the rise in inter-group competition is linked to the implementation of a new generation of legal, institutional and policy reforms that, since the early 1990s, have introduced special rights and protection for ethnic (indigenous) groups.

A new consensus on the need to grant legal guarantees to ethnic minorities was forged at the international level in the 1980s and, since then, has trickled down to domestic policy across the world. The approach has become particularly influential in Latin America, where vibrant indigenous movements have successfully pressured governments to respond to their demands for recognition, rights and, in certain cases,

self-government. Contentious indigenous politics has led to a new model of citizenship and statehood, in stark contrast with the assimilationist paradigm that had prevailed since the mid-twentieth century. Inspired by globally famous theories of recognition (Taylor 1992; Kymlicka 2001), this new model postulates that the formalisation of differentiated rights for ethnic groups is a precondition for social coexistence on peaceful and equal grounds. Over the last thirty years, Latin America, and the Andean countries in particular, have pioneered the implementation of the recognition agenda mainly through constitutional reforms that formally recognised the multicultural or plurinational nature of their societies. These reforms introduced new ethnic-based rights, granting indigenous peoples certain degrees of territorial and administrative autonomy, political representation, direct participation in decision-making processes and access to special social provisions. In this context, I include within the 'recognition reform' category a broad set of institutional, legal and policy changes, ranging from more moderate versions inspired by neoliberal multiculturalism to more radical plurinational regimes, while I understand recognition as the process of institutionalisation of special rights to social collectivities determined along ethnic lines.¹

As has been extensively documented, recognition reforms have had an empowering effect on traditionally marginalised indigenous groups and, in turn, have strengthened democratisation and improved the quality of political communities in countries traditionally beset by persistent discrimination and inequality. Yet these positive effects have come with unforeseen social costs. In contrast to the mainstream progressive interpretation of the politics of recognition as offering more peaceful and inclusive arrangements for ethnically diverse societies, this book argues

¹ This is a rather narrow definition of recognition as it focuses specifically on ethnicity and institutionalised politics. In the literature, recognition has been understood in very different ways. As many as twenty-three different usages of the notion 'to recognise' have been identified, grouped into three main categories, namely recognition as identification, recognising oneself and mutual recognition (Ricoeur 2005). While left-Hegelian political philosophers have tended to emphasise the positive normative dimension of recognition as a precondition for the fulfilment of a 'vital human need' (Taylor 1992, 26; see also Honneth 1995; Kymlicka 1995), Marxist and post-structuralist philosophers have conceptualised recognition as a potential source of estrangement and as an inhibitor of social transformation (Sartre 1943; Althusser 1971). Sociological literature has tended to focus on recognition claims as the expression of struggles of marginalised social groups for social incorporation (Bauman 2001; Hobson 2003), and more recently on recognition gaps, defined as disparities in worth and cultural membership between groups in a society (Lamont 2018).

that these politics contain seeds of conflict. While they aim to improve social inclusion, under certain conditions they increase social differentiation in cultural and socio-economic terms, expand the gaps between communities of rural poor, reduce incentives to cooperate, and generate new types of social conflict, which I call recognition conflicts.

I define *recognition conflict* as a pattern of behaviour in which social groups consistently engage in contests with each other over goods, services, power, social boundaries and/or leadership as part or as a consequence of the recognition of specific ethnic rights. Parties in competition self-identify as members of distinct and bounded communities, divided along ethnic and/or class lines. Although public authorities are often called into question in the framework of these conflicts, state involvement is not a condition for recognition conflict to happen. To be sure, the high volume of disputes in which groups (particularly ethnic groups) claim different forms of legal and social recognition by the state are excluded from this definition. These ‘vertical conflicts’ have been crucial triggers of wider recognition reform in Latin America and beyond, and have been the subject of extensive investigation (Davalos 2005; Yashar 2005; Lucero 2008; Merino Acuña 2015). The definition of ‘recognition conflict’ proposed here aims to uncover instead the horizontal dimension of recognition claims, that is, those situations in which the main dispute occurs between two (or more) social groups or communities in conflict with each other. This horizontal dynamic has seldom been the object of research in its own right. Although conflicts are often complex phenomena and both horizontal and vertical dimensions are sometimes coexisting features of a single dispute, I argue that there is an added value in untangling those axes and identifying inter-communal conflicts as a distinct phenomenon within broader struggles for recognition.

The rather broad definition proposed here seems pertinent to studying a phenomenon with common roots but outcomes and material implications that vary greatly. The recognition conflicts studied in this book range from increased inter-group competition to open violence and involve a broad spectrum of actions: from hatred discourses and political competition to discriminatory acts, threats and blackmail, and to outbreaks of violence and physical aggression. This book constitutes the first attempt to provide an empirically grounded analysis and a theoretical framework for understanding these widely overlooked types of conflict, which have emerged over the last twenty years alongside the strengthening of ethnic-based rights. It challenges the primary logic of recognition, according to which the granting of minority rights should

reduce conflict, revealing that, under certain conditions, recognition can become the main source of conflict itself.

ETHNIC CONFLICT IN THE AGE OF RECOGNITION

Throughout history, multi-ethnic communities have been the norm rather than the exception. This is true also for the contemporary world. It is estimated that more than 90 per cent of modern territorial states contain two or more ethnic communities of significant size (Connor 1973). Esman (1994) identifies three main sources of ethnic pluralism: conquest and annexation, European colonisation and decolonisation, and cross-border population movements. In modern times, ethnic heterogeneity has often been the source of conflict and political instability. Throughout the twentieth century, the doctrine of national self-determination inspired anti-colonial struggles and legitimised autonomy claims by ethnic minorities within national borders. Over the past few decades, economic globalisation has also favoured the movement of people, at times increasing social tensions in receiving societies. These instabilities have made it urgent for states to explore new strategies for ethnic diversity governance. Recognition has been one of these. Despite the fact that moral principles, a sense of justice and just struggles vary widely within and across human societies (Eckstein & Wickham-Crowley 2003), the paradigm of recognition has had a reach across different and diverse countries. This is probably because it addresses some of the most urgent anxieties of modern democracies concerning how to guarantee the peaceful and fair coexistence of ethno-cultural groups within liberal state architectures.

