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National University of Ireland, Cork



Comparative Indigeneities in Contemporary Latin America: Analysis of Ethnopolitics in Mexico and Bolivia

Thesis presented by

Cian Warfield, BA, M.Res

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Department of Spanish, Portuguese and Latin American Studies

Head of Department: Professor Nuala Finnegan

Supervisor: Professor Nuala Finnegan

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Abstract

This thesis engages in a comparative analysis of two key ethnopolitical case studies drawn from Bolivia and Mexico. The intention is to critically evaluate the politically diverse ways in which Indigenous groups respond to the challenge of coloniality as they seek to restore their ethnic rights. The 2011 TIPNIS conflict between President Evo Morales (2006-2019) and lowland Indigenous communities reveals the difficulties faced by Bolivia's former Indigenous president who struggled to find equilibrium between ethnic rights and national economic development. While Morales himself claimed to represent the interests of all Bolivian ethnic groups, the TIPNIS conflict showed that a policy of neoextractivism in combination with territorial development intersected with the struggle for ethnoterritoriality to reproduce scenes of chaos, conflict and socio-territorial change which sometimes distorted, at other times, enhanced his image as an Andean-decoloniser. Comparatively, in 2003, the Zapatista social justice movement bypassed Mexican state relations in order to satisfy their search for ethnoterritoriality. While the Zapatistas struggled in the midst of this pursuit against a global capitalist framework, which they claim, masquerades as international free-trade alliances and foreign corporatism, the rebels have become an important ethnopolitical model of resistance in the context of a neoliberal Mexico. Conceptually framed around notions of place and space, this interdisciplinary study uses a broad range of theoretical approaches (decolonial theory, discourse theory, utopia studies) which facilitates an innovative reading of key speeches, declarations, government policy documents, communiqués and locally-sourced journalistic material and relies on a range of scholarship drawn from cultural studies, political science,

anthropology and philosophy. Through its comparative design, this thesis not only generates fresh and original perspectives on contemporary ethnopolitical activity between Mexico and Bolivia but also reveals the challenges, opportunities, similarities and differences which shape diverse forms of ethnopolitcal resistance across the region today.

Introduction

Introduction

In Latin American Studies, ethnopolitics, or the study of Indigenous political activism, has evolved across a range of scholarship, enhanced by an understanding of how Indigenous social movements resist the politics of the international neoliberal order from their specific places and spaces of ethnopolitical thought and action. From the *Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional* (hereafter EZLN) in Mexico, which advances a model of ethnopolitical autonomy outside the legal and conceptual limits of the neoliberal state, to the politics of Evo Morales (2006-2019) and the *Movimiento Al Socialismo – Instrumento Político por la Soberanía de los Pueblos* (hereafter MAS-IPSP), which formally shaped and reworked the foundations of Bolivian state matter in a more ethnically inclusive way, it is clear that ethnopolitics is practiced in diverse ways, across multiple geographies, producing a host of often opposing outcomes. While scholarship tends to endorse alterity in the analysis of ethnopolitical social movements in Latin America (López Caballero and Acevedo-Rodrigo 2018), frequently

locating the study of Indigenous political activism within specific local and national contexts, this thesis offers the reader an alternative view whereby I explore the implications of ethnopolitical research from a "hemispheric frame of reference" (Castellanos et al. 2012: 1). What happens to our understanding of ethnopolitics in Latin America when framed within a comparative context? Does a comparative methodology allow for a more critical reading of different Indigenous struggles and social movements in Latin America? By drawing together two separate case studies from Mexico and Bolivia, this thesis develops an innovative comparative approach to ethnopolitical research that generates a series of interesting perspectives in relation to the challenges, opportunities, similarities and differences which shape ethnopolitical resistance across the region.

From the outset, however, I must address the recent changes to occur in Bolivia and how these events impact this study. 2019 was an election year in Bolivia with elections being held across the country on 20th October. Several candidates contested the elections including Evo Morales (MAS-IPSP) and his main opposition, former president Carlos Mesa (2003-2005; *Alianza Comunidad Ciudadana*). While early election figures placed Morales ahead, with a firm lead, a delay in the release of official polling figures sparked rumour and suspicion that fraud had been perpetrated by the MAS-IPSP. Both protests for and against Morales quickly became visible on the streets of major cities. Moreover, the Organisation of American States (OAS) intervened to question the integrity of the results. Mesa and the *Alianza Comunidad Ciudadana* subsequently called for fresh elections as demonstrations on the streets against Morales rapidly escalated. By 9th November members of the police and the military had renounced support for Morales and violent, racist attacks against *MASistas* (MAS-

IPSP loyalists) had resulted in some deaths (Hylton 2019).[1] To restore some semblance of order and prevent further attacks on his core support base (*cocaleros* or coca leaf farmers) Morales, pressured by the military, resigned his post (10th November) and went into exile first to Mexico before seeking asylum in Argentina. By 12th November, Janeine Áñez, senator and party-member of the right-wing *Unidad Nacional* alliance was sworn in as interim president.

The breakneck speed with which events unfolded in Bolivia caused obvious tension and confusion among scholars, intellectuals and observers. There is, however, a broad divide between those who view this as nothing less than a *coup d'état* (Mosquera 2020) and those who consider it more the ousting of a president who showed blatant disregard for democratic processes and who had, in their view, become increasingly authoritarian.

Yet, with the departure of Bolivia's first Indigenous president, it remains to be seen how the country's Indigenous majority will respond in the long-term. What is certain is that racism towards Indigenous people has increased (Mosquera 2020). What is also true is that support for Morales had fallen in recent years. A series of controversies and corruption scandals, too many to mention here, contributed to his decline. One such conflict, the 2011 TIPNIS controversy, a primary case study in this thesis, symbolised many of the difficulties faced by Morales and the MAS-IPSP in their pursuit of a plurinational society. These recent tumultuous events mean that the temporal thrust of the thesis has been changed quite dramatically in that, from the outset of the study, the focus was on Morales as the President-in-situ, a situation that

[1] According to Hylton (2019) two massacres in Cochabmaba (Sacaba) and El Alto have taken place since the resignation of Morales on November 10th which, collectively, have left 19 people dead, mostly unarmed indigenous people.

radically altered in the final weeks before submission. As a result, the thesis has adjusted and adapted to the new situation, referring to the Morales regime in the past tense and addressing the implications of recent events where necessary, most particularly in Chapter Four.

Mexico and Bolivia have long drawn the attention of scholars for the influential role Indigenous people have played in resisting the politics of the international neoliberal order and how they have transformed the social dynamics of each country as a result. A decade after the Zapatista Uprising in January 1994 (Weinberg 2000; Womack Jr. 1999; Harvey 1998), which interrupted and destabilised Mexico's otherwise smooth transition into the world of free market capitalism (Wise el al. 2003), Bolivia's first Indigenous president, Evo Morales Ayma, was elected in December 2005 with a resounding mandate to bring an end to the policies of the neoliberal past and to rework the foundations of the Bolivian state around the struggle for Indigenous rights and culture (Postero 2017; Farthing and Kohl 2013; Webber 2011; Harten 2011). Since then, both ethnopolitical models have been widely studied by scholars for their innovative approaches to ethnopolitical resistance and for the many challenges these ethnopolitical models have faced in attempting to overcome the contemporary conditions attributed to the neoliberal "lifeworld".[2] While many scholars celebrate the achievements of Zapatista autonomy and their prolonged effort in peacefully resisting the Mexican state through alternative forms of local government (Mora 2017; Harvey 2016; Dinerstein 2016; 2013), Morales has been more harshly criticised as Bolivian president for his struggle to establish a more effective

[2] I frequently deploy the use of the term lifeworld throughout the thesis both in relation to Indigenous people as well as in reference to neoliberalism. With roots in philosophy, phenomenology and the social sciences, lifeworld is a useful and relevant phrase which effectively captures the experiences, activities, and contacts that constitute the worlds of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people alike.

equilibrium between national economic growth, Indigenous rights and environmental sustainability (Rivera Cusicanqui 2015). As scholarship in this area continues to grow, drawing closer attention to the evolving dynamics of ethnopolitical struggle in Mexico and Bolivia, this presents us with new opportunities to develop a comparative approach to the study of ethnopolitics in contemporary Latin American Studies.

To date, there are virtually no studies in the literature which exclusively and comprehensively engage the treatment of Indigenous political activism between Mexico and Bolivia on a comparative basis. While some comparative research does exist in the field of Indigenous studies (Pitman 2018), it is a generally underutilised framework in the study of Indigenous political activism and has broadly concerned the study of *Zapatismo* in relation to the *Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem Terra* (MST) in Brazil (Starr et al. 2011; Vergara-Camus 2009). Despite our growing interest as researchers in the search for alternatives to neoliberal orthodoxy, scholarship has remained heavily confined by its attention to both local and national perspectives which continue to strongly shape our collective understanding of ethnopolitics in contemporary Latin America. From the Mexican *milpa* (Nigh and Diemont 2013) to the Andean *ayllu* (Yampara Huarachi 2017; Alderman 2016; de la Cadena 2015), from the Zapatista *Caracoles* (González Casanova 2010; Ross 2005) to the 2011 TIPNIS controversy in Bolivia (Delgado 2017; Laing 2015; Rivera Cusicanqui 2015; McNeish 2013), Latin American indigeneities are frequently debated, discussed and analysed from the "small spaces of everyday life" (Canessa 2012: 32). And yet, while all this establishes a very rich, detailed and dynamic picture of the ethnopolitical landscape in Latin America today, scholarship still neglects to look beyond the small places and spaces of ethnopolitical thought and action and towards the new possibilities that

arise in engaging a comparative approach to ethnopolitical research. How does the Zapatista model of ethnopolitical resistance on the margins of nation-state recognition (Mora 2017) compare to Morales and the MAS-IPSP who pushed to transform nation-state frameworks from within, adopting national policies and discourses which reflected ancient Andean cosmologies? What similarities and differences can be drawn from a comparative study of this nature and how might that enrich our understanding of ethnopolitical activism between Mexico and Bolivia in the contemporary Latin American lifeworld? The opportunities, then, to generate fresh and original perspectives in the epistemological space between Mexico and Bolivia are a central motivation behind this thesis.

Of course, let me be clear: it is not my intention here to competitively assess the merits of one ethnopolitical model over the other nor will I conclusively find in favour of one ethnopolitical approach and not the other. To engage in a comparative study of this nature on that basis would be completely misguided and runs counter to my main objective: to develop a fresh and original comparative approach to ethnopolitical research between Mexico and Bolivia (Castellanos et al. 2012). Respect for the radically different dimensions of these two ethnopolitical models in Mexico and Bolivia is central to the very foundations of this thesis and thus informs my analytical approach.

Throughout the thesis, my intention is to focus specifically on two separate case studies, drawn from Mexico and Bolivia, which highlight the opportunities, challenges, similarities and differences in the practice of ethnopolitical activism in Latin America. Not only will my focus on case studies provide the thesis with the range and scope necessary to develop an effective and worthwhile comparative

ethnopolitical analysis but it will avoid the added pitfalls of engaging in direct comparisons between nation-states (Bolivia) and social movements (Mexico), something which would inevitably result in methodological, theoretical and conceptual challenges to say the least.

In Mexico, the EZLN, or the Zapatista social justice movement, highlights the challenges and opportunities that confront an ethnopolitical social movement which operates a project of autonomy outside the legal and conceptual limits of the Mexican state. After years (1994-2001) of protracted negotiations with the government over the issue of Indigenous rights and culture (Muñoz Ramírez 2008; Higgins 2001; Womack Jr. 1999; Harvey 1998), the Zapatista revolutionaries transitioned to the margins of nation-state recognition (Mora 2017), where they developed new political architecture (*Caracoles*) that not only continues to challenge the authority and legitimacy of the international neoliberal order, but secures access to land and Indigenous rights in their attempt to resolve the legacies of Mexico's (neo)colonial past (Ross 2005; González Casanova 2010).

Meanwhile, the 2011 TIPNIS (*Territorio Indígena y Parque Nacional Isiboro-Securé*) controversy between former Bolivian president Evo Morales Ayma and lowland Indigenous communities (Chimané, Yuracaré, Moxeño) serves as the second ethnopolitical case study in this thesis. It highlights the challenges faced by Bolivia's former Indigenous president who struggled to mediate between a national economic agenda based on neoextractivism while preserving the integrity of local ethnoterritorial rights. While Morales claimed to represent the universal interests of Bolivia's Indigenous majority, promising to rupture with the neoliberal past, his pursuit of a highway development directly through the heart of the TIPNIS reserve

and Indigenous territory reproduced scenes of conflict and chaos that forced lowland Indigenous communities to confront the hegemonic tendencies of his government (Delgado 2017; Springrtová 2016; Wickstrom 2013; Hirsch and McNeish 2011; Calla 2011).

In terms of structure and approach, these two ethnopolitical case studies will be comparatively analysed around two key tropes: place and space (Tuan 1977; Relph 1976). Broadly divided into two parts, chapter one and chapter two explore the politics of Indigenous place-making in Mexico and Bolivia respectively, examining how the Zapatista struggle for land and ethnoterritorial rights in Mexico compares to the complex reality of Indigenous place-making in Morales's Bolivia, symbolized by the challenges of the TIPNIS case study and the opportunities which surround construction of *la nueva arquitectura andina* (Runnels 2019).

Meanwhile, chapter three and chapter four address the politics of *space* and, in particular, explore what these different case studies reveal to us about how ethnopolitical actors in Mexico and Bolivia "endow" national spatial imaginaries with "value" and meaning in accordance with their own precise ways of *knowing* and *being* (Tuan 1977: 6). Focusing exclusively on textual analysis, these chapters foreground key declarations and speeches, authored by Indigenous people themselves, and which have not yet featured as part of any independent study to date. Chapter three analyses the Zapatista *Declaraciones de la Selva Lacandona* (1994-2005), revealing how they challenge and destablise traditional power dynamics during the height of neoliberal reforms in Mexico. This is followed by chapter four which studies two 2006 inaugural speeches delivered by former president Morales who combined performance, memory and discourse in the pursuit of Andean utopias in Bolivia (Flores Galindo 1994 [1986])

that were enhanced and destabilised by the complexities surrounding the development of the TIPNIS highway. As such, this study reveals the opportunities, challenges, similarities and differences which characterize contemporary ethnopolitical resistance in Latin America, especially in relation to the struggle for place and space which, as Tuan (1977: 3) notes, serve as "basic components of the lived world".

With the basic objectives of this thesis now firmly established, attention turns to section two of this introduction. Here I will define the term ethnopolitics as it relates to the Mexican and Bolivian contexts. In particular I will draw attention to the evolutionary nature of the concept ethnopolitics and how it is best understood in relation to place and space (Tuan 1977; Relph 1976). Following this, section two will develop the methodological approach for this comparative research before I finally outline the structure of this thesis in section three.

Section One

The Politics of Place and Space: Defining Ethnopolitics through the Centuries

Place and space are key organising tropes in this thesis. This section will address the concepts of place and space, locating them within their respective theoretical frameworks and in relation to the particularities of this study. It is useful to contemplate ethnopolitics in relation to place and space for several critical reasons which I will outline here in this section. And, in doing so, I propose to draw upon the work of Tuan (1977) whose phenomenological approach to the conceptualisation of place and space is relevant to the framing of this contemporary ethnopolitical analysis.

Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience by geographer Yi-Fu Tuan was was originally published in 1977 and is considered to be one of the first texts to explore acts of place-making from a phenomenological perspective. In justifying his approach, Tuan (1977) argues for a more coherent statement in relation to human environmental experience and narrows his focus to the closely related concepts of place and space which, he adds, form the basic components of the lived world. In his unique, exploratory style of writing, Tuan (1977) sets out to understand how people think, feel and react to space and how they form attachments to home however that may be lived or experienced. By defining his work as an essay, Tuan (1977) unburdens himself of the need to seek answers to the questions he proposes and instead aims to suggest rather than conclude which actively encourages his readership to consider the relationship between space and place in light of their own experiences and subjectivities. These stylistic elements combined with his refusal to contextualise his sixteen different chapters on architecture, the body, the homeland and mystic space owe to the

relevancy of Tuan's (1977) narrative today and why it is the perfect point of departure for a contemporary analysis of ethnopolitics in Latin America.

Crucial to this study is how Tuan (1977) draws close attention to the co-dependent and interrelated nature of place and space and how the freedom and insecurity of space becomes the familiarity of place the more individuals and groups inhabit it and get to know it. This phenomoneological approach to the concept of place-making strongly mirrors the historic and contemporary ways in which Indigenous people struggle for land and meaning in a world defined by disorder and chaos, where their cosmologies, cultures and traditions are submerged beneath the weight of dominant capitalist ideologies. Indigenous activism or what I term ethnopolitics in this thesis can be considered a way in which Indigenous people seek to establish their own sense of "security" and "freedom" in the world (Tuan 1977: 3). As "basic components of the lived world", place and space belong to a set of key values and human desires and a struggle for them in the contemporary world is akin to a struggle to exist, to survive (Tuan 1977: 3; Relph 1976). Place, and the struggle to "make place", concerns the need to establish meaning in reality and is a "basic element in the ordering of our experiences of the world", according to Relph (1976: 43). For Tuan (1977: 6) place and space are bounded together in an intimate relationship of mutual dependency, where the world of "undifferenciated space becomes place" the more "we get to know it better and endow it with value". "From the security and stability of place", he writes, "we are aware of the openness, freedom, and threat of space" (Tuan 1977: 6).

It is clear, then, that arranging this thesis around place and space develops an effective framework in which to explore ethnopolitics from a comparative perspective.

It becomes useful in helping to illuminate how the Andean *ayllu* (chapter two) and Mexican *milpa* (chapter one) construct the realities of those Indigenous groups who conform to these specific ways of *knowing* and *being* in the world. The struggle for the *ayllu* and for the *milpa* in the contemporary lifeworld is, as I have suggested, a struggle to exist, and to survive. Beyond notions of survival, place and space help us understand the different ways Indigenous groups architecturally construct places and spaces of significance (Tuan 1977). While the Zapatista *Caracoles* (chapter one) create distinction between notions of the interior and the exterior, helping the revolutionaries establish meaning separate to the neoliberal world, *la nueva arquitectura andina* (chapter two) redefines the struggle for place in contemporary Bolivia and reveals how some urban Indigenous people negotiate the ethnic self. Emphasis on textual analyses in chapters three and four illuminates how Indigenous people define *space* through discourse, ascribing their own structure and meaning to the contested world of national imaginaries.

From here, I focus on the historical evolution of ethnopolitics in Mexico and Bolivia focusing on how the interrelation between place and space has changed through time. Beginning with a discussion of the *ayllu* and *milpa* and the intimate relationship between place and space, I then turn to the period of twentieth century revolutionary nationalism. Here, I point out how the nation-state interfered with Indigenous place and space informing reality on their behalf. Finally, attention turns to neoliberalism and how place and space became a set of radicalised demands against the excesses of the neoliberal world order. I will also facilitate discussion here of decoloniality and how this maps onto an important theoretical framework which helps to frame the realities of ethnopolitical activism.

Ethnopolitical Origins in Bolivia:
The Andean *Ayllu*

The *ayllu* is the oldest form of socio-political and territorial management in the Bolivian Andes (Yampara Huarachi 2017; Platt 2016; de la Cadena 2015; Canessa 2012; Abercrombie 1998). While an exact date of orgin remains unclear, the literature agrees that the *ayllu* pre-dates the Inca civilisation which ruled over the Andes between the years 1438-1533 (Yampara Huarachi 2017; Abercrombie 1998). Considering its longevity, discussion of the *ayllu* provides an important basis from where we can begin to understand not only how Indigenous people in Andean Bolivia engage the land physically and "make place" but how they also organise and rationalize time and space in the mental and material universe guided by philosophies and cosmologies that shape their understanding of reality in the present (de la Cadena 2015; Huanacuni Mamani 2010). The *ayllu* is evidence for how place and space are intimately bound together in the Andes forming a complex picture of social life (Tuan 1977). Any effort to intercept this, radically alters, distorts and destabilises the very foundation of Andean reality.

Local and international scholarship provides a rich and varied understanding of how the Andean *ayllu* not only sustains life but informs a sense of reality that is unknowable to European epistemologies. I emphasis *Andean ayllu* in order to draw attention to the fact that the *ayllu*, "a political, geographical and ethnic unit that encompasses Indigenous communities occupying different ecological levels" in the lifeworld, traditionally and historically transcends the conditions of modernity and the nation-state borders of Bolivia and Peru which demarcate the Andes today (Yampara Huarachi 2017; de la Cadena 2015). While one can certainly find differences in the way

Aymara and Quechua peoples engage the land and organise space within and between *ayllus* in Bolivia and Peru respectively, there are a series of common traits that shape our general understanding of how the *ayllu* operates in time and space (Yampara Huarachi 2017; Platt 2016; de la Cadena).

A "ubiquitous" phrase in Andean ethnography, Peruvian anthropologist de la Cadena (2015) offers her rather interesting take on *ayllu* relationality. De la Cadena (2015) describes the *ayllu* as a unique system of "kinship ties" between "human and other-than-human persons" that collectively inhabit a single geographic region or territory. Akin to notions of "weaving", de la Cadena (2015: 44) draws attention to the way "all beings in the world" including plants, animals, and mountains are like separate, individual threads woven together to reveal a complex yet delicate picture of reality that is suspended in space between partially connected worlds.

Alderman (2016) observes how the Andean community of *Kallawaya* performs ritual offerings of alcohol, coca leaves and llama foetuses to nearby mountains which they believe contain the spirits of dead ancestors or *mulchulas* (Abercrombie 1998). This close and intimate association between the living and the dead, between the past and present speaks to a sense of time and of history that exists in other wordly forms and is relived through kinship ties (Canessa 2008; Abercrombie 1998). Through feeding these spirits, the *Kallawaya* incorporate the mountains into local political structures, expanding Western understandings of the political to include all non-human entities or what de la Cadena (2015: 25) refers to as "earth-beings" (Alderman 2016). Rituals and performances (re)generate reciprocity and complimentarity among community members and the spirit world, transforming this unfamiliar natural space into a familiar communal place of belonging (Yampara Huarachi 2017; Canessa 2012).

Regular engagment with the spiritual world through ritual and communal performance allows community members to negotiate the ethnic self. According to Canessa (2012), being human (Indigenous) or *jaqi* is a constant cycle or process of becoming and is renewed through ritual and laboring the land. A sense of self is intimately tied to notions of place, where the further one is from the *ayllu* the less *jaqi* and more *q'ara* (white) they become. This creates distinction between interior and exterior places and spaces which reinforces belief in the Andean *ayllu* as a place-making act (Tuan 1977).

