

DOING DEMOCRACY DIFFERENTLY: INDIGENOUS RIGHTS AND REPRESENTATION IN CANADA AND LATIN AMERICA

Roberta Rice

ISBN 978-1-77385-565-3

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Decolonizing Democracy: Theoretical and Conceptual Considerations

The continued exclusion of Indigenous peoples under settler states looms large not only for democratic legitimacy, but also for the quality of democratic institutions and processes (Eversole 2010; Papillon 2008). Democracies in the Americas that operate without Indigenous participation are deficient (CEPAL 2014). Indigenous movements in the cases under consideration in this study see institutional change as key to self-determination. In northern Canada and the central Andes, liberal-inspired democratic orders coexist and compete with traditional and adapted Indigenous governance structures. In between Western and Indigenous forms of governing, however, there exists ample space for political experimentation to link formal with non-formal or non-state institutions as a way to improve overall democratic governability (Retolaza Eguren 2008). To be effective, the process should not formalize all institutions (which would only tilt the political arena to the further advantage of the politically powerful) but should instead promote the productive interplay between both types of institutions. To do so would be to construct a democratic system with the ability to produce the results that civil society demands and to consolidate political institutions that guarantee the inherent rights of Indigenous peoples.

This chapter builds on Abele and Prince's (2006) typology of self-government models in Canada by extending and applying their conceptual framework to Latin America. Despite significant differences in political history and organizational structures among Indigenous nations and peoples in the Americas, it is possible to sort the various forms of self-governing arrangements into models or categories that embody distinct relationships between Indigenous communities and the broader political systems in which they are situated. Each of these models of Indigenous self-government offer differing

degrees of autonomy from the state and thus different possibilities and constraints for self-determination. Proceeding from this analytical framework, I establish the criteria for determining the degree of Indigenous autonomy and self-governing power in the book's four case studies. The aim of the chapter is to sharpen our understanding of key theoretical concepts and relationships rather than provide a better specification of measures or indicators of democratic decolonization.

The chapter begins with an overview of the concepts of Indigenous autonomy and self-government in Canada and Latin America as the building blocks for a theory of democratic decolonization. The next section addresses democratic theory as it applies to the institutional experiments that are taking place in northern Canada and the central Andes. The process of democratic decolonization is, as this framework suggests, to be facilitated by an emphasis on governance, as opposed to government, the meaningful inclusion of non-formal institutions into the polity, and the role of citizenship as agency in pushing the boundaries of representative democracy. Special attention is paid in the chapter to how Indigenous institutional participation promotes the growth of new forms of society-centred governance. The chapter also addresses how formal, informal, and non-formal institutions are implicated in current efforts to redesign governing institutions in more culturally grounded and relevant ways. Finally, the chapter examines the relationship between civil society engagement and inclusive democratic governance. Indigenous movements have played a decisive role in determining the extent and nature of democratic inclusion in Bolivia, Ecuador, Nunavut, and Yukon. The inclusion of Indigenous actors in the structures of the state has produced deeper, more meaningful forms of democracy in each of the four cases.

Indigenous Autonomy and Self-Government

Autonomy is the articulating claim of Indigenous peoples around the world. The demand for autonomy centres on the call for self-determination and self-government within Indigenous territories (Díaz Polanco 1998). Following González (2015, 17), Indigenous autonomy is understood in this study to refer to (a) the transfer of decision-making authority and administrative power to local collectives; (b) the establishment of self-governing political institutions within a recognized jurisdiction; and (c) the delimitation of territorial rights, including control over land and natural resources. According to Sambo Dorough (2021), the right to autonomy and self-government is

central to the survival of Indigenous peoples as distinct peoples or nations. In Canada, Bolivia, and Ecuador, Indigenous autonomies have been recognized by the state and constituted as political-administrative units at the sub-national level (González et al. 2021). The demand for plurinationality, as expressed in Latin America, calls for the sharing of power and the recognition of Indigenous sovereignty within the framework of the state (Resina de la Fuente 2012). Plurinationality involves the re-founding of regime institutions, the reconceptualization of the nation-state, and the reconfiguration of the political map on the basis of Indigenous participation, legal pluralism, and Indigenous autonomies (Acosta 2009; De Sousa Santos 2009; Walsh 2009). Decolonization is perhaps best understood as a collective endeavour on the part of Indigenous peoples inspired by and oriented around the question of land (Singh 2019; Tuck and Wang 2012). Theoretically, decolonization is achieved when there is a nation-to-nation relationship between Indigenous peoples and the state on shared land. As Rivera Cusicanqui (2020, 49) asks, “How can the exclusive, ethnocentric ‘we’ be articulated with the inclusive ‘we’—a homeland for everyone—that envisions decolonization?”