Recognition of ethnic groups through institutional and legal reform has been the object of important national debates from Canada to Argentina, from Kenya to Norway and from Nepal to the Philippines. But the most audacious steps to institutionalise recognition of ethnic groups have been taken in Latin America. The region, which hosts approximately 50 million indigenous peoples (UNDP 2013), has the highest rate of ratification of Convention 169 on the Rights of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples (fifteen out of twenty-two countries),² the only binding international norm on ethnic-based rights. This enthusiasm can at least partially be explained by the need to overcome the dark past of dictatorial regimes in the 1970s and 1980s, which provided an

² Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, Venezuela.

incentive for the ratification of conventions in general, as part of Latin American countries' international rehabilitation (Panizza 1995; Lutz & Sikkink 2000). The impact of international law on domestic legislation, however, has been more than symbolic. Since the early 1990s, constitutional reform took place across the region to formally recognise the multicultural or plurinational nature of Latin American societies, while introducing ethnic-based rights which granted a degree of territorial and administrative autonomy, political representation, and access to special social provisions (e.g. in education and health) to indigenous peoples (including, in certain cases, Afro-descendants; see Hooker 2005; Paschel 2016). Where constitutions were not amended, indigenous rights were often included in legal frameworks and nationwide policies through, for example, systems of quotas for political representation and affirmative action in the education sector (Van Cott 2005b; Rousseau and Dargent 2019).

These reforms were not only the result of 'norm cascade' mechanisms, in which the chance of ratification increases once a norm has proven internationally successful (Finnemore & Sikkink 1998); they also stemmed from bottom-up pressure from a growing number of indigenous movements active at national and international levels. Since the 1980s, organisations representing indigenous peoples have been founded in a number of Latin American countries, including Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Mexico and Nicaragua. The so-called indigenous 'awakening' or 'resurgence' (Albó 1991; Bengoa 2000; Le Bot 2009) occurred in tandem with the rise of global indigenous movements and thanks to the financial and advisory support of a myriad of non-governmental organisations and activists, mostly foreigners, that formed alliances with local communities to win battles of recognition (Jackson 1995, 2019; Andolina et al. 2009; Canessa 2018). Throughout the 1990s, indigenous organisations consolidated and, in certain cases, made their first steps into national political arenas, while ethnic identities regained traction as sources of self-identification and markers of social differentiation and group belonging (Rivera Cusicanqui 1984; de la Cadena 2005). The rise of indigenous movements and their politicisation has been linked to the new opportunities enabled by the democratisation processes that followed the collapse of dictatorial regimes across the region, and particularly the efforts to generate more open electoral and party systems (Yashar 1998; Van Cott 2005a) and to strengthen local governance and participation (Andolina et al. 2009; Rousseau & Dargent 2019).

The positive assessment of recognition in the framework of democratisation processes in Latin America has meant that, in practice, the effects of these reforms on social and political ethnicisation (and therefore more rigid social boundaries) have been read almost exclusively through the lens of the empowerment of traditionally marginalised and impoverished communities and their enhanced participation and social inclusion. Indeed, as research on indigenous politics has amply shown, these reforms were a key step towards the rebalancing of a system of exclusion and discrimination rooted in the colonial past (Brysk 2000; Hale 2002; Sieder 2002; Postero 2007; Lucero 2008). They were key factors in strengthening the social and political organisation of indigenous peoples and converting them into political actors in many Latin American countries, from Mexico to Colombia, Ecuador to Bolivia (Van Cott 2005a; Yashar 2005). Latin America is therefore considered the region in which the recognition agenda has been implemented most successfully and in a relatively unproblematic and peaceful way. In this context, and in the absence of major ethnic conflict of the kind frequently seen in other parts of the world (Yashar 2005), scholars have generally been reluctant to focus on the effects of the ethnicisation of social conflict and collective identities on the overall cohesion of societies and communities.

This attitude has contributed to widening the gap between continentally siloed debates on ethnic politics. Indeed, mirroring the position of the vast majority of governments in Asia and Africa, scholars studying ethnic politics in these continents have remained somewhat sceptical about recognition. If in Latin America the focus has been on the emancipatory potential of indigenous rights for social inclusion and on fighting old discrimination rooted in the colonial past, in Africa and Asia discussions have revolved around the destabilising potential of ethnic politics and its malleability vis-à-vis political and economic change (Posner 2005; Comaroff & Comaroff 2009). Scholars have been especially sensitive to the potential for indigenous politics to exacerbate local inter-ethnic conflicts and reinforce class hierarchies that further marginalise the poorest people (Li 2002; Pelican 2009; Shah 2010; Sylvain 2014). What are the roots of this continental divide on recognition? I argue that politics rather than ethnic demography is the key factor at play here. This is rooted in a very pragmatic assessment of the potential for geopolitical destabilisation linked to ethnic appraisals, which is related to the relative power of ethnic groups with respect to central government, as well as to their loyalties, interests and sense of belonging to the nation-state. Even a very rapid assessment of these features leads to the conclusion that both the

fragilities in the process of consolidation of national identities and the disruptive potential of irredentist claims are much more serious in most African and Asian countries than in Latin America (Gutiérrez Chong 2010). Also, in most Latin American countries, no single ethnic group makes up more than 20 to 30 per cent of the population. Without a clear discriminated-minority-vs-ruling-majority divide, the very claim for autonomy based on discrimination loses traction (for an in-depth analysis of factors that might explain these divides see Kymlicka 2007).

