COCA YES

HOW BOLIVIA'S COCA GROWERS RESHAPED DEMOCRACY

THOMAS GRISAFFI

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How Bolivia's Coca Growers Reshaped Democracy

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Cover art: Chapare Mural (*top*) and coca growers attend a rally in support of the MAS government (*bottom*). Both courtesy of the author.

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Map FM.1. Map of Bolivia showing major cities and roads.

INTRODUCTION. To Lead by Obeying

The convoy of over twenty cars and pickup trucks sped past fruit plantations, markets, houses, mechanics, and karaoke bars. Each car was festooned with the blue, white, and black flag of the ruling Movement Toward Socialism party (Movimiento al Socialismo or MAS by its Spanish acronym). Grover Munachi, a reporter from a local radio station, caught sight of something out of the window: “Look, it’s the president!” he shouted. A small jet gradually came into view. The plane flew low over the convoy before climbing up and out of sight, only to return once more from the opposite direction. The car passengers laughed in admiration; one shouted out, “Way to go, Evo!”

When the convoy arrived at its destination, a military base located on the banks of a wide, muddy-brown river, the guards snapped to attention and lifted the barrier to allow the cars through. A man sitting in the car’s front seat joked, “Last time I was here these guys locked me up . . . and now look, they are saluting us!” The cars snaked through the base; to the right was the United States–run Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) compound, and on the left dozens of rusting cars, barrels of gasoline, and sacks of coca, all of which had been confiscated from drug traffickers. Ahead, three Vietnam-era helicopters, UH-1s or Hueys, donated by the United States, stood ready for antinarcotics missions.

Evo Morales disembarked from the plane, followed by the ambassadors from Cuba and Venezuela. The trio strolled across the hot tarmac to where the eighty-strong delegation of union leaders and local government officials waited patiently in an orderly line. Morales shared jokes and warmly embraced old friends. It was October 2006, Morales had only been in office for ten months, and as yet no one could get their head around the fact that the man who they knew as “*compañero* Evo” (comrade Evo), the leader of their agricultural union, was now the president of Bolivia.

The amazement the union leaders expressed on entering the military base and greeting the president reflects a deeper issue that goes to the very heart of this book: namely, the shift from being an agricultural union criminalized as a result of U.S.-led drug war policies, to a ruling party responsible for governing a country. Morales's initial support base was the coca growers' union of the Chapare, a tropical agricultural zone located at the eastern foot of the Bolivian Andes. Here peasant farmers are primarily dedicated to the production of coca leaf, a perennial shrub native to the Andean region. Indigenous peoples in the Andes have consumed coca for millennia; they either chew it or prepare it as a tea, and it is present at every ritual from birth to death. But while many people regard the leaf to be special, if not sacred, according to local farmers a great deal of their crop is used to manufacture cocaine, and Bolivia is the world's third largest producer of the illegal drug. Coca leaf is internationally outlawed; UN conventions list coca, alongside cocaine and heroin, as a dangerous substance that is subject to strict controls. For over twenty years successive governments denounced the coca growers as criminals, drug traffickers, and terrorists, and yet they now had a president in power—one who claimed to represent their interests.

When Evo Morales assumed the presidency in January 2006, he broke with the U.S.-financed and U.S.-designed war on drugs. Bolivia's new program is referred to as "Coca Yes, Cocaine No" because of the distinction it makes between coca leaf, a plant with significant local value, and cocaine, the illegal drug. The new policy permits farmers to cultivate a small plot of coca and encourages them to self-police with respect to these limits. The Morales government has prioritized development assistance to coca-growing areas, improving educational, health, and road infrastructure, as well as developing alternative uses for coca, using it to manufacture everything from cakes to toothpaste. The approach stands in marked contrast to the previous U.S.-led strategy, which focused on the forcible eradication of coca crops by local security forces, leading to two decades of violent confrontation without reducing coca production or the flow of drugs reaching the United States.

Drawing on over ten years of participant observation and interviews with coca union leaders, peasant farmers, drug traffickers, as well as top-level politicians, this book traces a powerful ethnographic narrative from Morales's inauguration and the political hope that accompanied it to the contemporary moment when increasingly critical voices can be heard from within the ranks. The study departs from the premise that in order to understand the

mounting disillusion, we need to comprehend the operating logic of the agricultural unions and the expectations for governance that this logic created.

The first objective of this book is to analyze how the coca growers built the MAS and put it into power. The book explains the organization of the base-level unions and the way their vernacular democratic practices were scaled up and projected onto the idea of a nation. The book identifies the central role played by the trope of the coca leaf as a means for collective identification: Given the criminalized nature of coca, the farmers had to find a legitimate language to frame their demands. They achieved this by emphasizing coca's cultural and symbolic significance. In the context of a growing global indigenous rights movement, the ethnic discourse gained domestic and international support.

And yet grassroots movements have not always succeeded in getting what they wanted; hence the second objective is to understand the disappointments and internal conflicts that have persisted since the MAS came to power. The book analyzes how grassroots ideas of democracy and accountability have been corrupted as Morales and his aides have directly intervened in the union organization. It also describes how some grassroots union members have come to feel that Morales has fallen short of his initial promises to protect their livelihoods. Conflict stems from the fact that, in accordance with its obligations to the international community, the MAS government has had to stem coca cultivation, which represents the coca growers' main source of income, and attack drug production, which some growers are involved with. Many farmers whom I interviewed were acutely aware that Morales has distanced himself from the unions, and this in turn has led to claims of betrayal.

Over the past ten years there has been an unprecedented interest in Bolivia, Evo Morales, and the movements that support him. What makes this book unique is that it is the first full-length monograph about the Chapare coca growers' unions and their relationship to the MAS. This book tells the inside story, the one the union leaders, politicians, and academics have so far been reluctant to tell—namely, how the coca growers are tied to the international cocaine trade through the production and selling of coca leaf and the processing of coca paste (a first step to processing refined cocaine). The aim of the book is not to highlight the illegal activities of the coca growers, but rather to theorize the contradictions in Bolivia's claim to be an indigenous-led and grassroots-oriented democracy.

I argue that tensions between the coca union and its party (the MAS) stem from the impossibility of reconciling claims to national sovereignty with the constraints imposed by policies that have been skewed by the U.S.-led war on drugs. Through this case study, the book raises important analytical questions—questions about the problems of scaling up grassroots democratic practices, whether trade unions can ever be reconciled with projects of state making, and more broadly, what the implications of such tensions are for social movements beyond the Bolivian case. This book reveals the difficulties of reinvigorating democracy when the policies constraining it go beyond the mandate of popular sovereignty. In this way, it brings to anthropology a transnational perspective in understanding how national and local-level governance is realized.

This chapter opens by setting out the coca growers' vision of democracy and the delight of union members at the potential for new forms of political participation that the MAS's rise to power promised. It then considers debates that emphasize the difference between vernacular politics, which acknowledges the importance of local cultural norms in political mobilizing, and institutional politics. This sets up a framework for understanding the challenges generated when the vernacular becomes institutional, as was the case for the MAS. The chapter subsequently introduces the field site and considers the specific drug control policies that have impacted the lives of coca farming families in Bolivia. This serves to introduce the core dilemma at the center of the book—namely, the challenge Morales faced in satisfying the material demands of the rank and file in a context where their livelihoods are internationally outlawed.

A Government of Social Movements

In 2005, against a backdrop of political turmoil and widespread disenchantment with democracy[1] (popular uprisings had forced two presidents from office in 2003 and 2005), Evo Morales, the left-wing leader of the six Chapare coca growers' unions, was elected as president of Bolivia with 54 percent of the vote. This was the first time any political party had won a majority since the return to democracy in 1982. Morales and the MAS scored equally resounding victories in the 2009 (64 percent) and 2014 (61 percent) national elections, and a 2008 recall referendum (when Morales took 67 percent of the vote).

The 2005 MAS victory marked a sea change in Bolivian history; until then politics had been dominated by a small group of white *creoles*, and was very much seen as "the private business of elites" (Alvarez, Dagnino, and Escobar 1998: 9). By contrast, the MAS was established by a confederation of agricultural unions (led by the coca growers' union); as such it was composed of outsiders with few links to the political establishment. The rise of Morales (who was born to an Aymara family) was also symbolic, marking an end to the white elite control of the state apparatus, in a country where 63 percent of the population self-identify as indigenous (INE 2003: 157). When the MAS came to power, there was a palpable sense of hope that substantive change was now possible (Madrid 2011: 254).

The day before his official swearing-in as president in January 2006, Morales was honored with a ceremony of investiture at Tiwanaku, the ruins of an ancient Aymara temple located close to the capital city, La Paz. During the ceremony, Morales was dressed in a replica of a tunic worn by pre-Incan priests; he accepted a traditional staff of authority and the blessing from a *Yatiri* (an Aymara healer and priest). Standing barefoot in front of the Kalasasaya temple, Morales addressed tens of thousands of supporters, many wearing T-shirts that read "500 years of indigenous and popular resistance." Morales proclaimed that he would found the nation anew, but this time with and for the indigenous majority. He told the crowd, "For the first time in Bolivian history, Aymaras, Quechuas, and Mojeños, *we are presidents*. Not only Evo is the president, sisters and brothers" (Morales 2006: 13). The following day, at his official inauguration in La Paz, Morales reiterated this commitment: "I will fulfill my duty, as Subcommander Marcos[2] says, to command by obeying the people. *I will lead Bolivia obeying the Bolivian people*" (*Pagina Doce* 2006).