The work of Abele and Prince (2006) on pathways to Indigenous self-determination in Canada provides us with an important conceptual framework for comparing models of self-government. The authors identify four models or approaches to self-government that embody lesser to greater degrees of autonomy from the state: (a) mini-municipality; (b) public government as Indigenous self-government; (c) Indigenous governance as a third order of government; and (d) nation-to-nation relations or dual federations. The mini-municipality model envisions Indigenous governments as equivalent to local governments in size and governing authority. Under this model, Indigenous governments enjoy devolved administrative responsibilities while sovereignty continues to be shared between national and provincial or, in the case of northern Canada, territorial governments. According to Abele and Prince (2006, 586), the mini-municipality model has few supporters among Indigenous peoples. Likewise, the adapted federalism model, which proposes the creation of a new public government as opposed to an Indigenous-only government, is also based on a notion of sovereignty that is shared between national and provincial or territorial governments. However, this model does entail significant change to the national political map. In contrast, the third-order-of-government approach calls for the participation of Indigenous governments in the broader political system as a distinct order of government

within the Canadian federation. In this scenario, sovereignty is shared between three orders of government. Lastly, the nation-to-nation approach to self-government is based on the concept of a parallel set of sovereign federations in a given territory. Instead of Indigenous nations and governments having power under or within the federal system, the dual federations model is based on the concept of power alongside the Canadian federation (Abele and Prince 2006, 584–5).

Abele and Prince's (2006) conceptual framework may fruitfully be applied to the case studies of this book. Table 1.1 depicts the different models of Indigenous autonomy and self-government in Bolivia, Ecuador, Nunavut, and Yukon. The case of the Yukon best approximates the nation-to-nation model.¹ The 1990 Umbrella Final Agreement provides the framework within which each of the fourteen Yukon First Nations may negotiate a First Nation Final Agreement (FNFA) that includes a range of common shared provisions as well as provisions unique to each First Nation (Alcantara 2013; Rice 2014a). FNFAs set out the tenure and management of settlement land as well as the rules regarding use of non-settlement land. On Category A Settlement Land (approximately 25,900 km²), First Nations have ownership of the surface and subsurface, while on Category B Settlement Land (approximately 15,540 km²) they have ownership and control only over the surface (CYFN and YTG 1997, 3). A Self-Government Agreement (SGA) accompanies each FNFA. The SGA outlines the powers, authorities, and responsibilities of the individual First Nation government. Under the SGA, a First Nation has the power to make and enact laws with respect to their lands and citizens (Coates and Morrison 2008). The various Indigenous and non-Indigenous governments work together through a territorial body called the Yukon Forum to avoid duplication of services and programs and to ensure that the needs of all citizens are being met. In matters of federal policy, an intergovernmental forum brings together federal ministers along with the Yukon premier and First Nation government leaders (Rice 2014a). The completion of the FNFAs and SGAs has clearly changed Indigenous-state relations in the territory.

In Bolivia, the practice of Indigenous autonomy and self-government best resembles the third-order-of-government model. The administration of Evo Morales (2006–19) committed itself to deepening the decentralization process that began in the mid-1990s as part of a package of neoliberal multicultural policies. The 1994 Law of Popular Participation created over three hundred municipal governments with widespread administrative powers,

Table 1.1 Models of Indigenous autonomy and self-government

Model	Example	Power Relations
Nation-to-nation	Yukon	Power alongside the state
Third order	Bolivia	Power within the state
Public government	Nunavut	Less power within the state
Mini-municipality	Ecuador	Power under the authority and control of the state

Source: Abele and Prince (2006, 585).

