

DOUBLE BIND: ALEJANDRO LIPSCHÜTZ AND THE FAILURE OF TRANSNATIONAL INDIGENISMO IN CHILE

ABSTRACT: This article examines the life and career of Alejandro Lipschütz, Chile's most accomplished indigenista, to investigate his influence on the scientific and political discourse about the role of indigenous peoples in modern American states, known as indigenismo. Trained as an experimental biologist, Lipschütz criticized prevailing views of race in the Americas, arguing for a social interpretation and analysis of racial categories that defined indigeneity. Lipschütz then promoted the creation of an indigenous institute within the Chilean state and advocated on behalf of the Mapuche people. Because indigenous leaders themselves developed a strong political movement in the mid twentieth century, transnational indigenismo failed to produce meaningful or lasting progress in Chile. That failure convinced Lipschütz that indigenous peoples should preserve and strengthen traditional communities and seek political autonomy. This analysis joins a growing body of scholarship that challenges conventional views of indigenismo, which characterize it as a repressive ideology used by paternalistic states. This study of Alejandro Lipschütz prefigures the shift toward acknowledging the greater indigenous agency that accompanied identity-based social movements emerging in the 1980s.

KEYWORDS: indigenismo, indigenous politics, Mapuche, Chile, indigeneity

Across the Americas in the mid twentieth century, politicians and social scientists sought to incorporate native peoples into national identities, economies, and political systems. Those efforts transcended national boundaries and established a Pan-American discourse and professional network called *indigenismo*. Most *indigenistas* were highly trained white intellectuals, employed by universities or government agencies, and based in urban spaces. Although the results of indigenista projects varied widely in different national contexts, in recent decades historians have roundly criticized indigenismo for its failure to deliver meaningful and lasting change to indigenous peoples living within modern national states.

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In Chile, a country with a relatively small indigenous population living on the margins of the national economy and geography, indigenista projects received scant funding and little political support. But a small group of committed Chilean indigenistas enthusiastically engaged the transnational discourse through published works and personal correspondence. By examining the career of Alejandro Lipschütz, the most prolific member of that cohort, this study traces several unique features of Chilean indigenismo to measure the manner and extent of its effectiveness. Fundamentally, Lipschütz and other indigenistas struggled to produce substantive change in Chile for three interrelated reasons. First, state actors refused to fund or officially recognize a formal indigenista institute that would lead policy initiatives within Chile or exchange ideas with similar agencies in other countries. Second, Mapuche leaders formed their own political organizations in central Chile that more effectively engaged the state through electoral politics. Third, for much of the period, Alejandro Lipschütz himself found it difficult to establish his legitimacy as an indigenista with conservative state actors: he was a trained biologist for whom anthropology was only an avocation, he was an avowed communist, and he was an ally to Mapuche leaders whose base of power originated in the rural south and developed through alliances with conservative politicians and parties. In the final analysis, Lipschütz emerged as the preeminent indigenista in Chile, and while his theoretical contributions to the national and transnational discourse were substantial, they produced few tangible effects or improvements in the lived reality of indigenous Chileans.

In what follows, I first locate Alejandro Lipschütz and the Mapuche movement within broad global trends, Chilean politics, and indigenismo in the Americas. I then explore Lipschütz's contributions to the Pan-American indigenista discourse and his engagement with Mapuche political groups. In the 1940s, Lipschütz established himself as an anthropologist and built a network of like-minded researchers across the hemisphere. He then tried to build greater connections between the Instituto Indigenista Interamericano (III) and the Chilean state but found little interest on the part of state actors or the main Mapuche leaders of the period. By the late 1950s, however, Lipschütz began to engage more directly with Mapuche activists, which informed his scholarship and introduced the Mapuche political experience to thinkers in other national contexts.

This work shows that indigenistas had to filter their ideas through national political circumstances in Chile. Indigenous organizations and state actors selectively adopted indigenista ideas and sometimes excluded or transformed those ideas significantly. At the same time, the indigenous experience of Mapuche collaborators influenced Lipschütz's thinking in limited but

meaningful ways, and he transmitted those ideas to the transnational indigenista discourse.

INDIGENOUS HISTORY AND POLITICS IN CHILE

Today, Mapuche comprise approximately 10 percent of the total population of Chile, and 80 percent of that country's indigenous population.¹ For almost 500 years, Mapuche have contributed significantly to Chilean history and the national imagination. During the colonial period, Mapuche warriors fiercely resisted Spanish conquest, led periodic raids and warfare against Spanish settlements, and established an effective northern border at the Bío Bío River. Through most of the nineteenth century, Mapuche controlled an autonomous territory south of the Bío Bío known as La Araucanía and grew wealthy from cattle-herding and trade between Chile and Argentina.

In the 1880s, the Chilean army conquered La Araucanía in what they euphemistically called the *Pacificación*. In the ensuing decades, the Chilean state relocated Mapuche communities to small and isolated reserves based on household kinship groups through a process of *Radicación* (resettlement) and subsequently redistributed much of the remaining land to Chilean and European settlers. Historian Stephen E. Lewis has examined the complex national mythology surrounding the Mapuche to show how “Chile’s nineteenth-century political and economic elite juggled this body of mythology to its advantage.” In sum, the myth of the “indomitable Araucanian” represents the Mapuche as an irrepressible fighting force that helped establish Chile’s independence from Spain, but one that ultimately had to be conquered to cement control of state territory and modernize the nation.²

Mapuche political organizations first emerged in the 1910s as the 40-year period of *Radicación* reached a crisis point for rural Indians trying to subsist on ever-diminishing plots of land. Young Mapuche leaders who had been educated in Chilean schools established mutual aid societies with the support and guidance of the missionaries and teachers who ran those schools in Araucanía.³ This era was also a period of political upheaval across Chile, as workers organized to bring about political change in urban areas and the nation’s mining centers.⁴ Amid shifting political winds, Mapuche organizations

1. *Síntesis de Resultados: Censo 2017* (Santiago: Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas de Chile, June 2018), 5, 16.

2. Stephen E. Lewis, “Myth and the History of Chile’s Araucanians,” *Radical History Review* 58 (1994): 112.

3. Henry John Stegeman, “To Plow a Lonely Furrow: Indigenismo and Mapuche Politics in Chile, 1920–1960” (PhD diss.: Syracuse University, 2018), 34–48.

4. Frederick Nunn, *Chilean Politics, 1920–1931: The Honorable Mission of the Armed Forces*, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1970).

adopted a range of stances and alliances in the 1920s and 1930s. Illustrating two extremes, the Federación Araucana led by Manuel Aburto Panguilef embraced leftist politics and traditional Mapuche cultural practices, while the Unión Araucana aligned with the Conservative Party and functioned as an organ of the Catholic Church under the leadership of Bishop Guido Beck de Ramberga. The fragmentation and isolation of Mapuche communities explains this variation in part, but it also maps to broader social, economic, and political upheavals taking place across Chile during this period.

In 1938, the leader of La Sociedad Caupolicán Defensora de la Araucanía, Venancio Coñuepán, joined the three groups together under the umbrella of the Corporación Araucana, charting a more centrist path and embracing a vision of economic development that broadly appealed to both the Mapuche rank-and-file and mainstream Chilean politicians.⁵ Through the 1940s and 1950s, the Corporación remained the most powerful force in Mapuche politics and integrated into the Chilean political system. Coñuepán was elected to the lower house of the Chilean legislature and supported Carlos Ibáñez del Campo in the 1952 campaign for the presidency. Ibáñez rewarded Coñuepán with a position in his cabinet and then appointed him to lead the newly created Departamento de Asuntos Indígenas (DASIN).⁶ Coñuepán's leadership of DASIN from 1953 to 1958 represents a high-water mark for the Mapuche movement and its participation in twentieth-century Chilean politics, and as we will soon see, also illustrates a complex and dynamic relationship between indigenous leaders and the corpus of ideas, thinkers, and networks that came to be known as indigenismo.

INDIGENISMO IN THE AMERICAS AND ITS HISTORIOGRAPHY

Indigenistas sought to incorporate *indígenas* into national states as citizens, retaining only the “least offensive” features of native cultures as lifeways and living conditions were modernized.⁷ Mexican education reformer Moisés Sáenz probably coined the term “indigenista” in 1933, to identify a category of

5. A wide body of scholarship on Mapuche leaders and political organizations now exists both within the Chilean literature and in English. See especially Xavier Albó, “Andean People in the Twentieth Century,” in *Cambridge History of the Native Peoples of the Americas*, Frank Salomon and Stuart B. Schwartz, eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Rolf Foerster and Sonia Montecino, *Organizaciones, líderes y haciendas Mapuches, 1900–1970* (Santiago: Ediciones CEM, 1988); and Joanna Crow, “Negotiating Inclusion in the Nation: Mapuche Intellectuals and the Chilean State,” *Latin American and Caribbean Ethnic Studies* 5:2 (July 2010): 131–152.