It is hardly a coincidence, then, that in Africa and Asia minimalist approaches have prevailed, which means that few groups are treated as ‘indigenous’ and the term is chiefly reserved for scattered and nomadic minorities. In Latin America, however, maximalist interpretations dominate (with some exceptions, such as Peru), which suggests that all the populations that existed before colonisation should be considered ‘indigenous’. Countries’ different attitudes have also been influenced by the role of international organisations, which have certainly been more proactive in the implementation of indigenous rights in Latin America compared to any other region. In particular, in the African context, international organisations have been framing indigenous rights as a humanitarian matter, focusing on very specific minorities (those living in remote regions, hunter-gatherers and those particularly marginalised even among multiple ethnic minorities) and trying to avoid issues around self-determination for national minorities (such as the Kurds, the Tamil, the Tuareg, etc.). A minimalist attitude is also mainstream among anthropologists and subaltern studies scholars focusing on Asia and Africa, who have often denounced the essentialist idea of culture and identity embedded in the concept of indigeneity, although they disagree on whether essentialism could, in certain cases, benefit social struggles (e.g. through strategic essentialism, Spivak 1990) or foster new inequalities (Kuper et al. 2003).

In the effort to bridge this continental divide, this book finds inspiration in the work of scholars focusing on other world regions that have, in recent years, started to document the unforeseen and troubling effects of recognition reforms. In certain cases, what Shah (2007: 1806) calls the ‘dark side of indigeneity’ means that local use of global discourse by well-intentioned urban activists can in fact reinforce a class system that further marginalises the poorest. In others, the effort to ‘become tribal’, motivated by access to affirmative action and autonomy, has generated new tensions among local communities over the determination of what constitutes tribal culture and competing claims for authenticity

(Middleton 2015). My aim is to contribute to this body of literature by advancing a broader theoretical and conceptual framework that will identify and understand the under-researched phenomenon of recognition conflict in Latin America, while supporting my claims through cross-national empirical evidence.

A NEW AGENDA ON POST-RECOGNITION

This book puts forward a new perspective on the study of recognition and ethnic politics by introducing three major shifts: (1) from recognition to post-recognition; (2) from indigenous groups claiming recognition to broader social communities; and (3) from the Global North to the Global South.

From the 'Epic' to the 'Tragedy' of Recognition

Scholarship on recognition and ethnic mobilisation in Latin America can be divided into three main generations. The first generation of research, which I analyse in detail in Chapter 2, considered ethnicity a relatively marginal category for social action and subsumed the study of ethnic groups within a broader approach to the rural question through class lenses. This reflected in part the prominence of peasant movements across Latin America between the 1950s and early 1970s. Following the crisis of these movements and the initial rise of new social actors with strong ethnic associations throughout the 1980s, the attention of scholars (especially anthropologists) became more explicitly focused on the ethnic question, in many cases with sympathetic if not militant attitudes in support of cultural and identity-based claims and forms of organisation. Identities suddenly became central concerns for activists, scholars and practitioners alike, while ethnic differences could no longer be ignored nor reduced to class differences. Although they may greatly overlap in practice, they began to be perceived as 'qualitatively different' (Orlove & Custred 1980: 167). This differentiation had two interpretative implications for the understanding of the rural poor as political actors: on one hand, the rural poor went from being perceived as reactionary to being the progressive vanguards of social change; on the other, the material differences that were used as traditional markers of social boundaries were assimilated into cultural and identity cleavages, blurring the distinctions between poverty, class and ethnicity. With the age of recognition reforms that started in the early 1990s, political scientists in particular

became very interested in questions around when and under what conditions indigenous movements were created, and how their claims relate to broader democratic arrangements, potentially constituting a 'post-liberal turn'. The debate, opened by influential works such as Yashar's *Contesting Citizenship in Latin America* (2005), was followed by a vast amount of scholarly production trying to understand the new political role of ethnic movements in Latin America and their impressive successes in moving from recognition claims to recognition reforms (see, e.g., Van Cott 2002 on multicultural constitutionalism).

The focus on recognition as either a normative principle to guide institutional reforms or a framework for claim-making means that most academic work has so far concentrated on the period preceding recognition, while scholarly interest has generally waned once recognition is granted. It is understandable that the *epics* of recognition struggles have been of great inspiration to scholars. Historic indigenous mobilisations and social uprisings, such as the Zapatista rebellion in Mexico in 1994 and the first march for dignity and territory in Bolivia in 1990, were paradigmatic turning points in the entire Latin American political scenario. Yet recognition is not the end of the story, but rather the beginning of a different, perhaps less epic, tale.

By shifting the focus to the post-recognition phase in order to capture the practical consequences of the implementation of indigenous rights, this book is setting the agenda for a fourth generation of research on recognition, one that focuses on post-recognition. In this endeavour, I draw inspiration from recent work across the social sciences that has embarked on the task of dismantling well-established assumptions around the relationship between ethnicity and political and economic processes. In particular, constructivist approaches have highlighted how ethnic identities and boundaries are often the product of political and economic change, rather than key variables that explain that change (Chandra 2012; Wimmer 2013; Singh & Vom Hau 2016). More specifically, scholars have explored the impact of state institutionalisation of ethnic categories (i.e. formal recognition through, e.g., census forms or systems of national ethnic certification) on inter-group relationships and violence. The argument, in brief, is that institutionalisation boosts ethnic differentiation, creating a competitive dynamic that increases the likelihood of spiralling aggression (Lieberman & Singh 2012; 2017). In line with the constructivist turn in ethnic studies (Wimmer 2013), the empirical cases presented in this book illustrate how recognition reforms have major performative effects on identity and social boundaries, which in

turn can increase inter-group competition and, in certain cases, lead to outbreaks of violence.