direct citizen oversight, and dedicated resources as a means to bring government closer to increasingly mobilized rural and Indigenous communities (Arce and Rice 2009; Postero 2007). The reforms opened the door to the electoral participation of a new generation of Indigenous leaders, including Morales. As the governing party, the Movement toward Socialism under Morales instituted additional reforms that granted a substantial degree of autonomy to departmental, regional, municipal, and Indigenous governments (Centellas 2010; Faguet 2014). The 2010 Framework Law of Autonomy and Decentralization regulates the new territorial organization of the state as defined in the 2009 constitution. In addition to the recognition of the three hierarchical levels of government in Bolivia (i.e., departmental, regional, and municipal), the constitution also identified Indigenous autonomies as a separate and distinct order of government, one that is not directly subordinate to the other levels (CIPCA 2009). Under current provisions, existing Indigenous territories as well as municipalities and regions with a substantial Indigenous presence may convert themselves into self-governing entities based on cultural norms, customs, institutions, and authorities in keeping with the rights and guarantees in the new constitution (Faguet 2014, 6).

The case of Nunavut exemplifies Abele and Prince's (2006) model of public government as Indigenous self-government. The Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NLCA) provided Inuit with title to more than 350,000 km² of land (equivalent to 18 per cent of Nunavut), subsurface mineral rights to approximately 36,000 km² of that land, and over CAD\$1 billion in federal compensation money (DIAND 1997; Henderson 2009). Inuit beneficiaries of the claim are also entitled to a share of the royalties from oil and gas extraction on public lands, additional hunting and fishing rights, and the guaranteed right to participate in decisions over land and resource management. In

exchange, Inuit had to surrender all existing and possibly existing surface and subsurface land rights in the area covered by the claim. The NLCA also committed the federal government to introduce a measure to create a new territory out of the existing Northwest Territories (Timpson 2009b; White 2006). The creation of the new territory brought with it the task of establishing a new territorial government. Given the disproportionate size and relative homogeneity of their population, as well as the greater likelihood of federal government support, Inuit decided on a system of public government (one that serves Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples) instead of a more direct form of Inuit self-government (Rice 2016).

Finally, the practice of Indigenous autonomy and self-government in Ecuador most closely approximates the mini-municipality model. Although the 2008 constitution formally recognized the plurinational nature of the Ecuadorian state, its model of plurinational constitutionalism is quite limited in comparison to Bolivia's. For instance, Spanish remains Ecuador's official language (article 2), with Indigenous languages recognized only in the realm of intercultural relations (Schilling-Vacaflor and Kuppe 2012, 360). In addition, while both countries recognize Indigenous or customary law, the Bolivian constitution places ordinary and customary legal systems on an equal footing (article 179), whereas the Ecuadorian constitution does not (Wolff 2012, 192). Ecuador's new constitution recognizes Indigenous territories as jurisdictions that may take on the same responsibilities as those of local governments (Ortiz-T. 2021). It falls silent on the matter of guaranteed proportional representation for Indigenous peoples in the legislature and on the explicit recognition of the right to self-determination and self-government (Radcliffe 2012, 243). It also fails to open up participatory spaces for Indigenous actors within the structures of the state. Perhaps most telling, in Ecuador, as in Bolivia, the state retains control over the exploitation of non-renewable resources in Indigenous territories.

Democratic Decolonization

In this study, the term “democratic decolonization” refers to the re-valorization, recognition, and re-establishment of Indigenous cultures, traditions, and values within the institutions, rules, and arrangements that govern society (Vice Ministerio de Descolonización 2013). According to Bolivia's vice minister of decolonization, Félix Cárdenas, the Bolivian state has not only historically excluded Indigenous peoples—it was in fact founded in

opposition to them.² The same can, and should, be said of all settler states. The project of democratic decolonization entails reimagining the state and democracy. This means not only infusing the state with Indigenous principles and practices, but attempting to create new political subjects and forms of citizenship (Canessa 2012; García Linera 2014; Rice 2016). According to Ecuadorian Indigenous leader Luis Macas (2009, 97), “We cannot have a political project just for Indigenous peoples. To change the country we need to have a relationship with the broader society and a mechanism of exchange.” In a similar vein, Canadian Indigenous scholar Glen Coulthard (2014, 179) suggests that “settler-colonialism has rendered us a radical minority in our own homelands and this necessitates that we continue to engage with the state’s legal and political system.” Finding an effective mechanism of Indigenous engagement with the state is crucial to decolonizing democracy. Borrowing from Roberts’s (1998) conception of deepening democracy as an inherently continuous rather than discrete variable, decolonizing democracy revolves around the central analytical dimension of Indigenous autonomy that may contract or expand over time depending on the extent of Indigenous peoples’ control over their own affairs.

