A REVOLUTION IN FRAGMENTS

Traversing Scales of Justice, Ideology, and Practice in Bolivia

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Cover art: Art illustration of Evo Morales and Túpac Katari, from a political poster for MAS (Movement toward Socialism). Design by Drew Sisk.

As always, for Isaiah, Dara, and Romana, in whose presence
"I acknowledge my life, my destiny."

———

Taqi kun sum puquñpataki. ("May everything produce well.")

—QUOTED IN Olivia Harris,
To Make the Earth Bear Fruit (2000)

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Preface

In October 1997, after a week of commemorations that "had a quasi-religious character," as a *New York Times* article put it, the remains of Che Guevara were interred on the grounds of a massive public monument, built in his honor, in the provincial capital of Santa Clara, Cuba. Santa Clara had been chosen by the Castro regime because it had been the site of a critical battle during the Cuban revolution, in which Guevara had led a decisive victory over government forces. Although Guevara had been executed in Bolivia in 1967 after the insurrection he fomented had been violently suppressed by a special Bolivian counterinsurgency unit trained and advised by U.S. military and CIA personnel, the location of his remains was not revealed until the mid-1990s. Retired Bolivian military officers led an international forensic team to a common grave near an airstrip in Vallegrande, where Guevara's skeleton was identified in part because it was the only one that lacked hands. Soon after his execution, his hands had been removed so that his body could be identified through his fingerprints. At some point during the intervening decades, these relics were supposedly acquired by the Castro government in Havana, where they were privately displayed on occasion to visiting luminaires at the Palace of the Revolution.

But what was fascinating about this moment in which the circle of Guevara's revolutionary martyrdom was finally, after thirty years, closed was the way in which it was experienced by average Cubans. Instead of understanding the symbolic importance of Guevara, and by extension the Cuban revolution, in terms of a unifying ideology of global class struggle and the dialectical rhythms of historical materialism, Cubans viewed the legacy of the heroic guerrilla leader in quite varied and vernacularized ways. The same *New York Times* article quotes an aging retiree, for whom the significance of Guevara lay in the simple fact that Guevara's deeds "drove a stake into the heart of the Batista tyranny." In other words, it was not the fact that Che helped steer Cuba on its glorious passage into communism that mattered. Instead, it was that he played a key role in overthrowing a brutal dictatorship that had preserved Cuba as a zone of economic plunder and a play-place for wealthy foreign tourists, gamblers, and the American mafia.

I kept this lesson in mind both during ethnographic research over nine years in Bolivia and during the writing of this book. In trying to come to terms with the meaning and significance of the period 2006–15 in Bolivia, a period variously described as revolutionary, reformist, crypto-neoliberal, and increasingly authoritarian, among others, it was this basic tension that recurred time and again—the tension between the politics of ideological "condensation," in Victor Turner's terms, and the centrifugal realities of everyday life. In a sense, the anthropological dilemma mirrored the social and political one: how to crystalize the analysis of the "process of change" in Bolivia in a way that was consistent with its ethnographic heterogeneity and ambiguity. The response, which I hope is sufficiently reflected in this book, was to conceive of the period 2006–15 in terms of the many and shifting fragments that came together, or were mobilized, or were resisted, at particular moments in time. Even more, the book tries to privilege the ways in which these fragmentary assemblages took on a prismatic quality, in which categories of ethnicity, gender, class, and political identity, among others, intersectionally shaped the quotidian experiences of "revolution" and its various afterlives.

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Before I get to the many acknowledgments and expressions of gratitude, there are several points of methodological order that must be made. The first concerns the use of the past tense throughout the book. I decided early on to abandon the fraught ethnographic present, and this decision proved to be liberating. Ethically, the use of the ethnographic present is problematic, since it traffics in unacceptable tropes of cultural timelessness. Stylistically, it is also troubling, since it attempts to collapse the distance between the anthropologist-as-writer, reader, and whoever or whatever is being described in ways that confuse even as it harnesses the power of what Malinowski called the "ethnographer's magic." And historically, the use of the ethnographic present poses simple problems of descriptive accuracy. This was a particular concern in writing about ethnographic research conducted during different periods over nine years. By adopting the simple past tense throughout much of the book, I realized that I was also putting down the magician's wand, and, as a consequence, letting go of the tight grip of ethnographic authority. In the end, the use of the past tense seemed to be of a piece with an analytical approach to the period 2006–15 in Bolivia that underscored the fragmentary, the partial, and the prismatic.

Another important methodological point concerns the use of names. This is something I discussed with almost every interlocutor over nine years:

Do you want me to change your name? In almost every case, the answer was "no," and I couldn't think of a reason to disregard these express wishes on the matter. There are key exceptions: for example, when I discuss interviews with students and nonpublic figures, I routinely use pseudonyms. But these are exceptions that prove the general rule. Obviously, the use of pseudonyms would not have been possible for many of the figures who appear in the book, since they were (and many still are) well-known intellectuals, political leaders, jurists, and indigenous activists, among other official and semiofficial positions.

As will soon become clear, I make extensive use of ethnographic interviews throughout the book. This was a way to give priority to the voices of a wide range of Bolivians who played a role, in one way or another, during this extraordinary period in Bolivian history. Over nine years, I accumulated an enormous amount of data from interviews. For example, ethnographic interviews in 2008 and 2009 alone yielded almost five hundred pages of interview transcripts. Nevertheless, I was only able to use a fraction of the overall interview data in the book. I edited interviews—at times, extensively and liberally—for clarity and legibility after first translating them into English. In general, I tried to interpret and present extended interview passages in a way that would be easier to read without changing the narrative flow or interrupting the particularity of the exchange.

Beyond questions of methodology, there are a few broader issues that should be addressed. First, although ethnographic research over nine years in Bolivia was, as I explain in the introduction, regionally and historically wide-ranging, it was far from comprehensive. For example, in 2009, I returned to the region in which I had conducted doctoral fieldwork in the late 1990s, northern Potosí Department. This was more of a personal visit than a research trip. Yet even at the height of conflict over the new constitution in the major cities, life in and around Sacaca seemed to go on much as before, with certain subtle yet important changes, such as the fact that the town's leadership included a few members from some of the close-in rural hamlets. I imagine a version of this provincial story was true throughout the country; it is an important story, just not the one that forms the basis for this book.

And second, there are no doubt any number of glaring ethnographic gaps in the book, since they were not part of the underlying research. For example, although I conducted relatively attenuated research with Guaraní political leaders in Santa Cruz in 2015, I didn't feel sufficiently knowledgeable about lowland politics to incorporate this material into the book. Yet there is no question—as a number of recent volumes demonstrate—that from the TIPNIS conflict of 2011 to the ongoing marginalization of lowland indigenous interests

by the La Paz–centric MAS government, the "democratic and cultural revolution" of the period 2006–15 must be understood in relation to regional, linguistic, and cultural specificities. In addition, by empirically and theoretically foregrounding justice, ideology, and practice as orienting scales for the project, other areas were necessarily left aside. A particularly important absence in this sense is obviously the place of economic processes and state planning, including resource exploitation and, increasingly, industrialization.

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In acknowledging the vital role played in the project by different people, I have decided to focus on the many Bolivians who collaborated, in one way or another, in the research, conceptual analysis, and writing. I am not able to acknowledge everyone who gave of their time and wisdom, but this book could never have been written without a willingness to participate, even (or especially) critically, in the long-term research that forms the basis for the book. Having said this, it is also true that by acknowledging these debts I do not mean to associate anyone with particular arguments, observations, or anthropological critiques, that is, beyond the associations that appear in the book itself. For their collaboration, participation, and time, I acknowledge the following: Virginia Aillón, Emilio Barea Medrano, Ricardo Calla, Mary Carrasco, Efrén Choque Capuma, Frida Choque de Claros, Adolfo Colque Gutiérrez, Oswaldo Cuevas Gaete, Carlos Dabdoub Arrien, Carlos Derpic Salazar, Erika Dueñas, Carolina Floru, Gustavo Guzmán, Luis E. Huarachi Miranda, Martín Hurtado Tovar, Delina Joffré Romandú, Gonz Jove, Julio Llanos Rojas, Sacha Llorenti, Felipe Machaca Quispe, Ricardo Montero, Mónica Pacheco Sanjinés, René Gonzalo Párraga Gallardo, Antonio Peredo Leigue, Miguel Pérez Quispe, José Antonio Quiroga Trigo, David Ricalde, Luis Pedro Rodríguez Calvo, Cecilia Salazar de la Torre, Hugo Siles Núñez del Prado, Luis Tapia, Virginia Tapia, Leonardo Villafuente Philippsborn, Rolando Villena Villegas, and Fernanda Wanderley.

Research and writing took place during the same years in which I served as one of the editors for the long-term project that culminated (in 2018) in *The Bolivia Reader: History, Culture, Politics*. Under the steady and indefatigable hand of the project's lead editor, Sinclair Thomson, the volume took shape over more than fifteen years and gave me the incomparable opportunity to learn from a vast amount of diverse historical material, some of which I draw from in the current book. At the same time, it was a privilege to collaborate with the *Reader*'s other editors: Xavier Albó, Rossana Barragán, and Seemin Qayum.

The slow development of the book's ethnographic and theoretical approaches took place in large part through invited lectures, seminars, and presentations rather than through earlier journal articles and book chapters. Each of these moments was a time to explore what seemed to be an always-emerging and evolving framework for understanding the period 2006–15 in Bolivia. These occasions were so valuable to me in large part because of the critical engagement of colleagues, students, and audience members, whose collective responses and recommendations became, over time, interwoven into my own long-term thinking about contemporary Bolivia. I express my heartfelt gratitude for having been given the chance to develop the project in this way at events at the following places: University of Oslo (Department of Anthropology, October 2006); Universidad de Antioquia (Department of Anthropology, March 2008); University of Pittsburgh (Department of Anthropology, September 2008); Stanford University (Center for Latin American Studies, April 2009); Rutgers University (Center for Latin American Studies and Department of Anthropology, October 2009); Cambridge University (Centre for Research in the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities, January 2010); Catholic University of Leuven (European Commission and the Marie Curie Fellows program, March 2010); University of Wisconsin–Madison (Department of Anthropology, April 2010); International University College of Turin (October 2010); Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology and Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg (Institute for Social Anthropology, October 2010); Northwestern University (Department of Anthropology and Rhetoric, and Public Culture Program, Department of Communication Studies, October 2011); University of Minnesota (School of Law, Institute for Advanced Studies, Human Rights Program, and Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies, October 2013); University of Coimbra (Centre for Social Sciences, March 2014); Stanford University (Program on Human Rights; Center on Democracy, Development and the Rule of Law; Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies, April 2014); London School of Economics (Department of Anthropology, May 2014); Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg (Institute for Social Anthropology, January 2016); University of Zurich (Department of Social Anthropology and Cultural Studies, November 2016); The Hebrew University of Jerusalem (Department of Sociology and Anthropology, January 2017); University of Cagliari (Faculty of Jurisprudence and the Institute for Advanced Studies, May 2017); and University of Helsinki (Helsinki Institute of Sustainability Science, Department of Anthropology, September 2018).