At the behest of the social movements, Morales made efforts to reconfigure state–society relations by following some of the tenets of direct democracy practiced by grassroots organizations. The MAS administration introduced new participatory mechanisms, including frequent elections and plebiscites, new consultative bodies,[3] the recall of representatives, and innovative methods for *social control*[4] at every state level (Anria 2016a). During the first MAS administration, a handful of social movement leaders (who were selected by grassroots movements) were given cabinet positions and other posts, partly as spoils but also as a way to transform the state as a colonial institution. Morales held regular popular consultations with social

Figure I.1. Morales attends a celebration in the Chapare, February 2006. Photo by author.

movement actors, and he frequently traveled all over the country to attend grassroots meetings.

Significantly for this book, Morales has continued in his role as the executive general secretary of the coca growers' unions.[5] As a result, Morales regularly travels to the Chapare region to attend union meetings, sports events, cultural events, and celebrations (which mostly revolve around the inauguration of government-sponsored infrastructure) (see figure I.1). At union meetings in the Chapare, Morales invariably opens his speeches by stating that his job is to follow the will of the grassroots and that he will "lead by obeying." Morales invites the rank and file to treat him as if he were nothing more than another union member, using phrases such as "tell me when I make a mistake," "please guide me," "this is not the government of Evo Morales alone, this is our government."[6]

Ever since Morales came to power, debates have raged about the role that Bolivia's social movements play in government. On the one hand, supporters have held up Morales and the MAS as an example of popular democracy that works. They argue that it is only right that "the people" are empowered to participate in politics and to rewrite constitutions to transform society (Escárzaga 2012b; García Linera, Tapia, and Prada 2007). Sociologist (and vice president of Bolivia) Alvaro García Linera goes further than most, ar-

guing that the MAS functions as an extension of the social movements from which it emerged. For him, the MAS represents a new form of government, one that is run by and for its social movement base[7] (see García Linera 2006, 2014). In his own words: "Evo-ism as a political and ideological current is a form of political self-representation of the plebeian society, which makes it possible for the social movements to access the highest levels of state decision making" (García Linera, cited in Mayorga 2009: 110). García Linera (2006: 30) has argued that MAS's approach to democracy and state building has regional and global resonance.

On the other hand, there are those who characterize Morales and the MAS as a dangerous and antidemocratic force. Observers have pointed out that Morales continues to act as if he is a union leader, employing anti-institutional and confrontational strategies to get his way (Farah 2009; Laserna 2010).[8] Some have characterized Morales as a *caudillo*,[9] a populist strong man, who eliminates his rivals and rewards those who are loyal to him (Laserna 2007; Molina 2013: 11; Zuazo 2010). Far from empowering social movements, Gaya Makaran (2016) argues that Morales and the MAS have co-opted them through ties of clientelism and patronage (the distribution of jobs and economic resources), both long-standing features of Bolivian political culture (Albro 2007; Lapegna and Auyero 2012; Lazar 2004). The coca growers have received sharp criticism from the national press (building in part from their demonization during the 1990s war on drugs), but also from academics. Eduardo Gamarra (2007: 12) has argued that the coca farmers have been bought off with the legalization of coca leaf and now represent a "praetorian guard" that Morales "can mobilize to obtain specific gains." Political scientists have typified Bolivia under Morales variously as a "competitive authoritarian" regime (Levitsky and Loxton 2013; Weyland 2013), a "semi-democracy" (Mainwaring and Pérez-Liñán 2015), and even a "full-blown authoritarian regime" (Mayorga 2017: 66).

What is interesting is that both those in favor and those against Morales implicitly acknowledge that there is an alternative to the liberal (read: Western) political system and that somehow the MAS is enacting it. Scholars who occupy the middle ground have been more skeptical, however. They point out that the MAS represents neither the revolt of the masses nor autonomous constituent power; rather, they argue that the MAS works within the preexisting liberal framework, but is nevertheless committed to instituting a substantive new state model that can more effectively engage its citizens. These scholars have contested the characterization of Morales

and the MAS as authoritarian, arguing that while the institutional base has been partially undermined, democracy overall has benefited from the expansion of political participation under the current government (Anria 2016b; Barrios Suvelza 2017; Cameron 2014; Postero 2010; Wolff 2013).

While there has been a great deal of scholarship on the role of Bolivia's social movements in government, there has been relatively little research on how these enhanced forms of direct democracy play out at the grassroots, particularly among Morales's core support base. At the time of the 2005 election, I was carrying out fieldwork in the Chapare with the coca growers' unions. In the months following the historic victory, echoing Morales's words, coca growers told me, "all of us are presidents," "with Evo in power it's just as if we are governing," and "there are lots of Evos here." But with ten years' hindsight, it appears as if Morales's initial promises have faltered. On follow-up fieldwork in 2015, union members no longer spoke of bottom-up control. Instead, they complained that when Morales visits the Chapare they cannot get close to him,[10] that he is not available to assist with their problems, and that he has abandoned them. In the words of one older female coca grower: "Before Evo was really valued here, he was so well received. He often used to stay here [at her house]. But now he seldom comes, he has forgotten about us." Even high-ranking leaders told me that now that Morales is president he does not answer their phone calls, and when he does, he has no time to talk or will immediately reject their proposals. One male coca grower in his fifties put it this way: "These are not the principles of the political instrument [the MAS], this is not what we set out to do."

The objective of this book is to explore what the coca growers hoped to achieve in government and the extent to which these expectations were met. The main empirical questions driving the study are: What does democracy mean to the coca growers? How have these ideas been scaled up to shape expectations of how the MAS should act once in power? What was promised, and what has Morales been unable to deliver? What reactions has this provoked on the part of the rank and file? How has Morales responded to challenges to his authority? And, more broadly, what happens to the political potential of a union when it blurs with the government? To answer these questions, it is first necessary to take a theoretical detour. In what follows I explain how anthropologists have seen democracy as a culturally specific and historically contingent concept, one that lacks a stable reference point, even if people have very clear ideas about what democracy might mean to them.

Alternative Visions of Democracy

One of the most influential definitions of democracy comes from Joseph Schumpeter, who reduced it to a set of procedures and forms. For Schumpeter, democracy is a system "for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote" (Green and Gallery 2016: 46). In this reading, voting is the defining feature of democracy. Departing from this, political scientists have argued that once countries develop a certain level of wealth, a robust civil society, and a constitutional framework that safeguards basic political rights, then their (representative) democracy is secure (Diamond 1994; Schedler 1998); it becomes, in the words of Linz and Stepan (1996: 15), "the only game in town."

For decades global events largely supported this hypothesis. The "third wave of democratization" began when, at the close of the Cold War, Eastern European countries became electoral democracies, as did parts of Asia, Africa, and Latin America (Huntington 1993). By 1999, 119 of a possible 192 countries could be described as electoral democracies, totaling almost 60 percent of the world's population, leading the research organization Freedom House to denote the twentieth century as the "democratic century" (Freedom House 1999). Nobel Prize winner Amartya Sen (1999) even referred to democracy as a "universal value."

But these gains have not been as secure as once thought, and today democracy seems to be in poor shape. Signs of democratic malaise are everywhere, from Athens to Washington (Bermeo 2016; Diamond 2015). In the United States, voter turnout in 2016 dipped to its lowest point in two decades (Wallace 2016), confidence ratings for the Supreme Court and the presidency are well below their historical average, and trust in Congress is scraping the bottom of the barrel (Jones 2015). There is evidence that increasing numbers of people are open to populist alternatives with an authoritarian tinge, as the rise of Donald Trump attests (Foa and Mounk 2016; MacWilliams 2016). Discontent has spread to other Western, supposedly liberal democracies. In Europe support for antisystem (right-wing) populist parties is on the rise (Berezin 2009), and the United Kingdom's decision to leave the European Union has been read by some as a sign not only of dissatisfaction with government, but with democracy itself (Koch 2017b).

Latin America's democratic transition began in 1978 with the end of military dictatorships and the restoration of basic civil and political rights

to most counties in the region (this happened in Bolivia in 1982). But even here, opinion surveys conducted at the turn of the millennium revealed a growing dissatisfaction with democracy (Valenzuela 2004: 6). Academics have explored the contradictions of democratic politics on the continent, which in many places means little more than the right to vote while poverty deepens under economic neoliberalism (Auyero and Swistun 2009; Holston 2008; Paley 2001). Civil rights have been undermined by endemic racism, corruption, police violence, and crime (Caldeira 2000; Goldstein 2012; Zeiderman 2016), giving rise to what Teresa Caldeira and James Holston (1999) have referred to as "disjunctive democracy." Since 2000 popular uprisings, military actions, and legislative deposals have ousted democratically elected presidents from Argentina to Venezuela.[11]

Political theorists have sought to explain both the genesis of and responses to the growing malaise. Academics have pointed the finger at the way politics in Europe and the United States has been taken over by a technocratic elite (Mair 2013), the dissolution of left and right distinctions (Kalb 2009), the undue influence of corporate lobbyists (Crouch 2004), and the power of the mass media (Manin 1997: 218–26). Combined, these factors have corrupted or "hollowed out" politics (Mair 2013), giving rise to what some scholars have referred to as a "post-democratic" (Crouch 2004) or "post-political" moment (Rancière 1995). But for others, this is only the tip of the iceberg, reflecting a deeper crisis of representation that can be traced to the neoliberal polices advanced in the 1980s, which saw the state's redistributive capacity undermined, the privatization of public goods, and the strengthening of the state's ability to police disorder (Brown 2009: 37–59, 2015; Wacquant 2012).

Cook, Long, and Moore (2016) argue that such macropolitical and economic narratives of disenchantment are very useful, but they tell only part of the story. In order to understand the reasons why people have turned their backs on democracy as an ideal, we have to look more closely at social relationships, affect, and ethical subjectivities. Insa Koch (2016) further argues that from citizens' own perspectives, while macro changes to the economy and politics (such as neoliberalism and technocratic governance) might well have had an impact, their own experiences of betrayal and abandonment do not correspond one-to-one with a retreat form the democratic project (see also Koch 2017c). Anthropology's key contribution in this regard, then, is to connect cultural elements and issues of governance more broadly to understand how one is mediated through the other.