6. José Ancan Jara, “Venancio Coñuepán: Nizol Longko, líder regional, hombre de estado: resplandor y eclipse de la Corporación Araucana en medio siglo de organización indígena en el sur de Chile, 1938–1968,” in *Intelectuales indígenas piensan América Latina*, Claudia Zapata Silva, ed. (Quito: Ediciones Abya-Yala, 2007), 202–229.

7. Bernardo Berdichewsky, *Alejandro Lipschütz: su visión indigenista y antropológica* (Santiago: Ediciones UCSH, 2004), 16.

policies that would improve the lives of Indians and the people who advocated for those policies.⁸ Certainly, non-indigenous allies had supported indigenous peoples and championed their perspectives across Latin America since Bartolomé de las Casas in the sixteenth century, and education was an important vehicle for such improvements, as we saw in southern Chile with the founding of Mapuche political organizations. But when Sáenz and like-minded reformers from across the Americas came together in 1940 at Pátzcuaro in Mexico for the First Interamerican Indigenista Conference (Primer Congreso Indigenista Interamericano), they institutionalized support for Indians in new modern, bureaucratic, and scientific ways that had far-reaching but varied impact in many national contexts.

During the presidency of Lázaro Cárdenas in 1930s Mexico, the populist revolutionary government sought to incorporate indígenas into the national political system.⁹ In Mexico, the official status of indigenismo secured broad funding and support from the government, which in turn created an indigenous school system, public health projects, and economic development schemes.¹⁰ In the United States, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt supported indigenista projects through the Indian Reorganization Act (also known as the “Indian New Deal”), which aligned with other policies geared toward social reform, economic stimulus, and modernization in the 1930s and early 1940s.

In Peru, the impact of indigenismo fluctuated as the nation’s political winds shifted. When Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre founded the American Popular Revolutionary Alliance (APRA) while exiled to Mexico City in 1924, Marxist revolutionary activity in Mexico and the Soviet Union influenced the fledgling party and its followers. Peruvian Marxist intellectual José Carlos Mariátegui, also an early *aprista* and political exile, identified “The Problem of the Indian” as the second of his *Seven Interpretive Essays on the Peruvian Reality* in 1928.¹¹ Peruvian sociologist Osmar Gonzales describes that country’s indigenista movement as composed of two distinct branches. After repressive political regimes effectively crushed the leftist politics of Mariátegui and Haya de la Torre in the 1930s, a reform-minded indigenismo replaced the more radical revolutionary indigenismo current in the 1940s.¹²

8. Laura Giraudo and Juan Martín-Sánchez. “Soy indígena e indigenista”: *repensando el indigenismo desde la participación de algunos, no tan pocos, indígenas*,” in *Protagonismo amerindio de ontem e hoje*, Maria Cristina dos Santos and Guilherme Galhegos Filipe, eds. (Jundiaí, Brazil: Paco Editorial, 2016), 257–294.

9. Laura Giraudo and Stephen E. Lewis, “Pan-American Indigenismo (1940–1970): New Approaches to an Ongoing Debate,” *Latin American Perspectives* 39:5 (September 2012): 3–11.

10. Alexander Dawson, *Indian and Nation in Revolutionary Mexico* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2004).

11. José Carlos Mariátegui, *Seven Interpretive Essays on the Peruvian Reality*, Marjory Urquidí, trans. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1971).

12. Osmar Gonzales, “The Instituto Indigenista Peruano: A New Place in the State for the Indigenous Debate,” *Latin American Perspectives* 39:5 (September 2012): 33–44.

Although indigenista projects did produce some short-term improvements in the lives of Indians in certain contexts between the 1930s and the 1950s, indigenismo as a whole did not lead to lasting change on a large scale across Latin America. By the 1960s, a broader class-based discourse and rural Marxist uprisings that were sometimes carried out in indigenous territories subsumed the reform-minded, technocratic indigenista discourse. Therefore, in the 1970s many critics looked back on the previous efforts of indigenistas as broad failures. In the 1980s, indigenous activists began to form identity-based social movements in many countries, especially in response to political repression in the previous decade.¹³ Indigenous collective action expanded and accelerated in the lead-up to the 1992 quinquennial of Columbus's "discovery" of the Americas.

As neoliberal social and economic reforms became common across Latin America in the 1990s, few challenged the view of indigenismo as an isolated period of state-directed reforms carried out on passive indigenous subjects. More recently, scholars have begun to re-examine the role that indigenismo played in laying foundations for the rise of indigenous social and political activism. That historiographical turn provides critiques of previous interpretations that characterized the movement as scientific and apolitical, or as a form of internal colonialism that sought to assimilate and exploit Indians. In 2012, this emerging body of scholarship was recognized in a special edition of the journal *Latin American Perspectives*, entitled "Rethinking Indigenismo on the American Continent."¹⁴

In their introduction to that volume, lead authors Laura Giraudo and Stephen E. Lewis show that from the beginning many indigenista efforts were complicated by events on the world stage, including large-scale military conflicts, global trade and economic cycles, and foreign policies that interfered with national agendas.¹⁵ The case of Guatemala illustrates these complications: "An indigenista movement took root during the 'Guatemalan Spring' of 1944–1954, but it fell victim to the US-backed coup that ousted [President] Jacobo Árbenz and ushered in a series of repressive, sometimes genocidal dictatorships."¹⁶ While transnational trends can explain some of indigenismo's

13. Chile and Guatemala offer two examples of this phenomenon. In Guatemala, government forces targeted Indians for providing aid and shelter to Marxist rebels during a protracted civil war. In Chile, because of their previous support for socialist reforms during the Allende presidency and their participation in unlawful land occupations, Mapuche became targets for repression during the Pinochet dictatorship. Similar patterns can be found in Peru in the 1980s during the Sendero Luminoso uprisings, and in Colombia where the FARC sustained a long-running guerrilla revolt against government forces for more than two decades.

14. "Rethinking Indigenismo on the American Continent," *Latin American Perspectives* 39:5 (September 2012).

15. Giraudo and Lewis, "Pan-American *Indigenismo*," 3.

16. Giraudo and Lewis, "Pan-American *Indigenismo*," 5. See also Abigail E. Adams, "Antonio Goubaud Carrera: Between the Contradictions of the Generación de 1920 and US Anthropology," in *After the Coup: An Ethnographic*

challenges, they do not account for the tremendous variation in specific national contexts. Giraudo finds that the effectiveness of the movement's broader agenda was limited by the willingness of member states to contribute meaningfully to its projects. Varying levels and forms of support for national indigenista efforts in the United States, Guatemala, and Peru illustrate that indigenismo was neither fully "scientific" nor "colonialist" in those cases.¹⁷

Following the failure of relatively conservative forms of institutional indigenismo across the Americas in the 1940s and 1950s, indigenous activists and Marxist revolutionaries sought new ways to advance their projects. The radical politics of the 1960s sowed the seeds of the 1970s critique of indigenismo. In the case of Peru, later historiographical attempts to understand native participation in leftist political projects like the Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) movement illustrate this transition.¹⁸ The Chilean example shows that mainstream socialism, in which class transcended ethnic identity, coincided with a generational shift in the Mapuche movement in the lead-up to Salvador Allende's socialist experiment of 1970–73.¹⁹ After indigenismo failed to deliver meaningful change for Mapuche in the 1940s and 1950s, Mapuche leaders of the 1960s willingly embraced the radical left. Yet they continued to assert their ethnic identity and ancestral rights to land and government resources with the same strength as the previous generation of Mapuche movement had when they aligned with conservative political forces two decades earlier.

In Chile, the penetration into national politics that Venancio Coñuepán achieved with DASIN echoed a central component of indigenista agendas in many national contexts throughout the period. Indigenous leaders based in the rural south made Mapuche identity a central part of their rhetoric and policy proposals to achieve

Reframing of Guatemala 1954, Veronika Fuechtner, Douglas E. Haynes, and Ryan M. Jones, eds. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2011), 17–48.

17. Laura Giraudo, "Neither 'Scientific' nor 'Colonialist,'" *Latin American Perspectives* 39:5 (September 2012): 12–32.

18. Steve Stern, ed., *Shining and Other Paths: War and Society in Peru, 1980–1995* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1998). The essays in this volume provide a variety of explanations as to why the violent Sendero Luminoso movement took root in the highland region of Ayacucho, among a largely indigenous population. Particularly insightful to the present work is Marisol de la Cadena's essay "From Race to Class: Insurgent Intellectuals of *provincia* in Peru, 1910–1970," 22–59. See also Marisol de la Cadena, *Indigenous Mestizos: The Politics of Race and Class in Cuzco, Peru, 1919–1991* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000). Taken together, de la Cadena's work shows that Peruvian indigenismo was linked to very fluid notions of race and ethnicity that were bound up with class identities and a profound rural-urban divide. See also Jaymie Heilman, *Before the Shining Path: Politics in Rural Ayacucho, 1895–1980* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010).