Research over nine years would obviously not have been possible without the generous assistance of a number of different foundations and institutions.

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I am grateful for the participation of a number of graduate research assistants over the years. Adriana Salcedo performed a wide range of important tasks and was able to join me during field research in Bolivia, where she participated in interviews and observations, conducted data analysis, and later transcribed interviews. Michael Posse joined me during later fieldwork and also participated in interviews and observations, including the interviews with the members of the survivors' association with which I begin the book. Finally, Maya Avis conducted valuable bibliographic research during the drafting of the manuscript.

I would be remiss if I did not also thank the staff at the Hotel Calacoto in La Paz, which has welcomed me for extended periods of time since 2006. Several of the hotel's longtime staff members have become like old friends; it is a pleasure to see them each time I return to Bolivia, even as we remark on the way we all continue to age.

The process of publishing with Duke University Press has been rewarding at every stage. As is standard with the press, the book manuscript was subject to two distinct rounds of anonymous peer review, a level of scrutiny and revision that proved vital for the book's development. Gisela Fosado's early support for the book was critical, as was her wise counsel and guiding hand throughout the entire process. I must also thank Alejandra Mejía, who provided technical support and advice on different aspects of the manuscript.

As with other books I have published, this one too is formally dedicated to my family, Isaiah, Dara, and Romana. Their support and love is the glue that holds everything together and makes my life—professional and personal—possible. When I first began the project, Isaiah and Dara were little children;

now they are teenagers, both headstrong and filled with hope, their entire futures ahead of them. In a sense, this too was a lesson I kept in mind during the writing of this book. In considering the extraordinary, if contested, process of change in Bolivia during the period 2006–15, the danger is not that we will overestimate its significance, its implications, its revolutionary moments, however fragmentary. The real danger is that, in a cynical age marked by global inequality, political disenchantment, and enduring patriarchy, among other ills, we are losing the ability to even imagine better futures, let alone to recognize the fleeting signs of their appearance on the horizon.

Introduction MEANING AND CRISIS IN COSMIC TIME

Even against the noise and perpetual movement of La Paz's El Prado, the city's historic central boulevard, the structure was impossible to miss. It appeared in 2012 directly across from the building that housed the various vice ministries and offices of the Ministry of Justice. The structure was semipermanent, with wooden walls and a corrugated metal roof. As was common throughout Bolivia, the sheets of corrugated metal that constituted the roof were held down by a dozen clay bricks. This shack sat in the middle of El Prado's median strip, a long and well-used pedestrian public space that featured

a series of statues, benches, and aging tile groundwork. The structure's outer walls were covered with posters and signs that proclaimed in large bright red and black letters: "18 Years of Dictatorship. How Many More Years of Injustice and Impunity? Plan Condor. Survivors of the Dictatorships." Various figures drawn on the posters held up signs that demanded "justice," "truth," and "reparations." And on the edge of one large poster, the faces from the rogues' gallery of Bolivian dictators stared down at passers-by: Barrientos, Banzer, Pereda, Natusch, and the worst of all, García Meza, the narcofascist *paceño* who worked closely with the Nazi war criminal Klaus Barbie, the "Butcher of Lyon," during García Meza's one-year reign of terror.

The shack on El Prado was constructed by members of a nationwide "platform" for survivors of the eighteen years of almost continual brutal oppression between 1964 and 1982, a period in which successive Bolivian dictatorships collaborated with both U.S. and regional economic, military, and intelligence interests as part of a hemispheric war against various movements that sought to challenge capitalist hegemony and conservative political rule. Nationwide, about five thousand people considered themselves survivors of the Bolivian dictatorships, although only about two hundred participated regularly in maintaining and occupying their unofficial headquarters on El Prado. Because the current government had ignored their demands for recognition and reparations, the local members of the survivors' organization decided to establish an open-ended vigil in which their stark presence across from the Ministry of Justice was meant as a quiet and dignified rebuke, a constant reminder to the thousands who passed daily that Bolivian history did not begin in 2006, the year Evo Morales and the Movement to Socialism (MAS) party took power.

Just outside the entrance, the survivors had placed a wooden table on which they had arranged various types of office equipment, including old computers, that had been warped and twisted by fire, a testament to the fact that their vigil on El Prado had been met on occasion by violence, harassment, and the constant threat of eviction by what they believed were plainclothes intelligence and police personnel acting on government orders to make life difficult and ultimately to break their resolve.

The inside of the structure was divided into three small areas: one that served as a kitchen in which simple meals were prepared; a second that contained piles of documents, legal files, photographs, and other evidence from the survivors' histories; and a third, a central space flanked by two long wooden benches. Here is where the survivors came and went during the day, where they sat with each other to trade small talk about ailments and personal travails, and

where they kept a wary eye on a list of names that loomed over them. This was the list that recorded the *compañeros fallecidos en la vigilia*, the comrades who had died during the vigil on El Prado. In August 2015, there were thirteen names on the list, meaning thirteen survivors had died just since 2012. The collective health of the survivors on El Prado was extremely precarious. Most of them were in their late seventies and some were in their eighties. Because many of them had been tortured during the dictatorships, they suffered from lasting physical and psychological disabilities. And because some of them had also been miners in their youth, they were afflicted with advanced cases of silicosis and other lung diseases. Indeed, in a country whose life expectancy at birth was only around fifty years as late as 1980, it was something close to a miracle that any of the survivors—particularly those from the dictatorships of the 1960s—were still alive.

Although the survivors' organization did not have formal political status, one of its members had agreed to act as its spokesperson. Alejandro Mamani was a *dirigente* at the Colquiri mine in La Paz Department in the 1960s who was a leading advocate for anti-imperialist revolution among his fellow miners. He had been an enthusiastic supporter of Che Guevara right up until the moment the Argentinian revolutionary was cornered and executed in La Higuera in 1967 by Bolivian soldiers operating under the close supervision and assistance of the U.S. CIA and military advisers.

Mamani was seventy-seven years old, a quiet man who walked slowly with a slight limp that was the result of beatings he suffered during six separate periods of detention between 1965 and 1975. I asked him if he was willing to tell me what happened to him, and he reluctantly agreed. He sighed, looked around the room at the other survivors, and began.

The first time I was held was terrible, it was a terrible shock. I had received training in ideology [during a trip to China in 1964]*, but I wasn't prepared for what I saw and what happened to me when I was taken into custody by the military. Yes, I was in custody that first time for about a month. I was interrogated first for many days and then tortured. They pulled out the fingernails on this hand* [his right]*. After that, they tied me up against a wall and dripped water on my head all day. I couldn't move my head because they squeezed two boards on either side of it very tight, like this* [pushes his hands to his ears like a vise]*. Sometime after that, I can't say how long, they took a group of us to Lake Titicaca in a truck, but we were in boxes, like coffins. They stopped by the shore and they told us, from outside, that we were dead. Then I heard splashes. I waited, but then they loaded*

some of us back into the truck and drove us back to La Paz. I couldn't be sure which of our comrades were in those boxes, but they were gone.

I asked him if he remembered his longest detention.

In 1969, they kept me for three months. I was sure they were finally going to kill me. That was the time I lost my finger [points to the middle finger on his left hand, which had been severed at the middle knuckle]. *I'll never forget his name, a sadistic guard named Álvaro Lanza* [not a pseudonym]. *They grabbed my hand and Lanza pulled out his bayonet. They held the hand down and Lanza started playing a game, like this* [makes gesture of poking quickly between his fingers].

Here Mamani put his face in his old hands to hide tears, but he quickly continued.

Lanza started going faster and faster and then the tip came down right in the middle of my finger and cut it off. Part of the finger was just there, with blood everywhere and this Lanza was laughing and laughing.

I asked him how his wife and children coped with these many periods of detention and torture, the constant threat that he would simply be disappeared one day.

During this same detention [in 1969]*, they held me along with many other comrades in a torture center that was right next to the Parliament* [in Plaza Murillo]. *I will never forget what happened on Christmas Eve. They allowed the prisoners to go into home detention for several days to be with their families, but not me. Everyone was allowed a home detention except me. That night, they put me into a jeep and drove around and around the plaza. And there was my family, waiting for me, my wife and three children, sitting on a bench. After they had driven around the plaza very slowly about ten times, one of them said to me, "have a long look at your family, because this is the last time you are ever going to see them, carajo." And then they drove right back into the building.*

During three of my later detentions, they told my family I had died, but they wouldn't tell my wife anything more. Even today [2015]*, almost fifty years later, she still suffers, she still has nightmares that I've been killed.*

So why begin in this way with Alejandro Mamani's heartrending account? Doing so allows me to introduce three implicit framing devices that reoccur throughout the book in the form of theoretical argument, historical observation, and a kind of ethnographic ethics. The first is the idea that the process of change in Bolivia was marked by the destabilizing manipulation of coevalness. As the German anthropologist Johannes Fabian (1983) showed, social and political power can

be exercised by creating what he calls a chronological "cultural taxonomy" that establishes different possibilities and impossibilities for coexistence.

As we will see, from the preamble to the 2009 Bolivian constitution to the rhetoric of world-reversal or world-renewal associated with the concept of *Pachakuti*, the period of change in Bolivian history that underwent a profound turning point with the election of Evo Morales was shaped by a politics of allochrony—the reification of past, present, and future into categories that did certain kinds of public work. Even more, not all of these categories were equal. In particular, the MAS government mobilized—politically, ideologically, and symbolically—the cultural taxonomies associated with what the Indianist writer and guru Fausto Reinaga described as "cosmic time" (1978: 45).

Second, a politics of allochrony was only one expression of another key characteristic of the country's contested democratic and cultural revolution: the fact that change took place in terms of a series of inclusions and exclusions that were problematically, even paradoxically, justified within a broader ideological framework of pluralistic belonging. In this sense, the ethnography of post-2005 Bolivia revealed a social and discursive dynamic that has implications for other processes of profound transformation. In forming categories, even those that encompassed historically marginalized ethnic, regional, and class groups, others were at the same time excluded. To this extent, even a novel social rhetoric of inclusion and empowerment could function as well as a rhetoric of denial and disempowerment. This dialectical interplay had significant consequences during the period 2006–15 in Bolivia, as will be explored in depth throughout the book, but it evoked at a social, political, and legal level the basic insight about language formulated by the Spanish philosopher and essayist José Ortega y Gasset—to define is to exclude and negate.

Third, the life and experiences of Alejandro Mamani and the other members of the national platform of survivors of the dictatorships pointed to a calibrated pragmatism behind much of a process of change that was more typically marked off by the recognizably spectacular moments of public ritual and resistance. The members of the group themselves believed that their claims had been ignored by a government whose official commitment to socialism should have made it sympathetic to its comrades from early struggles not because of a disagreement over beliefs, but for actuarial reasons. As Mamani explained,

Well, it's simple, we are dying, the survivors. Look over there [points to the list on the wall]. *We had thirteen of our comrades die just since 2012.*

I asked him if he thought that was the reason the Morales government had done nothing to recognize or respond to their claims, including those for reparations.