Anthropologists have moved away from the focus on the ballot box to consider citizens' own criteria for evaluating democracy, and the way these vernacular ideas are rooted in deeper social processes (Hickel 2015; Koch 2018; Michelutti 2008; Spencer 1997). For example, Sian Lazar (2008: 91–117) challenges the standard reading of elections as merely formal procedures, showing how they are a way to establish personalized relationships with politicians. In this sense, voting is not just about the electoral moment; rather, it is about everything else that comes before and after (see also Auyero 2001; Gay 2010; Jaffe 2015; Koch 2016). Researchers have also worked with a range of social movements, from indigenous peasant activists to Occupy Wall Street protestors, to examine how they have articulated alternative visions of democracy to those offered by the formal political system (Graeber 2014; Maeckelbergh 2009; Nash 1997a; Nugent 2010; Razsa and Kurnik 2012).

While acknowledging that subaltern groups forge their own political cultures, it is important to recognize that alternative and dominant practices are never entirely divorced from one another (Roseberry 1994). Thus, when considering vernacular forms of politics we need to ask where their inspiration and practices are drawn from and acknowledge some overlap. For example, Orin Starn (1999: 105–54) shows how self-governing peasant communities in the Peruvian highlands emulate features of state bureaucracy in their internal organization (see also Colloredo-Mansfeld 2009), and even apparently "age old" democratic traditions, such as "building consensus," might turn out to be quite recent inventions (Nader 1990).

Drawing inspiration from this work, it is argued here that, for the Chapare coca growers, democracy really has nothing to do with what are often taken to be the core elements of the liberal system, including competitive elections, individual liberties, universal suffrage, and the secret ballot—what David Nugent (2008: 24–27) refers to as "normative democracy." Rather, in their unions, they pursue a form of direct participatory democracy in which all members of the community meet to debate, decide, and enact their laws. Most importantly, there are strong pressures for leadership to remain deferential and collective; in the local vernacular they must "lead by obeying." The fact that the coca growers practice a form of democracy that clashes with the Western liberal ideal is not in and of itself that extraordinary; alternative democratic practices are actually quite widespread (Comaroff and Comaroff 1997; Conzelman 2007; Feuchtwang 2003; Rayner 2014). What makes this case stand out is that the coca growers'

political party (the MAS) has transformed into an organization responsible for building a government and therefore for ruling a country.

When the MAS came to power in 2006, status quo views of the nation, the state, and democracy were brought into question. For the coca growers, the state went from being thought of as negligent or, worse still, an enemy, to something that they could now reach, and even control. When they said "all of us are presidents," they were laying claim to a new form of citizenship, one that is modeled on the forms of self-governance found at the grassroots, including continuous deliberation and compliant leaders (Grisaffi 2013). However, as we will see, once voted into government, the principle of "leading by obeying" becomes difficult to enforce as the idea of "the people" becomes abstracted from the concrete into an "imagined community" to be governed.

The challenges presented by the shift from movement to government is nowhere better illustrated than in the case of coca, which transformed from being a means of safeguarding livelihoods for the local agricultural unions to becoming a potentially illegal threat that the government had to control from the top down. The tension stems from the fact that while the MAS government has stressed its desire to free Bolivia of U.S. imperialism, the country exists in a global context where powerful actors place limits on change, and thus courses of action are not always set domestically (Postero 2017: 33). Let us now take a step back to consider the international context of drug war politics and the implication this has for the possibilities of grassroots politics. We will see that Morales was never going to be able to fully satisfy the material demands emanating from the bases, which revolve around the right to grow unlimited coca.

The Drug War in the Andes

"America's public enemy number one in the United States is drug abuse," Nixon declared in June 1971. "In order to fight and defeat this enemy, it is necessary to wage a new, all-out offensive" (Becket 2017). Two years later he declared, "This Administration has declared all-out, global war on the drug menace" (Nixon 1973). Policy makers came to focus on cocaine, which by the mid-1980s had affected the lives of up to twenty-two million users in the United States. The violence associated with its use (particularly related to crack cocaine)[12] transformed the drug into the number-one priority for

U.S. “drug warriors” and led to the dramatic militarization of the overseas drug war (Gootenberg 2012: 166).

Over the past thirty years, the United States has channeled billions of dollars to Latin American military and police forces to enable them to undertake counter-narcotics operations. The logic underlying source-country enforcement is that by reducing supply, the street price of illicit drugs will increase and in turn dissuade people who live in consumer countries (principally the United States) from buying them (Youngers and Rosin 2005b). But after three decades, the supply of drugs reaching the United States is as robust as ever (Mejía 2017). Today consumers in the United States spend some $100 billion dollars every year on illegal substances (Kilmer et al. 2014) and, while cocaine consumption has decreased since 2008,[13] the United States still represents the single largest market for cocaine in the world[14] (UNODC 2016d).

The three largest coca-producing nations are Colombia, Peru, and Bolivia. The most recent UN coca surveys estimate that Colombia has 146,000 hectares of coca (UNODC 2017a), Peru 40,300 hectares (UNODC 2016c), and Bolivia 23,100 hectares (UNODC 2017b). The U.S. drug warriors focus in the Andean region has been the aggressive eradication of coca crops. Eradication is most often done manually: military conscripts, accompanied by heavily armed members of the police, enter small farmsteads to uproot coca plantations (Colombia is the only country in the region to permit the aerial fumigation of coca crops). Coletta Youngers and John Walsh argue that forced eradication is a deeply entrenched aspect of U.S. international drug control policy. They write: “It has the appeal of seeming ‘tough’ and straightforward—if we wipe out drugs at the ‘source,’ they won’t make it to our shores—and it has attained enormous political and bureaucratic inertia” (Youngers and Walsh 2010: 1). The United States has pressured its southern neighbors to comply with its drug policy goals through an annual process termed certification. This is an evaluation of each country’s performance against U.S.-imposed antidrug targets. Countries that do not fulfill U.S. goals are punished by decertification; sanctions include the withholding of development assistance, credit, and trade benefits (Joyce 1999).

Forced eradication puts the burden of the war on drugs onto small farmers who gain the least from the trade and generates multiple harms: eradicating crops destroys local economies, criminalizes some of the poorest and most vulnerable sectors of society, and legitimizes oppressive policing. In the Andean region eradication teams have killed, abused, and seriously

wounded scores of coca farmers, torched homesteads, and incarcerated thousands of people. Institutional damage has been further compounded by the impunity that U.S.-backed security forces frequently enjoy (Youngers and Rosin 2005a). Not only is eradication harmful, but also the strategy is grossly inefficient.[15] It generates incentives for poor farmers to replant by forcing up the price of coca while simultaneously denying farmers their only source of income. When crops are eradicated in one area, they simply expand elsewhere, a phenomenon that policy analysts refer to as the "balloon effect" (Dion and Russler 2008; Mansfield 2011).[16]

The enormous cost of the war on drugs, coupled with the fact that it is not actually reducing the flow of drugs northward (see Mejía 2010), has prompted some observers to suggest that U.S. policy on drugs is not a standalone issue. It has been argued that the U.S. motivation for escalating its militarized fight against drugs at the end of the Cold War was to justify the build-up of a military presence in the region and thereby secure U.S. corporate interests (Corva 2007; Paley 2014; Tokatlian 2010). Winifred Tate (2015) has studied the implementation of Plan Colombia, the backbone of the U.S. drug war strategy in Colombia[17] (2000 to 2012). Tate argues that the militarization of U.S. drug policy was driven by institutional interests, including the U.S. Southern Command's efforts to enhance its profile, the Clinton administration's concern about being thought of as "soft on drugs," and the expansion of the military-industrial complex into drug enforcement operations.

In the Andean countries, coca cultivation is concentrated in marginal areas, characterized by minimal civilian state presence, limited infrastructure, and high rates of poverty. In this context, the decision to grow drug crops is highly rational, especially in the face of steady demand. Coca is a nonperishable, robust crop, with a high value, and the market for it is relatively stable (see figure I.2). Coca complements subsistence farming and, in the absence of other income-generating activities, is one of the few pursuits that provide farmers with access to cash income, which is essential for survival (Grisaffi and Ledebur 2016: 4). As Peru, Colombia, and Bolivia have their own unique history, culture, and traditions related to coca, each country pursues a different approach to regulation.

Colombia penalizes coca most severely; all aspects of production, consumption, and commercialization are outlawed. The Colombian state has long embraced U.S.-designed and U.S.-funded eradication strategies (although over the past six years Colombia's leaders have begun to question

Figure I.2. Men drying coca. Photo by author.

the sustainability of the U.S. approach; see Collins 2014). Under the auspices of Plan Colombia, the government sprayed an average of 128,000 hectares per year (between 2000 and 2012) with the defoliant glyphosate (also known by its brand name Round-Up). Researchers from Bogota's Universidad de los Andes found that people who live in spray zones suffered from a variety of ailments including skin, respiratory, and gastrointestinal problems, and that exposure to spraying increased the incidence of miscarriages. The herbicides have caused environmental damage (including water contamination and land degradation) and affected food and cash crops, undermining food security (Camacho and Mejía 2015). Spraying pushes peasants off the land, accelerating processes of displacement (Dion and Russler 2008).

Colombia's harsh stance toward coca can be traced to the fact that the country has comparatively limited traditional consumption, and so unlike in Peru and Bolivia there is no widespread support for it (Ramirez 2011: 55). Further, the major guerrilla groups, including the Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia—FARC) and right-wing paramilitaries were known to finance their activities by taxing coca production (Ibáñez and Vélez 2008; Thoumi 2002). Given the

illegal status of coca in Colombia, the people who farm it have long been criminalized and subject to repressive measures. In response, the coca growers have mobilized, casting their social movement as a civic action to demand citizenship rights and the inclusion of themselves and the region into the nation-state (Ramirez 2011).