Performative effects that emerge if we shift focus to the post-recognition phase can be of different kinds. I identify three here, all represented by the case studies in this book:

- (1) A *genesis effect*, whereby new identities are created or become salient in response to contextual change. This effect describes, for example, the ethnogenesis of new indigenous identities, as in the case of Apolo (Chapter 5), or the process of revitalisation of ethnic markers, as for the Quechua settlers in Peru (Chapter 7).
- (2) A *crystallisation effect*, which creates an interruption in the flow of cultural and identity innovation. An equilibrium among multiple identities is reached and remains stable for a given period of time, as long as enabling conditions are maintained, while the tension between identity fluidity and resilience is at least temporarily resolved. As I illustrate in Chapter 3, in Latin America, crystallisation effects have shaped the alternation of peasant and indigenous identities as the main referents for social mobilisation and self-identification over the past fifty years.
- (3) A *hierarchical effect*, which triggers situations where not only do identities crystallise in a new equilibrium, but this equilibrium is sustained by the primacy of one identity over another. In the history of indigenous and peasant identities, there have been different moments characterised by hierarchal relationships (class over ethnicity and vice versa), as described in Chapters 2 and 3. These effects are not exclusive of recognition reforms (assimilationist models had the same effects but on different identities), yet they have not been fully acknowledged in the case of recognition.

Although the chain of actions and reactions triggered by recognition is not linear, changes in the way groups self-identify most likely lead to the redefinition of social boundaries and inter-group relationships. As I demonstrate throughout this book, recognition reforms tend to create stronger and more exclusive inter-group boundaries, particularly in contexts characterised by high social heterogeneity and economic fragility. Markers of difference become more relevant than markers of similarity in a process of mutual construction of exclusions. 'Indigenous' is therefore defined in opposition to 'peasant', and vice versa; 'autochthonous' is defined in opposition to 'migrant', and vice versa; 'highlander' is defined in opposition to 'lowlander', and vice versa. As I illustrate in the two

historical chapters (2 and 3), these dichotomies have not always existed and have not always had the same relevance as they do today. Historical trajectories of articulation and disarticulation between these collective identities highlight how recognition conflicts are likely the product of the contemporary reshaping of norms of inclusion and exclusion, recognition and redistribution.

From Actors to Social Communities

The second shift introduced by the book is from a focus on those groups either 'recognised' or 'claiming recognition' to a focus on a broader social aggregate, which I call a social community. This is an ensemble of different ethnic and class groups that share the same physical space but that may or may not have access to recognition. Expanding the theatre to social communities allows the researcher to better capture the boundary-making processes in the operationalisation of recognition, or how in practice recognition involves redefining social relationships and collective identities. Once again, the focus here is on horizontal inter-group relationships rather than vertical relationships with, for instance, the state, private companies or international actors. The horizontal dimension, however, does not imply that there are no power imbalances between these groups, but that the imbalances are contingent to specific social configurations rather than institutionalised or intrinsic to a given relationship.

As I mentioned earlier, I define recognition as the act of granting special rights to culturally distinct social groups. In the logic of recognition, group differentiation is indeed instrumental to achieving social justice. Hence, one of the key steps in the operationalisation of recognition involves defining what characteristics a group should have in order to deserve differential treatment. The challenge here is that recognition is a discrete mechanism, while most ethnic markers are continuous variables (i.e. skin colour, adherence to distinct cultural features, language proficiency). In practice, although abstract criteria can be more or less strict and rely on more or less undisputed markers, a cut-off point needs to be set. Depending on where the threshold falls, different social groups will be considered more or less suitable for being granted recognition. Both the relative arbitrariness of the criteria for recognition and the 'in or out' type of outcome mean that the very implementation of recognition is likely to be a contentious and highly politicised endeavour, with the state, social actors and other stakeholders trying to shift the cut-off point towards

what they consider a more favourable outcome. This also means that groups of rural poor are not entering the 'recognition battleground' on an equal footing and, therefore, there are likely to be winners and losers in the post-recognition phase (both aspects have generally been neglected by scholars of recognition). Indeed, even when the criteria of inclusion are rather lax, social differentiation will make it easier for certain groups to gain recognition compared with others. For example, those groups that have more credible and visible ethnic markers or that have managed to preserve an identity perceived as distinct within the national context and that is acceptable for local communities will be better equipped to adapt (i.e. or have *fitness*, to borrow the fortunate Darwinian concept) to the new political environment than others. In this context, fitness not only implies entitlement to new rights but also easier access to the globalised world of recognition, made up of networks, international organisations and activists that can provide different types of material and non-material support.

The second problem with the operationalisation of recognition, at least in the Latin American context, is that while target groups are defined in terms of collective identity and ethnic markers, policies that stem from recognition reforms entail in general a heavy redistributive component that ranges from land titling to monetary transfers to control over strategic resources (e.g. hydrocarbon, forest, water). Quantitative evidence generally supports the assumption that indigenous communities are the poorest and most marginalised within Latin American societies (Freire et al. 2015), which would in turn justify the overlapping of recognition and redistribution measures. Yet, in practice, micro-sociological realities are much more complex than what appears in World Bank figures. Not only is there an increasing number of indigenous urban dwellers that are making a decent living, if not heading towards the top of the economic pyramid, by controlling crucial import/export sectors of Andean economies (Tassi 2010), but the number of rural poor in these countries definitively exceeds the number of 'recognised' indigenous peoples. These discrepancies make it harder to justify the redistributive component of recognition if we take equality as a moral horizon, as I will elaborate on in my conclusion. These dilemmas become clearer in those contexts in which different groups of rural poor (whether indigenous, peasant or Afro-descendant) do not live in isolation from each other. Often as a result of more or less recent processes of migration and displacement, these groups share the same geographical space and relatively similar conditions of marginalisation and economic precarity. In such socially

heterogeneous contexts, recognition introduces demarcation lines across communities, and sometimes families, which not only crystallise symbolic boundaries but also set up differentiated mechanisms in regard to accessing key resources. It is not surprising, therefore, that many of these communities have been experiencing increased inter-group competition in the post-recognition phase.

Finally, given the complexity of social communities, we might wonder whether identity fitness constitutes a good metric for social justice at all. Indeed, all the conflicts described in this book entail moral dilemmas around the subject and the scope of recognition. If identities are fluid and endogenous to the institutional process of recognition, then identity does not seem a good enough criterion in itself to justify access to special protection and resources. Additional elements may need to be added to the equation, particularly an intersectional analysis that considers other variables such as class and gender. The argument here is not against recognition *tout court* but for an empirically grounded assessment of recognition that can highlight its successes as well as its limitations within a particular social community in a given historical and geographical context. This brings us to the third shift of perspective, which invites us to rethink recognition beyond Western boundaries.