19. Rafael Railaf et al., *A Desalambraz: historias de Mapuches y Chilenos en la lucha por la tierra* (Santiago: Editorial Ayun, 2006). Historian Florencia Mallon maintains that the view presented in *A Desalambraz*, from the perspective of the most stridently Marxist Mapuche activists of the period, is incomplete and that many Mapuche retained and valued their indigenous identity in the face of socialist efforts to have class supersede ethnicity in political struggle and discourse. Florencia Mallon, "Decolonizing the History of Allende's Chile: The Mapuche and the Agrarian Reform," Freedman Memorial Lecture, Friday November 11, 2011, SUNY Binghamton.

state support; the white, urban intellectuals who composed the indigenista class were unable to do so. However, ethnic identity does not clearly delineate a distinction between indigenistas and indígenas. Laura Giraudo and Juan Martín-Sánchez convincingly push back on the historiographical critique of indigenismo by showing that indigenous participants in indigenista projects frequently identified as indigenistas themselves.²⁰

In recounting the history and legacy of the Instituto Indigenista Chileno (IIC), Chilean historians Jorge Iván Vergara and Hans Gundermann have shown that the distinction between indígena and indigenista was imprecise in Chile. Indians, indigenistas, and state actors permitted (and perhaps encouraged) slippage between them. For example, Venancio Coñuepán joined the Pátzcuaro Conference as one of three formal members of the Chilean delegation, while Lipschütz attended as a private citizen. In 1945, the Corporación Araucana added “Movimiento Indigenista de Chile” to its name. And between its founding in 1949 and Chile’s formal ratification of the Pátzcuaro Convention in 1967, the IIC technically existed as a private organization with no formal ties or funding from the Chilean government.²¹ Meanwhile, DASIN functioned as a formal alternative to the IIC but without ties to the III, and Chile continued to include Mapuche representatives in the delegations to the 1940, 1949, and 1954 Indigenista Conferences. By maintaining a degree of separation between the state agency and the III, state actors and Mapuche leaders retained the ability to maneuver independently from that transnational organization and its accords and kept the proposals of scientists and other experts at a safe distance.

For his part, Alejandro Lipschütz participated consistently in III conferences, sent frequent news items and updates for distribution in the III newsletter and magazine, and worked tirelessly to win formal recognition for the IIC within Chile. In his published work, Lipschütz refuted the idea of race as a biological construct that determined human difference, supported the rights of Indians to maintain traditional communities by retaining ancestral lands, and advocated for political autonomy for the Mapuche. His views derived from his wide reading of indigenista scholarship in other American contexts, his personal observations of the Mapuche movement in Chile, and more fundamentally from a lifelong commitment to communism that stemmed from his early years in Latvia and experience of the Russian Revolution. To understand the developmental arc of Lipschütz’s career and thought, we must first step back to

20. Giraudo and Martín-Sánchez, “Soy indígena e indigenista,” 257–258.

21. Jorge Iván Vergara and Hans Gundermann, “Chile y El Instituto Indigenista Interamericano, 1940–1993: una visión de conjunto,” *Chungara, Revista de Antropología Chilena* 48:1 (2016): 1–18.

his origins to observe how his indigenista work grew naturally out of his first career as a research biologist.

BIOLOGIST, ANTHROPOLOGIST, AND INDIGENISTA

Alejandro Lipschütz began his career as a research biologist. His early work in the physical sciences led him to examine the role that the endocrine system played in the creation of sexual differences during the course of human development.²² His understanding of endocrinology taught him that what appeared to be fixed biological categories, observable in nature, were actually produced by chains of chemical reactions that varied over time.

Lipschütz applied similar insight to the role that race played in assigning social roles to indigenous peoples. His first intervention into the indigenista discourse occurred with his publication of *Indoamericanismo y raza india* in 1937, where he argued that although racial categories appeared to have fixed biological qualities, they were actually constructed historically and served specific social, economic, and political functions.²³ Lipschütz would go on to conduct and coordinate applied anthropological research, which led him to apply scientific principles to processes of cultural change and adaptation.²⁴ Through personal connections and political engagement, he also fought for the preservation of indigenous communities and the landholding patterns that held communities together.

Alejandro Lipschütz was born in Riga, the capital of what is now Latvia, in 1883, into a family of cultured, relatively secular, German-speaking Jews in the Livonian province of the Russian Empire. His father owned a successful publishing house and supported Alejandro's scientific education by sending him to study medicine at the University of Göttingen at the age of 20. But even in his teens Alejandro took an interest in social questions by observing the emerging workers' movement in his hometown.²⁵ After graduating with a medical degree, Lipschütz held professorships at three European universities, in Germany and then in Switzerland, finally returning to Livonia to teach at the University of Tartu in 1919. During that time, he studied and collaborated with important

22. Kurt MacMillan, "Forms So Attenuated That They Merge into Normality Itself": Alexander Lipschütz, Gregorio Marañón, and Theories of Intersexuality in Chile, circa 1930," in *A Global History of Sexual Science, 1880–1960*, Verónica Fuechtner, Douglas E. Haynes, and Ryan M. Jones, eds. (Oakland: University of California Press, 2018), 330–352.

23. Alejandro Lipschütz, *Indoamericanismo y raza india* (Santiago: Editorial Nascimento, 1937).

24. Alejandro Lipschütz and Grete Mostny, *Cuatro conferencias sobre los indios fueginos* (Santiago: Revista Geográfica de Chile, 1950).

25. Berdichevsky, *Alejandro Lipschütz*, 25–32.

experimental scientists throughout Europe and published prolifically, establishing himself in his thirties as a world-renowned endocrinologist.

In the wake of World War I and the Russian Revolution, life was difficult in the Baltic republics and shortages hampered Lipschütz's work. In 1926, he accepted a chaired faculty position in the School of Medicine at the University of Concepción. Attracted in part by the temperate climate of central Chile, he migrated with his wife, two daughters and his long-time secretary. Lipschütz was first introduced to Mapuche culture in villages near Concepción. His research formed a bridge between interests in laboratory and social science.²⁶ Lipschütz's work in endocrinology led him to investigate ways in which human sex glands produced sexual difference during the course of physical development.

In southern Chile in the 1930s, Lipschütz found himself amid broader efforts to reimagine Chile as a homogeneous mestizo nation. In that climate, researchers sought to understand apparent physical differences observable in indigenous populations. Endocrinology provided a useful framework for those inquiries, and Lipschütz consulted on several investigations.²⁷ Lipschütz used hard science to dispute widely held notions of indigenous racial inferiority, and his first indigenista book, although it was not published until 1937 after he had moved to Santiago, drew on research he conducted and supervised while in Concepción.²⁸

Lipschütz's work in anthropology and indigenismo did not devolve into biological reductionism, "as could have been expected in a biologist moving into the social sciences."²⁹ Furthermore, he viewed indigenismo as more than a form of benevolent social action, but rather as an outgrowth of bona fide social science (applied anthropology). But as a social scientist and a Marxist, Lipschütz also believed that the scientist's role included political intervention on behalf of analytical subjects.³⁰ Much of his thinking aligned closely with leading indigenistas in North America, especially John Collier and Manuel Gamio. However, the formal roles of Collier and Gamio as state employees constrained both men; others preferred instead to pursue policies from a

26. Berdichewsky, *Alejandro Lipschütz*, 32–35.

27. Kurt Thomas MacMillan, "Hormonal Bodies: Sex, Race and Constitutional Medicine in the Iberian-American World, 1900–1950" (PhD diss.: University of California, Irvine, 2013). MacMillan gives three examples: an article co-authored by Jaime Pi-Suñer Bayo and Guillermo Reyes on the distribution of body hair among Mapuche men and women (1933), a second article by Pi-Suñer Bayo on Mapuche metabolism, and a 1935 dissertation by Ernesto Oliver that Lipschütz supervised, on the development of body hair as a factor of age and race.