In Peru, coca leaf consumption is common in highland areas, particularly among rural populations, but it is also consumed by middle-class urban professionals and is served as a tea to tourists in Cusco to help them cope with the high altitude.[18] Peru's coca legislation is less rigid than Colombia's, because while the state officially condemns coca chewing and prohibits private coca cultivation, it nevertheless authorizes limited coca production and commercialization for medicinal, scientific, and industrial purposes (Ramirez 2011: 56). All (legal) coca is sold through the state coca company, ENACO (la Empresa Nacional de la Coca), with annual exports valued at approximately $6.5 million dollars (Ledebur 2016). Peru receives significant U.S. counter-drug aid and has ambitious plans to eradicate half the country's coca crop over the coming years (Gootenberg 2014). Coca growers in Peru have mobilized against eradication programs, but unlike their Bolivian counterparts, their political impact has been limited because of internal divisions among growers, distance from the capital city Lima, association with terrorism in the public mind (the Shining Path Maoist guerrilla group continues to operate in coca-producing regions), and a weak identification with indigenous causes (Durand Ochoa 2014).

Long Live Coca, Death to Yankees

Bolivia ranks a distant third in Andean drug production, but given the country's small economy, income from coca and cocaine has always been more significant than in either Peru or Colombia. In 2006 (the year Morales assumed office), the market for dried coca leaf was worth $180 million dollars, representing 2 percent of Bolivia's GDP and 13 percent of the GDP in the agricultural sector (UNODC 2007). By 2016 this figure had increased to $276 million dollars annually, but because of the rise in rents from hydrocarbons and mining,[19] it represented a smaller overall contribution to Bolivia's GDP (UNODC 2017b). Bolivia has two main coca growing regions, the Yungas and the Chapare.

The Yungas, which sits to the north of La Paz, produces approximately 60 percent of Bolivia's coca crop (UNODC 2016b). Here coca is cultivated

on steep terraced slopes alongside tropical fruit and coffee. Most of the 30,000 Yungas coca growers claim Aymara descent, but there is also a significant Afro-Bolivian population.[20] The Yungas coca growers are organized into six agrarian federations, which are united into a confederation, the Consejo de Federaciones Campesinas de los Yungas (COFECAY). Coca has been cultivated in the Yungas valleys for centuries, first to supply the Inca kings and later, during the colonial period, the mines of Potosí (Meruvia 2000; Soux 1993). From her research in the Yungas, Alison Spedding (1994) emphasizes the importance of rituals that accompany labor in the fields and the reciprocal modes of labor exchange (known as *ayni*) as a means for the reproduction of social identities. Spedding refers to the coca field as a "total social fact" (Spedding 1997). Yungas coca leaf is highly valued in Bolivia, as the small, green, sweet Yungas leaves are considered to be the best to chew. The Yungas crop is now the country's largest, and a significant proportion is probably destined for the illegal cocaine trade (Farthing and Ledebur 2015: 14).

By contrast, the Cochabamba Tropics, or the Chapare as it is more commonly known, has only been settled since the 1950s. It is a vast region covering more than 24,000 square kilometers (a landmass equivalent to New Hampshire or Wales) stretching over three provinces, Chapare, Tiraque, and Carrasco. The elevation ranges from 200 to 500 meters above sea level,[21] and consists of lowland tropical forests, wide rivers, and floodplains (see figures I.3 and I.4). It is hot and humid; indeed, the name Chapare is derived from *ancha paran*, Quechua for "it's very rainy." True to its name, average rainfall stands at 5,000 mm, with the wettest months being January and February (Eastwood and Pollard 1986). Bolivia's main road (built in the 1970s with U.S. funding) cuts through the region, connecting Santa Cruz and Cochabamba, Bolivia's first and fourth largest urban areas, respectively.

In 2012, the population of the Cochabamba Tropics stood at just under 190,000 people; the majority are migrants from the Cochabamba valleys and mining centers in the highlands, many of whom were previously engaged in militant miners' trade unions (INE 2014). As one farmer explained, "The Chapare, it's a cosmopolitan place, we come from all over the country." According to the 2001 census, over 80 percent of the local population self-identify as Quechua, and most people are bilingual, speaking a mixture of Quechua and Spanish (PNUD 2005: 302).[22] The roughly 45,000 families are dedicated to agriculture: they refer to themselves as *campesinos* (peasant

Figure I.3. A view of the Chapare. Photo by author.

Figure I.4. A typical Chapare house. Photo by author.

farmers), *cocaleros* (coca growers), *Chapareños* (residents of the Chapare), or *colonos* (settlers who came from the Andean region). In this book I use these terms interchangeably in both Spanish and English.

Unlike Peru and Colombia, where coca consumption in restricted, in Bolivia coca use is accepted across most sectors, regions, and ethnicities (Gootenberg 2016: 5). It is best thought of as a national custom, much like drinking tea is for the British. An EU-funded study published in 2013 concluded that about three million Bolivians (30 percent of the population) chew coca on a regular basis, and the majority consume coca as a tea or in the form of other legal coca-based products (Farfán 2013).[23] The most prolific chewers are truckers, peasants, laborers, miners, and small-scale merchants, who value its qualities as a moderate stimulant to suppress hunger and fatigue.[24] The practice of chewing coca has spread to the cities, where some middle-class professionals consume it, and even to the border with Argentina, where it is served on silver plates in elite settings (Rivera 2003). The widespread use of coca in Bolivia has fed into sentiments of what Paul Gootenberg has referred to as "coca nationalism," which, "like most strands of national identity, is a protean or invented tradition" (Gootenberg 2016: 5).

Given the important role coca plays in Andean rituals and society (Carter and Mamani 1986), simply banning the leaf (as UN conventions demand) would have led to massive social upheaval. Thus Bolivia's antidrug Law 1008 (in effect between 1988 and 2017), passed in 1988 under intense pressure from the U.S. government[25] (Albó 2008b: 59), dictates that 12,000 hectares of coca could be grown legally for domestic consumption in the Yungas higher-altitude "traditional zones."[26] Cultivation anywhere outside of the traditional zones (including in the Chapare and frontier lower-elevation Yungas areas) was outlawed and slated for eradication.[27] In this way, legislators turned the Chapare farmers into the "enemy" in the war on drugs (Albó 2002c: 75). As we will see over the coming chapters, the law created tensions between Chapare and Yungas growers, whose respective legal and economic situations have differed significantly.

Beginning in the mid-1980s, the United States launched ferocious coca eradication and interdiction campaigns in the Chapare. Crop eradication provoked a severe economic crisis among growers, who were only eligible for development assistance after losing their main source of income. During escalating cycles of protest and repression (see figure I.5), security forces killed dozens of coca growers and left many more injured (Ledebur 2005).[28] It is argued here that the ongoing military and police repression

Figure I.5. Conflict in the Chapare. Photograph courtesy of Andean Information Network and Dr. Godofredo Reinicke.

turned the Chapare coca growers' union into a powerful force to contest the state's anti-coca policies. One leader explained, "We had to defend ourselves, and so we built this organization to face up to this politics of zero coca, to combat the discrimination of the neoliberal system."

Throughout the 1990s, the Chapare unions, and (after 1996) their political party, the MAS, redefined the parameters of the national coca debate. Pablo Stefanoni (2003: 15–21) explains that while the governments of Bolivia and the United States associated coca leaf with illegality and drug trafficking, the unions emphasized the long history of traditional coca use, arguing that it represents one of the most profound expressions of Andean indigenous culture, not to mention a strategic resource that could be used to promote national development. In this way, the fight to defend coca leaf became synonymous with standing up for national dignity in the face of U.S. intervention, which had taken on increasingly imperial characteristics (Stefanoni 2007; Vargas 2014; Viola 2001). The projection of the coca leaf as a symbol of national sovereignty, captured by the union's call to arms, "Long live coca, death to Yankees," served in part to tie national movements together to bring about the process that put Evo Morales in power (Grisaffi 2010).

And yet, while the Chapare peasants have used the traditional status of the coca leaf to defend their crops against forced eradication, they are nevertheless aware that a percentage of their harvest is used for cocaine production. Moreover, some farmers are directly involved in the artisanal production of coca paste (also known as base paste). There is no way to know exactly how many people are involved in processing drugs, or how much of the coca produced in the Chapare feeds into the illicit trade, but many coca growers assured me that it is the cornerstone of the local economy. While in opposition, Morales and the MAS never had to be explicit on coca's relationship with cocaine: in the face of repressive policing, the promise was simply to end the war on drugs, to demilitarize the region, and to defend traditional coca leaf use. By sidestepping the issue of cocaine, Morales generated unrealistic expectations among rank-and-file union members, and so it was inevitable that, once in office, he would disappoint.