Decolonization places new demands on democracy. Liberal or representative democracy—with its reliance on elections and parties as the only available channels of communication between representatives and citizens—does not require citizen deliberation on policy matters or collective action. According to Cameron (2014, 5), “Without a voice in deliberations over the decisions that may affect them directly, many citizens become disengaged. This malaise may be especially acute in [I]ndigenous communities with strong traditions of collective decision making.” Institutional innovation is crucial to making democracy work for all sectors of society. Democratic innovations are institutional arrangements that open up the policy-making process to citizen participation, deliberation, and decision making (Smith 2009; Talpin 2015). Comprehensive land claims with self-government agreements in the North and the introduction of elements of communitarian democracy and Indigenous governance principles in the constitutions of the South are key democratic innovations that have provided important measures of self-determination for Indigenous peoples. Self-determination challenges an institutional context that shapes and constrains Indigenous participation (Eversole 2010). As Montúfar (2006) points out, agents of representative democracy are reluctant to innovate given their commitment to the principle of political

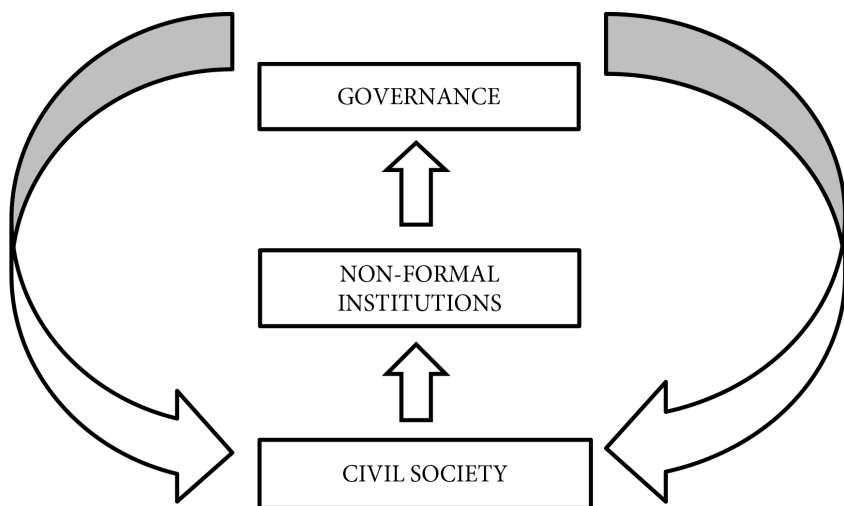


Figure 1.1 Process of democratic decolonization

responsibility and the performance-based evaluation criteria that guide their actions. Unlike political parties, civil society organizations have greater liberty to propose and act on new initiatives as their legitimacy is derived from internal consensus rather than external approval. Decolonizing democracy thus requires that civil society actors drive change and that institutions are grounded in, or at least made compatible with, the traditions and values of the peoples they serve (Eversole 2010).

Figure 1.1 illustrates, in ideal terms, the process for decolonizing democracy. Based on the findings from the comparative case studies presented in this book, the critical components of a decolonized democratic system include the following: (1) an actively engaged civil society that pressures for institutional change; (2) non-formal institutions as the site of political innovation; and (3) the dispersal of governing authority beyond the traditional centres of power. Decolonizing democracy means that representation and participation may occur beyond, and at times outside, the traditional channels of representation. Nevertheless, while the shift to a decolonized democratic system may change the character of representative democracy, it need not be seen as undermining it (Cameron, Hershberg, and Sharpe 2012; Exeni

Rodríguez 2012). New mechanisms for Indigenous inclusion and representation have the potential to strengthen representative democracy by enhancing or stretching liberal democratic conceptions and expectations (Anria 2016; Della Porta 2013).