28. Lipschütz, *Indoamericanismo y raza india*.

29. Berdichewsky, *Alejandro Lipschütz*, 74.

30. Berdichewsky, *Alejandro Lipschütz*, 74–75.

detached apolitical and scientific orientation.³¹ Lipschütz felt it was the duty of social scientists to engage with politics in support of the people they studied. He criticized as “timid” social scientists who adopted a more neutral, apolitical stance.³²

Peruvian journalist and Marxist political theorist José Carlos Mariátegui also influenced Alejandro Lipschütz’s brand of indigenismo, and shared his socialist political inclinations.³³ Within the world of indigenista thought, Mariátegui and Lipschütz strongly supported indigenous self-determination, but even for them the concept was more theoretical than practical or political.³⁴ Mainstream leftists preferred to conceive of Indians in class-based terms, combining forces with workers or peasants for the overthrow of capitalist structures. In the 1920s and 1930s, Mapuche-led political organizations were caught up within these trends, along with the indigenistas. By the late 1950s, Lipschütz came to realize that indigenismo as a movement was failing to restore rights, ancestral territories, and cultural artifacts to indigenous peoples.³⁵ His student and biographer Bernardo Berdichewsky described Lipschütz’s divergence from mainstream indigenismo:

Indigenismo in America, during more than half a century of life, from the 1920s to the 1970s, was a progressive movement developed by socially advanced non-indigenous populations that tried to resolve the ‘indigenous question.’ Lipschütz understood the basic contradiction of the indigenista movement by the 1960s and 1970s. He was one of the first to make up his mind about it, as much on an ideological level as in his vision of indigenous autonomy; he expressed the real tendency and the historical and social practice of real indígenas.³⁶

Four distinct factors explain Alejandro Lipschütz’s contributions to indigenismo. First, his background as a medical doctor and research biologist made him an informed critic of prevailing views of race in his era. Second, following World War II, the orientation of the Chilean academy refocused on evidenced-based research, which brought his ideas on race and evolution into contact with questions pertaining to the origins and contemporary social conditions of indigenous populations. Third, Lipschütz’s own politics and experiences as an observer of the emergence and evolution of Russia’s communist transition

31. Giraud and Lewis, “Pan-American *Indigenismo*,” 3–11.

32. Richard P. Schaedel, introduction to Berdichewsky, *Alejandro Lipschütz*, 15–24.

33. Berdichewsky, *Alejandro Lipschütz*, 87.

34. Berdichewsky, *Alejandro Lipschütz*, 113.

35. Berdichewsky, *Alejandro Lipschütz*, 17.

36. Berdichewsky, *Alejandro Lipschütz*, 97. Berdichewsky notes that Lipschütz’s awareness grew at about the same time the American Indian Movement arose in search of similar autonomy.

made him sympathetic to the idea of popular organizing and social reform, and also made him a politically engaged scholar. Fourth, the emergence of indigenismo as a transnational ideology and movement provided a platform and community in which to apply those various elements of his background.³⁷

The arc of Lipschütz's career as an indigenista illustrates two profound aspects of his thought. On one hand, his application of scientific principles to indigenous history, society, and culture formed a reaction against positivism and the tendencies of natural scientists (and some social scientists) to reduce the study of human experience to a series of demonstrable and inviolable laws that govern people. On the other hand, Lipschütz used his scientific insight to engage state actors and indigenous political leaders in support of indigenous causes. Although he remained a committed member of the Communist Party, he opposed the elimination of ethnic distinctions in the broader class-based struggles that characterized most Marxist movements. Lipschütz was among the first indigenistas to recognize that the mechanisms of the state—even a socialist state—held few solutions for indigenous peoples. He advocated instead for indigenous leaders to take control of their destinies through the preservation of indigenous lands and communities, coupled with a struggle for political autonomy within national states.

GROWING AN INDIGENISTA NETWORK, 1937 TO 1947

In 1937, Lipschütz published his first major indigenista work, *Indoamericanismo y raza india*, in which he showed that social forces impact ethnic groups in similar ways. He compared indigenous hierarchical societies of the Americas (Inca, Aztec, and Maya) with those of Europe, and similarly equated premodern European tribes with indigenous societies like the Mapuche. In making those comparisons, Lipschütz discussed the tensions between tribal and national identities and showed that those double affiliations occurred in a variety of national contexts, including Russia and the United States. Chile was no exception, with the Mapuche caught in the bind of “double patriotism.” The actions of the Chilean state and Chilean society oppressed the Mapuche people by stealing their land and discriminating against them on almost every level of social interaction. Out of this recognition arose Lipschütz's commitment to social and political activism on behalf of indígenas in Chile.³⁸ In one way or another, Lipschütz dedicated his later work to combatting or correcting the wrongs perpetrated by anti-indigenous racism and to creating and supporting

37. Berdichevsky, *Alejandro Lipschütz*, 81–93.

38. Berdichevsky, *Alejandro Lipschütz*, 76–78; Lipschütz, *Indoamericanismo y raza india*, 1937.

conditions conducive to political self-determination for indigenous populations in the Americas.³⁹

At the same time that Alejandro Lipschütz was working to break into the field of indigenismo and applied anthropology by publishing books and articles on indigenous questions, he corresponded and collaborated with a host of international researchers. Lipschütz's commentary added a unique blend of characteristics to the indigenista discourse, which drew from his own life experiences and an eclectic set of influences. What started as a quest to illustrate the instability of race as a biological category eventually grew to a broad view that the future of indigenous peoples would always be dictated to them in postcolonial, imperialistic terms unless indigenous peoples organized themselves to fight for independence, or at least autonomy, within the context of national states contrived along a trajectory of European conquest and domination.

In 1944, Lipschütz followed the well-received *Indoamericanismo y raza india*, which was more like an essay on racial myths than a complete treatment of the racial questions pertaining to indigenous Americans, with a vastly expanded second edition, *El indoamericanismo y el problema racial en las Américas*.⁴⁰ At more than 500 pages, the second edition added a broader review of existing literature and tackled the question of African migration and racial mixture in the Americas. In preparing his text, Lipschütz collected 83 images, including charts, tables, microscopic slides, and many photographs of indigenous people and cultural artifacts. Some images he produced himself, but he gathered many others by writing to indigenistas in his expanding network. For that purpose, Lipschütz found the newly formed Instituto Indigenista Interamericano extremely useful.⁴¹

In July 1943, Lipschütz wrote to III director Manuel Gamio to request copies of photographs used in the institute's publications and permission to reproduce them in his book.⁴² Gamio replied by sending original photographs for

39. See also Alejandro Lipschütz, *El problema racial en la conquista de América y el mestizaje* (Santiago: Editorial Andrés Bello, 1967); and *Perfil de Indoamérica de nuestro tiempo, Antología 1937–1962* (Santiago: Editorial Andrés Bello, 1968).

40. Alejandro Lipschütz, *El Indoamericanismo y el problema racial en las Américas* (Santiago: Editorial Nascimento, 1944).

41. The III, or Instituto Indigenista Interamericano, was formed at the first Interamerican Indianist Conference in 1940. The conference itself grew out of proposals by the Organization of American States in the late 1930s. The III was charged with supporting research, collecting and disseminating findings and other information, and convening periodic conferences that brought together artists, theorists, and researchers from across the Americas who were working on projects related to indigenous populations.

42. Alejandro Lipschütz to Manuel Gamio, July 29, 1943. Colección Alejandro Lipschütz, Universidad de Chile, Biblioteca del Campus Núñoa, [hereafter CAL], caja 6370.

Lipschütz to reproduce and return.⁴³ He also shared Lipschütz's request with his colleague Juan Comas, who in turn sent it to another colleague, Professor Pablo Martínez del Río. Comas then wrote to Lipschütz to share with him a reference to a French work on racial categories and two bibliographic summaries that might be useful.⁴⁴ Lipschütz concluded the exchange by sending a thank-you note to Comas, Gamio, and their colleagues at the III expressing his appreciation for their assistance and mentioning that he would cite the photographs to the fledgling III journal *América Indígena*, where they were originally published.⁴⁵

In the early 1940s, Lipschütz's indigenista network also extended to North America, where he was in contact with John Collier, commissioner of the US Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). In August 1943, Lipschütz received a note from Collier's administrative assistant, E. M. Izquierdo, approving his request to reproduce photographs from BIA publications in *El indoamericanismo*. Collier went on to suggest how Lipschütz might publish an English translation of the text, although he lamented that the BIA did not currently have funds for such an endeavor, and requested a copy of the Spanish version for the BIA library once it was published.⁴⁶ Later, after Collier retired as the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in 1945, he continued trying to help Lipschütz publish English translations of his work in the United States by reaching out to contacts at university presses. Ultimately, those efforts failed.⁴⁷

When Lipschütz published *El indoamericanismo*, he sent complimentary copies to scholars across the globe, which functioned as a way to continue building a professional indigenista network. In December 1944, John Collier wrote to Lipschütz congratulating him on the publication of *El indoamericanismo* and thanking him for sharing a copy of a radio address that Lipschütz had made about the book. Collier affirmed the interdependence of their work by stating his agreement that indigenous peoples have something important to offer their respective national communities in the form of their culture, and that national progress in many countries depended on the progress of indigenous populations. The two indigenistas shared an optimism that the future would bring such progress and held the mutual view that "trying to help the Indians to help themselves and to exercise their rights and