Ethnopolitical Beginnings in Mexico:
The *Milpa*

In Mexico, the *milpa* is a system of territorial management historically associated with the Maya civilization (Grube 2000). The Maya ruled over regions of Latin America we now refer to today as Guatemala and southern Mexico, including Chiapas and the Yucatán peninsula (Grube 2000). Like the Andean *ayllu*, the Mexican *milpa* embodies particular ways of *knowing* and *being* in the world that require specialist knowledge to operate. The *milpa* is farmed by a *milpero* who learns to "make milpa" through the knowledge and wisdom that is passed down from grandfather to father to son (Nigh and Diemont 2013; De Frece and Poole 2008). *Maíz* or corn is the principle crop produced by the *milpa* (Nigh and Diemont 2013; De Frece and Poole 2008). It has special significance in Maya culture and forms an important staple in the diet of Maya descendents (*Tzotzil*, *Tzeltal*, *Chol*, *Tojolabal*, *Mam*, *Zoque* in Chiapas) and the Mexican peoples more generally (Rovira 2000; Barry 1995).

According to the *Popul Vuh*, or book of life, the first peoples to walk the planet were *los hijos de maíz,* or children of corn who were fashioned by the Maya gods from *maíz* (Tedlock 1996; Recinos 1986). As such, *maíz* has important historical and spiritual significance in Maya culture (Tedlock 1996; Recinos 1986). The *milpa*, central to the agricultural production of *maíz*, is not only a robust and adaptable way to provide for communities but is central to the spiritual world of the *milpero* and is a way for him to negotiate the ethnic self. Male and female Indigenous Maya have specific gendered roles in the production of *maíz*. While *milperos* (male) apply their knowledge and skills to make *milpa* and harvest corn, women domesticate *maíz* and prepare it for consumption. The gendered nature of corn production speaks to the

more traditional elements of Maya culture, where duality and complimentarity routinely define relations within this cosmic space (Agredo et al. 2013). As Marcos (in Agredo et al. 2013: 197) writes, "the feminine-masculine dual unity was fundamental to the creation of the cosmos, its (re)generation, and its sustenence". Yet, among the rural communities of Chiapas, Rovira (2000) draws attention to the slippery nature of gendered traditions in Maya culture. In particular, she notes how an established hierarchy between male and female figures (re)produces unbearable conditions of exploitation for women and girls such that "the exploitation men suffer, women suffer more (Rovira 2000: 34). The liberation of women and girls from the narrow confines of certain traditions and practices is a central tenet of the Zapatista social justice movement, pioneered by Comandante Ramona (1959-2006) and symbolized by their 1993 *Ley Revolucionaria de Mujeres* (Klein 2015; Eber and Antonia 2012; Roriva 2000)

In preparing the *milpa*, the *milpero* engages a technique that is widely known as slash-and-burn (Nigh and Diemont 2013; De Frece and Poole 2008). However, Nigh and Diemont (2013: 45) prefer use of the term "swidden" which, in their view, more accurately captures the skill, knowledge and prowess involved in the clearing and burning of vegetation. As they write, the "burning of newly felled vegetation in tall forest areas is often necessary to clear the land for planting. Fire can make an important contribution to long-term soil fertility through the addition of biochar that has been produced by low-temperature burning" (Nigh and Diemont 2013: 45) Swidden requires profound knowledge of land, nature and the seasons. If the environment is damp or wet then vegetation will only smolder thus producing limited fertilizer that will not sufficiently replenish the landscape with minerals (Nigh and Diemont 2013; De Frece and Poole 2008). Meanwhile, if the climate is arid then the

milpero risks losing control over the fire thus endangering himself, his *companeros* and the surrounding communities and ecologies.

Knowledge, then, is central to the *milpa*. The intimate knowledge required of the territorial and spatial dimensions of the *milpa* inform a unique sense of place in the mind and body of the *milpero* and locate the act of making *milpa* at the heart of place-making practices in Maya communities. Moreover, the sharing of knowledge between generations of *milperos* reveals the collective act of place-making. A successful harvest of *maíz* reinforces this skill and knowledge enhancing an even greater sense of ethnicity while securing even closer ties to place.

Ethnopolitics in Twentieth Century Latin America: Indigeneity and Post-colonial Revolution in Mexico and Bolivia

Thus far, I have shown that ethnopolitics originates within the Andean *ayllu* and the Mexican *milpa*. It traditionally and historically concerns the close interrelation between place and space and how this universal whole informs reality. I discussed how the Andean *ayllu* and the Mexican *milpa* function as mental and material universes that not only provide the territorial basis for place-making but they perform as complex ecological units, where space is organised around cosmologies which inform Indigenous realities.

In twentieth century Mexico and Bolivia, the spatial and territorial dimensions of ethnopolitics were considerably different. The nation-state played a profound role in the place-making capabilities of Indigenous people, informing their sense of reality through the institutional parameters of federal reforms, national unions, agencies and the promotion of official culture. Indigeneity was understood and articulated in relation to a post-colonial context of national revolution and reform which aimed to address the socio-territorial injustices of the colonial past without due consideration for the evasive ways modern logics continued to perpetuate throughout the social order. Twentieth century Mexican and Bolivian nationalisms may be considered post-colonial for the way they "attributed agency and history to the subjected nation [yet] staked a claim to the order of Reason and Progress instituted by colonialism" (Bhambra 2014; Guha 1997). In other words, the problem for some with post-colonialism is the almost implicit suggestion "that colonialism is now a matter of the past" without much regard or consideration for the way hegemony "persists in forms other than overt colonial rule" (Xie 1997: 8).

Revolutionary Nationalism in Mexico

The 1910 Mexican Revolution was long and protracted. Beginning as an armed conflict which lasted several years (1910-1921), the Revolution later entered a phase of constructive development (1920-1940) which established the foundations for a modern, constitutional republic (Krauze 1997; Fuentes 1996 [1971]). Part of this process of renewal and social transformation included the foundation of the *Partido Nacional Revolucionaro* (PNR) in 1929 by president of the Republic Plutarco Elías Calles (1924-1928) (Krauze 1997; Fuentes 1996 [1971]; Corneluis and Craig 1991). As "the great institutional project", Krauze (1997: 428) notes that the formation of this new national political entity had three key priorities: unite its forces, identify itself with the nation and elaborate an open, classless ideology which included radical action, centralized organization and moderate, steady evolution. The PNR, later the PRM (*Partido de la Revolución Mexicana*) and finally the PRI (*Partido Revolucionario Institucional*) positioned itself at the heart of a new Mexico and defined the spatial, territorial, economic, social and cultural limits of this new post-revolutionary national condition.

Revolutionary nationalism was strongly imbued with themes of social justice. It was aspirational, culturally romantic and created pathways for the upward social mobility of citizens (Gutiérrez 1999). As Lomnitz (2001: 53) writes, Mexican nationalism was imagined in the figure of the *mestizo/a*, "the product of a Spanish father and an Indigenous mother". The logic behind the construction of a national *mestizaje* concerned the *mestizo/a* as a "fortified version of the Indigenous race", where a mixture of the Spanish and the Indigenous "would create a population [...] finally [...] capable of holding its own against the United States" (Lomnitz 2001: 53). Similar to the characteristics of place-making identified earlier, Mexican nationalism

drew a distinction between the interior and the exterior, developing new racial characteristics that would both define Mexico's place in the world as a modern nation without simultaneously losing its relationship to the ethnic past (Tuan 1977). Combining what were perceived to be the positive attributes of both races, Lomnitz (2001: 54) writes that, "like his European father the [mestizo/a] had a propensity for action" yet, like his Indigenous mother was motivated by a desire to "protect his maternal legacy from exploitation by Europeans". This move towards a universal nationhood, centred on the official figure of the *mestizo/a,* defines the considerably utopian dimensions of José Vasconcelos's *La raza cosmic*a (Vasconcelos 2003 [1925]). According to O'Brien et al. (2013: 403) this essay by Vasconcelos, a Mexican philosopher and former secretary of education, celebrated *mestizaje* as the "moral and material basis for the union of all men into a fifth race" and identified it as precursor to a world, in the distant future, which transcends race in a new universal civilization.

Yet, despite the intellectual and aesthetic appeal of a national *mestizaje*, the project concealed a sinister reality. For Gutiérrez (1999: 1), official nationalism, which she defines as a "long-term project aimed at constructing a culturally and linguistically uniform nation by means of integrationist policies and institutions", had an "intrinsic ambivalence". While Mexican nationalism acquired legitimacy through cultural motifs and myths about the country's pre-colonial origins, it channeled a process of "social engineering" (Gutiérrez 1999: 3) designed to "assimilate the living Indigenous people into the mainstream nation" through a policy known as *indigenismo* (Gutiérrez 1999: 1). As Jung (2008: 95) writes, this policy approach "conflated Indigenous with poor, rural, and marginalized", and provided impetus for the state and its agencies to entre communities and rework the parameters of ethnicity. In stark contrast to the Mexican

milpa, where place-making relied on the knowledge and skill of the *milpero* himself to negotiate and mediate complex social and ecological relations, the twentieth century revolutionary state now appeared to redefine the limits of social operation on behalf of all Indigenous people (Lomnitz 2001; Gutiérrez 1999).

Central to a policy of *indigenismo* was the implementation of land reform under the new 1917 revolutionary constitution (Krauze 1997; Kelly 1994; Foland 1969; Gruening 1960). Article 27 combined both modern and pre-mondern forms of territoriality in, what Foland (1969) suggests, was a highly innovative structure of state-led territorial redistribution. Kelly (1994) reminds us that the implementation of Article 27 is largely the result of Emiliano Zapata's contribution to the constitutional reform process. Nowadays a cultural icon in the Mexican imaginary (Conant 2010; Holloway and Peláez 1998), Zapata drafted his *Plan de Ayala* in 1911 which denounced revolutionary president Francisco I Madero and outlined his vision for an elaborate land reform that restored all rights to land and natural resources to the Mexican *pueblo* (Karuze 1997; Fuentes 1996 [1971]). In 1917, his ambitions for land reform and territorial justice were symbolized by the federal redistribution of the *ejido* (Krauze 1997; Kelly 1994). An innovative form of communal land tenure, where property rights were collectively held by the village, *ejidos* were not permitted to be bought, sold or mortagaged by their recipients (Kelly 1994; Gruening 1960). Predicated on a belief in the social function doctrine, the *ejido* symbolized Mexico's commitment to ensuring that land served a practical, social function, that it embodied the principles of social justice and supported the greater good of society. The *ejido* directly challenged the logic behind the *hacienda*, a popular form of land tenure under Porfirio Díaz which symbolized a legacy of colonial wealth and inequality between *creole* elites and

Indigenous people who were bound to the land by the conditions of debt servitude (Ankersen and Ruppert 2006; Weinberg 2000; Foland 1969; Gruening 1960). Through the act of federal redistribution, where the Mexican president personally approved the allocation of all *ejidal* properties, the *ejido* positioned the nation-state as a national 'savior' freeing the Indigenous people from the excesses of colonialism. This firmly located it at the heart of Indigenous place-making, legitimising its presence among Indigenous communities (Jung 2008; Kelly 1994; Gruening 1960).

In addition to legitimising the place of Indigenous people under the new revolutionary state, the executive encouraged membership of federal unions, principly the *Conferderación Nacional Campesina* (CNC). If the *ejido* formed the territorial basis of place-making acts in revolutionary Mexico, then the unionization of Indigenous agricultural workers reinforced their role as state-endorsed *campesinos*. The CNC performed two major roles in relation to the organization and distribution of labour in Mexico's agricultural sector. First, it provided basic infrastructure which allowed *campesinos* to engage the land in ways suitable to a modern economy. Second, the CNC provided training and other financial and material resources to help facilitate the development of a homogenous *campesino* class that focused exclusively on agricultural productivity and output (Jung 2008). Yet, above all else, through this paternalistic approach, the CNC strategically designed a loyal political support base, with direct links to the state, mobilized by the PRI in times of political instability or crisis. It is clear, then, that the revolutionary state reset the institutional parameters of possibility, encouraging Indigenous people to renounce ties to ethnicity and to embrace the *mestizo/a* self as a positive and progressive step towards prosperity. For Jung (2008) the *Instituto Nacional Indigenista* (INI), founded in 1948, was a key agency

established by the state for that very purpose. It employed some of Mexico's most influential writers and creative artists, placing them in contact with communities and environments with high-density Indigenous populations. Rosario Castellanos (*Oficio de tinieblas* [1962]) and Juan Rulfo (*Pedro Páramo* [1955]) were two of the most influential participants of the INI and the writers addressed the plight of ethnicity and rural Mexico through their works. The INI translated a national policy of *indigenismo* into reality, proposing vaccination and hygiene programmes in communities as well as delivering education services that focused explicitly on interrupting "the informal transmission of culture from parents to children" (Jung 1998: 96). It is clear, then, that the revolutionary state institutionally framed Indigenous life. It enforced a particular view of the world which radically departed from knowledges and traditions associated with the *milpa* towards one that centred on the PRI as the source of national life.

Revolutionary Nationalism in Bolivia

In contrast to Mexico's Revolution which unfolded over two stages, lasting a total thrity-years (1910-1940), Bolivia's 1952 Revolution lasted only a matter of months with Dr Víctor Paz Estensorro, leader of the *Movimiento Nacional Revolucionario* (MNR), assuming the presidency on 9th April 1952 (Mesa Gisbert et al. 2016; Dunkerley 1997). Central to the revolutionary agenda was a focus on domesticating capital and reclaiming the country from the liberal grip of twentieth century globalism. Bolivian intellectual Carlos Montenegro (2016 [1943]: 227) was a leading figure behind the revolution of 1952 and played a key role in the formation of the MNR. His text, *Nacionalismo y Coloniaje* (2016 [1943]), formed an important ideological basis for the revolution. It draws fresh attention to Bolivian history and justifies the struggle for *Bolivianidad*. Central to his work is an emphasis on the dicotomy between concepts like *la nación* and *la anti-nación* which Montenegro uses to distinguish between the Bolivian majority dominated by global capitalism and the minority industrial capitalists or oligarchy. As Montenegro (2016 [1943]: 227) writes, "el capitalismo privado convirtiera en medios de negación de la bolivianidad". And, adds that,"el dinero internacional reguló así desde Europa [...] el manar de nuestras vetas metalíferas, descargando en ellas los contragolpes de los vuelcos económicos que promovía en el Viejo Mundo". Therefore, central to Montenegro's (2016 [1943]) thesis is the idea that, by displacing international capitalism and recreating an internal domestic economic framework, Bolivia would achieve national unity and prosperity for all.

Two reforms central to the restoration of the state and the development of a new revolutionary era in Bolivian politics included the nationalization of Bolivia's tin

industry and agrarian reform (Mesa Gisbert et al. 2016). In line with revolutionary aspirations, Salman et al. (2014: 295) writes that the 1952 Revolutionary programme included "welfare ideals" and a focus on the "economic liberation and sovereignty of the Bolivian people". Through the nationalization of Bolivian tin mining industries the MNR government established COMIBOL (*Corporación Minera de Bolivia*). Within a matter of just two decades (1950s-1970s) COMIBOL's workforce increased from 40,000 to 170,000, the largest employer in the state. Moreover, out of loyalty to the rural population, who supported the MNR's pursuit of power, the government introduced land reform in 1953 (Mesa Gisbert et al. 2016). However, while land reform was considered the pinnacle of social justice in Mexico, it appeared to be more of an afterthought in Bolivia and was administered in a rather disorderly and chaotic fashion (Salman et al. 2014; Foland 1969). Within the first twelve months of the revolution, militias had already seized *hacienda* estates across the Bolivian *altiplano* or highlands and state-led land reform prodecures appeared to be a way to impose order on a disorderly, even lawless, rural society (Foland 1969). The *minifundio*, an individual land parcel, formed the centerpiece of Bolivian land reform. Like the *ejido*, the *minifundio* prioritized the social function of land, symbolising the redistribution of land for the greater social good (Ankersen and Ruppert 2006). Yet, unlike Mexico, Bolivian agraian reform did not prioritize the collective tenure of land and focused instead on a policy of colonization between the highlands and the lowlands, the arid *altiplano* and the fertile *Oriente*, by *campesinos* (Mesa Gisbert et al. 2016; Salman et al. 2014; Antezana Ergueta 1982).

The origin of the *campesino/a* in Bolivia arguably forms part of a broader public debate on the racial constitution of Bolivian society that long pre-dates the 1952

Bolivian Revolution. Authors such as Alcides Arguedas (1879-1946) and Franz Tamayo (1879-1956) presented their opposing views on *indigenismo* and a national *mestizaje* in a string of published novels and essays that strongly influenced a public debate on *Bolivianidad* in the early twentieth century. In the influential yet highly controversial essay *Pueblo enfermo* (Arguedas 1979 [1909]) Arguedas draws attention to European discourses around desgeneration which he readily applies to explain Bolivia's seemingly backward condition. "Disease", writes Trigo (2000: 1), was a popular "metaphor", used by writers like Arguedas, to account for the "general state of crisis that [they] found not only in their respective regions, but also throughout Latin America". While several factors contribute to this "enfermedad nacional" (Paz-Soldán 1999: 62), Arguedas adopts a strongly pessimistic view of Bolivia's racial heterogeneity and, in particular, "el Otro indigena" who is "instintivo, irracional, rencoroso, supersticioso y atado a sus tradiciones" and thus an inherent impediment to modernity and progress (Paz-Soldán 1999: 65). Such a pessimistic diagnosis of the Bolivian condition provoked Tamayo to reflect inward and to construct his own *mestizo/a ideal* from the inside-out (Eiss and Rapport 2018). For Tamayo, a *mestizo* himself, Indigenous people represented energy, vitality, and morality and should not be so eagerly dismissed as part of the national question (Eiss and Rapport 2018). In negotiating his own subjectivity in *Creación de la pedagogía nacional*, Tamayo engages in the construction of bodily metaphor to imagine the figure of the *mestizo/a* in Bolivia. He imagines a national *mestizaje* or the *mestizo/a ideal* as the physical embodiment of Indigenous strength and stature coupled with the intelligence of the *mestizo*/a (Eiss and Rapport 2018). Twentieth century debates on a national *mestizaje* naturally continued and coalesced around the formation of state-endorsed

campesino/a identities during the 1952 Revolution. Like Mexico, the MNR embraced pre-colonial heritage as a source of legitimation for the new revolutionary state while coopting Indigenous people into formal union structures in the areas of mining and agriculture symbolized by the institutional power of the *Central Obrera Boliviana* (COB) (Mesa Gisbert et al. 2016; Canessa 2000; Antezana Ergueta 1982).

However, Canessa (2000: 123) writes that, by the mid-twentieth century, the Bolivian Revolution "opened up political space" for *indianismo* or Indigenous nationalism to grow in popularity. Indigenous urbanisation coupled with a weakening of the revolutionary state structure, encouraged intellectuals and city workers to explore alternative methods of organizing outside the limits of the nation-state which obliged Indigenous people to renounce their ethnicity in order to make citizenship claims on the state (Canessa 2000). *Indianismo* had always been a strand of radical thought which pearmeated the Andes, propelled forward in the mid-twentieth by various influences in the area of scholarship and literature. Literary works by Peruvian José María Arguedas (*Los ríos profundos* [1958]), on one hand, and scholarship by Peruvian José Carlos Mariátegui, on the other, contributed towards a rethinking of attitudes in relation to socialism and *Andeanness* in the twentieth century. Humberto Flores M (2006) notes that Mariátegui challenged the universal implementation of Marxist-socialist thought in Latin America and argues that European socialism did not account for subjective experience in the Andes. Instead, he encouraged a critical rethinking of pre-colonial Andean histories. In particular, he pointed to the Incas as a model for Andean socialism which, under the right circumstances, would naturally flourish across the Andes (Humberto Flores M 2006).

Aymara intellectual Fausto Reinaga (2001 [1970]: 46) proposed a model of *indianismo* for Bolivia that located the struggle for Indigenous autonomy and dignity in the recreation of "un sistema social colectivista de propiedad socialista", a communitarian model originally practiced by the Incas in pre-colonial times. Reinaga's ideas, his texts, including *La Revolucion India* (1970) and his *indianismo* movement *Partido Indio de Bolivia* (PIB) struggled to compete against the ideology of the revolutionary nation-state and the many economic benefits offered by the MNR to Indigenous people in exchange for their loyalties and support (Canessa 2000). However, his ideas did eventually gain ground in urban Aymara strongholds, namely El Alto, where radical intellectuals including Felipe Quispe developed further the principles of contemporary Aymara nationalism. Central to Quispe's political vision for Bolivia is the restoration of the *ayllu* "[como] un modelo en el que ya vivieron nuestros antepasados desde tiwanaku hasta los incas es un sistema comunitarista, donde se vive en condiciones igualitarias [...] buscamos autogobernarnos en un sistema comunitario" (Ecotopia 2007).

Ethnopolitics and the Neoliberal-Turn: Place and Space as Sites of Resistance in Mexico and Bolivia

Thus far, I have not only established the close interrelation between place and space in the Andean *ayllu* and the Mexican *milpa* but I noted how notions of place and space in the ethnopolitical lifeworld were radically altered and distorted by the twentieth century nation-state. In exchange for vital services and access to citizenship, Indigenous people were encouraged to embrace a national *mestizaje* which often celebrated the pre-colonial origins of their respective nations in culturally aesthetic ways without due concern for the way *living* Indigenous people were forced to renounce their personal ties to ethnicity.

In this section I would like to define ethnopolitics in relation to the neoliberal turn in Latin America which began in 1973 and which accelerated across the continent from Mexico (1982) right through to Bolivia (1983). Here I will discuss how place and space became important sites of resistance between Indigenous people and the neoliberal nation-state as first the EZLN seized land in Chiapas during their 1994 revolution against the privatization of the *ejido* followed by Bolivia's Indigenous and *campesino* majority who elected Evo Morales as the country's first Indigenous president in December 2005 as a means through which they could reclaim sovereignty, dignity and control over national patrimony.

Since its early inception in Chile in 1973, neoliberalism has been a widely debated phase in the historic development of Latin America with scholarship in frequent discussion over the impact this "theory of political economic practices" continues to have across local political, economic, social, cultural, racial and gendered structures and spaces (Harvey 2005: 2). Developed by US economists as early as the

late-1950s, neoliberalsim builds upon existing theories, frameworks and philosophies that, broadly speaking, originated among European theorists in the eighteenth century (Kletsky 2010; Dardot and Laval 2009; Harvey 2005). In his historic treatment of global capitalism, Kaletsky (2010) identifies the four stages of global capital development as a way to reinforce the robust nature of capitalism as a fluid system of exchange that has acquired a unique ability to adapt to cycles of revolution, crisis and global change. In reference to the latest controversy to afflict global capitalism (2007-2008), he refutes any optimism that capitalism might crumble or collapse under the weight of crisis pointing instead to the highly flexible and versatile nature of this system of social exchange. In his view, "the cental argument is that capitalism has never been a static system that follows a fixed set of rules, characteristed by a permanent division of responsibilities between private enterprise and governments" (Kaletsky 2010: 2). Instead, as Kaletsky (2010: 2) writes, capitalism is an "adaptive social system that mutates and evolves in response to a changing environment" that, when threatened by a systemic crisis, will reinvent itself in more successful and productive ways, developing new versions that replace the previous dominant order (Kaletsky 2010).