From the Global North to the Global South

It is now clear that indigenous movements across Latin America have fully embraced the struggle for recognition and the human rights discourse associated with it. Without bottom-up pressure, those constitutional changes that have reshaped the very nature of Latin American states and societies would simply not have been possible. Yet it is equally undeniable that the roots of recognition of ethnic diversity, as implemented through these reforms, are mainly grounded in the international codification of indigenous rights as human rights, and in the globalised network of actors that have been instrumental in ‘translating’ recognition discourse into the language of social struggle. As Kymlicka (2007: 4) notices in a rare attempt to look at the ‘internationalisation’ of recognition, its global diffusion through both political discourses and legal norms has been ‘fundamentally reshaping the traditional conceptions of state sovereignty, nationhood, and citizenship that have underpinned the international system of nation-states’. But surprisingly, despite this global dimension, academic discussion of recognition has rarely been influenced by experiences beyond Western borders. Yet how recognition is claimed,

granted and contested outside of the West constitutes an important part of the journey of recognition as a philosophical, legal and political category. Indeed, while the liberal perspective of most of the advocates of recognition and their biographical origins has meant that the geographical focus and the empirical observations that inspired their theories were driven mainly from Western post-industrial democracies (particularly Canada, the United States, Australia and Europe), the most audacious steps to institutionalise recognition of ethnic minorities have in fact taken place in the Global South and particularly in Latin America.

By shifting the empirical focus to economically fragile and relatively young democracies, this book consciously tries to overcome a divide in the literature and academic thinking on recognition between the Global North and the Global South. While the underlying principles of recognition may have universal value (for instance, in their ambition for inclusion and non-discrimination), when applied to specific socio-historical contexts, their rather homogeneous and a priori evaluation of the causes and remedies for oppression and misrecognition fails to account for important variations. Institutional and state capacity, the availability of public resources, levels of economic development, and ethnic demographic and categorisation variables (density and volatility of ethnic population and politicisation of ethnic identities) are all relevant conditions that affect the outcome of recognition reforms (Storper 2005; Guibernau I Berdún & Rex 2010; Telles & PERLA 2014). In this sense, introducing recognition measures in Western democracies with relatively stable and efficient institutions, high levels of economic development, and low poverty rates is a very different endeavour from implementing similar policies in developing countries and young democracies. Yet, as Wimmer (2013) observes, advocates of recognition tend to support the propagation of this model across the globe, regardless of whether the conditions under which it originally emerged (in Western developed democracies) have been met.

I argue that indigenous rights (as implemented in the Latin American context) should be more fully integrated in the theoretical and normative discussion on recognition politics for at least three reasons: they are one of the fields in which recognition politics have achieved a greater degree of formalisation and practical implementation; they have gathered significant support and consensus in their potential to advance the social justice agenda, without seriously scrutinising their practical outcomes; and they can be studied in a variety of national contexts across the developed/developing divide. Critically, an empirical focus is instrumental for raising issues of contextual and historical variation. In other words, recognition

principles and politics might not lead to the same outcomes in terms of social justice everywhere. While recognition theories and policy recipes have often raced along the path towards universalisation, local, domestic and regional variations have rarely been considered. By focusing on countries in the South, this book argues for the need for a more nuanced assessment of recognition politics, which accounts for historical and contextual variations, and a more cautious generalisation of their normative prescriptions.

EXPLAINING RECOGNITION CONFLICTS

This book examines how progressive and globally acclaimed recognition reforms can trigger protracted social conflict affecting poor and marginalised communities. One key reason to study cases where recognition is contested 'stems from the general rule that researchers who want to learn about a given institution should focus on its margins and instances where things don't work' (Jackson 2019: 225). Indeed, the defining feature that distinguishes recognition conflicts from other types of ethnic conflict is their close link with the implementation of specific legal or policy measures related to broader recognition reforms. The object of these measures varies significantly, ranging from land titling to education policies and affirmative action, administrative autonomy, and participatory governance. Whether at the national, regional or local level, these measures are all part of the project of incorporating ethnic groups into the framework of multicultural or plurinational models of citizenship and statehood. In order to do so, they adopt different measures and systems that I broadly divide between what I call 'means of recognition' and 'means of redistribution'. The former includes those provisions that clearly allow for the differentiation of one group from the rest of society based on ethnic criteria, and, from there, allocate this collective subject differentiated rights. The latter are the mechanisms through which recognition norms institutionalise the allocation of material resources on an ethnic basis. The institutionalisation of ethnic categories through recognition reforms has the downstream effect of hardening potentially fluid categories. At the same time, the redistributive effects of recognition through, for example, land tenure increase the stakes for the rural poor. Indeed, many recognition reforms offer access to very concrete resources, including land, and (in certain cases) direct monetary transfers from central government, which can make a big difference in conditions of widespread poverty or indigence. In these scenarios, horizontal inter-group relationships are

often completely altered, mechanisms and incentives for cooperation are greatly debilitated, and access to new rights (and resources) becomes a zero-sum game, whereby it is important not only to be granted recognition, but equally to exclude other groups from enjoying the same rights. In certain cases, even relatively homogeneous communities have become battlegrounds, as a result of the new salience suddenly attributed to ethnicity and the emergence of brand-new identities.

The link between rising competition and conflict and the introduction of legal recognition and policy reforms is not always easy to assess. In the cases of the conflicts I discuss in this book, I treat this as an empirical question and I identify two facts that substantiate this relationship: firstly, none of the conflicts I analyse existed prior to the implementation of recognition reforms; secondly, the link is clearly and openly acknowledged by the vast majority of informants. Indeed, this is one of the few points of agreement between the parties in conflict. Another important finding that corroborates the link is the strikingly similar features of the conflicts analysed across three countries – Bolivia, Colombia and Peru – which, despite being part of the same geographical sub-region (the Andes), are in fact quite different from one another in terms of economic development, political orientation and stability, history of civil violence, and ethnic demographics. These countries have, however, followed relatively similar paths towards the implementation of recognition reforms. The comparison represents a compelling framework in which to link the new wave of inter-communal conflict with the implementation of recognition reforms. I discuss the comparative dimension of the book in detail in Chapter 1.