43. Manuel Gamio to Alejandro Lipschütz, August 10, 1943, CAL, caja 6370.

44. Juan Comas to Alejandro Lipschütz, July 17, 1943, CAL, caja 6370.

45. Alejandro Lipschütz to III, August 24, 1943, CAL, caja 6370.

46. John Collier to Alejandro Lipschütz, August 9, 1943, CAL, caja 6370.

47. Correspondence between John Collier and Alejandro Lipschütz, 1956–1959. CAL, Caja 6373. Most notably in 1956, following Lipschütz's publication of *La comunidad indígena en América y en Chile*, Collier wrote letters to various university publishers in the United States in the attempt to get that work translated and circulated in the North American academy.

discharge their obligations of conscientious citizenship” was the way to pursue that progress.⁴⁸

Lipschütz, Collier, Gamio, and Comas endeavored to build a transnational network of scholarly inquiry around subjects pertaining to indigenous peoples in the Americas, but in the mid 1940s that network remained small and fragile, and suffered from the isolation produced by long distances, language barriers, and the difficulty of procuring information published abroad. In the fall of 1944, Lipschütz sent a copy of *El indoafricanismo* to Melville Herskovits, the influential anthropologist at Northwestern University who helped establish African and African American studies in the North American academy. In his reply, Herskovits lamented that “more of the work of the late Professor Franz Boas and the late Professor T. Wingate Todd was not available to you.” Herskovits also arranged for several of his own publications to be sent to Lipschütz for his reference on questions pertaining to “the origins of New World Negroes.”⁴⁹

In November, Lipschütz wrote back, thanking Herskovits for the texts, but also providing insight into his own view on the significance of the work:

I was also very interested in reading your brilliant article on Native Self-Government published in *Foreign Affairs*. I fully agree with your standpoint but I have not the necessary optimism as [summarized] in your words of ‘sufficient good will.’ The point is that this good will is lacking on the part of whites in Africa and elsewhere where colored people served for the purpose of making money by the white. The only way to come out from the difficulties is dropping the capitalistic system as has been done in the U.S.S.R., where the problems of mutual relations between white and colored have been settled definitively. And it is surprising that this was done happily without sacrificing those advantages which are due to the incorporation of formerly independent territories into the economy of the Empire.”⁵⁰

Already in 1944 Lipschütz held the view that self-government was the ultimate goal to which indigenismo should be applied. Furthermore, he lacked confidence in capitalistic and imperial politico-economic structures to produce that change through reform. Instead, Lipschütz saw the liberation of the Indian in the Americas as connected to socialist revolution, just as it was for native Africans and minority populations within the Soviet Union.

48. John Collier to Alejandro Lipschütz, December 1, 1944, CAL, caja 6370.

49. Melville Herskovits to Alejandro Lipschütz, September 19, 1944, CAL, caja 6370.

50. Alejandro Lipschütz to Melville Herskovits, November 9, 1944, CAL, caja 6370.

Although Lipschütz held firm convictions about the future of indigenous peoples and their liberation from capitalist and imperialist forces, he maintained cordial friendships with indigenistas across the ideological spectrum. In January 1946, Lipschütz received a long letter from Doris Stone, the daughter of Samuel Zemurray, who was popularly known as “Sam the Banana Man.” In 1946, Stone was living and working in Costa Rica where her husband Roger Stone owned business interests in a large coffee plantation. She wrote Lipschütz about her plans to build reservations for Indians “not to keep these people like monkeys [sic] in a zoo, but to educate them to become useful citizens.” Stone petitioned the ruling junta for money to create schools for Indians who could be trained as teachers and return to their people to educate them to work for progress and protection from non-indigenous colonists who were moving into their territory as a new highway was completed.⁵¹

Doris Stone trained as an ethnographer and later became the director of the National Museum of Costa Rica. Her friendship with Lipschütz and his wife illustrates the flexibility of indigenismo as an ideal. Lipschütz, an ardent Communist who was ultimately working for the liberation of indígenas from the clutches of capitalistic imperialism, maintained a friendship with the daughter of Samuel Zemurray, chairman of the United Fruit Company, who orchestrated several coups in Central America to oust or establish dictators in service of his neocolonial corporation. Zemurray infamously pushed the CIA to intervene in the overthrow of Jacobo Árbenz in Guatemala in 1954, thus bringing to an end the most promising socialist experiment in Latin America at the time.

If *Indoamericanismo y raza india* represented Lipschütz’s theoretical jump into indigenismo in the late 1930s, the interdisciplinary field research he supervised in Tierra del Fuego in 1946 constituted a more praxis-oriented transition in which he established himself as an applied anthropologist. In the process, Lipschütz earned credibility as a field researcher with indigenistas abroad and continued to expand and solidify his network. Having previously consulted on biological studies of Mapuche in south-central Chile, in 1945 Lipschütz assembled a team of researchers to gather a broad range of data about the Ona, Yamana, and Alakaluf cultures of the extreme southern reaches of Chile and Argentina, peoples collectively referred to as “Fuegians.”

The mission carried two primary goals: to collect information on physical characteristics that would be useful to the National Health Service, and to record cultural practices for the Chilean Museum of Natural History.

51. Doris Stone to Alejandro Lipschütz, January 3, 1946, CAL, caja 6371.

Accordingly, Lipschütz asked Grete Mostny, director of the National Museum of Natural History, to join the mission. But as the mission also sought to contribute to a broader transnational debate about the racial origins and cultural adaptations of indigenous Fuegians, Lipschütz built an international team of researchers and drew support from a host of Chilean institutional sponsors. The Misión Científica Chilena para el Estudio del Indio Fueguino included Chilean army general Ramón Cañas Montalva and foreign scholars like Ecuadoran anthropologist Antonio Santiana, French anthropologist Louis Robin, and German photographer and ethnographic filmmaker Hans Helfritz.⁵²

For Lipschütz, the expedition resulted in two distinct outcomes. When Antonio Santiana abruptly left the mission in the field and later claimed that his research findings had been stolen by the team, Lipschütz found himself embroiled in the second rather messy and public controversy of his career.⁵³ At the same time, the broad publication and dissemination of the mission's findings through journal articles and conference presentations, the highly collaborative nature of the mission itself, and publication of the group's collected works in a volume entitled *Cuatro conferencias sobre los indios fueguinos* helped Lipschütz continue to grow his network of professional indigenista contacts and establish himself as a legitimate anthropologist.⁵⁴

While still in the field on the Fuegian expedition in March of 1946, Lipschütz wrote to Manuel Gamio, director of the III, from Punta Arenas in southern Chile. He sent Gamio information about the expedition for publication in *Boletín Indigenista*, the III newsletter.⁵⁵ Later that month, Gamio replied to inform Lipschütz he would gladly publish the information and took the opportunity to express an appreciation for Lipschütz's varied work and tireless efforts. "I admire the intensity and variety of your activities, because as I see, after your trip to Tierra del Fuego, you will give lectures in England about hormones in relation to their cancer-fighting properties. I would be glad to know the secret of your eternal youth that keeps you first in line among the hardest-working researchers on the continent."⁵⁶

While in England lecturing on his biological research, Lipschütz gave an interview to the BBC about his recent work in Tierra del Fuego, which included a hypothesis that he and his team constructed to explain the historical

52. MacMillan, *Hormonal Bodies*, 130–131.

53. For a fuller discussion of the Lipschütz-Santiana controversy, see MacMillan, *Hormonal Bodies*, chapt. 3. The previous controversy, his highly publicized lawsuit and subsequent firing from the University of Concepción in 1936, stemmed from a contract dispute.