Coca Yes, Cocaine No

As the country's president, Morales must address drug trafficking, not only in response to international pressure but also because the MAS recognizes the negative social and environmental impacts of cocaine production (Kohl and Bresnahan 2010: 16). When Morales assumed the office in 2006, he was, in the words of one union leader, "stuck between a rock and a hard place" (*entre la espada y la pared*). His government could not resume forced eradication; to do so would have alienated the MAS's core support base. But neither could the government allow unlimited coca cultivation, as this would have turned Bolivia into an international pariah. Instead, the government opted to extend a policy originally ratified by the administration of Carlos Mesa (2003–5) in 2004, which allows each registered peasant farmer in the Chapare to grow a limited amount of coca, known as a *cato* (1,600 square meters), and demilitarized the region. The MAS government informally raised the amount of coca that could be grown nationally from 12,000 to 20,000 hectares, which allowed for 7,000 hectares of coca to be grown in the Chapare (the national limit was increased to 22,000 hectares in 2017).[29]

Over the past ten years there has been a gradual softening in international opinion toward coca at a global level: as a result of Bolivian pressure, in 2013 the United Nations accepted the right to traditional coca consumption within Bolivian territory. At the same time, peasant farmers

are less resistant to developing alternative livelihoods to coca as a result of government-led integrated development initiatives (Grisaffi 2016; Grisaffi, Farthing, and Ledebur 2017). The Bolivian state, then, can be thought of as a mediator or buffer between these two conflicting poles. The MAS both challenges the absolutism of the international regime (by diversifying coca politics and fighting for the legalization of coca leaf at the level of the United Nations), but also challenges peasants to gradually move away from dependence on coca through its innovative development-first policies and high levels of state investment in the region (including the building of factories and the expansion of basic infrastructure). By 2015 the Bolivian state had successfully brought coca down to its 20,000-hectare national limit, and it had created a new regulatory regime. Significantly, these goals were achieved while simultaneously respecting human rights in coca-growing regions (Farthing and Ledebur 2015). For this reason, Bolivia's new coca policy has been called the world's first "supply-side harm reduction" approach (Farthing and Kohl 2012).

And yet, while these are undoubtedly positive steps, not everyone is sanguine. The cato policy was originally developed with the participation of the coca unions, but it was only supposed to be a temporary arrangement until a study on national coca consumption could be completed, which would form the basis for a new policy. Many rank-and-file members told me that they hoped that Morales would lift the cap on cultivation to allow each member to plant two or three catos (if not several hectares of coca). When this did not occur, some accused the government of selling out, arguing that the cato does not generate enough cash to support a family. More to the point, no modification to the cato agreement would ever have been enough to satisfy expectations, because ultimately the coca growers are dependent on the illegal drug trade (as a market for their crop but also for work), an industry that the Bolivian government cannot and will not support.

The sense of disillusionment with the cato policy, and the coca growers' inability to demand more from Morales, has led some grassroots members to complain of betrayal. Many coca farmers I spoke with said that Morales (and by extension the MAS) no longer looks after them, and that high-level leaders value the maintenance of the party and their own careers over the realization of union goals. This is often narrated in terms of the corruption of grassroots democratic ideals. Rank-and-file members say that leaders do not act as they should; that is, they do not lead by obeying. This contradic-

tion reveals the gap between the aspiration of democracy as a form of self-government and the reality, where external actors (in this case the United States and the United Nations) always impinge on the boundaries of the political community.

The story of the coca growers' struggle from the 1990s to the present day provides an important lens for understanding Bolivia under Evo Morales, the national and international constraints his administration faces, and the MAS's seemingly inexorable trajectory toward top-down, rather than bottom-up, government. But it also makes a broader point about the limits of alternative or vernacular democracies. We saw above that anthropologists of democracy have identified the various forms that democratic practices can take, thus moving away from the liberal ideal that has so often acted as a normative yardstick. But by contrasting the vernacular, the alternative, or the purely local to their received liberal counterparts, this literature also runs the risk of glorifying the former as if they are set in stone. Yet alternative democracies are not statist models, nor can they be isolated from the broader contexts in which they are articulated. As the case of Bolivia's coca growers' struggle shows, Morales's focus on localized models of "leading by obeying" could never have satisfied his bases, whose material livelihoods remain closely entangled in an international drug commodity chain. In short, this book argues that the conditions for the realization of alternative democracies are closely linked to broader political and economic circumstances that both constrain and enable these practices to take hold. As such, its lessons go far beyond the Bolivian case, as these are issues that all social movements have to face.

Structure of the Book

This book is divided into two broad parts: chapters 1, 2, and 3 provide context for the study, while chapters 4 through 7 take different aspects of life in the Chapare and consider how they have been transformed with the MAS in power. The chapters, then, are not in chronological order, but rather tell the story of grassroots mobilization and the limitations and disenchantments that have become apparent over the ten years that I conducted fieldwork (2005–15). I argue that with the MAS in power, rank-and-file union members imagined that a new form of politics would now be possible, one based on the forms of direct democracy found at the grassroots. However,

as we see at every step, Morales (and the MAS) has attempted to increase his control over the union, while simultaneously breaking free of the constraints imposed by grassroots organizations.

The first substantive chapter provides the background necessary to understand the rest of the book. It lays out the history of rebellion to illustrate how the insurgency spearheaded by the coca growers has far deeper roots. The chapter introduces the Chapare, including how the coca growers organized into unions to defend their livelihoods. It then examines the trajectory of the MAS party's formation; it stresses how it has developed from its origins as a radical anti-neoliberal party that was driven by extraparliamentary politics, to its contemporary moderate and reformist profile, which prioritizes electoral politics over mass mobilization.

The objective of chapter 2 is to understand the two aspects of coca, its role in traditional rituals and healing practices on the one hand, and the paths by which it enters into illegal circuits on the other. The chapter begins by outlining the traditional uses of coca and the legislation controlling its production and sale. It then traces the history of migration to the Chapare, drawing attention to the way colonization was intimately bound to the growth of the illicit narcotics industry. Finally, it examines coca paste production in the region today. The chapter shows how coca has genuine sacred value, but is also a commodity that is used for cocaine production.

Chapter 3 focuses on processes of governance at the local level. It first identifies some of the central principles of sociality that guide daily life within the base-level union (or *sindicato* as it is known). It analyzes the paradox that, while the sindicato has the ambition to function like a state and exert control over its members (using fines and sanctions to ensure compliance), at the same time there is a drive toward maintaining accountability at the grassroots. It is argued that what makes coercion consensual and socially accepted is the fact that the union's goals are said to reflect those of each and every member, hence collapsing the distinction between executive power and legislative will within the grassroots union. As we will see, it is precisely this link that Morales broke once in power.

Chapter 4 examines how coca growers built an indigenous political identity linked to coca. The fact that coca is outlawed by international treaties meant that they needed a powerful symbolic way of legitimizing their coca production. The discourse of indigeneity allowed coca to become part of a cultural narrative that permitted the farmers to configure a coherent political movement and gave them a moral justification to reach out and form

alliances with other social movements from across the country. However, the chapter notes the limits of identity politics, including how, once in power, Morales and the MAS have had to deconstruct this political identity to justify continuing coca eradication missions in national parks and in new colonization zones.

Chapter 5 considers coca control policies in more depth. The chapter explains why the farmers are so reliant on coca for their livelihoods and explores the failure of previous drug war policies to convince farmers to plant alternative legal crops. It then considers how the policies that were pursued once the MAS came to power betrayed expectations regarding coca production. The ethnographic data presented in this chapter expose the weakness at the heart of the MAS project, namely how Morales has been unable to protect the interests of the rank and file, and how this in turn generates feelings of resentment and calls the state's legitimacy into question.

Chapter 6 builds on chapter 3 to consider the union's control of local government. It begins by outlining how the organization of the union is based on Andean self-governing principles mixed with Marxist traditions inherited from the miners who migrated to the Chapare after the closure of highland mines in 1986. With reference to municipal government, the chapter then describes how, at the local level, the party's politics mirror the assembly-style democracy of the peasant unions and how this operates. This experience of local governance shaped expectations of the way the MAS should act in government. The chapter thus highlights the political hopes and aspirations that accompanied Morales's victory in 2005, specifically the idea that, with the MAS in power, members of the union would henceforth exercise direct structural control over the state apparatus through their party.

Chapter 7 considers the mechanics by which the union built a formidable regional presence in the late 1990s and early 2000s. The coca growers' radio station, coupled with the transistor radios that circulate in the Chapare, have provided the communication infrastructure to allow the union to function. It shows how, through satellite networks, the coca unions were able to build common ground with other marginalized groups across the country and form a national movement. However, the case study also shows how the station was hijacked and corrupted by the party, and ultimately replaced by a government-backed media presence. The story of the radio station serves to illustrate a broader point about how the MAS administration has broken its link with the unions and interfered in areas that were previously autonomous.

The conclusion reflects on the hopes and aspirations for a new form of politics that accompanied Morales's victory, but also the disillusionment and despondency that soon set in. It considers what the case study of the Chapare coca growers can tell us about the workings of democracy on the margins more broadly. Theoretically, the book analyzes the contradictions regarding how vernacular conceptions of democracy are enacted and the extent to which the larger institutional framework is able to encompass them. It argues that utopian movements have to find a way of reconciling big ideas with the profane and mundane realities of everyday life and to resolve these contradictions in a way that does not alienate the bases.

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1. In 2004 (the year preceding Morales's historic win), only 23 percent of the Bolivian population reported that they had any confidence in political parties, making them the least trusted institution in Bolivia. In 2005 the proportion of people who reported being satisfied or very satisfied with democracy stood at only 24 percent (Seligson and Moreno 2006).

2. Subcommander Marcos was the leader of the Zapatista movement in Chiapas, Mexico, who stepped down in 2014.

3. In 2007 the MAS administration created the National Coordination for Change (La Coordinadora Nacional por el Cambio—CONALCAM) to bring together the heads of Bolivia's social movement organizations with the president, his ministers, and congressional leaders in order to discuss government policies.

4. The concept of grassroots control over leaders was institutionalized in a new constitution adopted in 2009, which enshrines the idea that social movements should oversee government spending and policy as well as public contracts with private companies, something that draws on largely essentialized indigenous community concepts of *social control*. According to Farthing and Kohl (2014: 42), the emphasis on social control in the constitution is as a mechanism to battle corruption. The concept underlies areas as diverse as ensuring health program quality to limiting coca cultivation. The extent to which processes of social control are actually applied is debated, however (Anria 2010, 2016a; Mayorga 2011: 97; Postero 2010; Wolff 2013).