Without a doubt, they are just waiting, waiting for us to die. Of course, we will all be dead soon, but we still have hope while we have life. And if they don't [recognize our claims] *and give us the justice that we deserve, there is a greater danger that the past will be repeated.*

The fact is that the survivors of the dictatorships faced unique and lasting forms of harm, since—as with Alejandro Mamani—many of them could not work for almost twenty years while they were persecuted, imprisoned, exiled, and blacklisted. This meant that what for many of them should have been their prime earning years as workers were simply erased, with corresponding reductions to pensions, social security benefits, and medical entitlements. Their claims for reparations from the Bolivian government involved massive payments to account for these vast and diverse economic losses. So, as Mamani put it, "although we are old men and women [and] still consider ourselves fighters against imperialism," the government preferred to let time render moot the claims for reparations of these aging and ailing ideological ancestors.

And finally, to begin with Alejandro Mamani's story of torture, persecution, and the eventual outlasting of the historical epoch that was determined to destroy him is to recognize, and perhaps even prioritize, that which was irreducible in the phenomenologies of suffering, resistance, sacrifice, hope, and disenchantment that constituted the lived realities of Bolivia's moment of "refoundation."[1] Or rather, it is to draw a distinction between what could be reduced to, or captured by, the act of ethnographic and critical analysis, and what could not. Although, at a certain level of reflection, there were lessons to be drawn from Mamani's experiences, it is important to acknowledge that there was another level that lay underneath, that Wittgensteinian bedrock where the meaning of experience begins and ends with the unique forms of life through which it is expressed. Thus, in the first instance, one had to simply *hear* Mamani tell his story of lying in a dark wooden box on the shores of Lake Titicaca moments away from being thrown into the frigid water without demanding anything more from the ethnographic encounter. A sensitivity to the problem of irreducibility shapes this book in different ways as much for ethical as for epistemological reasons.[2]

(NOT) MISSING THE REVOLUTION

Although I conducted the research for my first ethnographic study of Bolivia between 1998 and 1999, I did not finish the manuscript based on this research until early 2007. The conclusion to that book (Goodale 2008a) was an attempt to bridge the findings from a study of law, conflict, and human rights activism

in the north of Potosí Department with rapidly changing events throughout the country following the election of Evo Morales, the formation of a constituent assembly to write a new constitution, and the emergence of a strong opposition based in the southern valleys and eastern lowlands of the country. Nevertheless, it was clear that the political, economic, and social context had shifted in ways that demanded renewed ethnographic attention.

At the same time, I was keenly aware of the kind of critique of Andean anthropology perhaps best represented by Orin Starn's 1991 article "Missing the Revolution," which argued that the methodological tradition of conducting village-based ethnohistorical and ethnographic research played a role in preventing scholars from fully appreciating the underlying political, economic, and ideological mobilizations that led to the rise of the Shining Path Maoist movement and the subsequent violence throughout the 1980s. Beyond the critique of a particular form of ethnographic research, Starn also argued that village-based Andeanist researchers were to varying degrees motivated by an Orientalist conception of highland peoples, one rooted in a set of romantic stereotypes about *lo andino*, the ideal Andean. Although Starn's critique (see also Starn 1994) was itself reductionist to a certain extent, painting, as it did, quite different kinds of research traditions and approaches with a broad brush, the basic thrust of his argument demanded serious consideration. Given the fact that my research experiences had been localized in an iconic region of rural highland Bolivia, how was I to conceive of a methodology that not only would not "miss the revolution," but would track its contours in a way that combined thick description with both a sense of national politics and an appreciation for the wider political economies within which Bolivia's revolution was taking shape?

Complicating the task even further was the fact that the process of refoundation in Bolivia was embedded in an emerging hybrid ideology that depended on much of the same kind of Orientalist imagery that Starn had associated critically with foreign scholars, with the exception that lo andino had been replaced by *lo indígena*, the ideal—and idealized—indigenous person. Thus, it was not possible to draw an easy analytical or ethnographic distinction between the political economic factors that were supposed to ground revolutionary mobilization from the base and the superstructural categories of identity that ultimately distracted attention from the root causes of inequality. In post-2005 Bolivia, the relationship between base and superstructure was being reconfigured.[3]

Finally, there was the problem of the ethnographer's dilemma. The sociocultural anthropologist must at a certain point justify an interpretation or a particular description through the epistemological elusiveness of ethnographic

authority, a problematic form of justification that depends on a kind of anti-Popperian disregard for "reliability": I was the only anthropologist to observe something that will never appear in precisely that form, or with precisely that meaning, again. The legitimacy of an ethnographic account, therefore, is inseparable from, indeed even coextensive with, one's own knowledge and capacities. Given the importance of relationships to space and place in the formation of anthropological knowledge and capacities in this sense (see Gupta and Ferguson 1997), the dilemma is that the ethnographer risks sacrificing interpretive power the farther she gets from the spaces and places with which her knowledge and capacities are most closely linked.

In my case, the spaces and places that had grounded my formation were in the north of Potosí Department, a remote region of Bolivia's central highlands that for a series of cultural, historical, and geographical reasons remained at the very margins of national life. Yet while transformations at the national level were being reflected in important local changes, such as the appearance of new rural political parties like the Movimiento Originario Popular (Goodale 2006), the force of these local shifts was still relatively weak compared with the ferment and historic mobilizations in places like La Paz, Sucre, and Santa Cruz. Although the newspapers that arrived each day by bus in the provincial capital, Sacaca, carried headlines of regional unrest, constitution-making, and national economic restructuring, these epochal developments had little impact on the daily rhythms and concerns of the province's agro-pastoralists.

It was clear, therefore, that I needed to adopt a different methodology in order to capture these diffuse broader transformations while staying true to the ethnographic project, that is, the commitment to distance-near description, a sensitivity to the possibilities and perils of representation, and a heightened awareness of the importance of the quotidian in the face of ideological posturing. The prevailing model for the kind of translocal research I had in mind was multisited ethnography (see Marcus 1995, 1999). This approach had formed the foundation for a number of innovative studies in the mid-2000s, including Sally Engle Merry's 2006 account of the international system that was developed to monitor compliance with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW; see Merry 2006a).

Yet as I considered multisited ethnography as a framework for the study of Bolivia's unfolding process of change, it soon became apparent that the fit was not ideal. Multisited ethnography was not simply a way to describe what it means to conduct ethnographic research in multiple places. The essence of multisited ethnography was that it was a way to track the same process in different locations without losing the value of ethnographic immediacy. Merry's

research, which examined CEDAW processes and actors in several countries from the national to the local level, as well as international institutions and governmental bodies, is in many ways a paradigmatic example of the value of multisited ethnographic research.

As I moved forward with planning in 2005 and 2006, however, I was not able to formulate the project in terms of a single or even several processes that could be followed in a similar way within Bolivia. The contested landscape of the early Morales years appeared to be too dynamic to be reduced to a series of sites at which isolated processes could be studied ethnographically. In addition, the project of transformation in Bolivia was being constituted in part through compressions, reframings, and distortions of what might be thought of as cultural space-time—that is, the overlaying of multiple idea-systems onto region, topography, and time itself, for example, through the emergence of the Pachakuti as an alternative temporality with charged political implications.[4]

What I settled on, therefore, was a form of research that took place between 2006 and 2015 that I conceptualized as a "multiscalar longitudinal ethnography." Rather than sites, scales were meant to capture key dimensions of the study that were partly defined relationally (see Xiang 2013).[5] Even more important, thinking of the research methodology in terms of scales allowed me to track the most important categories of compressions, reframings, and distortions along a relational continuum on which the "event" (Deleuze 1994; see also Kapferer 2015) and what Marc Bloch (1953) called "historical time" were closely intertwined. The most important scales of the study in this sense were those of *justice*, *ideology*, and *practice*.

If the project was multiscalar, it was also, importantly, longitudinal. The question of the relationship between synchronic and diachronic approaches to ethnographic research has long occupied anthropological theorists and historians. In addition to the epistemological and ethical dimensions to these debates, scholars such as Eleanor Leacock, Sidney Mintz, June Nash, and Eric Wolf brought a concern with global political economies to the problem of history in anthropology. In my case, although extended, multiyear fieldwork was a common marker of what anthropologists describe as "second projects," meaning the project that follows doctoral fieldwork, the research became longitudinal as a response to Bolivia's unstable unfolding history more than anything else.

What I was looking for with each passing fieldwork season, periods of research that took place for weeks and months in December and January and between June and August, was what I envisioned as an arc of interpretive coherence. Yet because historical conditions in Bolivia were changing so rapidly, at least until the end of 2011, it remained difficult to move forward with an

interpretation of the process of refoundation with any level of confidence. Nevertheless, as the years of fieldwork stretched on, a certain ethnographic chronology started to emerge, one that included key changes *after* the tumultuous year of 2011. By the end of the 2015 fieldwork season, I felt that the outlines of an interpretive arc were clear enough to move from research to the process of book-length writing.

The kind of longitudinal ethnography that forms the basis for what follows is perhaps ultimately organic to the project itself. Yet without drawing out too many broader methodological lessons for other researchers confronting similar historical processes with similar intentions to deploy ethnography over time, it was clear, as much in retrospect as anything else, that as the *longue durée* slowly took shape, the interpretation somewhat paradoxically both deepened and became more diffuse. It deepened for likely more obvious reasons: sometime in 2012, the synchronic and diachronic dimensions of the project collapsed into each other; what emerged from thick description over many years became inseparable from the chronology of post-2005 Bolivia as I understood it.

Yet at the same time, the collapse of the synchronic into the diachronic destabilized what had been a relatively straightforward analytical framework, one in which the social, political, and legal forces of "revolution" in Bolivia were counterpoised to those of "counterrevolution." Indeed, until the end of 2009, I continued to conduct research in terms of this dialectic. But with each passing year, interpretive coherence for the project became more and more defined by a kind of analytical ambiguity. The turning point came when I realized that the rough contours of this ambiguous vision of post-2005 Bolivia were not necessarily the result of a failure of imagination on my part, but were rather a reflection of ambiguities that were woven into the concepts, institutions, and practices that occupied much of my ethnographic attention, from the development of MAS's ideological program to the articulation of regional autonomy by anti-government activists in the lowlands.

This is not to say that the account of these analytical ambiguities, those partly my own and those partly constitutive of the process of refoundation in Bolivia itself, brings us any closer to a privileged perspective on the period 2006–15. Rather, it is perhaps more accurate to say that what appears here reflects a certain set of ethnographic truths, which are, as James Clifford (1986) classically argued, always inherently partial. Yet as Clifford also emphasized, only ethnographic truths that are both "serious" and "committed" are worth our collective consideration, and I am likewise content to make these the more general evaluative bases on which the book stakes its claims.