By Kaletsky's (2010) summation, then, neoliberalism was part of a natural cycle of capitalist development that adpted, changed and fortified itself in response to global crises. From the Great Depression (1929-1933) which "destroyed the classical laissez-faire capitalism of the nineteenth century", to revolutionary nationalism and the wefare economies of the twentieth century which, in turn, suffered from a rise in global inflation that sparked moves towards a neoliberal reconstruction of the world, capitalism embodies a unique ability to change, adapt and transform when everything else around it appears to disintegrate and collapse (Kaletsky 2010: 3).

In his text, Harvey (2005) casts a critical eye over this latest phase in capitalist development, dedicating his time to dispelling several key misunderstandings which appear to characterize the application of neoliberalism internationally. He defines neoliberalism as a "theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade" (Harvey 2005: 2; Goodale and Postero 2013). His historical treatment of neoliberalism is far less extensive than Kaletsky (2010). Instead, Harvey (2005) locates the origins of this latest wave of capitalist development in the economic interventionism of US economists in Chile in 1973 (Harvey 2005). What began as an experiment on the global periphery, transformed into a highly popular model of global development throughout the US and Europe in the 1980s, combining international loans with industry privatization and market deregulation that restricted the functions of the nation-state to those "necessary [...] to guarantee the proper functioning of the markets" (Goodale and Postero 2013: 27). Central to Harvey's (2005) critique is that neoliberalism, through its institutions and political proponents, advances the idea of freedom and liberation as powerful and appealing markers of this global model which, he adds, would be an attractive proposition for anyone who values the ability to make decisions for themselves. Yet, freedom itself is neither inherently good nor bad but is as "contradictory and as fraught as its incitements to action are compelling" (Harvey 2005: 36). A proponent of Marxism, Harvey (2005) concludes that the logic of neoliberalism only reinforces the wealth, power and prestige of a dominant capitalist class whose rights, freedoms, income, leisure and security never needed any enhancing in the first place. Instead, he adds, the unequal

distribution of wealth and freedom over the global body leaves nothing more but a pittance for the rest of us" (Harvey 2005: 38).

However, authors Dardot and Laval (2009) and Beasley-Murray (2010) challenge the widely held misconception that the nation-state somehow *withdraws* under a neoliberal model of deregulation and privatization (Harvey 2005). Instead, Dardot and Laval (2009: 215) argue against two broad misunderstandings: one, the nation-state lacks efficiency and productivity to participate in globalization and two, the withdrawl of the nation-state from market economics somehow allows for the "immaculate conception of the spontaneous, autonomous market" as a "natural system prior to political society". In their view, the concept of "governance" is an important axis around which several key changes have taken place in relation to the state and the market under neoliberalism. In constrast to a twentieth century model of governance which emphasized "sovereignty and government" as key elements in "nation-state formation" (Dardot and Laval 2009: 218), neoliberalism emphasizes "enterprise", where the nation-state delegates certain powers and responsibilities to the marketplace in a public-private partnership arrangement (Dardot and Laval 2009; 220). In other words, the state does not retreat so as to allow for the wider expansion of the market but redevelops and reconfigures to become a more marginal presence that operates a bureaucratic and managerial style of governance which exercises "its power more indirectly by incorporating codes, standards and norms defined by private interest agents" (Dardot and Laval 2009: 221). This technocratic perspective aligns considerably with Beasley-Murray (2010) who argues that, under neoliberalism, "civil society and the state merge", where the neoliberal state slips the bounds of dedifferenciation and infuses with civil society to form a hegemonic social whole.

In view of this Hardt and Negri (2000: xii) have long argued for the presence of *Empire* which, they note, is a "decentred and deterritorialis[ed] apparatus of rule that progressively incorporates the entire global realm within its open, expanded frontiers". Unlike imperial projects of the past, which had a clear geographic centre and periphery, the decline in sovereignty of the nation-state from the mid-twentieth century onwards paved the way for a "smooth world free of the ridgid striation of state boundaries" (Hardt and Negri 2000: 142). Mediated by the flow and exchange of capital which is regulated by a series of corporate, financial and humanitarian institutions based in the United States, "Empire posits a regime that effectively encompasses the spatial totality [...] that rules over the entire civilized world" (Hardt and Negri 2000: xiv).

Considering the small places and spaces that traditionally constitute ethnopolitics - the Andean *ayllu* and the Mexican *milpa* - Indigenous people are now confronting a regime of capital development which has progressively grown and expanded to fill the global space (Hardt and Negri 2000). Decolonial theorist Quijano has termed this perpetual dominance of capitalism as the "coloniality of power" and develops his explanation around the racial consequences of captialism. Unlike a number of earlier authors (Kletsky 2010; Dardot and Laval 2009) who develop a Westernized historicity of capitalism, Quijano argues that the Latin American colonial encounter generated a divide in time which created space for the development of a new social clasification of the world's population around the idea of race, a mental construct that expresses the basic experience of colonial domination (Moraña et al. 2008). Indigenous languages, cultures, places and spaces were erased and replaced by European epistemes which advanced what Quijano refers to as the "social geography

of capitalism" which serves as the "axis around which all remaining forms of labour control, resources and products are articulated" (Quijano in Moraña et al. 2008: 187). This concept of modernity shapes global development along industrial, scientific and geopolitical lines generating wealth and fortune for European and Western powers while casting a long dark colonial shadow across current and former colonies obscuring violent histories of chaos, death and destruction which continue to permeate the social fabric of the continent today (Mignolo 2010; Moraña et al. 2008).

Therefore, ethnopolitics may be considered decolonial by the way it not only shines light on the long history of coloniality but how it engages a radical "reconstruction of knowledge, power, being and life itself" (Walsh 2012: 11). In Mexico, the Zapatista social justice movement continues to struggle for land and place while defining their anticapitalist resistance through declarations and communiqués. In Bolivia, former president Evo Morales developed a nation-state model which rejected the neoliberal past while using performance, discourse and memory to construct an alternative decolonial future which, as recent events reveal, has not yet materialized for Indigenous people. Collectively, all these acts of territorial and spatial recovery may be viewed as decolonial, de-linking from the coloniality of power which articulates hegemonic forms of neoliberal power. As established ethnopolitical models, my thesis proposes to comparatively explore the similarities and differences which characterize the struggle for place and space in Mexico and Bolivia. In what follows, I will outline my methodological approach for this comparative study.

Section Two

Methodology

A growing subdiscipline within the wider academic field of Latin American Studies, the study of ethnopolitics is open to a variety of different perspectives from across the academy. While ethnopolitics was at one time almost exclusively dominated by North American anthropological investigations carried out during the early-to-mid twentieth century (Gallenkamp 1960), it has now diversified in recent decades to include scholarship from a variety of different sources and disciplines. Among the disciplinary frameworks that will support this thesis include scholarship - monographs and journal articles - drawn from history (Mesa Gisbert et al. 2016; Rabasa 2010; Weinberg 2000; Womack Jr. 1999; Harvey 1998; Karuze 1997), anthropology (Mora 2017; Alderman 2016; Postero 2017; de la Cadena 2015; Canessa 2012; Abercrombie 1998), political science (Webber 2011; Semo and Pardo 2006; Castañeda 2000), philosophy (Foster and Bonilla 2011 Ankersen and Ruppert 2006; Foland 1969), social geography (Lazar 2008), cultural studies (Conant 2010), sociology (Gutíerrez Aguilar 2014), performance studies (Taylor 2003), decolonial studies (Singh 2018; Gómez-Barris 2017; Cusicanqui 2015 Mignolo 2010; Moraña et al. 2008; Dussel 1985), discourse analysis (Foucault 1970), utopian studies (Dinerstein 2016; Flores Galindo 1994 [1986]), and the visual arts (Cárdenas 2010). Furthermore, this thesis relies on a combination of both international and locally-sourced scholarship.

This strong emphasis on a multidisciplinary framework not only highlights the nuances which characterise contemporary forms of Indigenous resistance but also reveals how the concept of indigeneity itself in Mexico, Bolivia and Latin America as a whole can no longer be adequately contained within any one particular perspective or

dominant theoretical approach. Instead, by fusing together this multidisciplinary methodology, this thesis promotes and enhances greater ethnopolitical dialogue between the different strands of scholarship, revealing the similarities and differences which transcend the practice of ethnopolitics across the region. Additionally, this thesis relies on a blend of primary and secondary sources. Not only does this thesis include discussion and commentary from an array of multidisciplinary scholarship that originates in Europe, North America and Latin America but it also foregrounds a series of primary texts. Key among them are the Zapatista *Declaraciones de la Selva Lacandona* (chapter three) as well as two 2006 inaugural speeches and policy documents prepared by Morales and his MAS-IPSP government (chapter four).

To begin with, chapter one and chapter two deal exclusively with the intersection between territorial and political philosophy (Yampara Huarachi 2017; Foster and Bonilla 2011; Huanacuni Mamani 2010; Ankersen and Ruppert 2006; Vargas Vega 2004) and how this shapes unique responses to ethnoterritorial resistance in both Mexico (Ross 2005; Gonález Casanova 2010) and Bolivia (Laing 2015; McNeish 2013; Cárdenas 2010). Meanwhile, chapter three and chapter four develop distinct utopian frameworks - exploring utopian concepts like hope (Dinerstein 2016) and *la utopía andina* (Flores Galindo 1994 [1986] - which address the various different ways in which these two ethnopolitical case studies frame the struggle for social justice in both Mexico and Bolivia respectively.

The application of these various theoretical frameworks across each of the four chapters in this thesis facilitates innovative rereadings of key speeches, government policy documents, communiqués, declarations and locally-sourced print media, all of which form the material basis of this methodological approach to comparative

indigeneities research. This thesis not only adopts a methodological framework that is rooted in textual analysis but also regards this kind of methodological approach as crucial to facilitating a comparative overview of ethnopolitics in contemporary Mexico and Bolivia. By relying on a variety of different historical and contemporary narrative forms which have been published across multiple platforms, disciplines, and geographies, this study not only exclusively identifies the types of texts which lie at the heart of this comparative study but reveals how this particular methodological framework enables fresh and original ethnopolitical perspectives to emerge between Mexico and Bolivia, located at the heart of Latin American Studies as conceptualised in the academy. In other words, by situating these different ethnopolitical case studies from Mexico and Bolivia within a comparative methodological setting, this thesis naturally draws fresh attention to the similarities, differences, opportunities and challenges which characterise the practice of ethnopolitics across contemporary Latin America.

While academic literature frames the theoretical parameters within which this comparative study is situated, the array of primary texts, documents and articles provides an important basis from which to examine the realities of Indigenous injustices and to reflect upon the similarities and differences that emerge across these two ethnopolitical case studies in Mexico (Zapatista social justice movement) and Bolivia (2011 TIPNIS controversy). While scholarship is an effective position from which to observe the underlying processes, practices and trends which have broadly shaped Indigenous activism throughout Latin American history into the political present, this thesis is also acutely aware of how non-scholarly Indigenous actors themselves author many important contemporary narratives which strongly influence

and disrupt traditional dynamics both within and between the Mexican and Bolivian political lifeworlds: they do so by proposing alternative imaginaries that directly challenge and rival the dominance of neoliberal orthodoxy. Moreover, my approach also seeks to acknowledge the variegated participation of different actors including Evo Morales and the Zapatista revolutionaries but also Indigenous scholars/intellectuals too (Yampara Huarachi 2017; Rivera Cusicanqui 2015; Huanacuni Mamani 2010; Reinaga 2001 [1970]).

Using Foucault's (1970) discourse analysis, chapter three examines the Zapatista *Declaraciones de la Selva Lacandona* (1994-2005) to reveal how their discourse challenges and destabilises the traditional dynamics of power within the neoliberal Mexican state. By mapping a theory of hope (Dinerstein 2016) onto the concept of civil society (Beasley-Murray 2010; Cohen and Arato 1992), the Zapatista social justice movement use the *Declaraciones* to paint an alternative utopian futurescape in Mexico, one which foregrounds social justice for the country's Indigenous and other subaltern communities who continue to suffer beneath the homogenising tendencies of the neoliberal state. By inserting themselves within an anti-globalisation discourse, the Zapatista movement invite the use of these methodological approaches in order to help illuminate the political ideas behind their discourse. Chapter four examines president Evo Morales's two 2006 inaugural speeches from within an Andean utopian perspective (López Baralt 2016; Flores Galindo 1994 [1986]. Not only does this reveal how Morales combined the use of Andean histories and memories with performance and discourse (Taylor 2003) to orientate his presidency in the political present but it revealed how development controversies like the TIPNIS (Laing 2015; McNeish 2013) both enhanced and destabilised his image as Andean decoloniser.

Furthermore, the addition of print media to my comparative methodology offers this study key insight into how controversies like the 2011 TIPNIS dispute in Bolivia and *el Tren Maya* in Mexico both play out across the landscape. In addressing the wider struggle for ethnoterritoriality in Mexico (chapter one) and Bolivia (chapter two), my treatment of print media sheds light on what these controversial developments reveal about the tensions between neoliberalism (or the legacies of former neoliberal policies) and ethnopolitical struggle. For example, despite the fact that Andrés Manuel López Obrador positions his presidency as a defining moment of change in the neoliberal lifecycle in Mexico (*la cuarta transformación*), *el Tren Maya* appears to reflect an uncomfortable legacy of ethnocultural and ethnoterritorial appropriations in Chiapas. Meanwhile, careful analysis of Bolivian print media in chapter two not only reinforces the widely held opinion that the TIPNIS reserve and Indigenous territority is a deeply contested site between Indigenous people and the Morales state but that it may also be considered a discursive battleground, where indigeneity and decolonisation are highly contested categories. Additionally, further analysis of print media is useful in the study of *la architectura nueva andina* in El Alto (Cárdenas 2010), providing insight into how *alteños* (citizens of El Alto*)* engage and respond to this development.

In addition to this, I spent three months (2017) in Bolivia conducting fieldwork as part of my doctoral research. While there I conducted a series of interviews with several Indigenous and non-Indigenous activists from the Bolivian *altiplano* and *las tierras bajas*. Moreover I consulted sources in a series of archives. In Sucre I visited the Archivo Biblioteca Nacionales de Bolivia where I acquired a combination of primary and secondary sources on Bolivian revolutionary history of the twentieth century. In

Cochabamba, I attended the Centro de Documentación e Información Bolivia (CEDIB) which provided me with contemporary sources on the 2011 TIPNIS controversy, including an array of print media. Furthermore, all photos printed in subsequent pages were taken by me during time spent in Bolivia (chapter two; chapter four).

My experience in Bolivia was a highly formative one and encouraged me to reflect more deeply on my position as a white, male European PhD researcher carrying out indigeneities research from afar. It forced me to develop an acute sensitivity towards my use of language and description in the thesis and of the need to honour and include Indigenous scholarship and other primary sources. At every stage of the thesis I try to respect and honour the profound differences between my cultural, social, and gendered privilege and the realities of Indigenous struggle against political and cultural injustice. I attempt to reflect this in my refusal to translate certain phrases and key concepts which do not naturally have a counterpart in the English language (*campesina/o*) and in my complete avoidance of words like *Indian* which frequently reappear in anthropological studies produced in the Global North but which, in my view, continue to carry the weight of a deeply negative and traumatic colonial history. As much as this thesis has been about my personal educational attainment within a profoundly neoliberalist educational setting – I have always been deeply conscious of that fact – the opportunities to learn and expand my understanding of indigeneities through the various approaches and frameworks laid out in this thesis have genuinely challenged me to think and rethink the world in which I live and the prevailing shadow of colonial injustice that continues to obscure important realities.

I must add that, while I received opportunity to visit Bolivia for an extended period, the same opportunities to travel to Mexico were less forthcoming due to funding scarcities. Needless to say, my research background and experience from the past decade (2009-2020) provides an important counterbalance to that lack of first-hand experience of Mexico and Chiapas. During previous degree programmes I studied, published, presented and taught on Mexico and the Zapatistas (Warfield 2015) and I have also been highly active in my pursuit of courses/modules in territorial and political philosophy, available as part of the PhD structured programme, which have duly helped to facilitate the development of my theoretical approaches to the various chapters which follow. With an established background in indigeneities research, accompanied by a passion for the material itself, I hope that I am suitably positioned to lead in the development of this comparative research topic.

Overall, by engaging in a methodological framework which prioritises textual analysis over other qualitative, quantitative and other social scientific methods, this thesis not only observes the historical and contemporary processes and practices which underpin ethnopolitics in Latin America today but acknowledges the agency of Indigenous people themselves who author influential narratives that have real effect and meaning within the social spaces they are produced and articulated. This methodology facilitates a smooth, comparative transition between the Mexican and Bolivian contexts, promoting fresh, original perspectives within the growing field of Latin American indigeneities scholarship.

Section three

Thesis Structure

Before I begin this comparative analysis, it is first necessary to outline the structure of this thesis as well as to provide an overview of each of the four chapters. All four chapters are arranged in relation to the key organising tropes of place and space, where chapters one and two deal exclusively with land and Indigenous place-making in Mexico and Bolivia while chapters three and four concern the politics of space and ethnopolitical representation. The case studies which I have identified for discussion in this thesis will each be introduced in chronological order beginning with the Zapatista social justice movement in Mexico followed by the 2011 TIPNIS controversy in Bolivia. By regularly shifting back and forth between these two ethnopolitical contexts this thesis draws greater attention to the similarities and differences which characterise ethnopolitical activity across contemporary Latin America.

Chapter one begins by examining the evolving nature of Indigenous place-making in Mexico with particular emphasis on the key role played by the Zapatista social justice movement in the struggle for land and place in Chiapas. By focusing on a variety of different Indigenous place-making acts including the *milpa,* and the twentieth century *ejido*, chapter one considers the way in which the Zapatista *Caracoles* evolve the struggle for land and place in contemporary Mexico. In particular, chapter one identifies how the Zapatista *Caracoles* may be considered a form of place-making in Mexico by arguing how they architecturally and epistemologically delineate between internal and external spaces, allowing the Zapatista communities to develop an internal project of autonomy that is separate

from yet connected to the neoliberal world outside (Tuan 1977). However, the chapter goes on to further elaborate that, despite the security offered by the *Caracoles* to the Zapatista communities, Chiapas still remains a key location under threat from several neo-territorial challenges linked to the neoliberal world order, among them eco-tourism and government-endorsed plans to develop *el Tren Maya*. While construction of this vast railway project does not directly impact Zapatista territory, this chapter reveals how *el Tren Maya* represents the contested nature of development in Chiapas. Even before construction of this railway project has begun, tensions are already emerging between the Zapatistas and the Mexican state, led by Andrés Manuel López Obredor, as well as among local Indigenous populations themselves in southern Mexico.

The contested nature of development in Chiapas establishes the groundwork for chapter two which addresses the challenges faced by former Indigenous president of Bolivia, Evo Morales Ayma, who struggled to mediate between a national policy of neoextractivism, on one hand, while maintaining the integrity of Indigenous collective territorial rights on the other. As my analysis of the 2011 TIPNIS controversy will show, lowland Indigenous communities, who legally occupy this reserve and Indigenous territory, were forced to confront the hegemonic tendencies of the Morales-led state, where Morales used discourse to marginalise communities who resisted the proposed highway, framing them as citizens deliberately acting against the interests of the plurinational state. Yet, in tracing ethnoterritoriality along rural-urban lines, chapter two also reveals how wealthy Aymara *alteños* (residents of El Alto) benefited from economic policies under the Morales regime, commissioning a bold new architectural

aesthetic that not only promotes ethnic pride and visibility in urban Bolivia but redefines the relationship between indigeneity and territoriality.

Transitioning from place to space, chapter three applies Foucault's theory of discourse to analyse the Zapatista *Declaraciones de la Selva Lacandona* to reveal how they challenge and destabilise the nature of power in neoliberal Mexico. From declaring war against the federal executive to proposing alternative futurescapes that foreground the subaltern in a globalisation of resistance, the Zapatista *Declaraciones de la Selva Lacandona* point to the power of discourse in undermining state hegemony whereby they articulate a message of hope. As a utopian framework, the Zapatista *Declaraciones* map hope onto the concept of civil society and encourage Mexicans to transcend the limits of modernity and organise outside the locus of the nation-state. While the Zapatista social justice movement acknowledges its difficulties in mobilising political change outside the narrow confines of Mexican electoral democracy, analysis of the declarations reveals how Zapatista discourse evolves to advance a globalisation of resistance which challenges the global neoliberal right by forming a global resistance of solidarity from below and to the left.

From looking beyond the nation-state, chapter four observes the way former Bolivian president Evo Morales Ayma used discourse to shape and rework the foundations of the nation-state in pursuit of social justice for the country's Indigenous majority. Through an Andean utopian perspective, chapter four analyses Morales's two 2006 inaugural speeches to reveal the ways in which Bolivia's first Indigenous president combined discourse, performance and memory to convey a new sense of the political which ruptures with the neoliberal past and foregrounds Indigenous rights and culture in a new and inclusive national imaginary. However, analysis of the 2011

TIPNIS controversy reveals how Morales's pursuit of highway development both enhances and destabilise his image as an Indigenous president who expressed personal commitment to decolonise the country. Not only do I argue that the TIPNIS highway development symbolises Morales's endeavour to elevate Bolivia out of a chronic state of underdevelopment, positioning it at a strategic crossroads in a pan Andean futurescape, chapter four also points to the ways in which the Morales state used force towards lowland Indigenous protesters, policing their demands and encouraging them to conform to his national Andean project. Chapter four concludes that the use of such force eroded Morales's broad coalition of support which contributed, in part, to his political demise years later.

By analysing these two very different ethnopolitical case studies through a comparative methodology, this thesis will draw attention to key similarities and differences in contemporary ethnopolitics across Mexico and Bolivia, generating fresh and original perspectives in the area of Latin American indigeneities research.

Chapter One

Tierra y libertad: The Zapatista Movement and the Struggle for Ethnoterritoriality in Mexico

Introduction

The aim of this first chapter is to explore the evolving nature of Indigenous place-making in Mexico with particular emphasis on the key role the Zapatista social justice movement has played in the struggle for land and place in Chiapas. Developing this argument over several stages, this chapter draws attention to examples of Indigenous place-making and how this practice has evolved either as a result of external influences or direct state intervention. Beginning with the Mexican *milpa,* this chapter establishes the basic principles of ethnoterritorial philosophy in this predominantly Maya region and how the relationship between the human and the non-human *Other* is symbolised by a special regard for *maíz* and for the knowledges and practices of the *milpero* who grows and nurtures *maíz* on the *milpa.* The chapter then considers the twentieth century *ejido,* and how this federally-endorsed system of communal land

tenure not only represented a post-colonial form of justice for Indigenous people but was vulnerable to state intervention, privatised by the *Partido Revolucionario Nacional* (PRI) in 1992, leaving Indigenous people exposed to market forces without legal guarantees or territorial protections.