5. Evo Morales is the executive general secretary of both Federación Trópico (the largest and most militant of the Chapare coca unions), and the Confederation of Coca Unions in the Cochabamba Tropics, referred to as the "Six Federations."

6. At a 2006 meeting of all six coca federations, Morales stated, "not only Evo is President, the six federations [coca unions], all of us are presidents compañeras and compañeros" (speech at the closure of the VIII Congress of the Six Federations. La Coronilla, Cochabamba, February 14, 2006).

7. García Linera insists that "governing from below" requires power to be concentrated in the president (Svampa and Stefanoni 2007: 161).

8. Social movements aligned with the MAS have demonstrated outside Bolivia's Congress to put pressure on legislators to pass MAS-sponsored bills, specifically those on agrarian reform and the new constitution. In 2007 MAS supporters (including the coca growers) used protest in an attempt to force the governor of Cochabamba (Manfred Reyes Villa) to resign, going as far as setting the prefecture on fire (Albro 2007: 357). Reyes Villa was ousted in a 2008 recall referendum.

9. *Caudillismo*, which Wolf and Hansen (1967) argue emerged during the tumultuous post-independence years, is an entrenched aspect of political practice in Latin America and can be observed in a range of settings from unions to government (Gledhill 2000: 111–14; Poole 2004; Starn 1992: 105–6).

10. When union members complained that they could not get close to Morales, they were describing how his security detail would form a protective human wall around him.

11. Presidents were removed from office before the end of their term in Argentina (2001), Bolivia (2003 and 2005), Brazil (2016), Ecuador (1997, 2000, and 2005), Honduras (2009), Paraguay (2012), and Venezuela (2002—although Chavez was back in office forty-seven hours later). In addition, there were several unsuccessful efforts, including an attempt to unseat Evo Morales in 2008, which was led by large landowners in Bolivia's eastern lowlands, with tacit support from the United States (Fabricant 2009).

12. Cocaine involves two distinct products, powder cocaine and cocaine-base products, which are commonly referred to as "crack" (in reference to the "cracking" sound it produces when heated). Powder cocaine is expensive in the northern consumer markets; it is normally inhaled, and its use is often associated with upper-middle-class urban consumers. Crack, meanwhile, is a solid form of cocaine that is smoked; it is cheaper, more intense, and is associated with high levels of street crime (Bourgois 1995).

13. From 2006 to 2010 the amount of cocaine consumed in the United States decreased by approximately 50 percent. Experts argue that this was because consumer preferences have shifted to other drugs including marijuana (which has now been decriminalized in more than twenty states) and methamphetamines (Caulkins et al. 2015).

14. The largest retail markets for cocaine in 2013 were the United States (whose 47 percent market share is worth an estimated $40 billion), followed by Western and Central Europe ($34 billion, or 39 percent of the global market) (UNODC 2016d). Cocaine is flowing south too, as demand increases in South America. Brazil's estimated 900,000 users represent the single largest market in South America (Gootenberg 2016).

15. Daniel Mejía (2015) estimates that the cost of eliminating the amount of coca needed to produce one kilogram of cocaine in Colombia is about US$240,000, more than double the price of one kilo of refined cocaine in the United States.

16. As a result of the "balloon effect," although the amount of land under coca cultivation in Peru, Colombia, and Bolivia fluctuated between 1987 and 2008, the total coca acreage in the Andean region as a whole remained remarkably stable, at around 190,000 hectares (Youngers and Walsh 2010: 3).

17. In 2000 the United States and Colombia jointly launched Plan Colombia, a multibillion-dollar "aid" package (80 percent of which was destined for the police and military) with the stated aim of reducing narcotics production by half within six years and to regain security in the country (Mejía 2010). The extent of the project was so

vast that it made Colombia the third largest recipient of U.S. foreign aid by the end of the 1990s.

18. In Lima, which is located on the coast far away from coca-producing zones, coca use is limited, although over the past ten years coca consumption has increased in coastal areas (Gootenberg 2016).

19. Revenues from hydrocarbons and mining increased as a result of higher commodity prices on the global market, but also because of the MAS government's decision to insist on a greater share of the rents in the hydrocarbons industry, currently centered on natural gas.

20. The Afro-Bolivian population are the descendants of slaves who were bought to Bolivia to work in Potosí's silver mines during the colonial period.

21. The 200 to 500 meters figure refers to the main agricultural area of the Cochabamba Tropics; some parts of Chapare, such as Colomi are much higher.

22. The 2001 census indicates that in the municipality of Villa Tunari (where I conducted fieldwork), 70 percent of respondents learned to speak in Quechua as a first language and 81 percent of the population self-identify as Quechua. The remaining respondents said either that they did not identify as indigenous (11 percent) or that they consider themselves Aymara (5 percent) or another indigenous group (3 percent) (PNUD 2005: 302).

23. It is estimated that Bolivians consume approximately twenty thousand metric tons of coca leaf annually, equivalent to approximately 14,000 hectares of production (Burgos Gallardo 2017).

24. Given its medicinal properties (including its power to alleviate altitude sickness), functionaries of the United Nations and the U.S. State Department have enthusiastically sipped on the coca tea offered on arrival at Bolivia's main international airport, located 4,000 meters above sea level (Henman and Metaal 2009: 22).

25. Contrary to dominant narratives, Allan Gillies has argued that Bolivian politicians pushed back against the United States–led "Andean Initiative" in the late 1980s (Gillies forthcoming).

26. Law 1008 also considered the Vandiola Yungas in Cochabamba and the Franz Tamayo Province in La Paz as "traditional zones," but did not stipulate how much coca could be grown there (Farthing and Ledebur 2015: 16).

27. Law 1008 makes a distinction between illegal and "transitional" zones. In illegal zones, coca has to be destroyed immediately. Transitional zones (of which the Chapare is one) were subject to crop substation programs. The law required Bolivia to eradicate a minimum of 5,000 hectares per year (Farthing and Ledebur 2015: 16–17).

28. Crop eradication in the Yungas regions was always done at a slower pace, partly because of its status as a traditional area, but also because the hilly topography and limited access roads meant that peasants could more effectively defend the region against police incursions (Crabtree and Chaplin 2013: 106).

29. The new coca law nearly doubles the area for legal cultivation from the 12,000 hectares allowed under Law 1008 to 22,000 hectares. It legitimates the existing 20,000 hectares of coca fields that were permitted under the 2004 cato accord and adds a further 2,000 to satisfy demands from coca growers in the Yungas of La Paz (Farthing 2017).

1. The Rise of the Coca Unions

1. Laura Gotkowitz has drawn attention to the important role agricultural unions played in promoting the 1952 revolution, a sector of the population that has traditionally been overlooked as historical actors in Bolivia (Gotkowitz 2007).

2. The COB brought together workers' unions from Bolivia's mines, the small manufacturing sector, peasant farmers, indigenous peoples, and some middle-class sectors. Its leadership was always drawn from the militant miners' unions, however.

3. In the early 1960s, USAID armed peasant militias to assassinate left-wing leaders of the miners' unions (Field 2016: 32).

4. At first there were only five coca federations. Federation Yungas split from Federación Trópico in the early 1990s. Growers in Yungas Chapare claimed that they lived in a "traditional area" and hoped to gain special rights under Law 1008. These special rights were never granted by the state, however.

5. The six federations of coca producers are affiliated with the Unified Confederation of Campesino Unions of Bolivia (Confederación Sindical Única de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia—CSUTCB) and the Bolivian Syndical Confederation of Intercultural First Peoples Communities of Bolivia (Confederación Sindical de Comunidades Interculturales Originarios de Bolivia—CSCIOB), which was formerly known as the Bolivian Syndical Confederation of Colonizers (Confederación Sindical de Colonizadores de Bolivia—CSCB).

6. The women's federation exists only as an executive committee; it does not have its own grassroots sindicatos, however (Arnold and Spedding 2005: 94–98).

7. Morales joined forces with Filemón Escobar, a controversial ex-Trotskyist mining leader. Escobar had moved to Cochabamba after the mine closures and the defeat of miner resistance, and increasingly adopted a pro-indigenist political stance (see Escobar 2008).

8. Maria Clemencia Ramirez (2010: 84) has drawn attention to how in coca-growing regions of Colombia normal civil and social rights are suspended. The "state of exception" is a government mechanism used to legitimize military actions against civilians and thereby achieve long-term institutional stability; with reference to Agamben, she describes it as "a technique of government."

9. The Law of Popular Participation (LPP) called for the establishment of oversight committees (*comités de vigilancia*) to provide "social control" over municipal administration and thereby limit corruption. It also empowered local grassroots organizations to participate in the planning process. Each territorial unit (known as a Territorial Base Organization, or OTB) was able to define its own needs for public spending, which were articulated through the Annual Operative Plan (Plan Operativo Anual—POA).

10. The outcome of decentralization in Bolivia has been mixed: in some regions the reforms entrenched long-standing inequalities as mestizo elites came to dominate municipal politics. However, the picture is quite different in regions like the Chapare, where well-organized peasant movements took control of municipal governance and ran it for their own benefit. In the Chapare this has meant investing state funds in previously neglected rural areas, including providing basic infrastructure such as roads,

drinking water, and sanitation, but also the construction of health clinics and schools (Albó 2002a; Albó and Quispe 2004).

11. Organizations at the founding conference of the political instrument in Santa Cruz included La Confederación Sindical Única de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia (CSUTCB), La Confederación Sindical de Colonizadores Bolivianos (CSB), La Confederación Nacional de Mujeres Campesinas Indígenas Originarias de Bolivia "Bartolina Sisa" (CNMCIOB-BS), and the Six Federations of Coca growers of the Tropics of Cochabamba.