Finally, given that the nine-year research project was fundamentally concerned with questions of radical social change, redistribution, the politics

of identity, inequality, and ethnic valorization, something should be said about my own subject position—and positioning—in the midst of these transformations. It is true that I began the research in 2006 in the full flush of enthusiasm for MAS's revolutionary ambitions. For someone who had been conducting research in Bolivia since 1996, someone bound to the country by both fictive kinship ties and a long-term professional commitment, the sight of Evo Morales performing an inauguration ritual at Tiwanaku attended by Aymara ritual specialists, or *yatiris*, was historically unprecedented and personally stirring. Like the first election of Daniel Ortega in 1984 during the Nicaraguan revolution, like the beginning of the Zapatista revolt against the Mexican state in 1994, and perhaps even like the coming to power of Salvador Allende in Chile in 1970, the inauguration of Morales in January 2006 seemed to represent a turning point that would lead to fundamental changes in Bolivia that were desperately needed: more equitable distribution of public resources across region, class, and ethnicity; greater investment in infrastructure; a redistribution of political power to the benefit of women, rural people, and workers; a direct challenge to the long history of U.S. interference in Bolivian affairs, a legacy that was only a more recent phase in centuries of resource exploitation and pillage during which Bolivia (and its earlier geopolitical iterations) served as what the Uruguayan writer Eduardo Galeano described as the "open veins of Latin America"; and, perhaps most important, the development of a viable alternative model of state-making, social and legal pluralism, and public ethics at a moment in historical time in which life in the post–Cold War was more and more being regulated by what James Ferguson (2006) called the "neoliberal world order."

Whether or not any of these fundamental changes took place in Bolivia after January 2006 is obviously a question that will be taken up, in different ways and with different answers, throughout this book. Yet over the course of nine years, my own orientation to the problems of revolution, resistance, empowerment, and disenchantment in Bolivia remained intentionally in the background. I did not take a stand, as I could have done based on the growing body of my research data, as either a supporter of the MAS revolution or as a critic of it. I did not write opinion pieces for *La Razón* or *El Deber*. I did not act as a consultant for government agencies or social justice organizations. I did not provide legal opinions or drafting advice during the Constituent Assembly of 2006–7. And I did not take part—as either organizer or participant—in the dozens of marches and public mobilizations that occurred during periods of research in La Paz, Sucre, and Santa Cruz.

In some ways, this orientation ran counter to much of the movement in anthropology toward what has variously been described as "engaged" or

"activist" methodologies. In his insightful discussion of the various stakes involved in these debates, Daniel M. Goldstein (2012) argues that different forms of engagement by the anthropologist can be placed along a spectrum. At one end are self-understandings of research that envision it as a direct mechanism of "collaboration with an organized group in struggle for social justice" (2012: 35; quoting Charles Hale 2010). At the other end of the spectrum is the disciplinary self-understanding that seeks to broaden the conception of engagement to be maximally inclusive so that many forms of anthropological activity can be seen to have a purpose beyond the simple production and diffusion of knowledge. Citing Setha Low and Sally Engle Merry's important 2010 review of the topic, Goldstein explains that this broadest vision includes something for everyone: social and cultural critique; sharing, support, and empathy; knowledge exchange with research interlocutors; teaching and public communication; advocacy, that is, "using the language of policy to translate grievances to a wider public"; and activism, in the sense defined by Hale (Goldstein 2012: 38–39).

Yet Goldstein worries that the most expansive accounts of engaged anthropology run the risk of redundancy. As he puts it, "if nearly everything anthropologists do counts as engagement—baby-sitting at community gatherings, teaching our classes, writing about environmental degradation, and so on—then what is the point of naming a subset of the field 'engaged anthropology'?" (39). Apart from the problem of redundancy, Goldstein also flags the ethical dilemma in the movement toward a broad self-understanding of the discipline's obligation to influence the world beyond research: how to distinguish between forms of influence that are legitimate and forms that are not. Even if there is widespread agreement among anthropologists that forms of engagement that seek to reduce inequality, promote social justice, and alleviate social suffering, among others, are legitimate, and those that reinforce hegemony, support military and intelligence agencies, and perpetuate violent practices based on the politics of cultural difference, among others, are not, where are the more difficult lines to be drawn, and by whom? In many countries, most professional anthropologists are members of national associations that have the legal right to regulate the conduct of members through codes of ethics, but the dilemma of engaged anthropology goes well beyond a simple question of organizational self-regulation.

In Goldstein's own pathbreaking research on conflicts between security and rights in the periurban barrios of Cochabamba, Bolivia, he developed an innovative response to his subject position as a long-term researcher that was anchored in the pragmatics of his field site more than anything else. Partly as

a way to fund his own summer research, Goldstein organized a university field school that required students to participate in service learning and local community development. These more practical activities led Goldstein to develop a local nongovernmental organization that responded to the needs of his interlocutors, friends, and community colleagues around the problem of access to justice. His many experiences with these forms of engagement were then combined with those from interviews, observations, and other techniques of ethnographic inquiry as the diverse sources for his 2012 study. As he puts it, "activism opens doors . . . engagement can be a critical component of the research process, one that makes rigorous research possible rather than obstructing it" (2012: 42, 46).

In my own case, it was a similar pragmatics that led me to something like the opposite set of methodological choices. Beginning in 2006, with each passing fieldwork season I broadened the scope of inquiry to include different institutions, different political parties, different regions, different social movements, different trade unions, and different social classes. Without pretending to an epistemologically and ethically unsustainable position of neutrality, it was clear that a certain detachment was the only basis on which I would be able to develop relations of trust and conduct ethnographic fieldwork among key actors and institutions within a national assemblage that was, at certain times, particularly in 2008 and 2009, on the brink of civil war. Although I did not conceive of it precisely in these terms at the time, it was only by pursuing a *dis*engaged and *non*collaborative anthropology that I was able, for example, to conduct ethnographic interviews in the same week with Evo Morales's closest adviser in the Palacio Quemado in La Paz and with leaders of Santa Cruz's radically anti-MAS and anti-Indian Unión Juvenil Cruceñista (UJC).

In the end, the uncertain and theoretically unmoored practice of disengaged anthropology had its limits, boundaries that themselves proved to be important points of ethnographic reference. In 2009, during the tense weeks leading up to the late-January national referendum on the new constitution, hundreds of indigenous community leaders came to La Paz to take part in assemblies organized by the Consejo Nacional de Ayllus y Markas del Qullasuyu, or CONAMAQ, the social movement most closely associated during these years with an ideology of indigenous militancy and anti-Western ethnic power.

The days when indigenous people could not enter the main plazas of La Paz for fear of being abused or racially tormented were long gone. Instead, hundreds of indigenous leaders with aspirations of becoming the *Jiliri Apu Mallku* or *Arquiri Apu Mallku*, accompanied by groups of community members and assistants, took the seat of government by storm, striding purposely

up and down La Paz's clogged and precipitous streets to obtain documents and notarial stamps or to drink *mate de coca* in cafes, dressed in the uniform of the office and bearing staff and whip, a reminder that the occasional use of violence is part of their mandate.

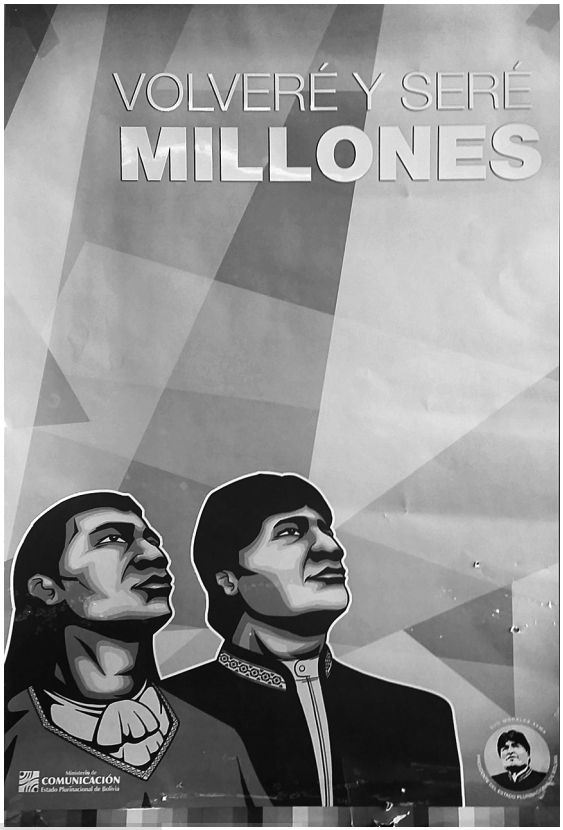
When I entered one such assembly at a community hall in La Paz's Miraflores district, I was immediately struck by the sight of perhaps over three hundred indigenous community leaders separated into dozens of smaller groups of between eight and ten people, huddled together in strategy sessions. They had come from different communities, different *ayllus*,[6] different departments, and different ethnic groups (primarily Aymara and Quechua). From a certain perspective, they were, collectively, precisely the kind of rural peasants with whom I had spent the lion's share of my research career in Bolivia; I even noticed several groups who were wearing textiles and vests typical of the province in the part of Potosí Department in which I had conducted my doctoral fieldwork many years before. In short, had I chosen to conduct a form of engaged anthropology, it would have been among and on behalf of exactly these *campesinos*.

Except that *neither* a disengaged *nor* an engaged ethnographic approach was possible at that moment. As I surveyed the assembly, watching for the right moment to approach a group to begin the halting and intrusive type of inquiry that hopefully leads to the exchange of information that later is described as an ethnographic interview, I was suddenly noticed by men in several groups. Then, quite quickly, I was noticed by other men in many other groups so that it seemed like the entire hall had turned its attention to me. This was not a kind of methodological reversal in which the observer is suddenly observed, a moment for clever theoretical reflection from the comfort of the office or seminar room (Stocking 1985). Instead, it was something more ominous, yet ethnographically more important: I was an intruder, a category violation with my pale skin and beard and weathered leather fedora, field notebook in hand and field camera around my neck.

I was soon surrounded by about twenty younger community authorities who demanded to know who I was and what I was doing there. There was a palpable sense of collective anger among my "interlocutors" and a worrying sense of physical threat, something I had experienced on occasion in the *norte de Potosí* in the late 1990s when I had tried to conduct research during violent and unpredictable community rituals called *tinkus*. I explained, as I had done hundreds of times before, that I was an *anthropologist*, which meant that I was there to learn about their organization and their thoughts about the new constitution and, more generally, their thoughts about the process of change brought about by Evo Morales. *Why did I want to know these things?* I was

asked. So that your thoughts and voices will be heard by many people outside of Bolivia, I replied. *And how will you do this*? I was asked. I will eventually write a book that will be read by perhaps thousands of people in different countries around the world, I said, at this point not even fully convinced myself. And then one young man, with staff in one hand and whip in the other, stepped right up into my face. His breath was redolent of chewed coca leaves but not a whiff of alcohol. He had a quiet fury in his eyes. *Listen to me, gringu, we will write our own books now. You need to leave and leave right now*.