In the context of this neoliberal turn, the Zapatista social justice movement emerged, symbolising the innovative role played by this predominantly Indigenous social movement in the struggle for land and place in Mexico. Following protracted negotiations with the neoliberal Mexican state, accompanied by political violence in the deeply militarised zone of Chiapas, the Zapatistas turn to construct the *Caracoles* which aim to redefine relations both among the communities themselves and between the Zapatistas and the rest of the world. Representing an epistemic reversal of power, the *Caracoles* distinguish between what Tuan (1977) refers to as the interior and the exterior, allowing the Zapatistas to develop a model of autonomy that is both separate from yet connected to the external lifeworld. This distinction between inside and outside spaces reinforces the role of the *Caracoles* as a place-making act whereby they generate a sense of security and stability for Zapatista communities inside amid the threat of the neoliberal world outside (Tuan 1977).

Yet, despite the reassurance of the *Caracoles*, Chiapas remains the site of several ongoing neo-territorial challenges among them the growth in eco-tourism and the invasive infrastructural development which supports this industry. Here, I apply Gómez-Barris's (2017) model of the "extractive zone" to illuminate how the ethnoterritorial and ethnocultural appropriations carried out by president Andrés Manuel López Obrador and his *Tren Maya* development project reveals the invasive presence of neoliberalism in twenty-first century Chiapas. Despite López Obrador and

his *cuarta transformación,* which proposes a radical reorientation of Mexico's political system away from the policies and practices of the neoliberal past, the Zapatista resistance to *el Tren Maya* symbolises the challenges that continue to confront Indigenous people who deliberately choose to make place outside and in opposition to the neoliberal world.

To achieve these aims, this chapter is divided into four sections. Section one addresses territorial philosophy and cosmology in the Maya region, focusing on the significance of *maíz* and the *milpa* among Maya communities. This section then turns to discuss the role of the *ejido* as a form of place-making in twentieth century revolutionary Mexico and its relationship to the nation-state.

Section two discusses Mexico's neoliberal turn and the impact this economic change had on the politics of place-making in Chiapas. In particular, I focus on the privatisation of the *ejido* in 1992 and how this sparked a predominantly Indigenous revolution in Chiapas.

In Section three, I explore the period of negotiations between the Zapatistas and the Mexican state which culminated in the San Andrés Accords in 1996. However, the government's refusal to implement the Accords in law provided impetus for the Zapatistas to begin the development of the *Caracoles*. Here, I focus on the *Caracoles* as a form of contemporary place-making in Chiapas.

Finally, Section four addresses one among a number of neo-territorial challenges to confront twenty-first century Chiapas. By drawing attention to the contested nature of the *Tren Maya* development, I argue how Chiapas is an "extractive zone", where (neo)colonial processes and practices converge and destabilise the region.

Section One

A History of Land and Land Reform in Chiapas and the Emergence of the EZLN

While the overarching aim of this chapter is to map out the evolution of ethnopolitical place-making in Chiapas and the role the Zapatista movement has played in that effort, I begin this discussion by reflecting a little further on the historical significance of land and how it came to form the centrepiece of the EZLN's politics of resistance against the nation-state. The aim of this opening section is to describe that history of struggle for land and ethnoterritorial rights in Chiapas dating back to the time of the Mexican Revolution (1910-1921) and to discuss how limitations in the federal redistribution of land to local communities in this Indigenous region of Mexico eventually gave way to the formation of a new kind of twenty-first century *Zapatismo*. However, I must add here that Mexican political history is a highly complex matter that is regularly rehearsed in the literature from a variety of differing perspectives (Katz 2014; Rabasa 2010; Higgins 2004; Bonfil Batalla 2002; Weinberg 2000; Womack Jr. 1999; Harvey 1998; Krauze 1997; Cornelius and Craig 1991; Bramford Parkes 1962; Gruening 1928). Therefore, the reader should be mindful from the outset that the ethnoterritorial analysis I am offering up in this section is a rather focused view of historical-territorial developments in Chiapas.

Chiapas is Mexico's most southern state and comprises several distinctive geographic regions and strategic sites of importance. The state capital, Tuxtla Gutiérrez, is located towards the west in an area known as the *tierra caliente,* a low lying region which stretches along the Pacific coast. By contrast, the eastern half of the state largely comprises the mountaineous terrain of the *Sierra Madre* where many

important historical centres are located, including the colonial town of San Cristóbal de las Casas which was made famous during the Zapatista insurrection of 1994. Moreover, further east and south lies the *Selva Lacandona*, a rich, bio-diverse rainforest. Originally the focus of significant human population growth during the industrial boom of the twentieth century, this vast rainforest now serves as an important tourist attraction, the consequences of which I will address later in this chapter.

Historically, Chiapas was annexed by Mexico in the year 1825 having originally formed part of the northern territories of Guatemala (Khasnabish 2010; Weinberg 2000). With this move not only did Mexico inherit an extremely biodiverse landscape, rich in flora, fauna, wildlife as well as renewable and non-renewable energy resources, an array of Indigenous communities, the majority of whom claim Maya ancestry, also joined the state. In short, the main ethnic groups in Chiapas are as follows: *Zoque, Tzotzil, Ch'ol, Tojolabal, Mam* and *Tzeltal* (Rovira 2000; Weinberg 2000). While others do exist, I have listed these communities largely because they now reside within the *Selva Lacandona,* which will be the focus of our discussions in this opening section, having migrated from the highlands during the twentieth century. Additionally, as will be determined later, these six Maya ethnic groups also form the basis of the civilian branch of the contemporary Zapatista social justice movement and therefore play an instrumental role in the daily functioning of this organisation.

In order to begin to understand ethnoterritoriality in Chiapas, it is important to think beyond the nation-state and to acknowledge that Chiapas shares a distinctive spatial relationship with the Maya past (Phillips 2014; Grube 2000). While the presence of the Maya civilisation has been traced to the northern rainforests of what we now

call Guatemala, their legacy extends across large swaths of southern Mexico including Chiapas, as I mentioned, as well as the Yucatán (Phillips 2014; Frece and Poole 2008; Grube 2000). While ongoing discoveries of ancient sites and artefacts continue to draw attention to the region, highlighting links between past and present – I will reflect later on how the López Obrador government aims to capitalise on the ancient sites of Chiapas in section four - the legacy of the Maya is also arguably a lived one by the way in which communities here continue to broadly favour engagement with the land through a form of ethnoterritoriality known as the *milpa* (Phillips 2014; Frece and Poole 2008; Grube 2000). While I am not in any way suggesting here that there is an authentic and, therefore, static relationship between the ways in which the *milpa* was farmed then as it is now - I will shortly acknowledge how agricultural practices have been shaped by state intervention in Chiapas - I do, however, aim to highlight here the historical and, therefore, conceptual importance of land and territoriality to ethnic groups in this region, where the *milpa* is considered more than just a form of subsistence agriculture but is, in fact, a way of life (Philips 2014; Nigh and Diemont 2013; De Frece and Poole 2008; Grube 2000).

The *milpa* serves as an important component of the daily infrastructure of Indigenous lifeworlds and is a medium through which communities in this region conceptualise their place in the natural world of things. The processes and practices behind "making milpa" (De Frece and Poole 2008) inform and mediate important ties between place, space, community and the ethnic self. According to most scholars, the *milpa* is a versatile and ecologically sustainable system of rotational agriculture that is most commonly associated with the cultivation of *maíz* or corn but also includes other important crops such as squash and beans (Philips 2014; Nigh and Diemont 2013; Frece

and Poole 2008; Grube 2000). The significance of the *milpa,* as a sustainable and adaptable form of agriculture, lies in the approach that *milperos* take in carrying out their farming duties. While agricultural practices vary from region to region, there is broad consensus on what makes the *milpa* successful.

To begin with, *milperos* generally clear a portion of land among the dense overgrowth, removing trees and vegetation from the area which is then burned in a method known as swidden (Nigh and Diemont 2013). As Nigh and Diemont (2013) recount, while the burning of vegetation may appear like an excessive act, it does embody some practical functions. According to the authors, it aims to "reduce weeds" and "releases soil nutrients, replenishes nitrogen and adds phosphorous, potassium, magnesium and manganese contained in the ash of the burned woody vegetation to the soil" (Nigh and Diemont 2013: 49). While the lowland regions of Chiapas are generally naturally rich in nutrients before any human interaction takes place, this 'slash-and-burn' technique is what makes the *milpa* both a sustainable and highly adaptable form of agriculture in highland areas where the quality of the soil may be greatly reduced. To this end, the *milpa* generates its own fertiliser from the unwanted trees and vegetation that are cleared to make way for it. Once ready, the *milpa* is intensively farmed by the *milpero* for a period of between two to three years before it is then left fallow for up to ten years, allowing the soil and vegetation to naturally re-grow and replenish (Nigh and Diemont 2013).

In Chiapas, the *milpa* has been at the heart of economic and agricultural life for centuries (Philips 2014; Grube 2000). Not only has *maíz* been cultivated for distribution at local markets or bartered in exchange for labour and other supplies, *maíz* has also been consumed in the form of *tortillas* which have been a staple in the

diet of many remote ethnic communities in the region, sustaining them through intense periods of poverty (Nigh and Diemont 2013; Frece and Poole 2008; Rovira 2000). Additionally, *maíz*, when left to ferment, transforms into an alcoholic drink known locally as *pozol* which has been traditionally served up during *fiestas*, endowing the *milpa* with strong cultural associations too. However, the idea of the *milpa* as the "stuff of life" (De Frece and Poole 2008**:** 341) takes on strong cosmological significance when we consider how *maíz* is conceptualised in the historical imaginary of communities in this region.

According to the *Popol Vuh,* an ancient Maya scripture which tells the story of how the world came into being, the first Maya deities created the earth, crafting the first humans from maíz,

> A continuacón entraron en pláticas acerca de la creación y la formación de nuestra primera madre y padre. De maíz amarillo y de maíz blanco se hizo su carne; de masa de maíz se hiceron los brazos y las piernas del hombre. Unicamente masa de maíz entró en la carne de nuestros padres, los cuatro hombres que fueron creados.
>
> (Recinos 1986: 104)[3]

The idea that *maíz* constitutes the essence of being human in Maya epistemology, intimately ties the self to the land and natural world. This endows the process of

[3] There are numerous translations available of the *Popul Vuh* or *Book of the People* which was originally orally transmitted across generations of Maya descendents before it was transcribed by an anonymous figure to preserve this history following the colonial encounter around 1521. Originally transcribed in Maya (*Quiché*) it has since been translated into Spanish (Recinos 1986) and also English (Goetz and Griswold Morley 2003; Tedlock 1996). A lengthy narrative, the *Popul Vuh* unfolds across five sections or *books* telling the story of how the world came into being through a long and complex struggle between the world below and the world above, between good and evil, light and darkness, deities and humans until an imperfect existence was finally created, a reality that must be harmoniously mediated in a constant cycle of construction, deconstruction and rebirth. This chapter relies on Recinos's (1986) Spanish language translation.

making *milpa* with a whole new, personalised meaning. No longer does *milpa* agriculture simply constitute the sustainability of livelihoods from a one-dimensional economic perspective, but it clearly informs a deeply entrenched part of who Maya people are, how they experience identity and construct a sense of self. The act of making *milpa* is a way of forming and maintaining spiritual connections with deities and ancestors, according to De Frece and Poole (2008) who have explored *milpa* farming in the Yucatán peninsula. By regularly tending to the *milpa*, making offerings to the gods and performing rituals of appreciation for the deities, *milperos* successfully navigate the challenges of seasonal harvests, generating food for themselves, their families and the community. Not only does this demonstrate the *milperos'* great sense of care and duty towards the land from which they originally came, according to the *Popol Vuh* (Recinos 1986), but, through this, they also demonstrate for others a sense of *Mayaness* which is something widely respected in communities (Frece and Poole 2008).

Like the Andean *ayllu*, which I will explore in chapter two, the types of agricultural practices and knowledges associated with making *milpa* generate *vivir bien*, what Hunacuni Mamani (2010: 43) refers to as "los valores de respecto, buscar la unidad y la armonía, con los ancestros, con los astros, y con los demás seres humanos de diferentes culturas, pueblos, naciones". While the concept of *vivir bien* shares certain similarities and characteristics that arguably make it a universal way in which to *know* and *be* in the world – something which will become apparent following my analysis of *ayllu* relationality in chapter two – Huanacuni Mamani (2010: 43) draws attention to the fact that local processes and practices such as making *milpa* connect individuals and entire communities "con la divinidad, deidades, ancestros, con los

astros y demás seres de la naturaleza para agradecer, pedir y equilibrarse personalmente y colectivamente". Specifically regarding the Mexican milpa, Cano-Conteras and Valenzuela Guadalupe (2014) note that the milpa is not just a prehistoric form of agriculture but that it is linked to local myth and to Mesoamerican cosmovision and that the processes and practices behind making *milpa* demonstrate a clear respect for and unity with the world. As the authors write, the vast majority of *milperos* "asocian las fases lunares, y también la intensidad de las lluvias, con las distintas respuestas de las plantas, de acuerdo con el momento de la siembra" (Cano-Conteras and Valenzuela Guadalupe 2014: 19). Moreover, the authors add that every *milpero* "tiene conocimiento al respecto, aprendido de sus mayors, de su propia experiencia y sus obervaciones y reflexiones" (Cano-Conteras and Valenzuela Guadalupe 2014: 19). In other words, the art of successfully making *milpa* does not constitute the simple idea that man has somehow mastered the natural world around him but rather that he is just another "elemento más del universo" (Huanacuni Mamani 2010: 42).

There is also a strong gendered component to making *milpa* which must also be considered here. Men and women have traditionally performed separate yet complementary roles in local agricultural processes, mirroring the importance of duality and complementarity in the Maya universe. "Duality" writes Marcos (2013: 198) is "the essential ordering force of the cosmos". Peppered throughout the *Popol Vuh* are important references to the priniciple of duality in terms of how the gods themselves created the earth and universe (Recinos 1986). In banishing earthly darkness, the gods created light, in forming the sun they also created the moon, where there is heaven, there is an earthly reality, life and death and so on (Recinos 1986). And, in forming the

first humans, they created a masculine and a feminine which, in relation to ethnoterritoriality and the Mayan *milpa*, perform complementary roles in the cultivation of corn (De Frece and Poole 2008). While men have traditionally engaged in the more laborious task of creating and tending to the *milpa*, women are often responsible for domesticating corn and transforming it into edible forms such as *tortillas* (De Frece and Poole 2008).

However, in keeping with the gendered nature of making *milpa*, it is quite obvious that the *milpa* as an agricultural unit is firmly under the authority of male figures in the community, where grandfathers, fathers, brothers and sons inherit the land from each other, excluding and isolating women from participating directly in the local economy (Rovira 2000). If a husband or father dies unexpectedly within the family unit, it is usually the eldest son who takes over the *milpa* in a move that instantly overlooks the agency of wives, mothers and daughters in the economic and agricultural processes and practices of the community (Rovira 2000). This tradition of inheritance very obviously imposes a visible hierarchy between male and female figures in Maya communities, where economic and agricultural authority remains firmly in the hands of the male (Agredo et al. 2013; De Frece and Poole 2008). [4]

Thus far, I have shown how the *milpa* is not only an important form of self-sufficient agriculture in terms of how it has traditionally sustained the lives and

[4] Challenges to these internal forms of community patriarchy were first established by a set of revolutionary laws proposed by the EZLN command in advance of their insurrection in 1994. Key among them was the *Ley Revolucionario de Mujeres* published in the newspaper *El Despertador Mexicano* in December 1993. This law exclusively promotes female agency by not only acknowledging the right of women to participate in the Zapatista-led struggle and to occupy leading positions of political authority and influence within communities but it also foregrounds their right to live economically independent lives from the men and to pursue their own line of work. While the struggle for gender equality over the last twenty-five years has been a slow up hill climb for many Zapatista women, it has resulted in a steady increase in female-led activity with women forming important economic and agricultural cooperatives which contribute to the local economy (Eber 2011; Klein 2015).

livelihoods of Maya communities in Chiapas but also how it is the cornerstone of Indigenous lifeworlds in the region, where tending the *milpa* endows individuals with a sense of self and place in the wider cosmological world. In what follows, I will discuss the ways in which twentieth century land reform in Mexico inserted itself into this agricultural space, disrupting, distorting and transforming ethnopolitical associations with land and place.

It is not a particularly useful exercise to try and ascertain whether land reform was a positive or negative experience for Indigenous communities in Chiapas. To do so may risk ironing over the complexities of territorial reform in Chiapas which, I should add, are many. Perhaps it is more suitable to frame this discussion in relation to the short-term and long-term consequences of nation-state intervention in the agricultural sector in Chiapas. This delivers a more thorough explanation as to why contemporary *Zapatismo* came into being towards the latter stages of the twentieth century.

In the short term, land reform was a welcome initiative because it aimed to address the long-term legacies of territorial injustice and inequality most acutely suffered by Indigenous groups in Mexico under the more than thirty years that Porfirio Díaz (1877-1880; 1876-1911) had single-handedly ruled the country (Higgins 2004; Krauze 1997; Bramford Parkes 1960). Under his liberal regime, Díaz encouraged foreign elites, mainly from European and North American markets, to invest heavily in Mexican agriculture, mining and industrial development including the construction of a vast rail network (Hardy 1934). To this end, Díaz deployed the military to appropriate Indigenous lands and to resell these territories to foreign buyers (Krause 1997). As Bramford Parkes (1960: 262) writes, "under Díaz the *hacienda* system had

spread throughout the entire country and the misery of its victims had been intensified". According to Barry's (1995: 1) assessment, Díaz had "presided over [...] the most extensive land redistribution in Mexico's history, leaving the Indian deprived of 90 percent of [his/her] land".

In Chiapas, American, German, French and British families had extensive control over land resources in the region and were engaged in lucrative commercial enterprises which included coffee plantations, cattle ranching and the trading of expensive woods such as mahogany to markets in Europe and North America (Womack Jr. 1999; Harvey 1998). As a consequence of this extensive control over land and natural resources, which was facilitated largely by the Díaz regime, many Indigenous communities were left completely landless, forced to sell their labour cheaply to the foreign *patrón* under conditions of debt servitude either to settle mounting debts which they themselves had accumulated in the local company store or to simply earn a small wage that might eventually allow them acquire some land of their own into the future (Weinberg 2000; Harvey 1998).

Similar to Bolivia, the liberal regime of Porfirio Díaz touted its belief in the "sancitity of private property and the efficiency of larger [agricultural] units", looking to the United States and its successful agricultural economy as an appropriate model to imitate (Foland 1969). Yet, according to Ankersen and Ruppert (2006: 85), the *hacienda* economy was merely a perpetuation of the colonial past, resembling *encomiendas* and *latifundios* which were former colonial systems of land management. While Mexico's Revolution (1910-1920) set about rupturing with the legacies of the country's colonial past, not only were the material benefits of this revolutionary event slow to emerge in Chiapas but land reform was neither motivated, nor fully inspired,

by the country's ethnoterritorial past, favouring, instead, a fresh new approach to the agricultural economy going forward.

Following the initial first stages of the Mexican Revolution (1910-1920), which saw architect of the revolution, Francisco I Madero (1911-1913), assume the role of president of Mexico in 1910, there was profound disagreement as to exactly what type of state should emerge out of the wreckage of the ensuing social chaos (Fuentes 1996). Revolutionaries including Emiliano Zapata in the state of Morelos and Francisco 'Pancho' Villa in Chihuahua strongly denounced the presidency of Madero, criticising him for maintaining continuity with capitalist regimes of the past, foregoing opportunities to implement revolutionary reform throughout Mexico (Fuentes 1996; Cornelius and Craig 1991). Zapata, in particular, favoured a decentralised state model where the *hacienda* economy would be entirely dismantled and the lands redistributed to the popular masses in order to allow Indigenous groups to practice ethnoterritoriality, empowering communities to reclaim control over local lands and natural resources (Krauze 1997; Fuentes 1996). Needless to say, this did not materialise nationally as the Mexican constitutionalists seized power and began consolidating the revolution around a single party system of governance which would preside over a new model of state capitalism (Krauze 1997; Cornelius and Craig 1991). While Zapata was famed for leading his Zapatista army of Indigenous and peasant rebels in arms against local landowners in Morelos, both he and Pancho Villa in the north were quickly defeated and the *Partido Nacional Revolucionario* (PNR) formed in 1929 (Krauze 1997). The revolutionary constitution of 1917 incorporated Zapata's principle of national territorial expropriation and redistribution, previously outlined in his *Plan de Ayala* (1911). However, Article 27, as it was termed in the legal framework, was not a

key priority for the consolidating and institutionalising revolutionary state in the immediate aftermath of the revolution. Instead, successive governments focused on rebuilding the foundations of a strong capitalist state which included establishing the Central Bank in 1921 (Krauze 1997). It was not until the popular presidency of Lázaro Cárdenas (1934-1940) in 1934 that Indigenous communities in Chiapas began to experience the longer-term benefits of the Mexican Revolution. Under Cárdenas, the PNR began the widespread redistribution of the *ejido* (Jung 2008).

Article 27 of the revolutionary constitution declared all "land, water and mineral rights to be the property of the people of Mexico" and that the state should "expropriate land from large landowners and to give it to eligible agrarian communities" (Kelly 1994: 542-543; Article 27: 20). Under President Cárdenas, this amounted to the redistribution of the *ejido* which, at the time, was an innovative form of communal land tenure that could not be leased, mortgaged or sold by its Indigenous recipients (Gruening 1928: 146-147). The concept of the *ejido* was premised on belief in the social function doctrine which broadly implies that land should not only serve as an important source of liberation for the Indigenous people but that it should also be put to good use by improving society and forming the basis of a strong and stable agricultural economy (Ankersen and Ruppert 2006; Foland 1969). In other words, land reform was not simply a gesture of goodwill towards Indigenous communities but functioned as something more broadly entwined with the politics of revolutionary nationalism and as a constitutive element of the ongoing process of revolutionary state building in Mexico. To complement the formal restructuring of Mexican agriculture, president Cárdenas founded the *Conferderación Nacional Campesina* (CNC), a newly constituted state-endorsed union that would consolidate

the Indigenous participants of this new agricultural economy around a single, homogenous class referred to by the state as *campesinos* (Jung 2008). This represented the formal integration of Indigenous people into the folds of the Mexican state as Spanish-speaking and agriculturally proficient *campesinos* (Jung 2008). This process of assimilation continued and expanded with the establishment of the *Instituto Nacional Indígena* (hereafter INI) in 1948 (Jung 2008). The aim of the INI, when it was originally founded, was to "integrar a los indígenas a la cultura nacional [y] promover el desarrollo e integración en las regiones interculturales a la vida económica, social y política de la nación" (INI 2012: 7). This policy of acculturation or *indigenismo,* as it was widely referred to then by the Mexican state, involved establishing a range of bilingual education and sanitation programmes designed to encourage Indigenous people to overcome poverty and isolation which were believed to be inherently linked to the condition of *being Indigenous* rather than something that was just simply circumstantial or the result of historical neglect.