54. Alejandro Lipschütz and Grete Mostny, *Cuatro conferencias sobre los indios fueguinos*.

55. Alejandro Lipschütz to Manuel Gamio, March 2, 1946, CAL, caja 6371.

56. Manuel Gamio to Alejandro Lipschütz, March 15, 1946, CAL, caja 6371.

decrease in the population of indigenous Fuegians. They had heard stories about professional Indian hunters who were paid by the head for the number of Indians they killed. Coincidentally, H. M. Stanley Turner, a medical doctor who was president of the British Medical Association and a wing commander in the Royal Air Force, heard Lipschütz's radio address and wrote him a letter about a story he had heard while stationed in the Falkland Islands between 1909 and 1915. Turner explained that the British Army in the Falklands sold those hunters obsolete Martini-Henry rifles with the understanding they would be used to kill Indians. Together, the two men tried to reconstruct figures about how many Indians the hunters may have killed.⁵⁷ In other correspondence, Turner suggested (from his own expertise in medicine) that studying the Rh factor could aid in mapping blood characteristics among indigenous peoples.⁵⁸ In this way Lipschütz's travels and public profile as a researcher in experimental medicine contributed to his work, reputation, and transnational network as an indigenista.⁵⁹

Following his trip to England in 1947, Lipschütz traveled to the United States where he gave medical lectures in St. Louis and also visited Washington DC. In the capital, Lipschütz met with T. D. Stewart, then editor of the *American Journal of Physical Anthropology*, who later went on to become director of the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History. In an exchange of letters with Stewart following his visit, Lipschütz recounted the remainder of his trip, during which he toured Mayan remains throughout Central America and met with indigenistas in several countries.⁶⁰ Stewart also worked with Grete Mostny and Fidel Jeldes, the criminologist based in Concepción, to publish some of their work from the Fuegian expedition in the *Journal of Physical Anthropology*.⁶¹

Lipschütz's travel, connections, and publications boosted his legitimacy as an intellectual and academic indigenista. His rising profile also elevated those with whom he collaborated. Ramón Cañas Montalva and Grete Mostny later helped to found the Instituto Indigenista Chileno, and Mostny was a member of the Chilean delegation to the 1949 Indigenista Conference in Cuzco. Mostny and Jeldes both benefited from Lipschütz's relationship with T. D. Stewart. But Lipschütz emphasized building the transnational dimensions of his indigenista work around the national, regional, and local concerns of indígenas themselves.

57. Stanley Turner to Alejandro Lipschütz, January 10, 1947; Alejandro Lipschütz to Stanley Turner, November 18, 1947, CAL, caja 6371.

58. Stanley Turner to Alejandro Lipschütz, September 8, 1947, CAL, caja 6371.

59. Lipschütz published his account of their exchange in *Perfil de Indoamérica*, 218–221.

60. Alejandro Lipschütz to T. D. Stewart, November 11, 1947, CAL, caja 6371.

61. T. D. Stewart to Alejandro Lipschütz, January 4, 1947, CAL, caja 6371.

In this same period, Venancio Coñuepán built the *Corporación Araucana* into a political force that repeatedly won him and other Mapuche leaders election to the *Cámara de Diputados*, the lower house of the Chilean National Congress. Lipschütz's personal papers and correspondence indicate that he rarely sustained contact and communication with Chilean state actors or Mapuche political leaders in this period, but he did successfully establish himself as an anthropologist, both within Chile and on the international stage.

INDIGENISMO IN CHILE, 1948 TO 1953

Upon returning to Chile from his international lecture tour, Lipschütz set to work preparing for the second *Congreso Indigenista Interamericano*, which was to be held in Cuzco in October of 1948. Whereas Chile had sent a delegation to the 1940 Pátzcuaro Conference that established the *Instituto Indigenista Interamericano* as a transnational nongovernmental agency, the Chilean government had not officially complied with any of the accords that came out of that conference. Much of the work of the III was put on hold across the Americas after Pátzcuaro, as World War II stole the attention of most of the world's governments, especially shifting the focus of the United States away from domestic Indian affairs. As Lipschütz increasingly focused his attention on indigenista issues in the 1940s, he became more involved with the III. He corresponded with indigenistas through the III network and gradually began championing indigenista causes in Chile. As the preparations for the Cuzco summit unfolded in 1948, Lipschütz planned to attend as a member of the Chilean delegation, representing the University of Chile and the Chilean Museum of Natural History. He hoped to be named technical secretary, official spokesperson for Chile, and president of the anthropology section of the conference.⁶²

In May 1948, Manuel Gamio wrote Lipschütz to request that he gather information about what measures had been taken in Chile to comply with the resolutions passed at the 1940 Pátzcuaro Conference.⁶³ So, in the summer of 1948, Lipschütz began writing letters to functionaries across Chile to collect and disseminate information on behalf of the III. Between June 21 and August 5, 1948, Lipschütz wrote at least 20 letters asking people to supply information so he could report to the III what had been done in Chile since 1940. He acknowledged that there was not yet a central office affiliated with the III in Chile, so he was circulating the request personally to interested

62. Alejandro Lipschütz to unnamed minister, draft communication, undated. CAL, caja 6349.

63. Alejandro Lipschütz to Manuel Gamio, May 21, 1948, CAL, caja 6371.

researchers. Following a standard introduction explaining his request, Lipschütz included the parts of the resolutions passed at Pátzcuaro that pertained to the expertise of the recipient. Of the 20 requests recorded in Lipschütz's personal papers, five are accompanied by responses. Taken together, those illustrate the indifference of many sectors of Chilean society toward indigenous concerns and the difficulty of organizing efforts on behalf of Chilean indígenas.⁶⁴

From the School of Public Health at the University of Chile, Lipschütz received a reply that they had no information to address his request.⁶⁵ Although the director of the Institute of Criminology replied that he could not directly answer Lipschütz's questions, he referred him to Fidel Jeldes, the anthropologist working at the institute who had been part of Lipschütz's recent Fuegian expedition. Jeldes had written a short work entitled "Some Considerations on Criminality among the Araucanians," which he enclosed for Lipschütz to read.⁶⁶ Ernesto Herzog, director of the Institute of Pathology at the University of Concepción and a former colleague of Lipschütz, wrote that he had not previously heard of the 1940 conference nor the resolutions passed at Pátzcuaro. Herzog claimed that no one in Concepción outside of their few mutual acquaintances was working on indigenous issues.⁶⁷ Eugenio Pereira Salas of the Institute for Musical Research in the School of Fine Arts at the University of Chile wrote that his institute "had complied, from a certain point of view" with the resolutions passed at Pátzcuaro by building an archive of Araucanian music and sharing that music publicly.⁶⁸ However, all four responses implied that any work that fulfilled the resolutions passed at Pátzcuaro had been done not as a matter of compliance, but only because it was otherwise a relevant part of their work.

The most thorough reply that Lipschütz received from his many inquiries was from Father Juan de Forchheim, the Catholic Church's Dean of Humanities and director general of primary schools in Araucanía. Forchheim wrote that he was a subscriber to the III publications *Boletín Indigenista* and *América Indígena* and had recently received an invitation to the Second International Conference in Cuzco. Forchheim claimed to have written a paper that he sent to the Pátzcuaro Conference, which Venancio Coñuepán delivered.⁶⁹

64. Alejandro Lipschütz to various researchers and officials in Chile, on behalf of the IIC, June 1948, CAL, caja 6353.

65. Mario Pizzi to Alejandro Lipschütz, July 12, 1948, CAL, caja 6353.

66. Israel Drapkin to Alejandro Lipschütz, July 23, 1948, CAL, caja 6353.

67. Ernesto Herzog to Alejandro Lipschütz, July 5, 1958, CAL, caja 6353.

68. Eugenio Pereira Salas to Alejandro Lipschütz, July 6, 1948, CAL, caja 6353.

69. Coñuepán and César Colima did present a paper at the Pátzcuaro Convention, however it is unlikely that Forchheim was the author. The section that addressed education advocated for the state to take control of the indigenous schools away from the church; that teachers employed there should be indigenous themselves; and that

Regarding the effects of the resolutions passed at Pátzcuaro in Chile, Forchheim had seen little effect on public opinion. In and around Temuco, he criticized a “suicide belt” of neglect and economic and agricultural stagnation.⁷⁰ Forchheim did perceive a reinvigorated activism of Mapuche organizations like the Unión Araucana, and expressed optimism that stories printed and circulated by teachers who had come to the region to teach Mapuche children might lead to the construction of new schools in the region.⁷¹

Forchheim wrote that no new work on Mapudungun, the native Mapuche language, had been conducted since that of Rodolfo Lenz, Félix de Augusta, and Ernesto Moesbach in the late nineteenth century. Regarding education more broadly, Forchheim did not believe the state had adopted a meaningful or adequate program for educating Indians. Those working in various missionary efforts, including two indigenous priests and many Mapuche teachers, had filled the gap. Forchheim wrote that “the majority of the recommendations [Article 36, on Indigenous Education] always figure into our educational ideals, as made clear by the number of ‘friends of the school’ dating back to before the first Congreso Indigenista.” Vocational schools offered training in “home economics” and agricultural skills, but they did not offer talented students enough opportunities to enter secondary schools or get the training in humanistic education they needed to become leaders who might then help their fellow Mapuche regain political rights, Forchheim wrote.⁷²

Referring to more technical concerns, Forchheim mentioned that Church leaders were struggling to build schools located close to indigenous communities with sufficient heat, light, and water. The lack of funding, especially as it pertained to the health and well-being of students, further stymied their efforts. Many schools had a health office in name, but few had a doctor to regularly serve patients. Some material support was being provided in the form of free breakfast distributed to students in 168 schools, but little to no remuneration was coming from municipalities or the state. In short, not enough support was coming from the state to aid schools in complying with the III’s recommendations. In Forchheim’s view, efforts to benefit Indians in Chile needed the legitimacy of an official organization and support from the state to

instruction should be offered in indigenous languages. Vergara and Gundermann, “Chile y el Instituto Interamericano,” 3–4.