VOLVERÉ Y SERÉ MILLONES



I got my start politically as a member of the Provincial Agrarian Federation of Communities of Caranavi, which is a very solid organization, a revolutionary organization, combative, one that is at the very center of

the political movement created by our current distinguished president Evo Morales. But really, the place where I come from is much like any other in the country now, part of the great changes taking place. . . . Even though I am now departmental president [of MAS], I'm only a soldier in the process of change and we all hope that what we are collectively working toward will someday benefit the whole country. That is the real difference between what is happening now and what other governments have done: they did nothing for a country in which there are huge differences between rich and poor, between those of different skin color, these are the things that we want to change.

Samuel Guarayo Aruquipa,
president of MAS for La Paz Department

DECEMBER 2008

When I first began to write about Bolivia in the late 1990s, the country occupied a peculiar place in relation to other areas of Latin America in which anthropologists and others conducted research. On the one hand, Bolivia had always fascinated outsiders, although in ways that represented a kind of Orientalist interest in South American alterity: the apocryphal legend of Queen Victoria erasing the young country from the world map in retaliation for the humiliation of a British emissary in La Paz; the double-layered Orientalism that both brought Che Guevara to Bolivia in 1967 and then shaped his later deification as the paradigmatic revolutionary fighting for the benighted Indian Other; and the many forms of topographic Orientalism that have constructed Bolivia's geographies as otherworldly, immeasurably exotic, and pulsing with biomass, from the *Salar de Uyuni* to Potosí's infernal tin mines to the "lost world" that inspired Arthur Conan Doyle.

Yet on the other hand, for a scholar interested in conflict, justice, law, and ideology, Bolivia was an apparent regional outlier, especially in relation to zones of civil strife, economic collapse, and environmental degradation, from Colombia's decades-long internal conflict and Peru's civil war to the economic crisis in Argentina and the tragedy of deforestation in Brazil. Academic interest in Bolivian history, culture, and politics was relatively marginal—though not necessarily marginalized—in relation to many other regions of interest within the problematic Cold War ordering logic known as "Latin American studies." This meant that the points of reference for an anthropologist or historian or political scientist of Bolivia in the late 1990s and early 2000s were fairly well defined; in my case, as a budding ethnographer of the norte de Potosí,

these revolved around the writings of a small group of anthropologists, including Tristan Platt, Olivia Harris, and Thomas Abercrombie, and extended out to a group of foundational Bolivian scholars including Xavier Albó, Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, and Marcelo Fernández Osco.

But within fifteen years, the place of Bolivia as a site of both scholarly and global public interest underwent a profound transformation. During this time, Bolivia became the lodestar for a powerful narrative in which the small landlocked country, which had previously been the "big bang" for neoliberalism in Latin America (Williamson 1992) and then "an unwilling lab for a radical experiment in conservative economic reforms," became instead "synonymous with conflicts over [globalization]" (Draper and Shultz 2008: 2). According to this account, beginning in the early 2000s, Bolivians finally rose up en masse against a "small and wealthy national elite" in movements defined by a dynamic mix of "rage and resistance." "From water rebels and weavers to emigrants and coca growers," Bolivians by the thousands took a stand against the ravages of a global political economic system that commanded the allegiance of world powers from the United States to China and underwrote international relations from the World Trade Organization to the International Monetary Fund (Draper and Shultz 2008: 2–3). If Bolivia had been a coerced central player in the tragedy of what Naomi Klein described as "disaster capitalism" (2007), its citizens had ultimately written a new script, one in which they pushed back against their country's historic condition with "dignity and defiance" in order to fight for a "future very different from the one prescribed for them by others, a future of their own design" (Shultz 2008: 296).

This broader shift in the image of Bolivia, one in which the country became, as South Africa had in the early 1990s, a new global icon for the possibility of radical change in the face of overwhelming economic, geopolitical, and historical odds, unleashed a subsequent academic shift in which Bolivian history, culture, and politics became central themes for researchers and writers. This led to a relative explosion in academic and critical studies of different facets of contemporary Bolivia, including a proliferation of studies produced by Bolivians for Bolivian publishers, newspapers, and policy and development institutions. The result was that, by 2017, the collective (and growing) body of interdisciplinary writing about Bolivia was voluminous. This fact has two direct implications for the current offering, which must take its place among a crowded field. The first is that it relieves me, in a sense, of the burden of having to summarize the state of the art as it relates to studies of contemporary Bolivia. The truth is that there simply isn't a state of the art to be found among the riotous cacophony of analyses, perspectives, and ethnographic accounts

that are part of the historic (re)discovery of Bolivia as a modern parable of "people looking at the larger forces shaping their lives and taking a stand, often with great courage, to demand what they believe to be right and to challenge what they believe to be wrong" (Draper and Shultz 2008: 5).

The second is that it is difficult to derive an unobjectionable historical timeline from this profusion of writing on Bolivia in order to provide a general outline against which the ethnographic research of 2006–15 took place. Indeed, the contested question of recent Bolivian history will itself be taken up in different ways and in different chapters throughout the book.[7] Nevertheless, it *is* both possible and vital, in light of these caveats, to establish a chronology that is organic to the book's broader arguments and ethnographic interpretations. What follows, then, is a description of this idiosyncratic chronology; its link with the book's chapters is made partly below and partly in the penultimate section of this introduction.

In order to understand the rise of Evo Morales and the transformations that followed his election in 2005, a good beginning is the election of Víctor Paz Estenssoro in 1985, three years after the restoration of democracy in Bolivia following almost twenty years of military dictatorship, internal repression, and sociopolitical stagnation. Upon taking office, Paz Estenssoro declared that "Bolivia is dying on us," meaning that hyperinflation, the growing influence of narcotraffic networks, and global price instabilities made it difficult for the country to respond to both micro- and macroeconomic challenges. Paz Estenssoro appointed the U.S.-trained businessman Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada (who came to be known simply as "Goni") as planning minister with a remit to oversee extraordinary measures to reorient Bolivia's economy and society. Goni did this by administering what he described as "bitter medicine" in the form of Decree 21060, an executive order that with the stroke of the pen dramatically devalued the Bolivian peso, raised public-sector prices, froze or slashed public salaries, and eliminated legal rights for public workers so that they could be legally laid off in large numbers.[8]

Although the "New Political Economy" of early 1985 reversed the problem of hyperinflation almost overnight, the crash of world tin prices in October accelerated one of the most consequential sociopolitical events of this period: the firing of 23,000 mine workers from the state mining company, the Corporación Minera de Bolivia, or COMIBOL. This precipitated a massive process of forced internal migration in which thousands of families were uprooted and "relocated": some left the country for Argentina, Spain, or the United States; others moved to work in the coca fields of the Chapare; and still many thousands more moved to the *altiplano* on the rim high above La Paz, a

zone called "El Alto," which became one of the fastest-growing urban areas in Latin America. El Alto eventually came to supplant La Paz itself in population as an independent city marked by haphazard construction, pervasive poverty, a lack of public infrastructure, and, critical for my purposes, a culture of radical political activism that could be collectively mobilized during key moments (see Lazar 2008).

Amid these neoliberal dislocations, which continued into the 1990s, Goni himself was elected president of Bolivia between 1994 and 1997, a period that for two reasons was fundamental for the ethnographic research and interpretations that form the basis for this book. First, Goni's government deepened and institutionalized the policies of structural adjustment mandated by the institutions that were promoting a framework that expressed the so-called Washington Consensus. These policies dramatically increased the influence of private transnational corporations in the internal economy of Bolivia, continued the process of privatizing key sectors of the Bolivian economy, and "capitalized" state-owned enterprises so that they could be sold to generate revenue for what was intended to be public goods, including worker pensions. In the end, the hidden hand of the free market did not guide Bolivia to a more just and sustainable future; on the contrary, the displacements of the 1990s created the highest levels of inequality in Latin America.

Yet at the same time, the high point of neoliberalism in Bolivia was a period in which the public articulation of long-standing grievances underwent a profound shift. Beginning in the late 1980s and expanding throughout the 1990s, local activists and movements in Bolivia came increasingly to be shaped by the related discourses of human and indigenous rights. Goni's government enthusiastically embraced the rapidly developing doctrines of multicultural identity and rights-based forms of justice, moves that were signaled by Bolivia's implementation of key international rights instruments such as International Labor Organization Convention 169 and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Two important government initiatives that marked the extent of the Goni government's commitment to the twin pillars of the politics of identity and the principle of (collective) self-governance were the Law of Popular Participation (see Postero 2007) and the Law of Bilingual Education (see Gustafson 2009b). Finally, in 1998 the Bolivian Congress approved Law 1818, which created an institution that would play an important, if contested, role over the following decade: the Defensoría del Pueblo, a national human rights institution with a mandate to promote human rights as the basis for civil society in the country and to hold the government itself to account in cases of official abuse.

Thus, although within ten years the demonization of the neoliberal period would earn it a place next to colonialism and republicanism as abhorrent periods in Bolivian history that the 2009 constitution formally rejected, the fact remained that the discursive shifts that took place during the 1990s laid the ideological groundwork for these future transformations. However, before these transformations—which depended in large part on the juridification of newly valorized categories of identity—could occur, the country had to pass through a period of often violent transition that Mesa Gisbert describes as a "crisis of the state" (Mesa Gisbert 2008: 607). The two most important events during this liminal period were the Water War in Cochabamba in 1999 and 2000 and the Gas War of 2003, which concentrated mobilizations from across the altiplano into the ideological tinderbox of El Alto.

In both cases, the underlying stakes were similar: massive resistance against a loss of control over public resources against a larger backdrop of almost two decades of growing inequality, foreign (particularly U.S. and transnational corporate) intervention, and the tragic failure of the "political system of '85" (Mesa Gisbert 2008: 623). The direct action tactics of protestors in Cochabamba and especially in La Paz and El Alto—which came to a head during Black October of 2003, when Bolivian army and police units fired on crowds, killing almost sixty people and wounding four hundred more—carried an important lesson for understanding developments during the period 2006–15. Even though the language of rights had clearly become a dominant guiding political framework and basic discursive tool for pursuing a collective project of socioeconomic change, its limitations, contradictions, and normative abstraction were recognized in practice every time Bolivians erected a road blockade or engaged in street battles with the police. Indeed, this tension between rights and direct action was codified in the concise and urgent 2000 Cochabamba Manifesto, which grounded ideologically the mobilizations against the transnational consortium Aguas del Tunari. As the Manifesto put it, "Cochabambinos, Cochabambinas—you cannot beg for civil rights. Rights are won in struggle. No one else is going to fight for what is ours. Either we fight together for justice or we let bad rulers humiliate us" (quoted in Olivera 2004).