Governance and the State

Democratic decolonization is closely intertwined with the concept of governance. Governance can be understood as “the structures and processes that enable governmental and nongovernmental actors to coordinate their interdependent needs and interests through the making and implementation of policies in the absence of a unifying political authority” (Krahmann 2003, 331). In other words, whereas government centralizes power in the state, governance disperses political authority among governmental and non-governmental actors, as well as Indigenous communities, in potentially democratizing ways (Swyngedouw 2005). It is the process through which governments, civil society organizations, and private-sector associations interact and make decisions on matters of public concern (Graham, Amos, and Plumptre 2003; Levi-Faur 2012). To promote the growth of society-centred governance, governments must be willing to work in partnership with civil society at each stage of the policy design and implementation process. The practise of public dialogue and deliberation is both a means and an opportunity to bridge the gap that exists between formal democratic institutions and excluded Indigenous communities and their public authorities (Retolaza Eguren 2008).

Decolonizing democracy requires the restoration of Indigenous forms of governance, ethics, and philosophies that arise from relationships on and with the land, including the natural world (Alfred 2009; Singh 2019). As Acosta (2009) has pointed out, democratic decolonization is not only an exercise in democratic inclusion; it is above all a proposal for a diverse way of life that is in greater harmony with nature. In this way, the debate over how to decolonize democracy must include discussions about land and natural resource governance. If settler colonialism is fundamentally about dispossessing Indigenous peoples from the land, then the project of decolonization must include actions and practices that reconnect Indigenous peoples to the land (Wildcat et al. 2014). One means of re-establishing Indigenous control over territory and governance is state recognition of and respect for the principle of free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC). The right to FPIC—or “prior consultation,” as it is known in Latin America—is established in international

conventions, notably the International Labour Organization's Convention 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples (1989) and in non-binding or soft law, such as the 2007 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. FPIC is a global standard against which governments can be measured in their interactions with Indigenous peoples concerning planned measures affecting their communities, such as mineral, oil, and gas exploitation (Resina de la Fuente 2012; Szablowski 2010). A prior consent regime, as opposed to a consultation regime, involves the sharing or transfer of authority between extractive industry project proponents and Indigenous communities in nation-to-nation-type negotiations (Rice 2019). The power to support or reject a project serves to enhance a community's negotiating power, strengthen its internal governance processes, and ensures a more equitable outcome.

New institutional arrangements to promote the participation of Indigenous peoples in the political decision-making process in northern Canada and the central Andes, such as natural resource co-management boards and Indigenous-centred public policies, are challenging conventional state-centric forms of policy-making and generating new forms of society-centred governance (Clarke 2017; Smith 2009). The Governments of Bolivia, Nunavut, Yukon, and to a lesser extent Ecuador, aim to decolonize democracy by incorporating Indigenous voices and values into their respective political systems. In so doing, they offer important instructional lessons in how to institutionalize Indigenous rights, world views, and governing principles within liberal democratic orders. The case studies demonstrate that a significant political institutional space or opening is needed for bold experiments in Indigenous governance to occur. For instance, in the cases of Bolivia and Nunavut, Indigenous peoples were presented with the opportunity to build a new government, practically from the ground up. This particular confluence of factors has allowed democratic and Indigenous governance innovations to flourish.

Formal and Non-formal Institutions

In Canada and Latin America, formal or state institutions of representative democracy (e.g., political parties, elections, legislatures, courts) coexist and compete with vibrant yet marginalized traditional and adapted Indigenous governance structures and institutions (e.g., customary law and communal justice; leaders and authorities; land-use and -tenure practices). According to Retolaza Eguren (2008, 313), "at one extreme, we have Western-minded

formal institutions with strong public funding as well as funding from international donors and lenders; at the other extreme, self-sustained or underfunded non-formal institutions which sternly condition [I]ndigenous and peasant social and political life and hence its interaction with the wider context.” In much of Latin America, the uneven reach of the state and formal democracy has excluded Indigenous and rural people while providing them with a de facto form of autonomy (Lucero 2012). A similar dynamic is witnessed in northern Canada, where Indigenous groups are remote from the seat of power and have experienced a much less intensive and protracted process of citizenship than their southern counterparts (Henderson 2008; Milen 1991). The governance gap that exists between these historically excluded Indigenous communities and formal public authorities and institutions has undermined the legitimacy and performance of democratic institutions.