70. The term “suicide belt” came into use in the late 1940s and became a popular refrain in the regional press used to criticize and explain the region’s lack of development. The basic idea was that the lands surrounding Temuco, in the hands of Indians who did not exploit them productively, were strangling the development and progress of the city and the region. See Foerster and Montecino, *Organizaciones*, 129–132, 159–164, 276–281.

71. Juan de Forchheim to Alejandro Lipschütz, July 14, 1948, CAL, caja 6353.

72. Forchheim to Alejandro Lipschütz, 1948.

carry out the recommendations of the III. As to whether or not any progress had been made in the Chilean Congress, he suggested asking Venancio Coñuepán directly.⁷³

Many of the challenges Forchheim identified could conceivably have been addressed if a national indigenista institute had existed within Chile. According to Berdichewsky, “When the Organization of American States created the Instituto Indigenista Interamericano, it was Lipschütz who was prepared to implement the program in Chile.”⁷⁴ In 1940, Lipschütz lacked a committed group of indigenista counterparts in Chile to collaborate on the founding of a national indigenista institute, and subsequently he lacked the support of the state. Lipschütz also does not appear to have cultivated partnerships with Mapuche leaders in the 1940s, although that would change starting in the early 1950s.

In the end, the Cuzco Conference did not take place until 1949, and Catholic Bishop Guido Beck was appointed by the government to lead the Chilean delegation instead of Lipschütz.⁷⁵ But immediately following the conference, Lipschütz and others established the Instituto Indigenista Chileno, which was “set up as a private organization on September 1, 1949.” While “it [was] hoped that in due course it [would] become an official agency,” the organization received no funding from the state and had no formal role in setting indigenous policy in Chile.⁷⁶

However, the members of the IIC soon began advocating for a more formal role in setting indigenous policy in Chile. After 1949, they made an official declaration to oppose plans to develop areas around Temuco and settle German and Italian colonists there, in response to those critics who advanced the idea as a way to address the “suicide belt” issue. The IIC declaration used Mapuche status as citizens with the same rights as white Chileans to oppose the government’s plan; it advocated that state banks invest in improving Mapuche cultivation of the land rather than pushing indigenous smallholders off their land and replacing them with white Chileans. To make this argument, the IIC referenced the 1813 Chilean Constitution, the 1934 Indian Reorganization Act in the United States, and a July 1947 executive order signed by Chilean President Gabriel González Videla that condemned usury and other abuses carried out

73. Forchheim to Alejandro Lipschütz, 1948.

74. Berdichewsky, *Alejandro Lipschütz*, 16.

75. “General Information on the II Inter-American Indian Congress,” *Boletín Indigenista* 9:3 (September 1949): 259.

76. Noticias section, “National Indian Institutes,” *Boletín Indigenista* 15:1 (March 1955): 31. It was not until the early 1960s that the IIC became formally associated with the Chilean government, coinciding with the declining role of DASIN and indigenous legal reform. For a more complete history of the IIC, see Vergara and Gundermann, “Chile y El Instituto Indigenista Interamericano, 1940–1993.”

against Mapuche landowners. González Videla's condemnation, they argued, specifically contradicted the proposal then under consideration by the government. Finally, the declaration requested a more formal role for the IIC by asking for official recognition by the state, in keeping with the conventions of the Instituto Indigenista Interamericano. Although the IIC wanted that recognition, they simultaneously wanted autonomy and to be consulted before any modifications to laws affecting indígenas were passed. A host of functionaries within Chilean society signed this petition, including anthropologists like Lipschütz and Grete Mostny, but also judges, public health officials, former army generals, a Supreme Court judge, a UN delegate, and Mapuche representatives.⁷⁷

Lipschütz expended significant effort to coordinate a Chilean response to the Pátzcuaro agreement and prepared for a role at the Cuzco Conference that never materialized. There is no definitive evidence in Lipschütz's personal papers to explain this sequence of events. However, Lipschütz's political orientation made him a natural adversary and persona non grata during this era of communist persecution in Chile. In 1948, the Law of Permanent Defense of Democracy, passed by the Chilean Congress at González Videla's initiative, officially banned the Communist Party. Prominent leftists like Pablo Neruda, a friend and acquaintance of Lipschütz, fled Chile for exile, and savvy politicians like Coñuepán might logically have distanced themselves under such circumstances.⁷⁸ However, Lipschütz did manage to coordinate the efforts of a small but committed group of non-indigenous indigenistas in Chile during this period.

ENGAGING THE MAPUCHE MOVEMENT, 1954 TO 1961

In the early 1950s, Lipschütz began interacting with Mapuche organizations more directly. While he continued to exchange ideas and friendly correspondence through the indigenista network and publish books on indigenista themes, this reorientation of his activities changed the thought expressed in his publications. By the 1950s, Mapuche organizations had achieved greater political significance through the rise of the Corporación Araucana, the election of several more Mapuche deputies to the Cámara de Diputados, and President Carlos Ibañez del Campo's appointment of Venancio Coñuepán to establish and direct the Departamento de Asuntos Indígenas

77. Declaration of the IIC, undated, CAL, caja 6357.

78. André Menard, personal conversation, July 2013. While this statement is hard to support with archival sources, Chilean historian of the Mapuche André Menard shared this perspective with me as a reasonable conjecture.

within the Ministry of Land and Colonization. Lipschütz would continue to write, publish, and interact through the indigenista network while he increasingly engaged Mapuche political organizations within Chile, but his leftist political views continued to limit his interaction with official indigenous policy.

Lipschütz had always used his many personal connections with Mapuche individuals to support their own self-advocacy through training and mentorship. In a July 1951 letter, Mapuche activist Domingo Tripailaf thanked Lipschütz for sending him a book, but also for his long and tireless work on behalf of the Mapuche people. He referred to Lipschütz as inspiring, recognizing Lipschütz's goal of empowering Mapuche to better their own social, economic, and political situation.⁷⁹ As the 1950s wore on, Lipschütz participated in a number of meetings convened by Mapuche organizations. Mapuche organizers Martín Painemal and Juan Llanquinao requested his presence at the first National Mapuche Conference in December 1953, to be held in Temuco. Lipschütz was scheduled to attend a medical conference on the same day but was able to participate in both events.

In an attempt to make participation in the conference as broad as possible, the leaders called the meeting to order without distinction as to the political or religious agendas of the participants, rallying around the cause of studying and solving problems faced by all Mapuche. They highlighted key difficulties facing the Mapuche people: the loss of land, rising prices and falling yields of agricultural products, inadequate educational facilities for Mapuche youth, and the difficulty of passing language, culture, and traditions on to the next generation. The list of Mapuche organizations fighting this onslaught included the Corporación Araucana, the Unión Araucana, an urban organization based in Santiago called the Unión Araucana Sociedad Galvarino (UASG), and others.⁸⁰

Through his work with Mapuche organizations, Lipschütz realized that the various problems they were trying to solve all in some way or another threatened the stability of their communities. Those organizations began thinking and talking about "community" as an analytic framework within which to grapple with those challenges. In October 1955, the UASG and the IIC jointly hosted a forum on community, and the association's leadership personally invited Lipschütz to attend.⁸¹ Lipschütz replied that he was

79. Domingo Tripailaf to Alejandro Lipschütz, July 8, 1951, CAL, caja 6372.

80. Documents and correspondence relating to Primer Congreso Nacional Mapuche, November-December 1953, CAL, caja 6358.

81. Leaders of the Unión Araucana Galvarino to Alejandro Lipschütz, October 17, 1955, CAL, caja 6357.

unfortunately confined to bed for a few days and so would not be able to make it. However, he did provide a letter in which he shared his thoughts on the topic. Lipschütz asserted the importance of the agricultural community as a defense against the “proletarianization” of the Mapuche. He disputed the notion that legal protections preventing the sale of property deprived Mapuche of their rights and equated that to the argument that holding a mortgage deprives one of the right to sell their land and keep the profits. Instead, Lipschütz argued that Mapuche communities could preserve communal landholdings if the state created a special fund from which individuals could borrow if they wished to buy a privately owned parcel and move away from the community. “You have to *develop* the community, you have to *improve it, but not liquidate it*.”⁸²

The forum drew a crowd of more than 200 people and passed a series of resolutions on a variety of topics that could help defend Mapuche communities from the loss of land, while at the same time improve living conditions for *comuneros* (community members). The conference began with a statement justifying the preservation of Mapuche communities in accordance with the *títulos de merced* (land titles issued during the resettlement period) that created them. Participants argued that preserving and improving laws that protected communities, while speaking out against legislative efforts intended to include indígenas under common Chilean law, would further that project. They also advocated for state efforts to support education in the communities; establish post offices, hospitals and pharmacies; and lend money for land improvements. Finally, the accords agreed upon at the conference were to be presented to public officials, and journalists were asked to print and distribute them.⁸³