All of this immediate prehistory led directly to December 2005, in which Evo Morales Ayma, the head of the powerful coca growers union in the Chapare and former member of the Bolivian congress for MAS, was elected president with 54 percent of the national vote, a clear electoral majority of the type that had last been seen in the country during the 1960 election of Víctor Paz Estenssoro (who won with 75 percent).[9] After Morales had been expelled from the Congress in January 2002, he had proclaimed, "*volveré y seré millones*," or

"I will return and I will be millions." These were the supposed last words of the Indian rebel Túpac Katari before he was drawn and quartered by Spanish colonial troops in the town of Peñas in 1781 (see Thomson 2002), an act of desecration that Burman has called the "root metaphor" for understanding the linkage between history and collective trauma in Bolivia (Burman 2016: 134).[10] In addition to representing himself as the fulfillment of Katari's eighteenth-century prophecy during the campaign leading up to the 2005 election (a typical poster read "Katari, the rebellion, Evo, the revolution"), Morales also promoted the idea that he embodied the spirit of Che Guevara (another poster: "Che Lives! Evo for President!").[11]

On January 21, 2006, Morales was invested with the traditional staff of office in an unofficial ceremony at the ruins of Tiwanaku attended by tens of thousands of Bolivia's indigenous citizens. Reflecting the broader sense of radical change that Morales's election signaled, the official swearing-in ceremony the next day in La Paz was witnessed by an unprecedented number of Latin American heads of state and dignitaries, including the presidents of Venezuela, Chile, Argentina, Colombia, Brazil, Panama, Paraguay, and Peru. The vice president of Cuba's state council, Carlos Lage, was invited to stand at Morales's side during the ceremony, while Eduardo Galeano, who was also present, later gave a speech to thousands of revelers in the Plaza de Los Héroes in which he said that "yesterday was the last day of fear in Bolivia" (quoted in Burman 2016: 171).

After Morales dramatically nationalized the country's hydrocarbon industries in May 2006—during which he personally occupied oil fields owned by the Brazilian energy company Petrobras accompanied by Bolivian soldiers—the Morales government moved to convene a constituent assembly in Sucre in August in order to write a new national constitution, thereby fulfilling a key promise of his campaign to the Pacto de Unidad, a shifting national alliance of social movements and indigenous organizations whose support formed the basis for Morales's victory. This alliance, whose most visible and influential members included the Consejo Nacional de Ayllus y Markas del Qullasuyu (CONAMAQ), the Confederación Sindical Única de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia (CSUTCB), the Confederación Sindical de Colonizadores de Bolivia (CSCB), the Confederación de Pueblos Indígenas del Oriente Boliviano (CIDOB), and the Federación Nacional de Mujeres Campesinas de Bolivia-Bartolina Sisa (FNMCB-BS), had called for a constitutional process that would be animated by the participation of civil society writ large with direct representation by labor unions, the Pacto members themselves, and environmental and gender rights NGOs, among others.

However, the MAS government decided to limit representation in the eventual Asamblea Constituyente to members who were affiliated with political parties, with the ruling MAS party enjoying the largest number. Although some Pacto and social movement members eventually affiliated with MAS in order to participate in the deliberations, the limitation on representation was resented even by some strong Morales supporters. At the same time, the assembly served to catalyze two distinct opposition movements. The first was based in the eastern lowland departments and came to be known as the Media Luna (after their collective resemblance on a map to a crescent moon), an opposition bloc that was driven by a diffuse mix of regional separatism, racial indignation at the unprecedented prospect of the Palacio Quemado in the hands of highland Indians, and economic protectionism.[12] The second opposition movement, concentrated in the historical capital of Sucre, revolved around the quixotic demand for *capitalía*, that is, to restore Sucre as the "full capital" of Bolivia, a status it had lost after the Federal War of 1899 (when the national government was divided between La Paz and Sucre).

The months during which the assembly was active were marked by discord among delegates inside the hall and growing civil unrest outside of it. Even so, despite the withdrawal of opposition parties, violence in the streets of Sucre that left three dead, and the eventual relocation of the assembly to a military academy on the edge of the city for security reasons, a full draft of a new constitution was approved by the assembly and presented to the Bolivian Congress in December 2007.

The following year brought the country to the brink of civil war as the opposition movements of the eastern lowlands and Sucre continued to institutionalize their demands and mobilize their urban, or "civic," populations for what amounted to a permanent state of protest, anti-government action, and, increasingly, racialized violence. Although the idea was to put the new constitution to a national referendum, the instability meant that the Morales government was forced into a series of negotiations with the departmental prefects of the opposition Consejo Nacional Democrático (CONALDE), which was seeking political and economic autonomy for its members modeled on Santa Cruz's unprecedented autonomy statute, which was approved in a department-wide vote in May 2008.

In a bold and risky move, the Morales government decided to give the Bolivian people themselves another opportunity to decide on the country's future just two and a half years after the historic December 2005 elections. The government announced that a national *Referéndum revocatorio*, or vote of no confidence, would be held in August 2008, in which citizens would have

the right to retain or oust both Morales and the country's nine departmental prefects. Nevertheless, the underlying question was actually broader than one of a simple political mandate—what was really at stake was whether a majority of citizens approved of Morales's revolutionary program, the most important aspect of which was the approval and implementation of the new constitution.

The year 2008 was thus one of competing national, departmental, and local campaigns both for and against the wider transformations that were heralded by the radical alternative future for the country at the heart of MAS's socioeconomic, legal, and political project. Yet just as the Media Luna and Sucre opposition movements seemed to be gaining in confidence and political capital, two events—one before, the other after, the August national referendum—served collectively as a key turning point in Bolivia's post-2005 history. On May 24, thousands of pro-capitalía activists captured dozens of rural Morales supporters who were arriving in Sucre to participate with the president at a political rally. As the violence spread, Morales quickly canceled the visit, but the peasants were brutally marched into Sucre's historic center, the Plaza 25 de Mayo, beaten and humiliated by the crowds, and forced to strip to their waists, chant obscene anti-Morales and anti-indigenous slogans, and to burn their own *wiphalas*, the flag of Bolivia's indigenous movement.

And on September 11, just one month after the mixed results of the Referéndum revocatorio, in which both Morales and most of the country's opposition prefects were reaffirmed in their mandates, another group of pro-Morales supporters was attacked by armed militants near Porvenir in the Department of Pando. Pando's prefect, Leopoldo Fernández, whose mandate had been reaffirmed in the August referendum, was, along with Santa Cruz's Rubén Costas, one of the most outspoken and racially derisive critics of Morales and the MAS government. As a later international investigation undertaken by the Unión de Naciones Suramericanas (UNASUR) confirmed, *cívicos* under either direct or implied orders from Fernández's office had committed various atrocities against the pro-Morales supporters, including murder, torture, sexual assault, and the desecration of bodies, some of which were thrown into rivers or hidden in the surrounding forest. In the end, UNASUR concluded that at least nineteen people had been killed, although the actual number could very well have been higher.

The immediate consequence of what became known as the Massacre of Porvenir was the arrest of Fernández on various charges, including intent to commit genocide, and his imprisonment in La Paz's notorious San Pedro Prison. But more importantly, the collective national shock over the "Plaza de Rodillas" of May 24 in Sucre and the atrocities of September 11 in Pando led to

a widespread loss of support for the opposition cause among key sectors of society in places like Cochabamba and La Paz, including the media and center-left intellectuals who had previously joined with the opposition in criticizing the Morales government. With Morales overwhelmingly confirmed in his office (he had received 67 percent backing in the August referendum, which was also more than any of the departmental prefects except the prefect of Potosí, a strong Morales supporter and member of MAS), with the opposition engaging in tactics that were being described by the government as a "civil coup d'état," and with the armed forces unified behind the popular president, the writing on the wall was clear—the opposition dream, embodied in the Santa Cruz statute of 2008, of dictating the terms of autonomy from the central state, was over; the new constitution would soon be confirmed as the nation's revolutionary "Magna Carta," and the government was now fully prepared to advance the process of change with the complete arsenal of legal, political, economic, and ideological strategies at its disposal.[13]

In January 2009, Bolivia was "refounded" when the new constitution was approved by a wide margin in yet another national referendum. Among its many other radical innovations, the new constitution formally established Bolivia as a postcolonial, postrepublican, postneoliberal, and plurinational state. In addition, the constitution codified two principles that would soon be at the center of the first major crisis of Morales's first term in office under the new constitution (he would be reelected in December 2009 in a landslide, with 64 percent of the vote): the first, that Pachamama, or Mother Earth, was the source of all life, sacred, and thus deserving of both public reverence and the protection of the law; and second, a greatly enlarged version of "free, prior and informed consent," a key facet of international indigenous rights law derived from ILO Convention 169 (1989), in which Bolivia's "native indigenous peasant peoples and nations" were recognized as having ancestral ownership of their territories and the right to manage them according to their traditional cultural practices.

Yet in 2011, as part of a government plan to develop the nation's infrastructure through road-building in formerly isolated areas, a conflict erupted around a proposal to build a major highway through the Isiboro-Sécure National Park and Indigenous Territory (TIPNIS), a protected area of almost 1.5 million hectares that extends from the north of Cochabamba Department into the south of Beni Department. The people living in the TIPNIS, which importantly included the Chapare province of Cochabamba, where Morales rose to political power, organized massive resistance to the planned highway. They argued that they were not consulted or given the ability to reject the plan;

that the highway would cause irreparable damage to the region's rich biodiversity; and finally, that the highway would dramatically increase the presence of coca-growing *colonizadores* in the park, whose farming practices were fundamentally at odds with traditional stewardship of the land.

After two key members of the Pacto de Unidad—CIDOB and CONAMAQ—organized a march from Trinidad, Beni, to La Paz as a public display of interregional indigenous resistance to the government's plan, a march that was met with military and police force, the Morales government soon realized how much damage the conflict was doing to the legitimacy of the broader process of change. Although the conflict ended (at the time) with a nearly complete vindication of the protestors' demands in the form of a national law that declared the TIPNIS forever off-limits to both road construction and land use by people "foreign" to the territory's ancestral owners, it carried several important lessons for understanding the 2006–15 period, including the fact that Morales's base of support in the indigenous movements viewed him more as a strategic ally than as one of their own.

To conclude the chronology that is most relevant for the book's arguments and ethnographic interpretations, something should be said about the critical post-TIPNIS period. Three developments seem to me most pertinent. First, Bolivia's economy experienced significant and steady growth, becoming one of the most stable in the region. Indeed, in an ironic turn, the IMF and World Bank both pronounced the country to be in a state of healthy macroeconomic "equilibrium," despite—or perhaps because of—the fact that its economic growth has come through a national policy of what some critics have described as "extractivism."[14] In 2014, Bolivia surpassed China as the country with the highest ratio of foreign reserves to GDP in the world: almost $14 billion, which was equal to almost half of its GDP.

Second, the period 2011–15 was marked by the pervasive use of the law by the government to consolidate power and institutionalize the process of change. This will be described as "strategic juridification" and developed in greater depth in chapter 5, but the important point here is the fact that through the use of criminal prosecutions, administrative regulations, and national legislation, the government was able to harness the power of the rule of law as a primary mechanism for its revolutionary aspirations.

The final development actually stretches beyond the ethnographic horizon of the book, since it involves moves that the government made in the years after 2015 with important implications for the future. In February 2016, a referendum to amend the constitution to permit Morales to run for a third presidential term was narrowly defeated amid a bizarre scandal involving a

young former lover named Gabriela Zapata, their deceased child, and charges that Morales had used his position to secure a job for Zapata in a Chinese company that had conducted hundreds of millions of dollars in business with the Bolivian government. Nevertheless, despite losing the referendum, MAS nominated Morales as its candidate for the 2019 national elections at a December 2016 party congress.