It was no surprise, then, that the INI opened its first regional branch in the state of Chiapas in 1951 (Jung 2008). While the population of Chiapas is estimated to be around four million people, at least thirty-percent of them claim an Indigenous identity (Warfield 2015; Cuevas 2007). Collier and Lowery Quaratiello (2005) note that, in order to more deeply embed the institutional presence of the Mexican state among ethnic communities in Chiapas, the INI appointed community leaders to facilitate education and sanitation programmes within and between communities, entrusting these often male protagonists with the capacity to decide which communities should receive state development and funding and which communities should not. The Mexican state was now effectively reaching inside communities, taking advantage of

the types of traditional hierarchies I discussed earlier in relation to the *milpa* and awarding land and development funding to those who expressed loyalty to the national government (Washbrook 2005; Stahler Sholk 2004).

Throughout the twentieth century, agricultural practices in Chiapas evolved at a considerable rate. While the *milpa* still remained the cornerstone of agricultural activity, under the influence of state-led land reform, *campesino* groups began to intensively farm their *milpa* plots with technological and educative supports provided by the CNC and the INI (Jung 2008). By the year 1970, the Mexican government had redistributed more than 200,000 legal land titles to communities who were mainly resident in the central highlands of Chiapas (Jung 2008). However, as population numbers continued to expand in this region, overcrowding suddenly became a pressing issue forcing predominantly *Tzeltal*, *Tzotzil* and *Ch'ol* communities to relocate to Chiapas's lowland region. The *Selva Lacandona* remained an under populated region of Chiapas right up until the mid-twentieth century. It was still home to commercial landowners up to that point in history. However, due to the progressive colonisation of this ecologically sensitive region of Chiapas, the lowlands went largely unsupported by the state, particularly in terms of the provision of institutional and infrastructural supports (Washbrook 2005; Stahler Sholk 2004; Trejo 2002). In other words, while presidents such as Luis Echeverría Álvarez (1970-1976) encouraged the ongoing colonisation of the Chiapanecan lowlands, the state did not properly reinforce land titles creating confusion within and among communities themselves and between communities and landowners which, in turn, contributed towards further tension and conflict between the various different social actors in the state (Van Der Haar 2004; Trejo 2002). Added to this was the increasing pressure of

environmental concerns over the intensification of agricultural practices in this sensitive ecological area. Around this time, the *Montes Azul Biosphere* reserve in the *Selva Lacandona* was established to try and prevent the total destruction of this region and to preserve important species of flora, fauna and other wildlife from extinction through increasingly aggressive agricultural practices which included intensive *milpa* farming and logging (Washbrook 2005).

This lack of state institutional presence generated a political vacuum that was duly occupied by religious groups seeking to win over the support of ethnic communities in the region. Following the secularisation of the Mexican state in the aftermath of the Mexican Revolution, the Catholic Church was eager to find new ways in which to rebuild its support base. It found the impoverished and disenfranchised communities of rural Chiapas receptive to their presence. In 1960, the newly appointed Bishop of Chiapas, Samuel Ruíz, proposed liberation theology as a method used by the clergy to communicate the *Word of God*, combining religious teachings with local Indigenous practices and customs (Womack Jr. 1999; Harvey 1998; Dussel 1978). Speaking at the second general council of the Conference of Latin American Bishops, Samuel Ruíz delivered an address, in which he spelled out his reasoning for adopting such an approach in Chiapas,

> The poor cannot be evangelized if we [Catholic Church] own vast estates. The weak and the oppressed withdraw from Christ if we appear as allies of the powerful. The illiterate cannot be evangelized if our religious institutions continue looking for paradise in the big cities, and not on the poor edges of town and out in the disinherited hamlets.
>
> (Womack Jr. 1999: 30)

As a philosophy, liberation theology offers "a new framework to rethink the articulation of religion and politics, culture and community" (Moraña et al. 2008). As Moraña et al. (2008: 15) writes, liberation theology is an "epistemological and theoretical criticism of colonialism". It trancends "traditional Marxist notions of alienation" and resignifies "religious narratives as discourses of liberation and popular resistance". It creates "a new rhetoric and a new concept of social change" which is "connected with popular beliefs and emancipatory political agendas". In Chiapas, Womack Jr. (1999: 30) notes that Bishop Ruíz began to learn native Indigenous languages "to understand villagers in their own tongue" followed by further efforts to translate the Bible into *Tzeltal* to ensure the widespread dissemination of the *Word of God* throughout remote communities in the *Selva Lacandona*.

Through small meetings and gatherings in *Chol*, *Tzotzil*, *Tzeltal*, and *Tojolabal* strongholds, Indigenous people in the central highlands of Chiapas and beyond "demonstrated their new conscious and conscientious capacity to organize on a regional scale (Womack Jr. 1999: 31). The *Congreso Nacional Indígena* (hereafter CNI), held in San Cristóbal de las Casas on 13th October 1974, was an important catalyst in this formidable new era of autonomous thinking in Chiapas (Khasnabish 2010; Womack Jr. 1999). Around 1,250 Indigenous people across more than 300 villages, settlements and communities gathered to recount the "misery and indignity of their lives", to denounce "injustices in vivid detail", to analyse "the causes of their poverty, torments and frustration" and to finally discuss "strategies for action including a union of canyon communities" (Womack Jr. 1999 31-32). As Khasnabish (2010) notes, the CNI inspired the development of a well organised Indigenous movement in Chiapas that led to the formation of several unions across the state including the *Central*

Independiente de Obreros Agrícolas y Campesinos (CIOAC) as well as the *Union de Ejidos Emiliano Zapata* (OCEZ) (Womack Jr. 1999). It was apparent that liberation theology had quite an impact across the political landscape of Chiapas, providing communities with an alternative to the revolutionary PRI which had lost significant influence among communities. Liberation theology actively appropriated Indigenous language, customs and cultures in a hegemonic exercise designed to organise Indigenous people around the religious teachings of the Church. Despite this, it nevertheless created sufficient political space to allow emerging ethnopolitical actors to begin the independent struggle for land outside the nation-state. This naturally resulted in fierce conflict with a nation-state that was reluctant to permit alternative forms of ethnopolitical expression that exceeded the limits of what it was willing to afford communities by way of land titles and other basic rights (Trejo 2002). Within this politically independent and mobile setting the *Fuerzas de Liberación Nacional* (FZL) entered Chiapas and combined with local Indigenous communities to form the *Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional* (EZLN), a predominently Indigenous-led revolutionary movement that prioritised the struggle for land and place in Chiapas. A relatively unkown force between 1983-1993, the EZLN, which combined elements of Marxist thought with Maya cosmology, dominated public discourse in Chiapas and across Mexico when the revolutionaries finally declared war against the neoliberal Mexican state on 1st January 1994 (Khasnabish 2010; Muñoz Ramírez 2008; Mentinis 2006; Higgins 2004; Hayden 2002; Womack Jr. 1999; Harvey 1998; EZLN 1st January 1994). In section two, I elaborate why the EZLN declared war on the Mexican state, exploring the impact neoliberalism had on ethnoterritoriality in Mexico and Chiapas.

Section Two

Ethnoterritoriality and Neoliberalism in Mexico

While there has been a significant focus by a whole range of scholars in recent decades on the politics and practices of the Zapatista social justice movement both in terms of how their initial revolution unfolded against the state (Muñoz Ramírez 2008; Womack Jr. 1999; Harvey 1998) and the subsequent developments that have taken place since then (Mora 2017; 2015; Khasnabish 2010), I remind the reader that my discussion here must be viewed in relation to the wider comparative framework within which it is broadly situated. I am particularly keen to demonstrate the way in which this Zapatista model of ethnopolitics evolved within the context of a neoliberal Mexico and, in particular, to situate this struggle for land and Indigenous territoriality within a comparative framework that also addresses the question of ethnoterritoriality in a Bolivia characterised by radical state-led ethnopolitical reforms under Evo Morales and the MAS-IPSP. To more accurately frame the Zapatista struggle for ethnoterritoriality in Mexico, it is important to first define the impact the *Tratado de Libre Comercio de América del Norte* (hereafter TLCAN) had on ethnoterritoriality in Mexico which is our task in this section. TLCAN, which is more commonly known by

the anglophone title North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), represented the peak of Mexico's formal integration into the global free market system (Cannon 2016; Wise et al. 2003; Levy and Bruhn 2001).[5]

Two key events unfolded in Mexico on 1st January 1994. Leader of the ruling PRI and then-president of Mexico Carlos Salinas de Gortari (1988-1994) celebrated the signing of TLCAN in Mexico City to much fanfare. TLCAN was a hallmark bilateral free trade deal which ushered in a new era of free market capitalism intended to open up Mexico to the benefits of the first world alongside its new North American trading partners the United States and Canada (Wise et al. 2003). As part of this process of "economic integration", TCLAN not only reduced tariffs and customs duties along the northern border with the US, but it established the rules to allow "transnational corporations to locate production in Mexico" and "to market their goods and services" to the Mexican people, "taking advantage of the country's comparative advantages" which included "low salaries, abundant natural resources, weak or uninforced environmental laws, favourable tax structures, and infrastructure" (Wise et al. 2003: 2). While Mexico already formed part of other international trading arrangements, including the General Agreement on Tarriffs and Trade (GATT) which concerns all

[5] It is important to note that the *Tratado de Libre Comercio de América del Norte* (TLCAN) is being replaced by a new trade deal, the *Acuerdo Estados Unidos, México, Canadá* otherwise known as the US-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) (*La jornada* 3rd October 2018). This new trade deal to replace NAFTA was signed by representatives of the three participating countries in December 2019 after negotiations reopened on this 25 year multilateral agreement at the behest of US president Donald Trump (The Guardian 10th December 2019). During his controversial 2016 presidential campaign, President Trump blamed NAFTA for the loss of US manufacturing jobs and vowed to renegotiate it with the help of Mexico and Canada to secure a more competitive advantage for the US. While slight tweeks appear to characterise much of this new trade deal, important changes have taken place in key areas including intellectual property, agriculture and automobile manufacturing. To restore the US competitive advantage, 75% (up from 60%) of vehicles must be manufactured in any of the three participating countries to qualify as tariff-free. Moreover, at least 40% must be manufactured by a worker earning $16 or more, a wage only available in the US (Countryman 2018). As USMCA has not yet been fully approved by all parliaments and senates, it is impossible to assess its impact. On that basis I will remain focused on TLCAN which still remains relevant for my analysis of ethnoterritoriality and neoliberalism in Chiapas.

World Trade Organisation (WTO) members, TLCAN was significant in terms of its scope, scale and impact on the country (Wise et al. 2003; Levy and Bruhn 2001). As Levy and Bruhn (2001) note, the problem with TCLAN did not directly lie with the impact it had on extremely high tariffs (some as high as 100%) which characterised Mexico's protectionist period (1940-1970) earlier that century; many of these tariffs had, in fact, already been radically reduced under GATT in 1986. Instead, as the authors write, "to secure fast-track agreement, Mexico had to make several unwelcomed concessions to an increasingly restive US Congress" including in the areas of labour and migration (where free trade did not constitute the free movement of people) and territorial and environmental law (Levy and Bruhn 2001: 205). While some still praise the wealth benefits brought about by TLCAN in Mexico, Indigenous revolutionaries who took up arms in the *Selva Lacandona* felt victimised by a series of "economic policies that seemed to leave no room for their survival" (Barry 1995: 157).

On that same morning, thousands of mostly Indigenous Zapatista revolutionaries, some armed with little more than sticks, seized private landed estates and deliberately occupied the streets, squares and town halls of some of Chiapas's most strategic cities including San Cristóbal de las Casas (Muñoz Ramírez 2008; Womack Jr. 1999; Harvey 1998). The aim of this armed insurrection was to showcase their anger at the threat neoliberalism posed to their ongoing – and still unresolved – struggle for land and Indigenous territoriality. The events of that morning were symbolically profound not just because a band of Indigenous revolutionaries launched a rebellion against the nation-state at a crucial stage of transition in the country's development, but it also marked the beginning of a new phase in the struggle for ethnoterritorial rights in Chiapas, one which centred on the question of compatability

between the struggle for ethnoterritoriality, on one hand, and the transition towards a neoliberal Mexico, on the other (Muñoz Ramírez 2008; Barry 1995).

During the first twelve days of the revolution both the Zapatista revolutionaries and the Mexican military were embroiled in a fierce battle which played out on the streets of San Cristóbal de las Casas in full view of national and international media (Muñoz Ramírez 2008). Surprised – perhaps even overwhelmed – by the extent of this Indigenous uprising, the state ordered an estimated 70,000 military troops be deployed to Chiapas in order to rapidly contain the spread of this insurrection (Higgins 2004). Justifying the revolution in their own words, through the publication of the *Primera Declaración de la Selva Lacandona*, the Zapatista revolutionary command addressed the Mexican *pueblo* claiming that,

> Somos producto de 500 años de luchas: primero contra la esclavitud, en la guerra de Independencia contra España encabezada por los insurgentes, después por evitar ser absorbidos por el expansionismo norteamericano, luego por promulgar nuestra Constitución y expulsar al Imperio Francés de nuestro suelo, después la dictadura porfirista nos negó la aplicación justa de leyes de Reforma y el pueblo se rebeló formando sus propios líderes, surgieron Villa y Zapata, hombres pobres como nosotros a los que se nos ha negado la preparación más elemental para así poder utilizarnos como carne de cañón y saquear las riquezas de nuestra patria sin importarles que estemos muriendo de hambre y enfermedades curables, sin inmortales que no tengamos nada, absolutamente nada, ni un techo digno, ni tierra, ni trabajo, ni salud, ni alimentación, ni educación, sin tener derecho a elegir libre y democráticamente a nuestras autoridades, sin independencia de los extranjeros, sin paz ni justicia para nosotros y nuestros hijos.
>
> (EZLN 1st January 1994)

I include this long paragraph from the declaration to draw attention to the fact that the Zapatista revolutionaries do not explicitly reference neoliberalism or TLCAN

as direct causes of their revolutionary campaign in Chiapas. Instead, as the passage highlights, the revolutionaries situate their current struggle for land and other basic rights within a long and complex historical trajectory which has persistently marginalised Indigenous people for more than five hundred years, leaving them with "absolutemente nada", as the passage suggests (EZLN 1st January 1994). In the context of current economic adjustments, the declaration simply points to the fact that the long, dark shadow of coloniality only looks set to darken further under this neoliberal turn, prompting Indigenous people in Chiapas to challenge convention and take up arms against the nation-state and in defence of *la tierra* and other basic rights (Mignolo 2010; 2000; Moraña et al. 2008; Muñoz Ramírez 2008; EZLN 1st January 1994).

A key factor in Mexico's economic transition under TLCAN directly concerned Article 27 of the country's 1917 revolutionary constitution and the federal redistribution of land in Chiapas and across Mexico. In order to ensure that Mexico's agricultural sector was more compatible with the international marketplace, president Salinas de Gortari ordered amendments to Article 27 which "terminated the government's historic commitment to provide land to petitioning campesinos", thus opening the doors to the "privatisation of the country's social sector" altogether (Barry 1995: 117). The *ejido*, a hallmark of Mexico's twentieth century land reform programme, was now no longer legally guaranteed by the federal state and rules and regulations which previously restricted the buying, selling and leasing of *ejidal* properties were now non-binding under current legal and economic frameworks (Barry 1995 Bramford Parkes 1960; Gruening 1928). In other words, Mexico returned to embrace a national regime of private property rights (as it did under the liberal regime of Porfiro Díaz), where demand for land and natural resources was no longer regulated by the

institutional presence and influence of the nation-state but was, instead, exclusively controlled by the economic currents of global market forces (Kaletsky 2010; Dardot and Laval 2009). The devastating consequences of agricultural deregulation under TCLAN can be accurately traced along the contours of Mexico's once thriving domestic *maíz* industry (Barry 1995).

As I discussed earlier, *maíz* was once the centrepiece of agricultural activity on the *milpa*. However, as Barry (1995: 70) notes, US-produced corn suddenly flooded the Mexican marketplace, where upwards of "2.5 million metric tons of duty-free corn was allowed to enter Mexico in the first year of NAFTA". Under TCLAN, more than two million *campesinos* were "hard hit by the agricultural restructuring policies" (Browning 2013: 87), with many more struggling to compete against the imposition of "industrial growers" who were buying large swathes of rural lands to expand their transnational enterprises (Browning 2013: 90). In short, it was quite clear that, from an ethnopolitical perspective at least, TCLAN not only represented the imposition of a radically disruptive economic regime which unfairly favoured corporatism over *campesino* and Indigenous livelihoods but, by deregulating and commoditising *maíz* in this way, it was a direct attack on ethnopolitical ways of *knowing* and *being* in the world. As the reader will remember, *maíz* is not just an economically important crop among Indigenous communities in Chiapas but it constitutes the very essence of life and *being* in the cosmological universe of the Maya. Therefore, this ethnopolitical resistance was not just a defence of economic lifestyles in Chiapas, it was a personal endeavour, an act of survival against a prevailing worldview which prioritised the economic agency of transnational businesses over the lifestyles of many remote Indigenous communities in Chiapas (EZLN 1st January 1994).

New international norms, however, dictated that national governments were now responsible for recognising the rights of Indigenous people within their jusrisdictions. Central to this global rights-based agenda was a series of international agencies such as the International Labor Organisation (ILO) and the United Nations (UN) which no longer deemed it acceptable or appropriate for national governments to either ignore and/or assimilate entire Indigenous populations into dominant cultures or ways of life. Instead, the ILO (1991) and, later the UN (2007), drafted a series of charters which encouraged nation-states to recognise and value the contribution of ethnopolitical, cultural and economic rights in their legal and constitutional frameworks, what Sieder (2002: 1) terms a recognition of a "politics of difference".

In 1991, the ILO published Convention 169 which explicitly required all member states to acknowledge "the aspirations of these peoples to exercise control over their own institutions, ways of life and economic development and to maintain and develop their identities, languages and religions within the framework of the States in which they live" (ILO 169 1991). While the politics of globalisation rolled back the influence of the twentieth century nation-state, thus generating fresh space in which to articulate an ethnopolitical rights-based agenda, these demands were still predicated on a certain set of beliefs and assumptions which reinforced the presence and influence of the colonial "matrix of power" (Mignolo 2010; Moraña et al. 2008).

First, this multicultural turn addressed the question of Indigenous rights as human rights. This is an example of the universal recognition and inclusion of difference explicitly articulated from within a Eurocentric perspective or worldview (Mignolo 2014; 2010). By incorporating the local rights of ethnic communities into a

universal rights-based agenda, European and North American powers position themselves as "saviours" of the global lifeworld. These agencies and institutions speak on behalf of all those it deems to be "victims", bestowing upon them a set of rights which conceal past violations that were formally perpetuated by these very same powers at different stages throughout history, resulting in ethnic invisibility (Mignolo 2014; 2010; Hopgood 2013).

Second, this multicultural agenda tended to reinforce the centrality of the nation-state in the political lifeworld of Indigenous people, empowering states to decide on whether, or to what extent, they would acknowledge ethnic rights within national legal frameworks. In other words, the state, a product of the modern colonial condition, was entrusted to legitimise the place of Indigenous people in contemporary societies. However, complete multicultural recognition almost never outweighted the nation-state's propensity to foreground economic development in this new neoliberal lifeworld. At the same time at which Mexican president Salinas de Gortari approved reforms to Article 27 in 1992, suspending all hope that Indigenous people would maintain access to lands and territories approved by the state, he also introduced a series of limited multicultural reforms which redefined the national character of Mexico to acknowledge the presence of ethnic cultures and to recognise their contribution to Mexican history and national heritage (Article 2; Mexican Constitution).

As Hale (2005) notes, this shift towards multicultural recognition allowed the nation-state to manage between permissible or inappropriate expressions of ethnopolitics. The nation-state viewed Indigenous people as either one of two categories: *el indio permitido* who does not pose a threat to the implementation of

neoliberal policies and can, therefore, be suitably managed by the nation-state through a range of modest reforms or, by contrast, the uncontainable *indio tajante* who makes radical claims on the nation-state by articulating a series of deep-seated ethnic demands which disrupt the continuity of the neoliberal project. By conducting land grabs and making territorial claims that far exceeded what was acceptable under Mexico's newly imposed neoliberal framework, the 1994 EZLN Revolution deliberately ruptured the multicultural seal of ethnopolitical containment, allowing Zapatista revolutionaries to engage a new kind of agency which had not been played out within neoliberal Mexico before.

In what follows, section three elaborates how the Zapatista revolutionaries engaged the struggle for ethnoterritorial rights in neoliberal Mexico. It is important to consider that this process of place-making unfolded over two separate phases in the evolution of *Zapatismo* between the years 1994-2005. First, section three will address the intense period of negotiations in the late-twentieth century which highlighted the failure of the federal executive to accommodate the demands of the EZLN. Committed to the struggle for land and place in Mexico, section three also considers how Zapatista revolutionaries were forced to occupy a place on the margins of nation-state recognition, where they developed the *Caracoles* as a material and symbolic response to their position outside the epistemological and institutional parameters of the neoliberal state.

Section Three

The Struggle for Ethnoterritoriality in Chiapas

Having established the impact that neoliberalism - specifically the TCLAN trade deal - had on land and ethnoterritorial rights in Mexico, discussion now turns to acknowledging the various ways in which the Zapatista social justice movement engaged the struggle for territorial rights in Chiapas from this point onwards. As I mentioned, this struggle for land and ethnoterritorial recognition is best understood as a process of place-making which unfolded over two separate phases of development, with the Zapatista revolutionaries first participating in a series of deeply contentious negotiations before finally occypying a place outside the legal and conceptual limits of the modern nation-state symbolized by the *Caracoles* (Mora 2017; 2015).