Prompted by the ideas circulated at the forum, in 1956 Lipschütz published *La comunidad indígena en América y en Chile*. The book brought together many themes that Lipschütz had treated before, but here he put them to work in service of preserving indigenous communities. In the preface, he described the project:

The present volume owes its origin to circumstantial causes. The “Unión Araucana [Sociedad] Galvarino” and the “Corporación Araucana” extended me an invitation to summarize, in a lecture, my ideas about indigenous community in Chile. This was a very gracious invitation, because with it the directors of the societies, who look after the interests of the indigenous people of Chile, have asked me to use my scientific objectivity to make them aware of

82. Alejandro Lipschütz to the Sociedad Unión Araucano Galvarino, undated, CAL, caja 6357.

83. Manuel Huenulao, president, Unión Araucano Galvarino, to Alejandro Lipschütz, November 1, 1955, CAL, caja 6357.

concepts that on several occasions before I had applied to the vast problems of indigenous peoples across the Americas.⁸⁴

The collaboration Lipschütz described indicates that the agency of the indígena and that of the indigenista were working together to understand a complex set of problems and try to solve them. The instance provides an example that connects significant Mapuche leaders and organizations directly to the IIC and Lipschütz personally. His subsequent correspondence with Mapuche leaders and indigenistas outside of Chile connected the Mapuche movement to the broader transnational indigenista movement.

As he was compiling *La comunidad*, Lipschütz wrote to Coñuepán at DASIN to request verification of statistics on indigenous land ownership in Chile.⁸⁵ He was trying to track down discrepancies between figures he had received from North American anthropologist Louis Faron, and others recently presented in the Cámara de Diputados. Treating that subject in the book, Lipschütz claimed that within a two-year period in the early 1950s, the subdivision of Mapuche land prompted 29 percent of the divided land to be sold or otherwise lost by Mapuche communities.⁸⁶ To refute the claims that individual property rights would encourage investment and more efficient exploitation of agricultural land to benefit Mapuche smallholders, Lipschütz asked, “What then is the real reason of the steps being taken to ‘liquidate’ the indigenous community in Chile?”⁸⁷ In writing *La comunidad*, Lipschütz also corresponded with Mapuche Deputy José Cayupi. In June of 1956, Lipschütz wrote Cayupi to congratulate him on a recent speech in the Cámara and thank him for the loan of documents that Lipschütz used in writing the book.⁸⁸ While Lipschütz collaborated extensively with other indigenista scholars in the Fuegian project, *La comunidad* involved more collaboration with Mapuche leaders and organizations.

The publication of *La Comunidad* also stimulated further dialogue with indigenistas in Mexico and North America. Manuel Gamio wrote Lipschütz twice in 1956 to ask him to contribute an article on indigenous community for publication in *América Indígena*, the III magazine.⁸⁹ Lipschütz sent a copy of the *La comunidad* manuscript to Alfonso Caso, who at the time was serving as

84. Alejandro Lipschütz, *La comunidad indígena en América y en Chile: su pasado histórico y sus perspectivas* (Santiago: Editorial Universitaria, 1956), 19.

85. Alejandro Lipschütz to Venancio Coñuepán, February 13, 1956, CAL, caja 6373.

86. Lipschütz, *La comunidad*, 174 n42.

87. Lipschütz, *La comunidad*, 176.

88. Alejandro Lipschütz to José Cayupi, June 27, 1956, CAL, caja 6373.

89. Manuel Gamio to Alejandro Lipschütz, January 11 and January 24, 1956, CAL, caja 6373.

director of the Instituto Nacional Indigenista in Mexico, and asked him to write a prologue for the book.⁹⁰ The publication of *La comunidad* also brought renewed correspondence with a host of North American scholars, including Faron, Herskovits, and anthropologist Robert Redfield.⁹¹

That dialogue accomplished several things for Lipschütz and his indigenista work. On one hand, his cordial relationship with John Collier led the latter to make numerous attempts to get *La comunidad* translated and published by various North American university presses.⁹² At the same time, it engendered a dialogue that compared Indian policy in the United States with legal reforms in Chile. The writing, publication, and distribution of *La comunidad* represents the most concrete example of Mapuche organizations and activism directly contributing to indigenismo as a formal transnational intellectual debate.

Lipschütz and the IIC continued their efforts to bring Mapuche organizations together across political and ideological spectra throughout the 1950s. However, the ambitions of individuals and infighting between organizations often frustrated those efforts and the IIC sometimes found itself dragged into disputes. In June 1959, Juan Huaiquimil and Armando Huarapil, president and secretary respectively of the Unión Araucana Sociedad Galvarino (UASG), wrote a letter to the president of the IIC to oppose a forum organized by the Corporación Araucana because it was not opened to the public. Due to recent unfavorable results in the Juzgado de Indios (Indian Court) in Temuco, they claimed it would only serve to fracture Mapuche solidarity due to frustration with the Corporación's leaders. They further claimed that someone within the Corporación had been claiming to represent the opinions of the UASG, an act they considered "subterfuge."⁹³ In October 1960, a large gathering of Mapuche convened to discuss education, indigenous laws, the Juzgados de Indios, and relations with the III. Attendees called for Coñuepán's dismissal as director of DASIN under the rationale that he was not adequately doing his job and was currently running for office again. They also repeated the request that the state send official representation to the III in Mexico City.⁹⁴ Again, in 1961, the leaders of the UASG invited members of the IIC to attend a public meeting to discuss the leadership of DASIN, among other things.⁹⁵

90. Alejandro Lipschütz to Alfonso Caso, March 16, 1956, CAL, caja 6373.

91. Correspondence of Alejandro Lipschütz with various North American scholars, June-September 1956, CAL, caja 6373.

92. Correspondence with John Collier and various North American publishers, September 1957-March 1959, CAL, Caja 6373.

93. Juan Huaiquimil and Armando Huarapil to Alejandro Lipschütz, June 6, 1959, CAL, caja 6358.

94. Statement by leaders of Galvarino, November 14, 1960, CAL, caja 6358.

95. Leaders of UASG to Alejandro Lipschütz, May 8, 1961, CAL, caja 6358.

By the early 1960s, Mapuche organizations and indigenistas were redirecting their attention to staving off efforts to change the *Ley Indígena* (the law that governed Mapuche landholding) to make it easier for Mapuche communal land to be subdivided and sold. President Jorge Alessandri, who had been elected in 1958, successfully changed the *Ley Indígena* in 1961, which would serve as a bridge to broader agrarian reform efforts championed by President Eduardo Frei Montalva after his election in 1964, but those reforms produced relatively small changes to the broad pattern of Mapuche land loss that began after their conquest by the Chilean armed forces in the 1880s.

CONCLUSION

For more than four decades, Alejandro Lipschütz participated vigorously in national and transnational debates about the place of indigenous peoples in contemporary Western society. In that time he worked tirelessly, mostly outside the traditional boundaries of his professional obligations, to study and propose solutions to problems faced by indígenas in Chile and across the Americas. Lipschütz's life and work demonstrate the nuance and complexity of the indigenista discourse. During the 1940s Lipschütz established himself as a legitimate researcher in the field of applied anthropology despite the fact that his formal training was in biology. He built a transnational network of professional contacts who read and disseminated his work. In the 1950s, Lipschütz forged critical ties with Mapuche leaders and political organizations despite the fact that he did not share their ethnic identity, lived far removed from the majority of the Mapuche population, and was in fact himself an immigrant to Chile. Although more conservative politics held sway during the 1950s, in the 1960s and early 1970s the national political climate turned in the direction of his long-held personal beliefs, and the Mapuche political movement realigned with the ascendant Left.

In 1970, Socialist Party candidate Salvador Allende was elected to the presidency and led his Unidad Popular (UP) coalition government toward a more radical program that nationalized key industries and redistributed land to Mapuche communities. Although Lipschütz was officially retired, he maintained a public profile, and the frequency and volume of his publication actually increased in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Mapuche political organizations formed an important component of the UP coalition that won Allende the presidency. In doing so, organizations like the UASG broke with the more conservative positions of the Corporación and other groups of the 1940s and 1950s to press for more substantive change. Ideas that Lipschütz had championed, most notably the importance of community, autonomy, and authentic indigenous

leadership, informed this political shift, and would later become foundational for indigenous activists in Chile and across the Americas when identity-based indigenous social movements emerged in the 1980s.

Eastside Preparatory School
Kirkland, Washington
hjs.327@gmail.com

JOHN STEGEMAN