Although the link between conflict and recognition reform appears strong in the cases analysed, I am far from suggesting that such reforms always lead to conflict outcomes. In fact, I identify other concurrent conditions that can increase the likelihood of recognition conflict. In other words, normative changes are necessary but not sufficient conditions for recognition conflict to happen. The first condition is the presence of heterogeneous social communities (i.e. different social groups sharing the same local spaces) or, in some cases, the existence of different ethno-cultural roots that can be mobilised to strengthen social differentiation. Demographic change, such as migration inflow, is one of the factors that can contribute to an increase in social heterogeneity and hence trigger recognition conflicts. The second important condition that can fuel recognition conflict is the endemic lack of resources linked to widespread poverty, precarious livelihoods and/or environmental fragilities that

characterise many rural communities. This in turn exacerbates the competition for resources, particularly land, and the sensitivity around the distributive outcomes of recognition reforms.

In Chapter 1, I elaborate on the mechanisms that underpin recognition conflicts and I offer a typology of such conflicts that results from the interaction between the two key mechanisms embedded in recognition norms (means of recognition and means of redistribution) and the two key characteristics of social communities: social heterogeneity and resource scarcity. The four types of recognition conflicts that emerge are discussed in detail and with examples in the four empirical chapters (4–7).

ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS

Situations of conflict among rural communities are not new and were frequent across the Andean region well before the rise of recognition politics. It is therefore legitimate to wonder if the conflicts described in this book in fact represent new and different kinds of dispute, or whether they are yet another manifestation of long-standing trends and socio-political processes. Institutional perspectives have been particularly valuable in identifying how the endemic weaknesses of Latin American states and the challenges to effectively controlling and governing vast and remote territories have been linked to social instability (Burt & Mauceri 2004; Yashar 2005; Brinks et al. 2019). Relying on evidence mainly from socio-environmental conflict involving rural communities, the state and private companies, scholars have explained the existence of protracted social tensions as the result of inadequacies and dysfunctionalities in the political and institutional system, a lack of transparency, and inappropriate management of conflict; in sum, problems of ‘governance’ (Panfichi 2011; Vergara 2011; Tanaka 2012). Weak state presence is also considered responsible for the rise of illegal activities and disruptive operations by external actors in the attempt to access and exploit strategic resources through, for example, logging, mining, illicit crop planting and hydrocarbon extraction. All these activities can be very disruptive for local communities and can also contribute to rising social tensions (Bebbington & Bury 2013; Rettberg & Ortiz-Riomalo 2016).

Recognition conflicts, and particularly conflicts involving land claims (which goes here mainly under the category of ‘social reproduction conflicts’), are indeed at least in part the result of state failures, weaknesses and slowness in granting land and other rights to rural communities. However, as Merino Acuña (2015: 87) argues: ‘fixation on these

explanations ... explicitly or implicitly den[ies] structural analysis and deeper understandings of phenomena'. It fails to explain, for example, why, even when efforts are made to strengthen accountability and institutionalisation, conflicts do not automatically vanish. As Li (2015) illustrates in the case of mining conflicts in Peru, efforts to resolve conflict through institutional mechanisms often fail to account for factors that remain 'outside the frame of visibility', that is, cultural and social structural factors that underpin the value assigned to things. The incompatibility between institutional or mainstream factors and local indigenous ones (or political ontologies, as Merino Acuña (2015) calls them) is at the root of conflict perpetuation. Furthermore, while institutional explanations work well for vertical conflicts, in which social groups mobilise in protest against state actions (or inaction), state inefficiencies do not fully explain why communities are in conflict with each other.

By focusing on the specific impact of recognition reform, I offer an additional explanation for inter-communal conflicts that complements, and adds to, other analyses focused on state and institutional weaknesses. In other words, I argue that state inefficiencies are an important factor, but not one that in itself can explain the rise of these particular kinds of horizontal conflict. Indeed, if the main issue in these conflicts was inefficiencies in implementation, rather than the norm itself, I would expect to find more widespread alliance, rather than conflict, between communities of rural poor that would be similarly impacted by those very inefficiencies and implementation weaknesses. Why then, instead of building alliances to lobby the state, do these communities end up on different conflict fronts? Why are these conflicts often accompanied by the strengthening of identity boundaries and social closure? And why do they not always match the map of old colonial and corporatist disputes? I argue that, to answer these questions, closer attention ought to be paid to the very epistemology of recognition norms, or the way ethnicity is conceived of within the recognition framework, as well as to its operationalisation and the implications it has for the redistribution of key resources.

A second recent line of investigation focusing on social conflict in Latin America has been driven by critical development studies of multicultural reforms. Some of the most common formulations of these critiques have explained the rise in social conflict as a symptom of the dysfunctional implementation of recognition norms. A particularly prolific field in this regard has been around resource governance and participation. Some of these scholars have been highly critical of participation processes in mining and hydrocarbon activities rooted in the International Labour

Organisation (ILO)'s convention and national legal framework, arguing that these mechanisms result in 'mundane performances of bureaucratic action' (Perreault 2015: 447) or 'invited spaces dominated by the state' (Flemmer & Schilling-Vacaflor 2016: 182), rather than fostering participation and genuine dialogue between the state, private companies and marginalised communities. Power asymmetries, lack of trust and reliable mediators, and the manipulative role given to technical brokers have progressively led to a disempowering effect of recognition reforms on marginalised ethnic groups, as well as to local actors abandoning the participatory process because of the inability and unwillingness of the state to address the underlying issues of consultation (Merino Acuña 2018; Torres Wong 2018). At the same time, an opposite trend is emerging that points towards the exacerbation of socio-environmental and socio-legal conflicts over prior consultations and extractive endeavours more generally (Merino Acuña 2015; Torres Wong 2018). Although, at least in certain cases, consultation procedures seem to be able to deter the use of state repression against indigenous groups (Zaremborg & Torres Wong 2018), the persistence of social conflict undermines the promise that Free Prior and Informed Consent/ Consultation (FPIC) could work as a mitigation and resolution tool. Some of these conflicts associated with extractive industries include demands for structural change at the state level and are used to promote broader public discussion on the necessity of recognition policies such as indigenous territorial and participation rights (an example is the 2009 Baguazo conflict in Peru) (Merino Acuña 2015; 2018).