12. In Ecuador, with the election of Lucio Gutierrez in 2002, indigenous leaders who had been involved in the general strike and coup that removed Mahuad from office in 2000 were able to join the national government as cabinet ministers. The indigenous movement then saw its moment of triumph fade away into accusations of corruption and patronage as they struggled to make the transition from outsiders to insiders (Collins 2004). Meanwhile, on its accession to power in 2003, the Brazilian Workers Party established a well-differentiated political organization that worked autonomously from its social base (Hunter 2010).

13. No coca union leaders were offered ministerial posts. After Evo Morales, the next most important Chapare coca grower in government is Felipe Caceres, the vice minister for social defense.

14. Even Morales's right-hand man, Vice President Álvaro García Linera (an elite public intellectual), was widely thought to be "not one of us" and therefore not to be fully trusted. Rank-and-file members disparagingly referred to García Linera as "the wife of Evo" and were of the opinion that as a result of his undue influence, the union's more radical proposals had been watered down. In the words of Doña Maria, a leader in her thirties, "In my opinion . . . it was Álvaro who has weakened Evo's position against the transnationals. He made the nationalization softer, more in their favor."

15. Colonialism is used to refer to a state of mind, language, and culture. Decolonization, then, is an attempt to promote a different kind of thinking and approach to state building along indigenous lines (Escobar 2010; Quijano 2007; Walsh 2010).

16. Significant cash transfer programs include the Bono Juancito Pinto, a payment for school attendance; Juana Azurduy, for pregnant and lactating mothers; and Renta Dignidad, a universal pension.

17. An IMF study argues that reductions in inequality and poverty have been driven by income growth at the bottom end of the income distribution (Vargas and Garriga 2015).

18. Bolivia's Gini Index decreased from 0.60 in 2004 to 0.47 in 2014 (World Bank 2016a).

19. Right-wing forces occupied state institutions, closed down airports, and shut down gas pipelines to neighboring countries. Large agribusinesses cut food supplies to the west of the country (where support for MAS is strongest), and key military commanders told Morales they would not obey orders to crush the rebellion. Phillip Goldberg, U.S. ambassador to Bolivia, flew to Santa Cruz to meet with Rubén Costas, the state governor, and one of the leaders of the autonomy movement, during this tense period. Morales subsequently expelled Goldberg (September 2008), declaring him persona non grata for having "conspired against democracy and Bolivia" (Fabricant 2011).

20. Critics have argued that when it comes to natural gas, Bolivia still lacks adequate technical and administrative capacity, energy self-sufficiency, and full-fledged economic sovereignty (Kaup 2010).

21. The no vote (against reelection) took 51.3 percent of the vote and won in all of Bolivia's major cities; meanwhile, the yes vote (in favor of reelection), which took 48.7 percent, prevailed in rural areas and urban peripheries, MAS's traditional heartlands (Achtenberg 2016).

22. There are competing arguments about why Morales failed to secure a victory in the 2016 referendum. The winners claim "the people have spoken," while the losers argue that there was a dangerous misinformation campaign orchestrated by the right (and paid for by the United States). The truth likely lies somewhere in the middle (Gustafson 2016; Stefanoni 2016).

23. Bolivia's economy relies mainly on natural gas exports, which have halved in price since 2014. In 2017 Bolivia is expected to earn $2.1 billion from gas sales, just a third of what it made when prices were high. The IMF estimates that in 2017 GDP grew 3.9 percent, far below the peak of 6.8 percent in 2013. Further, the IMF has warned that Bolivia's overvalued currency is hurting producers of goods besides raw materials (*Economist* 2017).

24. A survey undertaken in 2010 found that 45 percent of farm owners in Villa Tunari municipality would "occasionally" make use of a paid laborer (CPDI 2010: 132).

25. In the Chapare, people (particularly young men) use nicknames to refer to one another. However, for ease I have anonymized informants by using standard Bolivian names.

2. The Lowest Rung of the Cocaine Trade

1. A 2015 news article reported that the police destroyed 2,433 coca paste workshops in the Chapare in 2014 (de los Santos 2015).

2. The website of the Bolivian Special Anti-Narcotics Police Force (Fuerza Especial de Lucha Contra el Narcotráfico—FELCN) records that in 2016 it confiscated almost thirty tons of cocaine in Bolivia (FELCN 2017).

3. *Lejia* is the name of the alkali used to activate the coca. There are several forms of it available; *lejia dulce* (sweet lejia) is made from the ashes of burned vegetable matter, which is mixed with cane sugar and anise.

4. There are clear parallels between Spanish promotion of coca and the way British industrialists encouraged sugar consumption among Britain's working classes during the nineteenth century to provide them with a cheap source of calories while they labored in the factories (Mintz 1986).

5. In 1904 the Coca-Cola Company removed the cocaine alkaloid from its product, but to this day it continues to use de-cocainized coca leaf as a flavoring agent for its formula.

6. Under the terms of the Single Convention, Bolivia's reaccession could have been blocked if sixty-one ratifying parties to the Convention objected.

7. It took over ten years for the MAS administration to approve the new coca law, because an entitled group of growers in what Law 1008 designated the Yungas "tradi-

tional zone" opposed any legalization of cultivation in the Chapare. Initially, the new coca law was going to permit only 20,000 hectares—but an additional 2,000 hectares were permitted to stave off rebellion (Farthing 2017).

8. Ironically, the landowning elites who came to control the cocaine trade in the 1980s emerged as a direct result of U.S. government advisors promoting the formation of an export-oriented agro-industrial sector in the eastern lowlands during the 1950s (Mesa, Gisbert, and Mesa 2003: 664).

9. The practice of dividing plots of land among children meant that the plots steadily decreased in size until they were no longer large enough to support a family.

10. Coca growers are permitted to commercialize a very small amount of coca privately.

11. The amount drug processors will pay for coca leaf varies in line with market conditions, including how much coca is available and the supply of precursor chemicals to process cocaine.

3. **Self-Governing in the Chapare**

1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cfsuUdQpYJo.

2. Speech made by Evo Morales, September 10, 2013, Villa Catorce de Septiembre, Chapare.

3. Godparenthood, or *compadrazgo* as it is known locally, is a form of fictive kinship, whereby a senior member of the community takes responsibility for the education, religious development, or marriage of a more junior partner. The relationship implies a commitment and duties on both sides. For instance, the godparent of a marriage (normally the person who pays for the church ceremony) has the responsibility to check on the young couple and police any untoward behavior. In turn, the couple owe their godparents regular visits, invitations to eat together, and offers of assistance as and when needed (see Spedding 1998).

4. The 2009 constitution legitimizes the practice of community justice for minor crimes and dispute resolution. The constitution does not permit the use of violent punishments (Hammond 2011).

5. In the Chapare's larger villages and towns, the sheriff's position is not necessarily tied to the union, but rather he is elected by the town's civic committee (town council). In all but the very largest towns, the civic committee is composed of people who are also members of the union.

6. In cases of compensation, the claimant has to pay a 10 percent fee to the sindicato (which goes into the community's coffers). This is far cheaper for the claimant than if they were to take the case to an official lawyer.

7. Reciprocity is not only enacted between humans. In peasant communities, offerings of food, alcohol, cigarettes, and blood to the Pachamama (a female earth deity) maintain harmony with the supernatural world and ensure continuity in the returns from crops and flocks (Bolton 2002; Harris 2000b).

8. Here I am referring to Marcel Mauss's observations on the nature of the gift, in which he shows how the triple obligation—to give, to receive, and to return—helps

to create and maintain particular social relations of power and hierarchy within any society (Mauss [1954] 1990).

9. A landowner does in fact benefit from loaning a neighbor or friend land. The person who borrows the land puts considerable time, effort, and resources into clearing the dense foliage and trees (known locally as monte) and planting crops, making the land apt for cultivation in the future.

10. Coca is also repackaged for practical reasons. Coca leaves get hot and humid and can spoil if left too long in a sack.

11. The process of mobilization mirrors the segmentary political systems observed by Evans-Pritchard (1940) in Nuerland.

12. Penelope Harvey and Hannah Knox (2015) have examined how infrastructure facilities (such as roads and public buildings) are symbols of modernization in the Andes.

4. From Class to Ethnicity

1. In urban contexts the word *cholita* is often used pejoratively.

2. Marisol de la Cadena has argued that women are always deemed to be "more Indian" than men (de la Cadena 1995).

3. In the Chapare many women do not wear the pollera. When I asked my friend Leyla if she would wear a pollera, she replied, "No, that is for people who are more from the countryside." See Mary Weismantel's *Cholas and Pishtacos* for a discussion on the link between traditional dress, class, and indigeneity (Weismantel 2001).

4. There is no Quechua nation per se; rather, it is a linguistic group.

5. Ex-mining leader Filemon Escobar vehemently opposed Harris and Albó's argument that the miners were in some way opposed to the indigenous peasant groups (Escobar 1986).

6. I do not want to give the impression that the relationship between coca growers and lowland indigenous peoples such as the Yuracarés is always negative. Yuracarés have settled in coca grower communities (and vice versa). The sense of ethno-racial difference is by no means absolute (Sturtevant 2015).