Negotiating Place in Neoliberal Mexico

Within the brief two month period since the 1994 Chiapas Revolution first unfolded on January 1st, both the Zapatista revolutionaries and Mexican negotiators, led by PRI confidant Manuel Camacho, gathered at the Cathedral in San Cristóbal de las Casas to begin a process of dialogue mediated by the trusted Bishop of Chiapas, Samuel Ruíz (Muñoz Ramírez 2008; Higgins 2001). The Dialogues in the Cathedral took place over a two-week period between February and March 1994 (Muñoz Ramírez 2008; Higgins 2001; Womack Jr. 1999; Harvey 1998). In hindsight, the dialogues were both successful and unsuccessful in equal measure. On one hand, after an intense period of bloody conflict between the revolutionaries and the Mexican state, where more than five hundred Zapatista soilders are believed to have lost their lives (although official figures claim that it was closer to two hundred), the dialogues proved, in the short-term at least, that both sides could indeed sit down to negotiate a potential solution to the crisis (Hayden 2002). However, any possibility of an actual solution materializing at this early stage was very quickly diminished, on the other hand. While both sides emerged from the talks having agreed that the federal government would implement a series of 34 commitments which closely resembled the eleven original demands laid down by the Zapatistas in their *Primera Declaración de la Selva Lacandona*, Mexico simunltaneously entered a period of national political crisis which threw into question the government's commitment to peace in Chiapas altogether (Castañeda 2000; Womack Jr. 1999).

The Chiapas Revolution broke out during an important election cycle in Mexico. The PRI was intent on securing the presidency for another six year term (1994-2000). President Salinas de Gortari had, as per tradition within the institutional

ranks of the PRI, nominated his successor to the presidency, the youthful and exuberant Luis Donaldo Colosio (Castañeda 2000). Touted as a political reformer, Colosio's appointment stirred up tensions among some within the traditional ranks of the PRI to the point where certain members of the party faithful feared that his nomination might risk the Mexican presidency altogether (Castañeda 2000). A political party that once epitomized the very essence of *Mexicanidad* now struggled to find relevance among a competing electoral framework - the right-wing *Partido Acción Nacional* (hereafter PAN) and the centre-left *Partido Revolucionario Democrático* (hereafter PRD) - and within an economy that had weakened to the point of collapse in 1982 (Levy and Bruhn 2001). Broadly speaking, it is within this contested political environment in which Luis Donaldo Colosio was assassinated on 23rd March 1994 in the state of Tijuana while out on the campaign trail (Castañeda 2000). While Colosio was almost immediately replaced by the less charismatic Ernesto Zedillo, who eventually won the election that same year, this victory did little to restore confidence, faith or credibility in the PRI. In response to this ensuing crisis of legitimacy, Zapatista authorities firmly rejected the government's 34 commitments following a thorough consultation with communities in Chiapas (Muñoz Ramírez 2008; Manaut et al. 2006; Higgins 2001; Womack Jr. 1999; Harvey 1998). For now, it appeared as though all formal channels between the revolutionaries in Chiapas and the government in Mexico City remained suspended. Yet, with rising levels of violence reported throughout Chiapas, the EZLN command was left with little choice but to seek out ways in which it could bring to an end the conflict in Chiapas.

Within a year of the Dialogues taking place in the Cathedral at San Cristóbal de las Casas, the Zapatistas and the Mexican state agreed to re-join the peace effort and

find a solution to the crisis in Chiapas (Muñoz Ramírez 2008; Manaut et al. 2006; Higgins 2001). To showcase their commitment to peace in the region - a metaphorical olive-branch if you will - Mexico's Congress passed a new law entitled *Ley para el Diálogo, la Conciliación y la Paz Digna en Chiapas* (Muñoz Ramírez 2008; Manaut et al. 2006; Higgins 2001). Not only did this law establish a new legal precedent which guaranteed Chiapas and its citizens the right to peace, but it formally proposed the development of a new mediating body designed to help achieve that goal (Muñoz Ramírez 2008; Manaut et al. 2006; Higgins 2001). Known as *La Comisión de Concordia y Pacificación* (hereafter COCOPA), this new legislative body constituted an array of cross-party congressional leaders whose task it was to help facilitate and achieve a new peace deal in Chiapas.

Of course, while the government appeared to set the stage for peace talks to take place, preparing all the necessary legal and political groundwork for the demanding task that lay ahead, the Zapatista revolutionaries could be forgiven for thinking that the Zedillo administration was less than serious about dialogue and peace in Chiapas. In the roughly tweleve month period since the Dialogues at the Cathedral in San Cristóbal de las Casas concluded in March 1994, political violence in the region had intensified on a number of levels. Following military intervention in the conflict in January 1994, a large number of federal security forces remained in the region forming checkpoints which controlled the flow of individuals and communities in and out of the rebel-held territory (Muñoz Ramírez 2008). However, reports quickly surfaced which indicated that many of these military checkpoints staged multiple incidences of intimidatory violence towards communities as well as the rape of female victims by military personnel in an attempt to destablise and undermine the support

base of the Zapatistas in Chiapas (Klein 2015; Eber and Antonia 2011; Muñoz Ramírez 2008; Rovira 2000).

Meanwhile, in 1995, state intelligence officials claimed that they had finally identified the individual behind the highly popular yet enigmatic figure of Subcomandante Marcos whose identity had remained anonymous up to this point (Hayden 2002; Womack Jr. 1999). This discovery prompted president Zedillo to deliver an address to the nation in which he publically *un-masked* Marcos in an attempt to humiliate him and the Zapatistas (Womack Jr. 1999). By revealing to the nation that this iconic and respected Zapatista figure was, in fact, a *mestizo* university professor by the name of Rafael Sebastián Guillén, Zedillo hoped to inspire a sea-change in public opinion that would drive many to question the integrity of this ethnopolitical social movement. His efforts, however, failed, having the exact opposite effect. This public *de-masking* encouraged many supporters to join demonstrations in the Zócalo, Mexico City, where they donned the famous *pasamontañas* in solidarity with the revolutionaries, chanting *Todos Somos Marcos* (Muñoz Ramírez 2008; Manaut et al. 2006; Higgins 2001). With this level of public support firmly behind the rebels in Chiapas, the Zapatista revolutionary command could confidently approach peace talks with government negotiatiors in the small township of San Andés Larrainzar in March 1995 (Muñoz Ramírez 2008; Manaut et al. 2006; Higgins 2001).

Formal peace talks were set to begin on 20th March 1995. However, almost immediately, the government unexpectedly canceled proceedings (Muñoz Ramirez 2008). According Muñoz Ramirez (2008: 128), many thousands of Indigenous supporters of the EZLN had appeared at San Andés Larrainzar "to accompany their delegates" to the talks. Overwhelmed by this response, the government "orchestrated

a media campaign to argue that the dialogues could not begin because the Indigenous supporters were armed" (Muñoz Ramirez 2008: 128). While this was untrue, EZLN delegates requested that their supporters return to base in order to allow negotiations proceed without further delay or interruption.

From the outset, negotiations appeared slow and protracted and revealed the obvious epistemological divides that existed between the revolutionaries, on one hand, and the neoliberal state, on the other. For more than five months, both sides struggled to agree on the issue of the military in Chiapas. While Zapatista delegates sought an immediate relaxation of the federal security presence in the region, the government was unwillinging to relinquish such levels of military control over Chiapas, a clear sign that state negotiators still considered the revolutionaries a threat to Mexican national security (Muñoz Ramírez 2008; Manaut et al. 2006; Higgins 2001).

It was clear, then, that negotiations at San Andrés were a hardened battle between the local and the national. While the Mexican state maintained the position that this was a local, predominantly Indigenous dispute, the Zapatistas appeared eager to stress the national significance of their revolutionary campaign, claiming these negotiations embodied the hopes of "los pueblos indios de todo el país" (EZLN 17th July 1998). As negotiations progressed, both sides eventually agreed upon six roundtables that would become the focus of discussions between the revolutionaries and the state going forward.

Indigenous Rights and Culture
Democracy and Justice
Well-being and development
Conciliation in Chiapas
Women's Rights in Chiapas
End to Hostilities

(Graph 1.1 provides a full list of the six roundtables agreed for discussion between the EZLN and the Mexican state during peace talks at San Andrés Larrainzar. (See Muñoz Ramírez 2008)

After nine months, the Zapatistas and state negotiators emerged from San Andrés Larrainzar on 16th February 1996 with a formal agreement on the first roundtable, Indigenous Rights and Culture (Muñoz Ramírez 2008; Manaut et al. 2006; Higgins 2001). While the Zapatistas approached all negotiations with the state as representatives of a national struggle for land and Indigenous rights, it was very clear that they had to concede this stance in order to reach agreement. The San Andrés Accords discussed the terms of Indigenous autonomy in relation to Chiapas, failing to address the "nationwide problem of agrarian reform" or "the reform of Article 27" (Muñoz Ramírez 2008; 137). By signing the San Andés Accords, the government agreed to "uphold the right to autonomy of the [Indigenous] peoples in the Constitution, to broaden their political representation, to guarantee full access to the justice system and to build a new legal framework that guaranteed political rights, legal rights and cultural rights" (Muñoz Ramírez 2008; 138).

The government, however, has since refused to legalize and permit the implementation of Zapatista autonomy in Chiapas. In the aftermath of what was a

relatively successful negotiation process, which resulted in collective agreement by both sides on the issue of Indigenous rights and culture, this flat refusal by the nation-state to adhere to the constitutional demands for political and territorial autonomy in Chiapas dealt a massive blow to the wider Zapatista campaign (Muñoz Ramírez 2008; Manaut et al. 2006; Higgins 2001). More worrying was the fact that this period of uncertainty positioned Chiapas and the Zapatistas in quite an unstable and precarious political situation as the revolutionaries, along with their community supporters, were left with little choice but to patiently wait for the Mexican government to implement the accords (Muñoz Ramírez 2008; Manaut et al. 2006; Higgins 2001). This renedered the Zapatistas powerless against the state which was by now itself uniquely positioned to decide on whether to permit or deny the legal practice of Indigenous autonomy in Chiapas. Despite success in securing a legal agreement, it was clear that the San Andrés Accords reconfirmed the centrality of the neoliberal state in recognizing and legitimising the place of Indigenous people in Chiapas. The San Andés Accords revealed the challenges and obstacles that still faced this ethnopolitical social movement which struggled to negotiate their claim to place in a neoliberal lifeworld that continually failed to acknowledge a politics of difference in Mexico (Sieder 2002).

For the remainder of the twentieth century, the relationship between the Zapatista revolutionaries and the nation-state was charcterised by increased levels of mistrust followed by even greater instances of political violence and bloodshed which, it appeared, explicitly focused on community displacement. During this time, paramilitary groups began clandestine operations in the remote *Selva Lacandona*, terrorizing local communities and forcing their displacement. Amid this deeply unsettling and chaotic social landscape, the Acteal Massacre unfolded, where forty-

five Indigenous men, women and children were killed, at point-blank range, in broad daylight by a number of paramilitary elements (Rabasa 2010; Muñoz Ramírez 2008). As members of the Catholic pacifist community, *La Abejas*, these *Tzotil* men, women and children were seeking refuge in the hamlet of Acteal when it came under attack on the morning of the 22nd December 1997 by a paramilitary organization with links to the ruling PRI (Muñoz Ramírez 2008; Lacey *The New York Times* 23rd December 2007; Ramírez *The Irish Times* 24th December 1997). While *Las Abejas* did not directly support the Zapatistas and their use of armed conflict, they did share support for their political aims and were sympathetic to the wider campaign for land, liberty and justice being pursued by the revolutionaries in Chiapas. Yet, after years of hard-fought negotiations, where the promise of political agreement always remained within distant reach, the Acteal Massacre was a clear reminder of the profound epistemological and political divides that still stood in the way of peace and securing place in Chiapas. Neither the democratic election of Vicente Fox and the PAN in the year 2000 nor Comandante Ramona's impassioned plea to Mexican Congress to elevate the San Andés Accords to constitutional law shortly thereafter could restore the momentum which had been seemingly lost over the previous years. In the end, it was clear that the neoliberal state failed to recognize and legitimize the presence of the Zapatistas in Chiapas forcing the revolutionaries to secure their claim to ethnoterritoriality themselves (Mora 2017; 2015).

In what follows, I address phase two of the Zapatista struggle for land and ethnoterritorial justice in neoliberal Mexico, focusing on the symbolic and material significance of the Zapatista *Caracoles* as a form of Indigenous place-making in twenty-first century Chiapas.

Securing Ethnoterritorial Rights in Chiapas:
The Material and Symbolic Significance of the Zapatista *Caracoles*

Following almost a decade of political uncertainty, defined by protracted negotiations and a sustained campaign of military violence throughout Chiapas, the Zapatista revolutionaries entered into a period of silence, where they quietly and patiently enacted the San Andrés Accords themselves (Muñoz Ramírez 2008). In their *Sexta Declaración de la Selva Lacandona*, the final declaration to be published by the Zapatista command, the revolutionaries declared that they were no longer willing to engage with the neoliberal Mexican state on the issue of Indigenous rights and culture in Chiapas. As the Zapatistas made clear,

> pues ahí lo vimos claro que de balde fueron el diálogo y la negociación con los malos gobiernos de México. O sea que no tiene caso que estamos hablando con los políticos porque ni su corazón si su palabra están derechos, sino que están chuecos y echan mentiras de que sí cumplen, pero no. O sea que ese día que los políticos del PRI, PAN y PRD aprobaron una ley que no sirve, pues lo mataron de una vez al diálogo y claro dijeron que no importa lo que acuerdan y firman porque no tienen palabra.
>
> (EZLN 30th June 2005)

With this decisive statement, the Zapatista revolutionaries unveiled a new and elaborate socio-territorial system of ethnopolitical governance in Chiapas symbolised by the development of the *Caracoles*. The "birth of the Caracoles", writes Khasnabish (2010: 115), included the "formation of the Juntas de Buen Gobierno, marking the fulfilment of community autonomy" right across the Zapatista territory. The five *Caracoles* instantly became both materially and symbolically significant political

devices for the Zapatista revolutionaries in their struggle for ethnoterritoriality and Indigenous autonomy in Chiapas. As I will show, similar to Tuan's (1977) definition of place and space, the *Caracoles* endow the abstract and volatile nature of space in Chiapas with a new meaning and sense of purpose, redefining relations within and between Zapatista communities and between the Zapatistas and the political outside. As I will illustrate, the *Caracoles* not only symbolised the very act of place-making but they also reveal how processes of ethnopolitical place-making have evolved within Chiapas, allowing Indigenous people to finally take control of their own political destinies without direct interference from the nation-state as was the case with twentieth century land reform and the universal distribution of the *ejido*. By disrupting the flow of the neoliberal order over Chiapas, the *Caracoles* created new opportunities for Indigenous communities to advance autonomy and to specifically develop healthcare and other systems which are fully attune to the needs of the individual communities they aim to serve. In other words, I argue that the *Caracoles* transformed the previously "undifferentiated" nature of space in Chiapas into a place of "security and stability" for Indigenous people (Tuan 1977: 6), ensuring "that autonomy and the motto “mandar obedeciendo” do not remain in the sphere of abstract concepts" but find their place in Chiapas (González Casanova 2010: 79).

The *Caracol* is not an entirely new concept in Chiapas but has, in fact, evolved from earlier initiatives designed and developed by the Zapatista revolutionaries themselves within the autonomous territory since 1994. In this way, the *Caracol* does not represent or symbolise a complete rupture with the political past but, instead, speaks to the evolving nature of *Zapatismo* as the revolutionaries continually reshape and rework the narratives of their struggle in contemporary Mexico. Following the

revolution in 1994, the Zapatista revolutionaries developed what they referred to as the *Aguascalientes,* which they defined as "lugares de encuentro entre la sociedad civil y el zapatismo" (EZLN 10th January 1996). Borrowing their name from the Mexican city of Aguascalientes, where leaders of the 1910 Revolution gathered to agree the terms of the country's new 1917 revolutionary constitution, the five Zapatista *Aguascalientes* became important and strategic spaces of encounter between the Zapatistas and members of civil society who collectively gathered for days at a time to discuss "los principales problemas nacionales" (EZLN 10th January 1994; Krauze 1997). While the *Aguascalientes* represented the basic principle of horizontal information flow and exchange between the Zapatista revolutionaries and the world outside, the development of the *Caracoles* formulated an alternative approach to intellectual and social organising within Chiapas which starts with the local and the particular and slowly builds to include a whole new universal relationship with the world (González Casanova 2010).

Much of the symbolic weight of the *Caracoles* is tied up in the very meaning of the term itself and how it is applied throughout Zapatista political discourse in Chiapas. For example, as Ross (2005) notes, at a very basic level, the term *Caracol* in Spanish means snail or conch shell, the latter being a device traditionally deployed by the Indigenous Maya of the *Selva Lacandona* to summon individuals and entire communities together for political meetings. Collectively, the image of the snail and the shell speaks to the slow and gradual nature of Zapatista development in Chiapas and illustrates how the revolutionaries not only see the internal relationship among communities inside the territory but how they plan to develop their relationship with the world outside (González Casanova 2010; Conant 2010; Ross 2005). Similar to the

inward and outward motion or flow of the spirals on a snail shell, the *Caracoles* "serán como puertas para entrarse a las comunidades y para que las comunidades salgan; como ventanas para vernos dentro y para que veamos fuera; como bocinas para sacar lejos nuestra palabra y para escuchar la del que lejos está. Pero, sobre todo, para recordarnos que debemos velar y estar pendientes de la cabalidad de los mundos que pueblan el mundo" (*desInformémonos* 10th August 2017). In this way, the *Caracoles* create a clear and visible distinction between the interior and the exterior, helping the Zapatistas to forge a sense of place that is both separate from yet connected to the rest of the outside world (Tuan 1977).

Central to the internal dynamics of the *Caracoles* are the *Juntas de Buen Gobierno* (hereafter JBGs). As I mentioned above, each of the five *Aguascalientes* were erased and replaced by five *Caracoles* and their five corresponding JBGs which are as follows: Oventic, Roberto Barrios, La Realidad, La Garrucha and Morelia (Dinerstein 2013; Conant 2010; González Casanova 2010). Unlike the previous internal structure of the Zapatistas, where the EZLN-CCRI functioned as the political-military wing of the organisation, leading the development of all internal strategy, each of the five *Caracoles* now independently functions as a separate governing body that responds to and reflects the administrative needs of the grassroots communities under its jurisdictional remit.

Unlike the more familiar top-down approach to political organising we see reflected across many institutional structures, where policies are traditionally developed from above and then dispensed to the public below, the *Caracoles* emphasis an altogether entirely different approach that positions all 1,111 Zapatista communities to the fore of the internal decision-making process (Warfield 2015; Khasnabish 2011;

Conant 2010; González Casanova 2010). Operating on a two year rotational system, each community elects at least two representatives to serve across 29 municipal councils which then elects a further two representatives to serve as members of the JBG (Dinerstein 2013; Conant 2010). With all political positions at every level of government conducted on a voluntary basis, the political becomes a deeply personal act, whereby all members are expected to uphold their duty as representatives of this ethnopolitical model and either participate themselves directly in this bottom-up system of community government or alternatively support their fellow serving representatives by tending their land, harvesting their crops and sharing excess food and other supplies with their families (Neils 2003). This rotational system of government within each of the five *Caracoles* solidifies the abstract concept of *mandar obedeciendo*, locating it within a political architecture that allows the Zapatistas to spiral "away from some of the colossal mistakes of capitalism's savage alienation [...] and toward old ways and small things" (Dinerstein 2013: 5).

It is clear, then, that the *Caracoles* function as "territorial spaces" (Dinerstein 2013: 4) that draw attention to a distinction between the "inside" and the "outside", allowing the Zapatista revolutionaries to transform the abstractness of space inside Chiapas into a familiar environment that is constructed around their basic needs and desires (Tuan 1977: 107). The abstract, unfamiliar and violent nature of the neoliberal space is transformed in Chiapas by the way in which the Zapatista communities embrace the political and social institutions of the *Caracoles*. Central to this act of place-making in neoliberal Mexico is, for example, the development of the autonomous healthcare system which empowers communities right across the self-

declared autonomous territory to take control of their destinies and to negotiate their own futures.

Structured in a similar fashion to what I just described above, the autonomous healthcare system is located, first and foremost, inside the communities. Through a process of consensus-building, members of the community gather to nominate and elect health promoters who, once trained by NGOs, work within the community to diagnose and treat basic aliments, educate families around basic hygiene and to generally support the overall health and well-being of the communities they serve (Kozart 2007; Cuevas 2007). As per the internal structure of *Zapatismo*, larger clinics and health centres, designed and developed by the Zapatistas themselves, with the support of national and foreign NGOs, operate at municipal and *Caracol* levels and are often equipped with expert staff and more advanced technologies (Kozart 2007; Cuevas 2007). Yet, in the interest of maintaining a decentralised approach to healthcare services, which locates power and autonomy within the communities themselves, these clinics prefer only to offer additional supports to health promoters who do not have the material or financial resources or the knowledge necessary out in the field to adequately tend to patients in the community with more serious or complex medical needs.

It is clear, then, that the *Caracoles* carve out space which allows the Zapatista revolutionaries to give new meaning to their environment, transforming this once marginalised, neglected and state-dependent region of Chiapas into a highly productive and self-sufficient ethnopolitical site which now fully and completely satisfies that long-established struggle for autonomy conducted over previous centuries. In the words of Relph (1976: 67), even though "places acquire meaning

simply because we live in them [...] human life [still] requires a system of [...] structure and form and meaning" for us to thrive, to make sense of the world and to really achieve place.

In this discussion thus far, I have mentioned a lot about this distinction between the inside and the outside, where I put forward the view that the *Caracoles* achieve place in Chiapas by the way in which they help structure the internal political and social worlds of the Zapatista communities. Through initiatives such as autonomous healthcare, for example, the *Caracoles* symbolise the act of place-making, becoming "centres of felt value where biological needs [...] are satisfied" (Tuan 1977: 4). Yet, place is not just achieved by what we manage to create or organise ourselves in the abstract world of space. Rather, the act of place-making can equally be achieved through the distinctions we make between worlds and by our ability as "place makers" to mark or ward off and defend ourselves against that which we perceive to be the intruder (Tuan 1977). Place-making is as much a creative expression as it is a mark of defence and a desire to achieve a sense of stability and security in the unstableness of a neoliberal world which, for the Zapatistas, continues to threaten them (Tuan 1977).

In addition to fulfilling the needs of communities inside the autonomous territory, which Dinerstein (2013) argues covered an estimated 30,000 km² by the year 2007, the *Caracoles* are also designed to carefully mediate the flow and exchange of financial, material and other supplies between Zapatista communities and what Olesen (2004: 259) refers to here as "global solidarity". It is widely agreed that, in the aftermath of the 1994 Chiapas Revolution, the Zapatista revolutionaries became international beacons of resistance against the smooth expanse of the neoliberal lifeworld (Hardt and Negri 2000). From 1994 onwards, Zapatista revolutionaries did

not just engage in frequent dialogue with global activists and sympathisers through the various *encountros* held across their five *Aguascalientes*, but they began to receive material supplies, financial assistance and other labour supports from an international community that was willing and eager to help with the resistance (Ryan 2011).