Institutions comprise the underlying “rules of the game” that organize social, political, and economic relations within a polity (North 1990). Indigenous governance institutions are distinct from formal and informal institutions. *Formal institutions* are the written rules and regulations, such as constitutions, laws, and policies, that are enforced by officially recognized authorities. Much of the literature on democracy and development focuses on how formal institutions shape political actions and outcomes (e.g., Mainwaring and Scully 1995; March and Olsen 1989; Rothstein 1996). This body of literature fails to note the important influence that informal and non-formal institutions have on actor expectations and behaviours in practice. *Informal institutions* are socially shared rules and regulations, usually unwritten, that are created, communicated, and enforced outside officially sanctioned channels (Levitsky 2012; O’Donnell 1996). *Non-formal* or *non-state institutions* are neither informally constituted nor formally recognized by the state. They include customary laws and practices and traditional authority and governance structures (Eversole 2010; Retolaza Eguren 2008). Whereas the emerging literature on informal institutions is divided over whether or not informal practices, such as clientelism and patrimonialism, compete with or complement the performance of formal institutions, the role of non-formal institutions in making formal democratic institutions work has yet to be addressed (Levitsky 2012).

The cultural foundations of institutions of Indigenous governance, however, are not without controversy. Recent scholarship on multiculturalism and Indigenous rights has focused on the perceived tension between

collective and individual rights. On the one hand, the recognition of the collective Indigenous right to autonomy is suggested to serve as an important corrective to the assimilationist and integrationist policies and practices of the past. On the other hand, it is argued that local autonomous spaces may come at the expense of community members' constitutionally protected individual rights, especially women's rights (Danielson and Eisenstadt 2009). According to Lucero (2013, 33), "while one should avoid any romantic notions about Indigenous spaces, it is also important to avoid the opposite mistake of seeing them as the static containers of 'tradition' and take a closer look to see how Indigenous men and women continue to transform what it means to be 'Indigenous,' 'men,' and 'women.'" Broadly speaking, Indigenous people cannot enjoy their individual rights without first securing their collective rights (Regino Montes and Torres Cisneros 2009). Coates and Morrison (2008) have suggested that even though self-government rooted in traditional philosophies and practices may not be democratic in the liberal sense, it seems to serve the needs of the communities by helping to educate Indigenous youth in the traditional ways, broadening community debates, and providing for greater potential inclusion in governance processes. Official acknowledgement of the important role played by non-state institutions within Indigenous communities is essential to promoting Indigenous engagement with the broader formal political environment.

Citizenship and Agency

Democratic and Indigenous governance innovation demands an active citizenry. Political will and inclusive democratic institutions, while necessary, are in themselves insufficient to decolonize democracy. Citizens must take on the role of protagonists by demanding and defending their rights, seeking greater social control of their governments, working with the institutions of democracy, and by leading political innovation (Beatriz Ruiz 2007; Montúfar 2007). In the words of Guillermo O'Donnell (2010, 197), "this construction entails, and legally demands, the effectuation of a system of respectful mutual recognition as such citizens/agents in our legitimate diversity." Agency and citizenship are at the core of democracy. Given that citizens bring with them dense networks of social relations, collective affiliations, cultures, and identities, there cannot be a single, superior model of democracy; indeed, there are many variations and pathways to further democratization (O'Donnell 2010). Democratic innovations, such as self-government, popular assemblies,

or participatory budget councils, open an important space so that citizen initiatives can influence formal institutions and processes, which in turn allows for the development of a more active citizenry (Lupien 2016; Oxhorn 2016). Mechanisms of Indigenous collaboration with formal authorities on key policy matters do not imply the erosion of representation or the substitution of the roles and responsibilities of political parties, but rather the development of a synergistic relationship between Indigenous communities and the state.