Yet beyond the more concrete question of how the government eventually found a way to use the law creatively to allow this to happen without contravening the results of the February 2016 referendum (see the conclusion), the more far-reaching questions concern the long-term future of Bolivia's "democratic and cultural revolution." Will the Bolivian experiment mature into an important model for postneoliberal state-building, pluralism, and sustainable justice? Can the refounded Bolivian state find a way to reconcile what appears to be a structural tension between the ecological *cosmovisión* that is at the center of its revolutionary ideology and a plan for economic development that depends fundamentally on the exploitation and commodification of nonrenewable natural resources? Is the process of change in Bolivia inextricably bound up with particular charismatic actors (Morales, the powerful vice president, Álvaro García Linera) or a particular political party (MAS), or does its ultimate place in history depend on "the peoples" (plural), as the current government itself argues? Although *A Revolution in Fragments* can serve as a signpost to possible answers to these—and other—broader questions, they must remain, in the end, open and contested.

REVOLUTION FROM THE INSIDE OUT

> *Revolutions are the only political events which confront us directly and inevitably with the problem of beginning.*
>
> —Hannah Arendt, *On Revolution* ([1963] 2006)

To this point, the words *revolution* and *revolutionary* have been used in different ways almost thirty times. Moreover, since the book uses revolution in the title, this is clearly a conceptual anchor. But what, precisely, is meant here by revolution? Without offering a complete answer, since the question of revolution itself is taken up ethnographically in different ways in each chapter, I instead want to come at the question from the side and explain how the book reflects a particular approach to the problem. To do this, I draw a distinction between *normative* and *phenomenological* approaches to the general questions

of revolution and the application of these general questions to history. By normative approach I mean the attempt to derive models and typologies through which "revolution" can be distinguished from all other processes of historical transformation; these models and typologies can then be used prescriptively to identify the likely emergence of a revolution given certain social, economic, and political conditions; and, finally, a particular revolution, once properly identified, can be placed alongside other signal moments in history in a broader exercise in comparative social analysis.

Seen in this way, the normative approach to questions of revolution has dominated discussion and debate for centuries, and it is obviously not possible to review this full intellectual history here. So that the reader has an unambiguous sense of what I mean by a normative approach to revolution, a fairly recent example is offered by James DeFronzo (2011).[15] According to DeFronzo, whose model of revolutionary movements draws from the work of other normative revolution scholars such as Foran (2005), Goldstone (1994, 2001), Greene (1990), Gurr (1970), and Skocpol (1979), a revolution is distinguished by the following five phenomena: mass frustration that leads to popular uprisings by urban or rural populations; the emergence of divisions among elites, some of whom turn against the established order; the presence of one or more "unifying motivations" that transcend a society's existing social, economic, and ethnic fault lines; a severe crisis that serves as a catalyzing turning point; and a "permissive or tolerant world context" within which a revolution can emerge without outside interference (DeFronzo 2011: 12–13).[16]

The phenomenological approach, by contrast, sidesteps the prevailing "is it or isn't it a revolution?" problem to focus on revolution as a diffuse, though ultimately bounded, social and historical category that organizes experience in particular kinds of ways. A phenomenological orientation toward revolution finds expression in various genres, through literature (Allende 1982), through long-form reportage (Reed 1919), and through memoir and *testimonio* (Arenas 1993; Burgos-Debray 1984). Somewhat surprisingly, as Bjørn Thomassen (2012) has argued, with certain important exceptions (for example, Donham 1999; see also Greenberg 2014 and Razsa 2015), the ethnographic study of revolution has not been a traditional concern for anthropologists.[17] As he puts it, "though we talk about our own [disciplinary and theoretical] revolutions, we say much less about those that take place around us and continue to shape the world in which we live" (2012: 679–80). As a consequence, the normative approach has dominated debate and shaped the broader understanding of revolution: "Political scientists write volumes about [revolution] without consulting the anthropological literature . . . but these writers can hardly be

blamed, for the neglect comes from within anthropology itself" (Thomassen 2012: 680).[18]

The approach to revolution that is developed throughout this book strikes something of an intermediate position between the normative and the phenomenological. This is important because in the case of Bolivia, the normative is not only, or even most critically, a set of ideas about revolution developed by scholars as part of a comparative analysis of historical change. Instead, general theories of revolution derive from specific moments in Bolivian history and are closely connected with a series of hybridizations in which local processes of change, resistance, and state violence have vernacularized the meanings of revolution—both as ideology and as social practice. In this way, the normative and the phenomenological dimensions of revolution have been, if not necessarily mutually constitutive, then closely and dynamically linked as a marker of Bolivia's most important moments of transformation, including the period 2006–15.

This intermediate approach to the question of revolution has both theoretical and methodological implications. Theoretically, it locates the understanding of revolution first and foremost in the interplay between concrete appropriation and what might be thought of as codification. This creates a specifically ethnographic opening to frame revolution as an anthropological problem that can toggle conceptually between idea and action, intention and affect, and "*telos* and status" (Ferguson 2006: 185). Methodologically, the approach developed in this book privileges the hold that revolution has for people, to paraphrase Bronislaw Malinowski, including, critically, no hold at all. Yet if the book adopts an approach to revolution from the inside out in order to explore the consequential ways through which people in contemporary Bolivia find meaning in times of rapid transformation and chronic social instability, it also takes account of how these practices of meaning-making become organized, as we will see, through processes of ideological slotting that are both rooted in doctrine and at the same time open to interpretation, revision, and challenge.

A REVOLUTION IN FRAGMENTS

In January 2009, I asked Antonio Peredo to explain the political, discursive, and ideological extravagance of the new Bolivian constitution, which was soon to be overwhelmingly approved in the national referendum. Peredo was a legendary figure in Bolivian politics: brother to three *guerrilleros* who had fought with Che; Evo Morales's vice presidential candidate in the national elections of 2002, in which the MAS ticket had surprisingly come in second and gained

35 new congressional seats; and an influential senator for MAS who had played an important advisory role during the Constituent Assembly of 2006–7.

Peredo was a famously verbose intellectual of the traditional revolutionary left, and in that sense he was an ethnographer's dream. He could exhaust the space on an SD card with the response to a single question. Yet when I gave Peredo, who died in 2012 at the age of seventy-six, an opening to hold forth on the extraordinary structure and ambitions of the new constitution, he paused. It seemed to me, I remarked, as a way to continue the conversation, that the new constitution incorporated almost every conceivable right, obligation, theory of the state, theory of the economy, and category of identity. Peredo looked at me with a slight smile as he slowly shook his head from side to side: *I know*, he finally said, *we just couldn't say no*.

Peredo's reply, terse as it was, contained the seeds of an insight into how to read across what amounted to, by 2015, a boisterous plenitude of ethnographic data on the process of change in Bolivia. With time, this insight ripened into the central argument of the book: that the process of transformation in Bolivia was constituted through a series of shifting crystallizations, historical, ideological, and institutional fragments that were often in tension with each other. On the one hand, as Peredo acknowledged, Bolivia's "third revolution" (Dunkerley 2007b) was radically different from the one that Peredo and comrades had been fighting for over many decades of Bolivian history. It was deeply hybrid; ideologically ambiguous (if not, at moments, contradictory); delinked from well-defined theories of both historical oppression and historical change; and, above all, shaped by a pervasive mytho-utopian *dispositif* that drew on countervailing concepts of indigenous world-reversal and neoliberal rights-infused cosmopolitanism. The result was a polyvalent vision of transformation that was powerful and compelling despite its diffuseness—or, perhaps, precisely because of it.

On the other hand, this diffuse, ideologically unmoored, and discursively tumultuous process of change was instantiated largely in terms of the instrumentalities of state bureaucracy: legal regulations, administrative orders, the creation of new ministries and the elimination of others, new codes of institutional conduct. Whether or not the constitution of Bolivia's third revolution in terms of these particular kinds of historical, ideological, and institutional fragments must be understood, more generally, as a feature of the era of "revolution through democracy" (DeFronzo 2011) is a question that will be taken up in different ways through the book's various chapters. Yet if there is one key finding of this study, one result that has potential meaning beyond the study's ethnographic boundaries, it is this.[19]

In order to structure the ethnographic interpretation and analysis of Bolivia's fraught process of change, each of the book's chapters examines key themes that emerged through multiscalar research on justice, ideology, and practice over the period 2006–15. Chapter 1 charts the evolution of official state discourse and the diverse efforts to forge a dominant cadre of public and social actors committed to the project of refoundation and postneoliberal institution-building. As the chapter reveals, an enduring dilemma for the MAS government during this period was the inability to maintain an ideological coalition in the absence of a well-defined ruling class.

Chapter 2 analyzes the way law very quickly became a central mechanism through which the government's revolutionary aspirations were expressed. The chapter explores the extent to which so-called revolution by constitution put in motion a series of social and institutional processes that worked at cross purposes to the cause of structural transformation. Moreover, as the chapter shows, the need to make law hegemonic met with various forms of resistance, some of which took the form of alternative practices of justice-making in spaces in which people felt themselves to be "outlawed" (Goldstein 2012). Finally, chapter 2 examines the tensions that emerged from the effort to encode the revolution in law while at the same time reconceptualizing the meaning of law itself within the double layer of plurinationalism and legal pluralism.

Chapter 3 interrogates some of the most important expressions of resistance to the process of change in Bolivia during the period 2006–15. This resistance was ideological, institutional, and embodied. In an allusion to the anthropological thinking of Clifford Geertz, I develop the notion in this chapter that at least until the resolution of the TIPNIS conflict in 2011, the major currents of opposition to the MAS government and the broader process of transformation took the form of a cultural system that was shaped by particular collective memories, a willingness to resort to violence, and the demand to mobilize along ethnic and racial lines.

Chapter 4 unpacks the internal conflicts between competing visions of revolutionary change in Bolivia, conflicts that largely simmered out of view in the rush to construct a patchwork state ideology. In light of the country's long history of syndicalist, Trotskyist, and democratic socialist mobilizations, especially among the formerly influential urban intelligentsia, the MAS government struggled to develop a coherent revolutionary project that was nominally "socialist," while at the same time it was implicitly hostile to Bolivia's various institutions of the traditional revolutionary left. This chapter examines these ideological disjunctures both conceptually and through the experiences of different actors left behind by a revolution without revolutionaries.

The discussion in chapter 5 returns to the problem of justice, focusing on practices that marked the period between 2011 and 2015 in particular. This was a time in which the end of the instability around the government's mandate, the overwhelming electoral support for the new constitution, and the resolution of the TIPNIS conflict ushered in a new phase. This phase was characterized by the increasing use of "strategic juridification"—the selective use of the rule of law to consolidate state power. At the same time, because of the existing framework of Bolivian law, a "prerevolutionary" juridical structure that continued to form the foundation of the plurinational state, the general principles of the Bolivian constitution had to be converted, or "reglemented," into more specific laws that could be acted upon by government ministries and state agencies. As will be seen, the process of breaking down the constitution's sweeping principles of radical change into more limited and technocratic parts introduced fundamental limitations to the MAS government's broader aspirations.