Olsen (2007) reminds us that, at this early stage in the conflict, global solidarity was mutually beneficial. Not only did the Zapatista communities receive financial and material supplies from overseas but the very presence of foreign volunteers, among Indigenous communities in Chiapas, drew widespread international attention to the plight of poverty in the region and forced the Mexican government to reconsider its use of violence towards the revolutionaries. Moreover, at a time when the international Left was in crisis, trying to redefine itself in the wake of the end of the Cold War, the Zapatistas provided many activists with inspiration and motivation, a guiding light towards a new anti-neoliberal horizon (Olesen 2007). Yet, at a time when the Zapatistas were considering the role of the nation-state in their struggle for land and place in Chiapas (ie. the San Andrés Accords), Subcomandante Marcos was also reflecting on this global solidarity relationship which no longer appeared to be based around the principles of mutual respect and understanding. Instead, as the quote below suggests, this relationship became a global manifestation of pity and charity or what Marcos calls "el síndrome de la Cenicienta" (*La Jornada* 25th July 2003). In a communiqué that has since been widely circulated in scholarship and the media, Marcos elaborates this point further:

Del baúl de los recuerdos saco ahora extractos de una carta que escribí hace más de nueve años: *"No les reprochamos nada (a los de la sociedad civil que llegan a las comunidades), sabemos que arriesgan mucho al venir a vernos y traer ayuda a los civiles de este lado. No es nuestra carencia la que nos duele, es el ver en otros lo que otros no ven, la misma orfandad de libertad y democracia, la misma falta de justicia. (...) De lo que nuestra gente sacó de beneficio en esta guerra, guardo un ejemplo de "ayuda humanitaria" para los indígenas chiapanecos, llegado hace unas semanas: una zapatilla de tacón de aguja, color rosa, de importación, del número 6 1/2... sin su par. La llevo siempre en mi mochila para recordarme a mí mismo, entre entrevista, foto-reportajes y supuestos atractivos sexuales, lo que somos para el país después del primero de enero: una Cenicienta (...) A esta buena gente que, sinceramente, nos manda una zapatilla rosa, de tacón de aguja, del 6 1/2, de importación, sin supar... pensando que, pobres como estamos, aceptamos cualquier cosa, caridad y limosna, ¿cómo decirle a toda esta gente buena que no, que ya no queremos seguir viviendo en la vergüenza de México? En esa parte que hay que maquillar para que no afee el resto. No, ya no queremos seguir viviendo así."*

(*La Jornada* 25th July 2003)

Olesen (2007) argues that Marcos deployed the use of humour in his discourse here to tackle what is a very difficult and challenging truth. While Marcos is clear that the Zapatistas welcome the support and solidarity that is offered by members of the international community, he recognises that this relationship has been a very destabilising one for the Zapatistas all the same. In a similar vein to Hardt and Negri (2000: 36), who argue that NGOs and other humanitarian organisations are "some of the most powerful pacific weapons of the new world order", the Zapatistas develop an acute awareness of the dangers of international solidarity and how it is intimately tied to this neoliberal

lifeworld.[6] The light hearted image of the pink stiletto heel in the *Selva Lacandona* speaks to a more uncomfortable truth and points out the disempowerment which arises from a global solidarity relationship which denies the agency of the so called *Other* it aims to help. What can a Zapatista do with a stiletto in the rainforest?

Through this statement, Marcos implicitly questions a solidarity relationship that has been traditionally led by international NGOs and charities that act on the basis of their own ethical and moral assumptions without due regard for the particularities of *other,* local geographies which operate according to their own alternative epistemologies and ways of *doing* (Hardt and Negri 2000). All this echoes the twentieth century policy of *indigenismo* that accompanied the universal distribution of the *ejido* and how the revolutionary nation-state institutionally treated Indigenous communities through a series of unions and agencies that developed paternalistic education and sanitation programmes designed to manipulate communities and to encourage them to leave behind their ethnocultural ways. In both instances, it becomes clear that

[6] *Zapatismo* played a leading role in the configuration of the alter-globalisation movement which began to gather momentum in places like the United States and Europe during the 1990s. The Zapatistas became heroes of the radical left not just because they resisted NAFTA and the onset of neoliberalism in Mexico but because these rebels offered an original perspective on the nature of global capitalist relations. As De Angelis (2005: 179) writes, *Zapatismo* offered the world of radical resistance a fresh perspective and insightful coordinates that provided a general framework for empowering individuals and communities "to invent their own politics and construct alternative social relations". The formation of the *Caracoles* not only symbolises this inventive approach to grassroots democracy and political organising among Indigenous communities inside Chiapas but reveals the wider implications of transnational resistance on acts of place-making. By redefining the nature and purpose of global solidarity, the Zapatistas encourage activists and followers to avoid investing all their hopes of widespread social and political renewal in this local Indigenous project of autonomy and instead to invent their own unique style of resistance to neoliberalism elsewhere. In their book, which explores the best way to build bridges between various traditions of the radical left (anarchism, Marxism, militancy, unionism), Lynd and Grubačić (2008) settle on the view that accompaniment and organising alongside marginalised communities might be the best way forward for radical left politics. I return to the themes of transnationalism and global solidarity in chapter three where the Zapatistas encourage a globalisation of resistance from below and to the left in their *Sexta Declaración de la Selva Lacandona*.

their agency is denied and the power to define the frontiers of their resistance is hindered. However, like the inward-outward motion of the spirals on the snail shell, the *Caracoles* redefined this relationship with the outside world, defending the Zapatistas from the excesses of neoliberalism, disrupting the uni-directional flow of solidarity from the West to the rest (Dunford 2017; Olesen 2007; 2004).

The installation of the *Caracoles* in 2003, alongside the corresponding JBGs, represents an epistemic reversal of power, where the world outside is forced to conform to the standards set by the internal universes of the Zapatista communities inside. Activists and international humanitarian organisations are no longer permitted unrestricted access to communities across the autonomous territory (Mora 2017). Instead, each of the five *Caracoles* functions like a filter, distributing this international aid to the communities which they deem need it the most (Ryan 2011; Conant 2010). And, since the communities themselves are the ones who elect representatives to serve on the JBGs in the first place, they, in turn, remain at the fore of the decision-making process. In a decolonial sense, the *Caracoles* appear to rework the long-established narrative of power that has historically manipulated the small places and spaces of ethnopolitical thought and action. Agencies, governments and humanitarian groups that exist in the neoliberal world outside no longer have direct control over the space inhabited by the communities inside the *Caracoles*. This distinctive move to shift and displace traditional forms of top-down power and authority both inside and outside the *Caracoles* generates, what Harvey (2016: 13) refers to as "decolonial liberation", where the ability of the state and other transnational agencies and institutions to control the region has been deflected. It is in this way that the

Caracoles establish a clear distinction or barrier between the inside and the outside, between the interior and the exterior, allowing Indigenous communities to finally develop a sense of security or place away from the "openness [and] threat of space" (Tuan 1977: 6).

In the final section of this chapter, I explore the imposition of neo-territorial challenges, where the Zapatistas find themselves forced to confront the development of new infrastructural projects that appropriate space in Chiapas and southern Mexico for commercial benefit and consumption.

Section Four

Neo-Territorial Challenges in Contemporary Chiapas: Eco-Tourism and *El Tren Maya*

Without doubt, the model of development that has been pursued in Chiapas over the previous one hundred years has evolved considerably. From a focus on agriculture and cash crops in the twentieth century, where cattle-ranching and coffee plantations in particular dominated the landscape, Chiapas has certainly become the locus of new twenty-first century development strategies designed to better connect the region together with Mexico through roadways, railways and other infrastructural projects (Weinberg 2000; Womack Jr. 1999; Harvey 1998). Among other things, one of the main intentions behind such development plans is to enhance the image of Chiapas as a modern, attractive and suitable location for the twenty-first century global traveller (Gómez-Barris 2017).

In this final section, I will reflect on some of these neo-territorial challenges, and the consequences they have for Indigenous people in Chiapas. This complex intersection between the local and the global produces what Gómez-Barris (2017: xvii) terms the "extractive zone", where "extractive capitalism [...] engages in thefts, borrowings, and forced removals, violently reorganising social life as well as the land by thieving resources from Indigenous territories". While this reminds us that Indigenous agency remains threatened beneath the expansive weight of global capitalism, it also draws attention to the many ways in which Indigenous people choose to facilitate and/or engage processes of development too. Despite the fact that the Zapatista social justice movement strongly resists the state-endorsed *Tren Maya* project in southern Mexico, where a new rail network will connect together all six

major states in southern Mexico including Chiapas, a recent referendum on the railway development by the Andrés Manuel López Obrador government in December 2019 found that there remained unanimous support for this latest project across the region.

Rocheleau (2015) reminds us that Chiapas is no stranger to global development strategies having been first identified as a prime location for the implementation of *el Plan Puebla-Panamá* (hereafter PPP) under the presidential administration of Vicente Fox and the *Partido Acción Nacional* (PAN) back in 2001 (Torres Torres and Gasca Zamora 2009; Ornelas Delgado 2002; Álvarez Béjar 2002). When it was originally proposed almost two decades ago, the main aims and objectives of the PPP were to enhance and deepen Mexico's integration "[a] una comunidad económica de Norteamérica con mayors alcances que los del tratado de Libre Comercio de América del Norte y más semejante a la integración europea" (Ornelas Delgado 2002: 146). Following on from the implementation of TLCAN in 1994, it was apparent that Mexico, particularly regions in the far south, lacked sufficient infrastructure to extend the universal reach of this new trade deal across the country (Álvarez Béjar 2002). Moreover, this ambitious plan to develop transnational highways along the Atlantic and pacific coasts and, to build bridges, airports, railways and pipline infrastructure across southern Mexico, provided ample opportunity and scope to expand the influence of TLCAN further south along the border into neighbouring Central American countries too, so that, one day, there might be "grandes corredores carreteros y ferroviarios desde Alaska hasta Panamá, lo mismo que gasductos y líneas troncales de electricidad" (Ornelas Delgado 2002: 146; Álvarez Béjar 2002). It was clear, then, that the PPP symbolised the material advance of US hegemony and the

deepening of "el proceso de modernización [y] la lógica del capital y el mercado" across Mexico (Ornelas Delgado 2002: 138). And, despite the fact that the PPP was erased and replaced by the more recently proposed *MesoAmerica* Project (MP) did little to hide the fact that, as Rocheleau (2015) reminds us, regardless of these titular changes, the underlying logic behind these two development plans is identical.

In describing this newer plan, Rocheleau (2015: 701) draws attention to the continuity that exists between these two plans, revealing the ongoing nature of regional integration that is taking place across Mexico, Central America and Colombia, where a series of joint ventures by state and private capital are being led with major US participation. She adds that this newer *MesoAmerica* initiative maintains key focus on "transportation and energy infrastructure, with much of the power destined for mining and manufacturing industries, as well as energy consumers in the US" (Rocheleau 2015: 701).

In terms of Chiapas, however, a key project to emerge out of this cross-continental development plan is the *Centro Integral Planeado Palenque* (hereafter CIPP). This development plan aims to promote Chiapas as a destination for a "world-class inland tourism archipelago of archaeological sites, pristine forest stands and scenic waterfalls and lakes in a green sea of biodiversity conservation, carbon storage and environmental services" (Rocheleau 2015: 701-702; Bellinghausen 2008). The plan centres on the development of several key "hotspots" across Chiapas where eco-tourism initiatives will take place followed by an emerging corridor of ecological sites that are preserved and protected from all forms of human habitation and development (Rocheleau 2015: 702). As Rochleleau (2015: 702) notes, the intention behind the CIPP is to take advantage of "cultural tourism" and to diversify Mexico's tourist market. By

promoting cultural and ecological destinations or sites of interest outside some of the more traditional tourist hotspots in southern Mexico (Cancún), local and federal governments hope to take advantage of the "Indigenous people as spectacle" which they now view as an important "engine of economic development" in the region (Rocheleau 2015: 702).

As a result of this interest in developing Chiapas as a site for eco-tourism and ecological conservation, this regional landscape radically transformed to reflect conditions in the extractive zone where the scars of modern territorial development are revealed to us in new and different ways (Gómez-Barris 2017). In Chiapas, new eco-narratives were deployed to frame the sinister practices of development coloniality which continued to plague the region. As Rocheleau (2015: 698) notes, the act of "green grabbing" increased across Chiapas and, much like Gómez-Barris's (2017) extractive zone, involved the illegal appropriation of Indigenous lands and territories "by conservation and tourism interests". To this end, many NGOs were implicated in the darker side of western modernity, as they sought to help support local efforts to preserve land and territories as ecosystems in the wider conservation efforts of public and private interests (Rocheleau 2015; Mignolo 2010). This eco-development narrative emerged out of western concern over environmental damage and changes to the climate's behaviour, as many environmental activists arrived in Chiapas in an attempt to protect and preserve the biodiversity of eco-systems for future generations. Yet, these well-intentioned acts only appeared to (re)apply a familiar logic of control over Chiapas shaping and reworking the spatial dimensions of this region around the moral, ethnical and economic considerations of the West (Gómez-Barris 2017; Rocheleau 2015).

Conflicts around land and "green grabbing" frequently involved the Mexican state performing the role as enforcer, acting on behalf of private interest groups who seek to develop roadways and commercial centres as part of the CIPP and the wider *MesoAmerica* Project. Frayba, or the *Fray Bartolomé de la Casas* human rights centre in San Critóbal de las Casas, published reports documenting violent encounters that have taken place between police, the military and local Indigenous community activists who frequently come out in defense of their lands and territories. In 2012, the Frayba centre revealed the direct use of military tactics designed to intimidate and stoke fear among communities in the San Sebastián Bachajón *ejido* in Chiapas. The lands and territories around this area had been earmarked by the state and other private interest groups for vast infrastructural development including the construction of a highway between the San Cristóbal de las Casas and the Maya temples at Palenque (Frayba 2012). As Frayba (2012: 2) note, the Mexican state tried, on many occasions, to "apropiarse del territorio del Ejido de San Sebastian Bachajón a través de distintas estrategias como desalojos forzados, la cooptación para la firma de convenios y proyectos de desarollo, la ocupación político y militar de la zona, la criminalización de defensores y la judicialización de acciones de defensa de derechos".

As Rocheleau (2015: 702) notes, the violent displacement of Indigenous communities from their territories paves the way for local government and other commercial interests to step in and recreate parts of the *mystic* jungle, transforming sites like Palenque into a *Cancún of the Rainforest*. The appropriation of heritage sites, Indigenous architecture, ancestral lands and sacred temples by outside neoliberal forces deeply impacts how local Indigenous communities experience their culture in contemporary Chiapas. Not only are they physically erased from public view, violently

displaced from their territories to accommodate the construction of luxuary tourism infrastructure, but their histories, cultures and heritages are appropriated and refashioned to satisfy foreign commercial consumption. As Bellinghausen (*La Jornada* 29th Septembre 2008) notes "la cultura maya y sus riquezas naturales son un atractivo indiscutible en el mundo". This wholesale commercialism of place and space reflects what Gómez-Barris (2017: 43) refers to as the "projection of romantic spatial imaginaries", where Chiapas has been "reductively constructed" to conform to the fantasies of the global tourist who seeks "an idyllic escape from the toxicities of the overdeveloped United States and Europe". This example of "new age settler colonialism", as she calls it, is justified by the desire of many in the northern hemispheres who claim the need to escape "the stress, consumption, eco-depression and generalised dissatisfactions of late capitalism [...] exonerating the foreigner in everyway from the local injustices" which they help to perpetuate (Gómez-Barris 2017: 43).

The unstable nature of space in Chiapas, destabilised here further by the (neo)colonial processes and practices I just mentioned, which shape and rework these spatial imaginaries around ethnocutural consumption, reinforces the place-making capabilities of the *Caracoles* which, as González Casanova (2010: 87) reiterates, signify a "consciousness of what is internal and what is external". From here, however, the Zapatista revolutionaries criticise the accelerated nature of neoliberal development in Chiapas which has recently coalesced around the proposed construction of *el Tren Maya,* a large-scale railway development that will connect together "las principales ciudades y circuitos turísticos [en el sur de México] para integrar territorios de gran riqueza natural y cultural al desarollo turístico, ambiental y social en la región" (*Tren*

Maya n.d). The strongly cultural and eco-touristic dimensions of this latest development project speaks to the ongoing appropriation of space by public and private interests and how the international neoliberal order continues to normalise "an extractive planetary view" that "facilitate[s] capitalist expansion" across ethnoterritorial and ethnocultural resource-rich regions (Gómez-Barris 2017: 6).

An initiative of the Andrés Manuel López Obrador government (2018-present), construction of this vast new rail nework is set to begin in the year 2020 (*Tren Maya* n.d). Once completed by 2024, this rail network, constructed using a combination of new and existing rail lines, will cover an estimated total distance of 1,460km (*Tren Maya* n.d). Originating in the popular tourist resort of Cancún, two rail lines – a northern route and a southern route – will traverse several key states along the Yucatán peninsula eventually converging at the ancient Maya archeological site at Palenque, Chiapas (Pskowski 2019; *El Financiero* 12th December 2018; Muñoz Ramírez *Desinformémonos*). Costing an estimated $6.5 billion to complete, with finance for the project being made available through a series of public-private partnerships, the two rail lines will pass through the following five states which have been identified for development: Quintana Roo, Campeche, Chiapas, Tabasco, Yucatán (Pskowski 2019; *El Financiero* 12th December 2018; Muñoz Ramírez Desinformémonos).

Since López Obrador and his party Morena (*Movimiento Regeneración Nacional*) were elected in July 2018, the *Tren Maya* development has been a heavily contested idea, supported by some, vehemently opposed by others. Strongly endorsed by the president himself, López Obrador has participated in ritual ceremonies led by various different Indigenous communities from Chiapas and elsewhere that collectively converged at the *Ritual de los Pueblos Originarios a la Madre Tierra para*

Anuencia del Tren Maya on 16th December 2018 to, at the title suggests, seek permission from *la Madre Tierra* to begin construction of the project (*El Financiero* 12th December 2018). A central aim of the *Tren Maya* development has been to ensure "el bienestar de las communidades y pueblos originarios con el objectivo de crear condiciones que generan crecimiento económico en beneficio de la sociedad" (*El Financiero* 12th December 2018). Moreover, the Morena government has held several referendums and *consultas* across Mexico and among communities in the Yucatán peninsula with results from each one almost always showing in favour of the project. Yet, despite this perception of support for the project by Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities alike, the Zapatista revolutionaries have remained highly critical of president López Obrador and the Morena government and have come out strongly against, what they call, "su porquería Tren Maya" (EZLN 1st January 2019).

A leading figure of the socialist left in Mexico for over two decades, López Obrador first served as a member of the PRD before later splitting from the party and eventually founding Morena (Semo and Pardo 2006). After serving as mayor of Mexico City (2000-2005), followed by two attempts at contesting the Mexican presidency (2006; 2012), López Obrador and Morena eventually swept to power in 2018 on the back of an anti-neoliberal campaign, where he promised to initiate, what he calls, *la cuarta transformación* (Ackerman 2019; Semo and Pardo 2006). Positioning his presidency in line with other key moments of profound historic revolutionary change and social transformation, López Obrador promised to bring about an end to the excesses of neoliberalism in Mexico and to the corrupt ties between the political and commercial spheres which regularly results in fraudulent privatisation practices

(Ackerman 2019).[7] After winning the election but before taking office – a six month timeline - López Obrador and Morena consulted the Mexican public on several key outstanding development issues in an unofficial referendum which asked whether the construction of a controversial new airport for Mexico City and *el Tren Maya* should continue under the new administration. Around one million citizens from across Mexico participated in the poll unanimously rejecting the new airport (70% against), on one hand, while endorsing the railway development in Chiapas (90% in favour), on the other. And since 2018, *el Tren Maya* has been a leading priority for the López Obrador government, "un plan integral de ordenamiento territorial, infraestructura, crecimiento socieconómico y turismo sostenible … [que] … tiene como principal objectivo el bienestar social de los habitantes de la zona maya", according to the president himself (Muñoz Ramírez *Desinformémonos*).

For the Zapatistas, however, *el Tren Maya* represents nothing more than a clear expression of continuity between the neoliberal past and the neoliberal present. In a communiqué released by the revolutionaries to celebrate twenty-five years since the 1994 Chiapas Revolution (1st January 2019), the Zapatistas launch a scathing critique of the current Mexican political system "[y] a los chiquitos líderes […] especialmente el que está en el poder y el partido que está en el poder"(EZLN 1st January 2019). Despite earlier promises made by López Obrador to radically transform the neoliberal condition in Mexico through his *cuarta transformación*, the Zapatista revolutionaries reject these claims, drawing attention instead to how little things have changed for them in Chiapas in the twenty-five years since their revolution: "no es fácil enfrentar

[7] The moments of historic change and transformation which the *la cuarta transformación* refers to here are as follows: the War of Independence (1821), the period of secular reforms (1850s-1860s) and the 1910 Mexican Revolution (1910-1920) (Ackerman 2019; Krauze 1997).

los veinticinco años aquí a miles de soldados protectores del capitalismo, y aquí están, aquí donde estamos, pasamos en sus narices estos días" (EZLN 1st January 2019). As the communiqué develops, their criciticism of López Obrador intensifies where they reject the superficial way in which the president presents himself *as one of us.* For the Zapatistas, president López Obrador's active participation in Indigenous rituals and ceremonies attempts to envelop the *Tren Maya* development project in a series of behaviours, gestures and practices that rework the narrative of capitalist development around local cultures, customs and cosmologies. They write,

> Aquel que está en el poder, es mañoso, ¿y cuál es la maña que hace? Que hace de que está con el pueblo de México y engañando a los pueblos originarios y demostrando que se hinca en la tierra pidiéndole permiso como creyendo de que todos los pueblos originarios lo creen y aquí nosotros le decimos, no lo creemos eso, al contrario.¿Cómo es eso que al contrario? Eso de que disimula que agarra nuestros modos, nuestras costumbres, que pide permiso a nuestra madre tierra; nos está diciendo, dame permiso madre tierra para destruir a los pueblos originarios, eso es lo que dice eso, le hace falta entender a esos otros hermanos pueblos originarios. Eso es lo que está haciendo ese señor, nosotros no lo creemos. Sólo porque la madre tierra no habla, si no se lo dijera ¡Chinga tu madre! Porque la tierra no habla, si fuera, ¡No, vete a la chingada!
>
> (EZLN 1st January 2019)

Yet, while the Zapatistas reject all cultural appropriations of Mayaness as branding for the project, they are equally critical of other Indigenous groups too who appear to be convinced by López Obrador and his cultural and cosmological

appropriations.[8] It is clear, then, that not only is *el Tren Maya* a highly contested idea between the Zapatistas and the Morena-led state but this development project divides opinion on-the-ground, among Indigenous communities in Chiapas and elsewhere. Here the issue of alterity and agency are called into question. Is an individual any more or less *Indigenous* if they express desire for development to take place? Is alterity to capitalism and development automatically a pre-condition for ethnicity in the contemporary lifeworld? Should the Zapatistas themselves be so critical of other Indigenous groups who participate in development processes given their own political emphasis on notions of plurality, difference and the creation of *un mundo donde quepan muchos mundos*?