Taken together, this body of literature has offered an array of explanations for the rise in social conflict across the Andes in recent decades. This book builds and expands on these authors' findings by showing how, under certain conditions, recognition reform has the potential to fuel conflict rather than contributing to conflict prevention and mitigation across different countries and in a broader range of issue areas (not only in the extractive industry but also in service provision and territorial demarcations). The book also shifts the focus from vertical conflicts characterised by structural power asymmetries (i.e. conflict between social groups and the state or private companies), which have been the object of the literature on socio-environmental conflict, to horizontal conflicts characterised by a relative power equilibrium between parties (i.e. conflict among social groups themselves). I argue, indeed, that horizontal conflicts should not be considered as proxies for vertical conflicts but as conflicts that deserve attention in their own right. This is, I argue, an

important limitation of critical and institutional approaches that have tended to more or less consciously link inter-communal conflicts to broader struggles where social (particularly indigenous) organisations mobilise in protest against the state or petition state authorities for reform. As I mentioned earlier, these kinds of conflict have attracted much scholarly attention in recent years. They have commonly been considered movements of resistance against neoliberalism and what Harvey calls 'accumulation by dispossession' (Kohl & Farthing 2006; Harvey 2007: 34; Remy 2010; Rice 2012), attempts to forge alternative public spheres emancipated by liberal institutions (Stephenson 2002; Albro 2006; Postero & Zamosc 2006), or rebellions against entrenched racism, discrimination and neo-colonial practices (Richards 2003; Paschel & Sawyer 2008; Rivera Cusicanqui 2015).

Such interpretations are not in question here. All these analytical angles can indeed contribute to explaining some aspects of the types of social conflict that have become widespread in the Andean region over past decades. Yet, as de la Cadena (2010: 241) notes, citing Chakrabarty (2000), 'what is accurate is not necessarily sufficient, and questions remain [open]'. Why do social groups that suffer from similar conditions of marginalisation and the negative effects of neoliberal and neo-colonial politics not manage to build sustainable social and political coalitions? Why, at the local level, does conflict erupt in situations where neoliberalisation is similarly affecting communities belonging to different social groups? Why do communities that previously entertained long-standing peaceful relationships end up in conflict in a period characterised by a decline in neoliberalism and the emergence of new national-popular paradigms such as plurinationalism? And why are inter-communal conflicts of the kind that I call recognition conflicts happening across countries with very different political trajectories? A necessary condition to answer these questions, I argue, is to focus on the horizontal dimension of conflict as an object of study in its own right, rather than as reflections of other vertical struggles and claims.

Another popular angle from which to explain ethnic-based social tension in the Global South is embedded in postcolonial theory. In particular, the concept of strategic essentialism, first coined by the Indian scholar Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1990), represents a rare example of cross-continental spread in ethnic studies, as it became very influential in Latin America as well. There it has been used as an alternative to institutionalist approaches in accounting for a trend towards the ethnicisation of social struggle. In particular, it is used to describe how subaltern groups

decide to subscribe to a shared identity in order to increase their chances of success in public battles for rights (Buchanan 2010). It has the merit of introducing a strategic dimension to recognition struggles – one that accounts, at the same time, for the rarely considered performative effects of institutional change. Yet it falls short in explaining why certain subaltern groups are not able, or do not choose, to act strategically. This comes once again through neglecting the horizontal dimension of recognition struggles. In the context of indigenous rights, for example, why do some groups with clear indigenous markers choose not to self-identify as indigenous? As we shall see, this behaviour is not uncommon across the Andean region and can be understood only by looking at the ‘deep history’ of collective identities. In the Apolo conflict that I analyse in Chapter 5, for example, more than half of the local peasant union’s leaders and members did not join the indigenous organisation, although they could be considered to be just as indigenous as those that self-identified as such. Resistance to embracing ethnic identities is also common across the Peruvian highlands, albeit this has been slowly changing in recent years. These cases do not have one single and generalisable explanation. Opposition to indigenous identity is not uncommon where indigeneity evokes negative associations linked to a colonial past and a derogatory conception of contemporary indigenous peoples. As an Apoleño Quechua peasant told me:

They want to get us back as we were just getting civilised, as in the Eastern lowlands. There, there are true indigenous that do not even have their legal dressing as we have. We already know how to pray the ‘Lord’s Prayer’, we are Catholics, Christians. ... How could they convert us if we believe we are syndicalised, organised peasants!? We feel they are trying to convert us! (Interview, Apolo, July 2010)

But resistance to indigenous self-identification is not always driven by emotion. As I will show, it can also be a deliberate strategy to gain a portion of local power in opposition to the rise of competing actors (e.g. new indigenous movements). In sum, norm-driven performative effects on identity change are not always predictable and depend on the contingent responses of different social groups to evolving circumstances. The agency of subaltern groups has been strongly revindicated by Latin American ‘decolonial’ scholars. The Bolivian sociologist Rivera Cusicanqui has formulated one of the most elaborate critiques of multiculturalism in Latin America, identifying multiculturalism as an ‘ongoing practice of coloniality’ that recognises ethnic groups only as idealised static subjects. This aspect of Rivera Cusicanqui’s argument does in part

resonate with this book's claim that recognition reform has contributed to social closure and hard ethnic boundaries, although I tend to consider this a 'side effect' of recognition rather than a deliberate attempt to control subaltern masses, as Rivera Cusicanqui argues (2012; 2015).

