

Book Reviews

Colloredo-Mansfeld, Rudi (2009) *Fighting Like a Community: Andean Civil Society in an Era of Indian Uprisings*, University of Chicago Press (Chicago, IL), xviii + 233 pp. \$64.00 hbk, \$23.00 pbk.

Ever since a massive uprising in 1990 placed indigenous peoples front and centre on Ecuador's national stage, academics have commonly presented indigenous movements in that country as a model for how to build a powerful social movement. Most of those studies come from a national-level perspective rather than examining what was happening at the grassroots. While not consciously framed as a resistance study, Colloredo-Mansfeld provides valuable insights into what these protests looked like on a local level.

Colloredo-Mansfeld focuses on two case studies of the artisan communities of Otavalo and Tigua. Otavalo, located in the northern province of Imbabura, has long been well known for its weaving, particularly of sweaters. Tigua is much more isolated in the central province of Cotopaxi and only recently has begun a tradition of painting idyllic rural scenes, first on drums and then on smaller canvases. The title *Fighting Like a Community* plays on a double meaning that refers to internal conflicts over access to economic resources and political power, and to a unified struggle against shared external enemies. Colloredo-Mansfeld asks what it means to fight, both with outsiders and with each other. He concludes that sometimes being part of a community leads to conflict, and sometimes to celebrations, but in either case communities remain central to indigenous self-determination.

The book is structured in three parts that unravel community dynamics through the lens of individual careers, community dynamics, and finally engagements with state structures. The first part uses the life stories of three individuals to lay out a broad sweep of the different roles that people play in community dynamics. Julio Toaquiza is the artist who is generally credited with launching the tradition of modern Tigua painting. The second example is of a capitalist in Otavalo who grows wealthy off of the labour of others. He provides an example of how previously racial (indigenous vs. white) divisions became increasingly class based. The third example is of an activist who attempts to organise Tigua painters who have moved to the capital city of Quito. Colloredo-Mansfeld masterfully explores the parallels and contradictions between these three models of acting as an artist, capitalist or activist.

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The second section of the book explores community dynamics through the lens of chapters on projects, indigenous justice and class conflicts. Colloredo-Mansfeld raises the question of whose class interests a new emergent elite serves. The third section examines indigenous community engagements with state structures through the lens of marketing Tigua art, an arrest in a drunk driving case and a 2006 indigenous uprising against neoliberal economic policies. The first chapter delves deeply into different visions of how to organise artisan associations, and contrasts the more communal model of peasant cooperatives with the largely kin-based entrepreneurial system that emerged in Tigua. The final chapter examines competing lines of control for a blockade of the Pan-American highway north of Otavalo in a March 2006 strike. From the perspective of local community members, Colloredo-Mansfeld analyses competing national and community interests in opposing neoliberal economic policies, and divergent views within communities.

The entire book is broadly built around the Inka injunction 'ama killa, ama llulla, ama shua' (do not be lazy, do not lie, do not steal), which has become the slogan of Ecuador's indigenous movements. With the Inka emphasis on efficiency and production, social deviants would be detrimental to the interests of the empire. These values, of course, are not innately indigenous, and some scholars have wondered whether they were truly of Inka origins or whether the Spanish imposed them in order to force their new indigenous subjects to be more productive. The underlying issue, of course, is whose interests do these values serve. Are they more beneficial for the dominant class than the community at large? These class divisions are a key theme in this story.

This study also raises broad questions of ethical scholarship. Colloredo-Mansfeld positions his examination of internal community conflicts in the context of the well-known controversies that David Stoll launched in criticising Guatemala's peace prize winner Rigoberta Menchú's autobiography. How do scholars engage in constructive work on internal conflicts? Does highlighting divisions do irrefutable harm to a social struggle, one with which many scholars hold an allegiance? Or does ignoring or hiding important and pressing issues emerge out of paternalistic impulses that ultimately do a social struggle more harm than good? These are not simple or easy issues to sort out. Colloredo-Mansfeld argues that plurality rather than unity has been key to the political successes of indigenous movements in Ecuador. His thoughtful study provides key insights into how to explore community fights from a local perspective.

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