7. In 2009 the MAS government advanced a plan to put a Brazilian-financed 300-km-long paved road through the middle of TIPNIS to connect the cities of Cochabamba and Trinidad. The road would first pass through several coca grower communities in the Chapare (including the village where I was living), and the farmers had high hopes for it. Some built extra rooms on their houses so they might operate as a motel; others set up small shops; and one peasant subcentral several miles down the road even gathered together to construct a gas station. However, the road project was put on hold in 2011 as a result of pressure from lowland indigenous groups who staged a national march to highlight their concerns over the road's environmental and social impacts. The march was subsequently violently repressed by members of the security forces. Indigenous mobilization against road construction only served to highlight coca growers' conviction that the lowland indigenous groups represent a barrier to development. In a 2013 interview, Don Porfilio, a coca grower leader and municipal councilor, explained that the road had been a "dream" of the coca growers for a long time, but "the indi-

genas [indigenous people] got in the way." He assured me it was absurd to think that the "Yuras" (short for Yuracaré, used to refer to indigenous groups) would not want a road; rather, he insisted that it was foreigners and NGOs who had "manipulated" them and encouraged them to protest in a bid to destabilize the MAS administration. "They [indigenous groups] want development, just like we do. They plant bananas, oranges, and achiote; how are they going to sell those products without a road?" He continued, "A road would be good for them, there would be more movement, more sales, more development." When the government temporarily stalled construction of the road, the unions took matters into their own hands. Besides sending a permanent delegation to Sucre in an effort to repeal Law 180 (which has stalled construction on the road), the coca growers started work on opening the road themselves, contracting machinery and workers to improve the section running up to the border with the TIPNIS park.

8. At the same time that he was pushing through multicultural reforms, de Lozada also rushed through the law of capitalization (a gloss for privatization), which gave the go-ahead for the sale of the state's oil and gas, energy, telecommunications, national airline, and rail companies (Kohl 2002).

9. Observers have commented that, despite advancing a pro-ethnic agenda, the CSUTCB is nevertheless characterized by a tension between leftist, worker-based ideologies and a more "ethnic" set of demands recognizing the indigenous status of the majority of its members (Postero 2017: 28).

10. Personal communication with Penelope Harvey, July 4, 2007.

11. Human rights activists involved in the case confirmed that they had found no evidence of drug trafficking in the affected communities. Moreover, it turned out that both of those killed were not foreigners at all, but rather local residents (AIN 2006).

5. **Community Coca Control**

1. The farmers targeted for resettlement were the members of Federación Trópico, the largest and most militant of the six coca federations.

2. Sarah Radcliffe describes how after September 2001 Washington policy makers viewed indigenous people as potential security threats and destabilizing influences on Latin American nation-states (Radcliffe 2007)

3. In the State Department's April 2008 country reports on terrorism, it is claimed that "Bolivia showed new potential as a possible site for terrorist activity." The report added that supporters and members of the National Liberation Army (ELN), the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC), and Peru's Movimiento Revolucionario Túpac Amaru (MRTA) might be present in Bolivia. However, no evidence was provided to support these allegations (Ledebur and Youngers 2008).

4. According to U.S. data, between 1997 and 2002, land under coca cultivation nationally declined from 45,800 to 18,900 hectares, with most of the reductions being driven by eradication in the Chapare (Jackson et al. 2003: iii).

5. The most significant contribution of USAID programs was the improvement in local road infrastructure (USAID 2005).

6. During the late 1990s and early 2000s, when the local economy was severely depressed (as a result of violent forced coca eradication), farmers would use their coca in barter exchanges known as *trueque* or *cambio* in order to secure highland goods that they could not produce in the tropics; this was beneficial, as it did away with profit-seeking intermediaries (for a discussion of how trueque functions in Peru, see Mayer 2001: 177).

7. Alternative development projects undertaken in the Yungas traditional region (located to the north of La Paz) faced similar challenges. In the late 1980s, the UN launched a crop substitution program known as Agro-Yungas, investing over $21 million. The coffee varieties introduced were more susceptible to disease than local varieties and, just as in the Chapare, market research was absent. After 2001, USAID-led coffee projects had more success, partly because of investments in processing plants, but also because of a growing international demand for specialty coffee. Still, the project was vulnerable to dramatic shifts in the price of coffee, leaving farmers at times in a vulnerable position (Farthing and Ledebur 2015: 18).

8. Since 2008, the official policy in relation to the Yungas of La Paz has been to differentiate between the "traditional" areas (protected under Law 1008) and new zones where coca growing has increased in recent years. In these so-called transitional areas, farmers have also been granted a "cato of coca." Given the steep slopes, the cato is larger, measuring 2,500 square meters. In the "traditional" Yungas area, there is no limit on coca growing (Farthing and Ledebur 2015: 19).

9. The national media and opposition politicians have been critical of investments directed at the Chapare. Commentators decry the lack of strategic planning and the preferential treatment the region seems to receive (Gómez 2013; *Los Tiempos* 2017b; *Pagina Siete* 2015a). One 2012 headline read "Rivers of State Money Flow to the Chapare" (*El Día* 2012b).

10. The government has committed to building a fish-processing plant in Chimore at a cost of $28 million (*El Deber* 2015).

11. In 2016, Bolivia signed drug control agreements with Peru, Brazil, Argentina, and Paraguay. The country also bought high-tech radar units to tackle illegal drug flights, and installed vehicle scanners on the border with Chile to strengthen controls (Yagoub 2016).

12. Clashes between coca growers and government troops have been reported in the media (*Los Tiempos* 2012).

13. Land titling was completed in 2010; as a result, it is no longer possible to subdivide plots.

14. Antistate attitudes can be traced back to the ways in which indigenous taxation was increased in the nineteenth century and was the basis of state revenues (Larson 1995; Platt 1984).

15. The process of making the Chapare legible can be traced further back to the creation of municipalities via the Law of Popular Participation in the mid-1990s (Kohl 2003).

CHAPTER 6. The Unions and Local Government

1. Union leaders acquire T-shirts with federation and MAS logos when they attend union meetings or rallies, and these are given out as gifts by aspiring union or political leaders. The T-shirts are much in demand and are highly prized.

2. The statutes of the women's federation reveal that they share the same demands as the mainstream (read: male) federation, including the protection of coca, territory, and loyalty to the political instrument, but they also include demands specific to women, including "the right to be leaders," "equality of rights," and "the right to have land as women" (Agreda, Rodriguez, and Conteras 1996: 40).

3. Day workers and sharecroppers are not allowed to assume leadership positions because they have no land, and therefore it is suspected that they lack commitment to the union. Full members (read: landowners) worry that they might run off with the sindicato's money.

4. Over the past five years, fusarium (a disease that effects coca) has taken hold, and is killing off the coca plants in the Shinahota municipality; by some accounts as much as two-thirds of the crop has been affected. There are many explanations for why fusarium is happening and why now. Locals muse that it might be a U.S. imperial strategy—a biological weapon released in order to destroy the coca crop. But most believe that "the plague" is a result of intensive farming practices. Since the launch of the cato accord, farmers have jacked up their use of fertilizer and pesticides in order to boost production on their legal 40 × 40 meter plots, and this seems to have had a deleterious impact. Morales and his team do not want the message to get out, as it undermines the notion that they are taking responsibility for the coca–cocaine issue. Thus, the state response to the fusarium has been minimal (Pearson 2016). Lidia's acknowledgment of this issue, and her demand that the government should act on it, therefore might have generated conflict with the executive branch.

5. A further twelve coca farmers faced less severe sanctions (including being banned from selling goods in the local markets) for the role they played.

6. Dissident coca growers, along with a handful of representatives from national-level social movements (including the former general secretary of the Bolivia Workers Central of El Alto, and the "Apu Mallku" (the leader of CONAMAQ), established the National Council for the Defense of Constitutional Rights (or the CNDDC by its Spanish acronym). At its first and only meeting, which was held in Shinahota, it was stated that the CNDCC's goal was to "end the fear of the MAS, and to face up and fight for our constitutional and political rights" (Zelada 2015).

7. The Coca Union's Radio Station

1. Here I refer to only one coca union, because Radio Aurora belongs to only one of the Six Federations (Federación Trópico).

2. Aware of the power of radio to mobilize the workers, the military dictator General Hugo Banzer (1971–78) arranged for televisions to be distributed free of charge in mining

communities, but still the radio exerted a strong influence over the miners (Barrios and Viezzer 1978: 182–85).

3. In 2003, as part of an effort to wean the coca growers off listening to Radio Aurora, the military (with funding from the U.S. embassy) established their own FM station in the Chapare. The station, which was called Radio Tricolor, drafted in professionals from La Paz and played the most up-to-date music. This strategy was not successful, as growers continued to listen to their own station and made several attempts to shut down the rival station, including surrounding it and laying siege on numerous occasions.

4. Over the period I conducted fieldwork, access to other communications devices became more widespread. Most significantly, since 2010 (when the state telecommunications company rolled out the mobile phone network in the region) farmers now have mobile phones, and some have access to the Internet (at cybercafes in towns or via their mobile phone network).

5. ERBOL is by no means the only institution that provides a platform for community radio stations to communicate with one another; it is, however, the largest and has the longest history in Bolivia.

6. Reporters from community-run stations provide updates to ERBOL's main office in La Paz via telephone. These are then compiled into the daily news program, which is transmitted via satellite, downloaded, and rebroadcast by all participating stations.

7. Since 2006 there have been six different vice ministers of coca, and each one is from the Yungas. Commentators have referred to the Yungas dominance in this area as a "quota"; put another way, Morales has given this post to the Yungas organizations to ensure their support for the MAS administration (Choque 2016).

CONCLUSION

1. Manfred Reyes Villa was the governor of Cochabamba between 2005 and 2008. He was a vocal opponent of Evo Morales and the MAS. He angered the coca growers by arguing for a departmental referendum on autonomy, only half a year after the previous one when the "no vote" won with 63 percent of the vote. This suggestion generated massive protests by the social movements aligned with MAS, including a strong presence of cocaleros in the streets of Cochabamba who called for Reyes Villa to resign (Albro 2007: 357).

2. The decriminalization of coca leaf might not actually work in the Chapare farmers' favor. If there were no controls on coca, then anyone could grow it anywhere. History tells us that when coca cultivation is extensive, as it was in the early 1990s, the price drops. Some farmers told me they were concerned about legalization of coca for exactly this reason.

3. The new constitution prevents presidents from serving more than two consecutive terms. The proposed 2019 election would be Morales's fourth term, but his third under the 2009 constitution.