Struggles over citizenship have profound consequences for state-society relations. Oxhorn (2011) has identified three broad models of citizenship: citizenship as co-optation; citizenship as consumption; and citizenship as agency. *Citizenship as co-optation* refers to the historical tendency of Latin American elites to grant citizenship rights selectively so as to control and contain popular-sector demands for socio-economic equality and political inclusion. For Indigenous people, this meant national incorporation into the political system as peasants in the 1960s and '70s as a means to access land, credit, and services from the state under a corporatist citizenship regime (Yashar 2005). The shift to neoliberal economic policies in the 1980s and '90s resulted in the weakening of state corporatist institutions and the move to more atomized or individuated state-society relations as part of a neoliberal citizenship regime. *Citizenship as consumption* understands citizens as consumers who spend their votes and resources to access minimal rights of democratic citizenship in a market-oriented environment (Oxhorn 2011, 32). Both citizenship as co-optation and citizenship as consumption heavily circumscribe the role of civil society in democratic governance. In contrast, *citizenship as agency* involves the active participation of civil society actors in public policy deliberation, design, and implementation. Active citizenship entails a process of democratic learning, for civil society actors as well as for political authorities, that has the potential to generate new understandings of social reality and ways of doing democracy (Montúfar 2007). According to Oxhorn (2011, 30), "citizenship as agency ideally reflects the active role that multiple actors, particularly those representing disadvantaged groups, must play in the social construction of citizenship so that democratic governance can realize its full potential." Only citizenship as agency has the capacity bring about democratic decolonization.

Collective action has been the principal historical motor for the expansion and universalization of civil, political, and economic rights. In Latin

America, Indigenous movements have organized national strikes and protests, blocked neoliberal reforms, and in some instances formed political parties and even captured presidencies (Albó 2002; Bengoa 2000; Lucero 2008; Van Cott 2005; Yashar 2005). In Canada, Indigenous peoples have participated in constitutional reforms, negotiated land claims, won policy concessions, and secured an important measure of self-determination (Abele and Prince 2003; Cairns 2000; Cameron and White 1995; Henderson 2007; Ladner and Orsini 2003). As the cases under consideration in this study indicate, Indigenous autonomy and institutional participation do not have to be mutually exclusive. Civil society can play a critical role in facilitating innovations in democratic governance by working with the state on policy matters, setting new public agendas, and advocating for institutional change in the corridors of power.

Conclusion

This chapter aimed to outline the book's main theoretical and conceptual stance on how to decolonize democracy. It also provided a glimpse into the different models and approaches to Indigenous autonomy and self-government in Canada and Latin America that will be examined in the chapters that follow. Strong and cohesive Indigenous movements pressing for institutional change are suggested to be the motor of political innovation in Bolivia, Ecuador, Nunavut, and Yukon. Mutual respect and recognition between the state and Indigenous actors appear to be critical ingredients for strengthening Indigenous autonomy and self-government. The chapter proposed that Indigenous governance innovation plays an important role in improving the quality of formal institutions, which in turn can aid democratic governability and advance Indigenous rights agendas. Decolonizing democracy requires new institutions that provide the space for an active partnership between Indigenous actors and the state in the pursuit of common goals (Oxhorn 2011). In Bolivia, Ecuador, Nunavut, and Yukon, an unparalleled space and political push for democratic innovation has resulted in efforts to incorporate Indigenous or non-formal institutions into formal democratic arrangements. This has broadened the inclusive qualities of their respective democracies. The shallow reach of representative democracy in Indigenous communities in Canada and Latin America has created a fluid democratic landscape that is ripe for experimentation (Roberts 2016).

The case study chapters that follow reveal several challenges to the implementation of Indigenous autonomy and self-government in practice. First,

while the cases highlight the gains that Indigenous peoples have derived from working within the system to push for positive change, as opposed to relying solely on extra-systemic tactics, they also demonstrate the need for political will by governing elites to address Indigenous rights demands—something that is in short supply throughout much of the Americas. Second, the case study chapters reveal the importance of establishing a secure land base, ideally with subsurface mineral rights, for self-determination and autonomy to be fully realized in practice. Finally, the cases demonstrate that there are serious tensions between Indigenous territorial autonomy and the resource-dependent, extractivist models of development pursued by the Governments of Canada, Bolivia, and Ecuador. Reconciling natural resource development with Indigenous sovereignty is a critical challenge for the Americas. Repairing and rebuilding Indigenous-state relations on a more just and equal footing requires recognition of and respect for the Indigenous right to autonomy and self-government. Indigenous governance arrangements of the variety explored here hold great potential to foster inclusive democratic processes in Canada, Latin America, and beyond. As the following chapters will demonstrate, there is much to celebrate in the four cases, just as there is much work left to do to make these visions of a more just society a reality.