After this brief summary of the main argument of the book and discussion of alternative explanations, two clarificatory notes are in order. Firstly, social conflict and competition are not considered here as negative in and of themselves; conflict can be understood as symptomatic and inevitable in any process of social and political change. This book argues that it is equally important to acknowledge the unintended effects of ethnic recognition regimes, with the aim of moderating their potentially disruptive impact on communities that are among the most marginalised and poorest in Latin America.

Secondly, this book does not argue against the politics of recognition *tout court*, nor is its intention to provide 'ammunition to enemies' (Jackson & Warren 2005: 566) of recognition, particularly those states still reluctant to engage in the fight against the exclusion and discrimination of ethnic minorities. It does, however, challenge the dominant narrative about the effects of recognition in terms of inclusion and conflict mitigation. By exploring the links between global, national and, particularly, local politics, a more nuanced picture of recognition outcomes emerges. These nuances, and in particular the trade-offs between strengthening cultural and ethnic rights and increasing inter-group competition and socio-economic differentiation, should be fully acknowledged and incorporated both in a theory of recognition and within international and domestic policymaking. It is indeed 'in the shadow' of recognition that a more balanced understanding of the complex relationship between diversity and equality emerges.

ORGANISATION OF THE BOOK

The book contains one theoretical chapter, two historical chapters, four empirical chapters and a conclusion.

The first three chapters provide the theoretical framework and historical background. They offer a brief introduction to Latin American and Andean rural politics for those not familiar with the subject, while developing an original analytical framework in which to situate key historical processes.

In the first chapter, I propose a framework for analysis of recognition conflicts, through establishing a typology of such conflicts that results

from the interactions between key mechanisms that underpin them, related to both recognition norms and the characteristics of social communities. The chapter also provides details on the country case studies, offering an overview of recognition reforms and other relevant national features such as ethnic demography, economic performance, and institutional and political context across the three countries. Finally, it presents the methodology and some necessary conceptual and terminological clarifications.

The second chapter provides an overview of the different strategies adopted by Latin American states in dealing with the incorporation of the rural poor into nation-building processes. It proposes a chronology of implementation of four different models of citizenship and development from the early twentieth century to the present: (1) indigenism and *mestizaje* (1920–1950); (2) national corporatism (1950–1970); (3) neo-indigenism and multiculturalism (1980–1990); and (4) plurinationalism (2000–2010). The historical accounts that illustrate these models focus particularly on Bolivia, Peru and Colombia, with the aim of providing important background information for the case studies that are the focus of this book. Yet, with some variations, these models have been implemented across Latin America more widely over the past century.

Changes in state-building regimes have been key determinants in reshaping the modes of interaction and even the identities of rural communities. Chapter 3 analyses how collective identities and inter-group relationships have changed since the 1950s, commensurate with shifts in citizenship regimes. It focuses in particular on the alternation between class and ethnicity as the two main referents for social organisation in rural Latin America. Four main phases in the evolution of the class-ethnic relationship are identified: (1) hierarchical articulation (class over ethnicity); (2) hierarchical articulation (ethnicity over class); (3) organisational disarticulation; and (4) pragmatic articulation. These phases are illustrated through concrete examples, mainly from the Andean region. The chapter provides a historical narrative and an analytical lens through which to understand the complex and thus far only partially told story of the relationship between peasant and indigenous movements in Latin America.

Chapters 4 to 7 focus on recognition conflict. The empirical material and case studies are organised according to the types of recognition conflict identified in Chapter 1: participation conflicts, social reproduction conflicts, demographic conflicts and access conflicts. All the chapters have an introductory section offering more specific background

information about contextual and normative changes. Each chapter discusses at least two empirical cases of conflicts from different countries and provides a brief conclusion.

Chapter 4 deals with recognition conflicts around participatory governance. As an example of participation conflict, I provide a close analysis of the debates that led to the introduction of Free Prior and Informed Consent/Consultation (FPIC) in national legislation and policy in Bolivia, Colombia and Peru. Rooted in international human rights law, the FPIC mechanism is designed to regulate and operationalise the participation of indigenous peoples in environmental decision making and political processes on questions in which their interests are directly affected. The implementation of FPIC illustrates the tensions around key aspects of the recognition agenda, particularly on how to define the 'legitimate' subjects of recognition.

Land is perhaps the most obvious and widespread of the motives behind recognition conflicts, as territorial control and land access have been central claims for both indigenous and peasant movements. Chapter 5 discusses the links between land reform and identity change as examples of social reproduction conflicts. It describes paradigmatic cases from Colombia and Bolivia in which identities have increasingly become salient tools in social conflicts, eventually having an impact on the way people self-identify and the very nature of land struggles.

Chapter 6 illustrates how both exogenous and endogenous changes in rural demographics, namely sustained internal migration and growing indigenous population rates, fuel social tensions around new settlements, as well as in contexts where communities have peacefully coexisted for decades. Relying on empirical cases from Peru and Colombia, I explore changes in local demographics as roots of new recognition conflicts.

Chapter 7 focuses on access conflicts linked to recognition reforms in the education sector. Policy initiatives that seek to account for ethno-cultural diversity in education and schooling, including affirmative action measures and bilingual education models, have become increasingly popular over the past few decades. I draw on empirical case studies from Colombia and Peru to show how identity education policies can increase social tensions and lead to outbreaks of violence.

In the conclusion, I first highlight the contributions of the book to a broader cross-continental perspective on recognition that could help to bridge long-standing gaps in the literature on ethnic politics. I argue that findings about the Latin American case have particular value to this discussion, showing how the subcontinent shares more similarities with

other contexts than scholars have generally assumed. I then discuss how empirical evidence should encourage new thinking around the way in which recognition is theorised as a justice principle. Finally, I offer some recommendations on how to incorporate the book's findings into a policy agenda, or more precisely how to tackle these empirical and moral puzzles through concrete action and policy measures.