Chapter 6 examines the role that ideologies of collective identity played in Bolivia's "third revolution." Ethnographic research during the period 2006–15 led to a number of surprising findings, including the fact that the status of Morales as Bolivia's "first indigenous president" was contested by some key members of the country's indigenous social movements, including those that made up the Pacto de Unidad. Yet at the same time, some student and peasant intellectuals who defined themselves as "Indianist" or "neo-Indianist" militants viewed Morales, critically, as the very embodiment of a Western-inspired indigenism, as did anti-government intellectuals and activists in the lowland and Sucre opposition movements. And Morales himself? He was more likely than not to self-identify as a *sindicalista*, or trade unionist, one who came of age in the Chapare among his fellow coca growers.[20] The chapter takes up these and other contestations at the heart of what a recent volume describes as the intent to construct an "indigenous state" (Postero 2017).

The book's conclusion both recapitulates the main arguments and points of emphasis and suggests several ways in which the ethnographic interpretation of Bolivia's process of change carries certain lessons when considering the possibilities for, and limitations to, structural transformation more broadly in light of prevailing regional and global political economies.

CONCLUSION: ANTHROPOLOGY IN A WORLD OF MEANING AND CRISIS

In its call for papers for its 2017 annual meeting, the American Anthropological Association (AAA) took stock of the current moment of historical and political uncertainty gripping the world, from the election of Donald Trump in

the United States to the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union, from the reemergence of Russia as a regional power with global ambitions to the campaign by some African countries to undermine the legitimacy of the International Criminal Court. As the AAA rightly argued, the "world of the Anthropocene [is] packed with meaning and crisis" (American Anthropological Association 2016).

As the long-term ethnographic study of Bolivia's contested process of change demonstrates, however, the relationship between meaning and crisis in any one particular case is far from obvious. Nevertheless, what does seem clear is the need to continue to develop collectively an anthropological approach that is capable of elucidating this relationship as an ethnographic problem and, even more, drawing out the broader lessons as a contribution to interdisciplinary social and critical analysis. In this sense, my hope is that *A Revolution in Fragments* responds to this call for what might be thought of as a new anthropology of transformation.

Even more, although it is tempting to modify transformation with "progressive" in this programmatic formulation, I believe that would be a mistake. Not only would it prefigure the meaning—or potential meaning—of progressive in any one context, but it would carry the unwanted methodological implication that only certain kinds of transformative processes were worthy of our ethnographic and ethical attention. That was, I would argue, a key mistake made by the various anthropologies of the post–Cold War that examined the politics of identity. In the end, it was only certain kinds of transgressive or marginalized or cosmopolitan identities that were invested with disciplinary legitimacy; others, particularly those organized around various exclusionary or reprobate categories (nationalism, nativism, apocalyptic religious fundamentalism, racism), were rarely treated or were ignored.

Instead, the kind of anthropology of transformation that is meant to be reflected in this book is one that is both faithful to the phenomenological irreducibilities that partly constitute contemporary transformative processes and open, both methodologically and, one might say, politically, to the coalescence of alternative cosmovisions that can challenge a global neoliberal logic that has only become more pervasive and naturalized since the mid-2000s.

Notes

INTRODUCTION: MEANING AND CRISIS IN COSMIC TIME

1 See Nancy Postero (2017) for a rich discussion of the complexities of "refoundation" as an ordering logic.

2 For a similar argument for moving beyond the binary logics that can shape ethnographic writing, see Marisol de la Cadena's 2015 book, in which she develops a compelling framework for understanding the mutual differences that coexist in ethnographic description.

3 On the problems of identity, culture, and politics in Bolivia, see the important work of Andrew Canessa (e.g., 2006, 2007, 2012a, 2012b); see also Postero (2017). Classic and earlier analyses of identity beyond Bolivia can be found in, among other sources, the various studies of Charles Hale (e.g., 2002, 2004).

4 For an exhilarating account of the importance of the Pachakuti within Bolivia's process of change, see Gutiérrez Aguilar (2014).

5 For an innovative study that grapples with many of the same methodological dilemmas, see Amal Hassan Fadlalla's "multifaceted" ethnography (2018) of the production of transnational sovereignties in relation to the Sudanese and later South Sudanese conflicts.

6 As I put it in a different study (Goodale 2008a: 187), "an *ayllu* is a macro-regional fictive kinship category that was probably created to deal with the challenges of living in the extreme ecological zones in the Andes (Murra 1972, 1975). The ayllu has been an important unit of Andean social organization since pre-Hispanic times. [In many parts of highland Bolivia], ayllus retain many of their historical features, including 'an internal organization based on dual and vertically organized segments, communal distribution of resources, and a "vertical" land tenure system which includes the use of noncontiguous *puna* (highland) and valley lands' (Rivera Cusicanqui 1991; see also Platt 1982)."

7 Having made this point, I should underscore the importance of a work that perhaps comes closest to providing a relatively unvarnished account of Bolivian history—the magisterial single-volume *Historia de Bolivia* produced by the distinguished father, mother, and son team of Bolivian historians José de Mesa, Teresa Gisbert, and Carlos D. Mesa Gisbert (who was also, during attenuated terms of office, vice president and president of Bolivia). *Historia de Bolivia* was released in its eighth edition in 2012, two years after the death of José de Mesa, who had contributed—in addition to his scholarship—many of the elegant hand-drawn black-and-white images up through the seventh edition. The eighth

edition analyzes Bolivian history to the end of 2010. I make frequent use of *Historia de Bolivia* throughout this book.

8 Factual material in this section is drawn from the *Historia de Bolivia* and from *The Bolivia Reader: History, Culture, Politics* (Thomson et al. 2018), of which I am one of the editors.

9 This excludes both the compromised election of 1964, in which Paz Estenssoro won with almost 98 percent of the vote as the only candidate, and the various elections during the years of the dictatorships.

10 See Eva Fischer's fascinating (2017) anthropological study of the "many lives of Túpac Katari," in which she analyzes the ways in which the collective memory of the late eighteenth-century Indian rebel was reinterpreted during different moments of cultural struggle in Bolivia.

11 For images of this political propaganda, see *The Bolivia Reader* (chapter 12).

12 Although "media luna" translates literally to "half moon," it is also used in Spanish to describe the form of the crescent moon.

13 This is not to say that opposition to the MAS government ended in 2009; far from it. As will be seen in different places in the book, but especially in chapters 3 and 5, the opposition underwent several important changes in the years after 2009, changes that themselves can be divided into several phases. But to give just one example of how some elements in Santa Cruz increasingly turned their attention to paramilitary options for resistance, Bolivian army and police units killed three men and wounded two others at the Hotel Las Américas in Santa Cruz on April 16, 2009, after a supposed plot to assassinate Morales had been discovered. The men who were killed were citizens of Hungary, Romania, and Ireland with purported links to Santa Cruz's virulently anti-government Comité Pro-Santa Cruz and its militant youth wing, the UJC. Although the circumstances surrounding the events of April 16 are still unclear, there is no question that opposition groups were preparing for armed resistance and engaging in paramilitary training during this period, as my research reveals (see chapter 3).

14 See Kohl and Farthing (2012), McNeish (2013, 2016a, 2016b), Postero (2013, 2017), various chapters in Wanderley (2011), and Webber (2015).

15 Regarding influential normative revolution theorists, perhaps none cast so long a shadow as Crane Brinton, whose *The Anatomy of Revolution* sat astride discussions of revolution from its first publication in 1938 to its third edition in 1965. Brinton, who was the McLean Professor of Ancient and Modern History at Harvard for over two decades, was skeptical of revolutions, having famously compared them to a fever that takes over a body politic with uncertain and often violent results. As he put it, the "tangible and useful results [of revolutions] look rather petty as measured by the brotherhood of man and the achievement of justice on this earth. The blood of the martyrs seems hardly necessary to establish decimal coinage" (1965: 259).

16 Applying these criteria to recent history, DeFronzo finds that the election of Evo Morales in 2005 ushered in a period of what DeFronzo calls "revolution through

democracy" in Bolivia. Regarding the fifth criterion, DeFronzo observes that the "replacement of [George W.] Bush by [Barack] Obama . . . likely reduced the threat of . . . U.S. military intervention against [the] democratically elected leftist revolutionary government" (2011: 446).

17 Nevertheless, the anthropologist Martin Holbraad is directing a five-year project sponsored by the European Research Council (Comparative Anthropologies of Revolutionary Politics [CARP], 2014–19) that promises to reorient the anthropological approach to revolution in fundamental ways. See www.ucl.ac.uk/anthropology/revolution.

18 Thomassen identifies three reasons why an "anthropology of revolution" never developed: first, revolutions involve structural transformations to the kinds of large-scale systems that have not been a traditional focus of anthropological research; second, at least since the 1980s, anthropologists have—following James Scott's study of "weapons of weak" (1985)—turned away from what Thomassen describes as "high politics" in favor of "ordinary and everyday forms of political behavior"; and third, since revolutions often "happen when nobody expects them," it is difficult to plan ethnographic research in such unpredictable circumstances. Moreover, to the extent to which revolutionary processes are violent, a putative anthropology of revolution confronts ethical impediments: "No responsible teacher would send a Ph.D. student into a war zone" (Thomassen 2012: 682–83).

19 As one might imagine, the effort to characterize the period 2006–15 in Bolivia has occupied various other scholars. For a cross section of some of the more influential of these other formulations (in English), see Burman (2016); Canessa (2006, 2012b, 2014); Dunkerley (2007a, 2007b); Fabricant (2012); Fabricant and Gustafson (2011); Farthing and Kohl (2014); Goldstein (2012); Gustafson (2009a, 2009b, 2010); Gutiérrez Aguilar (2014); Hylton and Thomson (2007); McNeish (2013); Postero (2010, 2013, 2017); Schilling-Vacaflor (2011); Thomson (2009); and Webber (2010, 2011, 2016).

20 For an important long-term study of the ways in which "Bolivia's coca growers reshaped democracy" and influenced in indelible ways the evolution of MAS as a ruling party, see Grisaffi 2019.

CHAPTER 1: HEARING REVOLUTION IN A MINOR KEY

1 For a study of the "limits of decolonization" based on research in Bolivia's hydrocarbon sector, see Anthias (2018).

2 For other work that examines the question of citizenship in Bolivia after the election of Evo Morales, see Albro (2010), Canessa (2012a, 2012b), and Farthing and Kohl (2014).

3 The Finnish critical development scholar Eija M. Ranta completed a PhD dissertation in 2014 precisely on the role of vivir bien in contemporary Bolivia. Her important study of vivir bien as both "discursive construction" and "contested practice" argues that it should be understood as a radical challenge to broader neoliberal contractions, which lead, in many cases, to the condition of what