These questions will not be addressed here in this chapter, but do provide an important basis for the comparison which follows in chapter two. This analysis of the the evolution of ethnopolitical place-making in Chiapas and, in particular the contributions made by the Zapatistas in this area through the development of the *Caracoles,* has strongly emphasised alterity in the struggle for ethnoterritoriality in neoliberal Mexico. The *Caracoles* symbolise this desire for alterity by defining an inside and an outside which helps the Zapatista revolutionaries to mediate between the uncertainty of an accelerating neoliberal world order in Mexico and the familiarity of the internal places and spaces of Indigenous autonomy in Chiapas. However, tracing the contours of ethnopolitical place-making in Bolivia reveals an outcome that

[8] An obvious example of López Obredor's ethnocultural and cosmological appropriations included his inaugural ceremony on the 1st December 2018 where the newly appointed president of Mexico received a traditional cleansing by indigenous leaders before being handed the *bastón de mando*, a wooden staff which symbolises indigenous trust in the country's new leader and represents their approval for him to govern on their behalf (Carlsen 2018). In an online article published around the time of AMLO's inauguration, the *bastón de mando* is described as "una posesión muy importante que debe tratarse con respecto"(México desconocido 1st December 2018). By accepting the staff, AMLO "aceptó el cargo de gobernante de las communidades originarias y sostener con firmeza y respecto el bastón de mando" (México desconocido; 1st December 2018).

is both similar to and different from the Zapatista case study explored here. While Indigenous communities in rural Bolivia strongly resisted the imposition of a highway through their territories (2011 TIPNIS controversy), Indigenous communities in the Andean city of El Alto appear to rework notions of ethnoterritoriality in contemporary Bolivia. As I will show, *la nueva arquitectura andina* reveals how some wealthy Aymara people embrace development as a symbol of ethnic pride and a journey towards the rediscovery of the ethnic self in the contemporary lifeworld.

Conclusion

From the *milpa* to the *ejido* to the *Caracoles* to neo-territorial challenges of the twenty-first century, this chapter has examined the evolutionary process of place-making in Mexico, reconfirming the importance of place to Indigenous people in Chiapas. In particular, this chapter drew attention to several key attributes of the Zapatista *Caracoles* and how they inform a politics of place-making in Chiapas. By distinguishing between the interior and the exterior, the *Caracoles* assist Zapatista communities in making sense of reality, providing them with the physical and epistemological space to define a model of autonomy that is both separate from yet connected to the world outside. Symbolising an epistemological reversal of power, the *Caracoles* force the neoliberal world outside to conform to the politics and practices of Zapatista communities inside, shifting the balance of power and placing Indigenous communities to the fore of decision-making processes. Within this space, the Zapatistas construct and develop a world adapted to their needs and ways of *being* that transforms Chiapas into a more stable and secure environment for them, thus achieving place according to Tuan (1977). However, eco-tourism and *el Tren Maya* are some of the neo-territorial challenges that confront the Zapatistas in twenty-first Chiapas. The global tourist industry together with *el Tren Maya* perpetuate the acts of ethnoterritorial and ethnocultural appropriation that, despite the reassurances offered by president Andrés Manuel López Obrador and his *cuarta transformación*, reflect neoliberal continuity in the region. The contested nature of *el Tren Maya* between López Obrador and the Zapatistas reveals that place-making is never a fully

guaranteed thing for Indigenous people, especially those who deliberately choose to situate themselves outside and in direct opposition to the neoliberal world.

However, does an ethnopolitical movement which recaptured the nation-state offer us an alternative perspective on the struggle for ethnoterritoriality and place in contemporary Mexico? To address this question and more, my attention now turns to trace the contours of rural and urban forms of place-making evident in Bolivia under the administration of former president Evo Morales Ayma and the MAS-IPSP.

Chapter Two

The Struggle for Rural and Urban Ethnoterritoriality in Evo Morales's Bolivia: The 2011 TIPNIS Controversy and Neo-Andean Architecture

Introduction

Having established the evolving nature of Indigenous place-making in Mexico and the role the Zapatista social justice movement plays in the struggle for land and place, attention turns to the politics of place-making in Morales's Bolivia, where the nation-state becomes the vehicle through which Indigenous people secure their rights to ethnoterritoriality. From his initial election victory in 2005, to his formal resignation in 2019, president Morales vowed to resolve the legacies of Bolivia's (neo)colonial past by developing an ethnopolitical model of nation-state governance that combined a policy of neoextractivism with a national legal framework which spearheaded the ethnoterritorial rights of Indigenous people in Plurinational Bolivia.

However, analysis of the 2011 TIPNIS controversy draws attention to the challenges that confronted an Indigenous president who struggled to mediate between the need for national economic growth, on one hand, while preserving the integrity of

Indigenous collective territorial rights, on the other. In his pursuit of a highway development, directly through the heart of the TIPNIS reserve and Indigenous territory, Morales ignited a conflict between lowland Indigenous communities and the *Movimiento Al Socialismo – Instrumento Político por la Soberanía del Pueblo* (hereafter MAS-IPSP) state which reveals the contested nature of land and Indigenous territoriality in plurinational Bolivia. While Morales and the MAS-IPSP touted the economic benefits of this highway development, lowland Indigenous communities continued to resist the project claiming it would destroy local ecologies.

This chapter will outline how a policy of neoextractivism (re)produces scenes of conflict and chaos in Bolivia, where lowland Indigenous communities are forced to confront the hegemonic tendencies of the Morales state. In particular, this chapter will not just simply reinforce the widely held view that the TIPNIS reserve is a geographically contested site of production, what Gómez-Barris (2017: 2) has termed the "extractive zone", but that the TIPNIS may also be considered here as a discursive battleground, where concepts including indigeneity are highly contested categories, creating the conditions for ethnopolitical marginality and exclusion reminiscent of the colonial past.

This chapter also draws attention to the politics of place-making in urban Bolivia which has become an important site of ethnopolitical production in recent decades (Lazar 2008). Here, I argue that *la nueva arquitectura andina* in the city of El Alto not only represents an "Indianizing" of the urban landscape as Runnels (2019) suggests, but that this architecture transforms the interrelation between ethnicity and place in contemporary Bolivia, where wealthy Aymara people commission the construction of bold new modern aesthetics that celebrate ethnicity while helping its

owner renegotiate the ethnic self. Studying this architecture in El Alto in combination with complexities surrounding the TIPNIS controversy helps us to understand the shifting parameters of ethnoterritoriality and place-making in contemporary Bolivia, allowing us to draw better, more informed connections between rural and urban responses to ethnicity and place in contemporary Latin America.

To achieve these aims, this chapter is divided into three sections. Section one explores a history of ethnoterritoriality in Bolivia defining the territorial philosophies and cosmologies applicable to this study before then discussing how the 1953 Agrarian Reform Law and the 1996 ley INRA separately shaped the interrelation between ethnicity and place over two distinct phases in Bolivian history. Section two moves on to argue how the TIPNIS reserve may be considered a discursive battleground, where indigeneity has become a highly contested category maginalising lowland Indigenous people from the plurinational state. In this section I also take the time to define neoextractivism as it relates to the Bolivian context. Finally section three discusses the advent of *la nueva arquitectura andina* in El Alto, where I argue how it evolves notions of ethnoterritorial place-making in contemporary Bolivia. For now I begin this discussion by focusing on the history of ethnoterritoriality in Bolivia.

Section One

A History of Ethnoterritoriality in Bolivia

Like a number of its Andean counterparts, Bolivia is defined by a dramatic landscape. To the west and south beyond the city of La Paz lies the *altiplano* (Crabtree and Chaplin 2013). This vast highland region sits at an impressive altitude of around 4,000 meters. The majority of Bolivia's cities are located at various points along this mostly flat, dessert-like terrain. While many Bolivians now claim to live more urban lifestyles, the arid conditions of the highlands continue to challenge those who persist in eeking out a meagre living as agriculturalists in the more remote townships and villages located deep within this vast territorial plain. The Bolivian *Salar*, the country's most unique landscape setting, is also located here, near the border with Argentina, and attracts many tourists annually who come to experience this dramatic salt landscape (Noriyoshi 2018).

To the north and east of the country, the Amazonian lowlands offer a dramatic contrast. This tropical, jungle terrain contains fewer towns and cities than the south and they are generally scattered further apart making them more difficult to access by road. Towards the east of the lowlands is an area known as the *Oriente* which has become an important locus for agro-industry in recent decades. In particular, industrial agriculture, which is centered on the production of rubber and the Brazil nut among other produce, has transformed the city of Santa Cruz de la Sierra into an important economic hub which continues to attract widespread investment to this sprawling metropolis.

Finally, between the highlands and the lowlands lies the Cordillera valley, a series of dramatic mountain ranges which mark the transition between these two opposing terrains. Along this valley lies the strategic city of Cochabamba as well as an area known as the *yungas,* a fertile landscape famed for the production of the sacred coca leaf (Crabtree and Chaplin 2013). However, despite this immense topographical diversity, one thing about Bolivian territoriality remains abundantly clear: it has been an enduring source of political conflict for centuries.

Vargas Vega (2004) captures the nature of territorial conflict in Bolivia with the passage below,

> El problema de la tierra y del territorio en Bolivia se inició con la conquista y la occupación colonial de los territorios indígenas por la corona Española que implicó la usurpación de las tierra de cultivo de las poblaciones indígenas, así empezó la disputa por la propriedad de la tierra y el domino del territrio entre el Estado colonial y los pueblos indígenas pleito que se mantuvo irresolute en al substrato de los últimos quinientos años.
>
> (Vargas Vega 2004: 13)

In this passage, Vargas Vega (2004) identifies how the foreign occupation of Indigenous lands by Spanish invaders more than five hundred years ago became a catalyst for the array of territorial problems which continue to afflict Bolivia today. The violent appropriation of Indigenous lands and territories by white European elites transformed the nature of territorial relations within this newly conquered geographic space. Under Spanish rule, Andean colonial society was organised around racial

hierarchies which elevated white European landowners or *encomenderos* to positions of authority while simultaneously subordinating the role of native Indigenous populations, collectively categorised as *indios*, "que fueron desposeídos de su tierra y condenados a pagar con trabajo a cultivar la tierra para obtener sus alimentos y vivir en su territorio" (Vargas Vega 2004: 13 de la Cadena 2015; Canessa 2012; Mignolo 2011; 2000; Moraña et al. 2008).

While it is widely agreed that the formal colonial encounter between the European and Andean worlds produced scenes of conflict, disorder and chaos, it was by no means the only era in which territorial conquest and appropriation was deployed as a method of social and geographic control. In the period before the Spanish Empire, Inca kings ruled over a "vast empire" that was itself pieced together through war, conquest and territorial appropriation (Liss and Liss 1972: 27). This resulted in "so many diverse nations" existing beneath the authority of a "single commonwealth, ruled by the same laws, statutes and customs" (Keen 1986: 19). As Ankersen and Ruppert (2006) note, the Inca Empire developed a highly sophisticated strategy of territorial appropriation which maintained the structures of pre-existing forms of land tenure, such as the *ayllu* which I discuss below, shaping these structures to meet the needs of an expanding empire. While appropriated lands were individually controlled by local leaders, they were now property of the Incas and subject to their rules, regulations and processes (Ankersen and Ruppert 2006). Therefore, if territorial appropriation was central to the dominance and centrality of the Incas over the Andes in the period before the Spanish conquest of 1532, then why is it that the Spanish invasion is frequently singled out as the starting point for Bolivia's five hundred year land problem? (Vargas Vega 2004). What exactly lay at the heart of this particular

encounter that produced a territorial conflict which continues to reverberate into the present day? The answer to this question lies in a further discussion of territorial philosophies where I uncover how differing approaches to landownership and use have been responsible for shaping entire worldviews.

La tierra y el territorio in Bolivia

When we discuss the nature of land and territoriality in the Bolivian context, it is vitally important to draw a clear distinction between two rather distinctive territorial concepts. On one hand, there is the territorial concept known as *territorio* which considers the natural world as a collective totality and, on the other, *la tierra* which adopts a more fragmented worldview of things where everything that constitutes the natural world exists separately in an unrelated and unconnected way (CEDIB 2008). While both territorial concepts are highly popular in the Bolivian Andes today – each territorial concept features exclusively in Bolivia's 2009 Plurinational Constitution – they each shape how individuals and groups engage in agricultural practice and, as such, have been popularised at various different stages throughout pre- and post-colonial Andean-Amazonian society.

According to the *Centro de Documentación e Información de Bolivia* (CEDIB; 2008) there are several key elements that distinguish the concepts *el territorio* and *la tierra*. In their definition of *el territorio*, CEDIB (2008: 10) writes, "[que] implica una ocupación concreta del espacio, implícitamente tomando en cuenta la transformación del espacio "natural" en un espacio "ocupado" y por ello transformado por las estructuras sociales y culturales". In the period before the colonial encounter, the *ayllu* was a highly popular form of *territorio* practiced by Aymara and Quechua communities in the Andes (Yampara Huarachi 2017; Alderman 2016; de la Cadena 2015; Canessa 2012; Abercrombie 1998). As a complex yet highly dynamic system of socio-political and economic organising, the *ayllu* is broadly considered to be a political, geographic and ethnic unit that encompasses Indigenous communities occupying different ecological zones (Yampara Huarachi 2017). Specifically, *ayllu* relationality

considers how both human and non-human entities in the lifeworld relate and interconnect as a result of special kinship ties that must be carefully mediated through regular ritual practice and embodied performance (Alderman 2016; de la Cadena 2015; Canessa 2012). This universal social relationship between human and "other-than-human" actors in the lifeworld is broadly referred to as *vivir bien* or *suma-qamaña* which loosely describes how everything exists and interrelates in a complex system of balance and harmony that must always be maintained as a matter of priority (Yampara Huarachi 2017; Huanacuni Mamani 2010). While various Indigenous groups across the Andes including Bolivia, Peru, and Ecuador develop their own precise meanings and practices of *vivir bien*, Huanacuni Mamani (2010: 37) offers the following by way of general overview: "Desde la cosmovisión aymara y quechua, toda forma de existencia tiene la categoría de igual, todos existimos en una relación complementaria, todo vive y todo es importante".

The idea goes that while farming and other agriculture-based development practices are permitted to take place within and between *ayllus*, community members must readily communicate and negotiate with the surrounding Andean spirits which they believe inhabit the mountains, rivers and lakes of any given *ayllu* ecology (Alderman 2016; de la Cadena; Canessa 2012). Alderman (2016) observes the importance of this dynamic relationship between human and non-human forms as he explores the various ways in which humans and mountain beings interact politically in the Andean community of *Kallawaya*. Through his observations, Alderman (2016) reveals how members of the *Kallawaya* regularly maintain a ritual relationship with the nearby mountain spirits or *muchulas*, feeding these local deities with alcohol, coca leaves and llama foetuses. By regularly engaging in these practices and behaviours, the

author highlights that not only do the *Kallawayas* incorporate these mountain spirits into local community structures, thus expanding a Westernised concept of the political to include all non-human entities, these relationships are also key to maintaining a sense of belonging within the *ayllu* and are an important way for members to regularly negotiate the ethnic self (Alderman 2016). According to Canessa (2012: 163), being a person or "jaqi" within the *ayllu* involves a "continuous process of becoming", where one must consistently engage with the community and the earth spirits to achieve a legitimate sense of the ethnic self. An individual's sense of ethnic identity is defined by their relationship to the community and the lifeworld and is something which must be regularly rehearsed either through labouring the land or by engaging in the types of ritual behaviours noted above (Canessa 2012).

While the *ayllu* is unique to the Andean region, it is clear that the processes and practices which define this socio-territorial space are not all that dissimilar to the way in which the Indigenous Maya conceptualise and operate within the *milpa*. In the same way that ethnicity is achieved through careful mediations between the self, community and wider lifeworld of the *ayllu*, the *milpero* achieves status in his community by successfully negotiating the *milpa*, producing a harvest of *maíz* and/or beans for consumption and distribution. While the *ayllu* defined the personal, political and economic lifestyles of pre-colonial Andean societies, where, for example, "los ayllus del norpotosinos eran el eje de un vasto circuto de comercio regional e interregional de granos y harinas" according to Platt (2016: 13), this concept of *territorio* was submerged beneath the weight of a new territorial logic which emphasised, above all else, the economic value of land and territory.

In contrast to *el territorio,* CEDIB (2008: 9) defines *la tierra* "[como un] sistema bioproductivo terrestre que comprende el suelo, la vegetación, otros componentes de la biota y los procesos ecológicos e hidrológicos que se desarrollan dentro del sistema, de la misma manera que los minerales metálicos y no metálicos que se encuentran en su interior o en su superficie además de los hidrocarburos". *La tierra* is key to understanding how the European conquest of the Andes permanently altered landownership in this region. While the Incas appropriated *ayllus* and other territories as their own, providing varying degrees of autonomy to communities under this imperial regime, the Spanish Crown introduced a more tightly controlled system of feudal land tenure which generally dismissed local practices in favour of a worldview that considered the Andean landscape as the sum total of separate, individual parts that could be divided up and exploited to achieve maximum capital gain. Territories that were once divided by *ayllus* now formed part of a much wider *encomendero* system where Spanish landlords distributed lands to Indigenous people in exchange for tribute payments (Ankersen and Ruppert 2006; Liss and Liss 1972). While the landlord was supposed to "protect and Christianize the Indigenous people as well as ensure that they were permitted to use their lands for their own subsistence", *encomenderos* became increasingly more authoritarian which led to even greater levels of abuse and exploitation (Ankersen and Ruppert 2006; 80). Nothing exemplifies the exploitative behaviour by the Spanish Empire in the Bolivian Andes more than the silver mining which took place at the *Cerro Rico* outside Potosí (Mesa Gisbert et al. 2016). For more than two centuries, the Spanish Crown mined this mountain using Indigenous and African slaves transforming this small urban settlement into one of the richest cities in the world (Mesa Gisbert et al. 2016). The consequences of such a

modern and individualist logic were profound, however, transforming nature into "exploitable matter, destructible without limit, a cache of profits, a source of capital gains" (Dussel 1985: 114).

This logic of modernity continued to permeate the post-independence era of Bolivian development, where *creoles* advanced a liberal system of private property rights which allowed for the concentration of land and other resources in the hands of the few (Ankersen and Ruppert 2006; Foland 1969). According to Foland (1969: 98) the basic tenets of this liberal logic include the "inviolability of private property [which] is based on the theory that the right is God-given, resting on natural law and preceding the state itself; therefore the state had no jurisdiction in the matter". In other words, there was no obligation on landowners to distribute land nor was there any need to ensure that land served a wider economic purpose. Instead, the act of landownership was about the expression of power and prestige, reflected by the way in which Indigenous people were forced to serve on *hacienda* estates in their capacity as agricultural labourers under conditions of debt servitude or *pongueaje* (Mesa Gisbert et al. 2016; Vargas Vega 2004; Foland 1969).

By the turn of the twentieth century, life in rural Bolivia was defined by severe territorial inequalities (Mesa Gisbert et al. 2016; Webber 2011). Bolivia claimed the "highest inequality of land concentration in all Latin America, with 82% of land in the possession of just 4% of landowners" (Webber 2011: 27). Furthermore, three of the country's largest mining executives, collectively referred to as the Tin Barons, controlled this lucrative industry, generating huge profits for themselves through private tin exports to European and North American markets while many Aymara and Quechua miners languished in near-deadly working conditions (Mesa Gisbert et al.

2016; Dunkerley 2007). With such vast resources and wealth virtually out of reach of both citizens and the state, Bolivia was forced to import foodstuffs from abroad to meet the needs of a population of just four million citizens (*La Nación* 28th June 1953).[9] Such profound levels of inequalities set the stage for Bolivia's most transformative period yet as the revolutionary *Movimiento Nacional Rrevolucionario* (hereafter MNR) attempted to address the territorial legacies left behind by the colonial past.

[9] Nothing exemplifies the power of the Bolivian oligarghy more than its influence over the Chaco War (1932-1935) (Mesa Gisbert et al. 2016; Dunkerley 2007). This war between Bolivia and neighbouring Paraguay sought to claim ownership over the disputed resource-rich Chaco region. Following a ceasefire, it emerged that more than 50,000 of the total 250,000 men Bolivia conscripted to fight had died in battle while a further 21,000 were caputred by opposing forces (Dunkerley 2007). The highly unsuccessful nature of this international war effort coupled with the fact that it unfolded in the wake of the devastating 1929 Wall Street Crash raised eyebrows among the Chaco generation as they returned from the trenches. It transpired that the Bolivian state had received £2.1 million in loans from Simón Patiño, a tin baron, to fund state-of-the-art military equipment purchased from Europe and the US (Dunkerley 2007). Funded by private interests, the Chaco War fuelled anger and frustration among the popular masses over social inequality and the failure of the nation-state to protect public interests. Backlash from the Chaco War, in turn, encouraged changes to Bolivian labour law and is identified by Dunkerley (2007) and others as a motivating factor behind the revolutionary momentum of 1952.

1953 Agrarian Reform Law

The overall aim of the Bolivian Revolution of 1952 was to "crear el concepto de un estado nacional poderoso" (Mesa Gisbert et al. 2016: 557). In particular, it aimed to reverse the effects of foreign, transnational capitalism in Bolivia's economy which had effectively weakened the state by diverting capital away from the national economy and into the hands of business elites, otherwise referred to as the oligarchy, while poverty levels continued to escalate among the majority Indigenous population (Montenegro 2016 [1943]; Mesa Gisbert et al. 2016). Carlos Montenegro, a revolutionary intellectual and member of the *Movimiento Nacional Revolucionario* (MNR) writes that "el capital extranjero constituye poco menos que el mayor enemigo de los pueblos, de su independencia y de su progresso" (Montenegro 2016 [1943]: 22). To achieve this reversal of fortune, the MNR, led by revolutionary intellectual and president of Bolivia Dr Víctor Paz Estenssoro, developed a model of state capitalism which aimed to insert the nation-state into Bolivian national life by institutionalising the role of government in the social, economic, cultural and political spheres (Bernard et al. 1973). Similar to the Mexican PRI, which broadly served as inspiration, this was achieved, in large part, through the formation of state-led unions as well as the implementation of mandated reforms (Mesa Gisbert et al. 2016; Antezana Ergueta 1982). The revolution was based around strengthening Bolivia's domestic economy by nationalising the country's two key industries – the mines and agriculture – and developing a strong workforce in service of these two new pillars of the national revolutionary state (Mesa Gisbert et al. 2016; Crabtree and Chaplin 2013).

The nationalisation of Bolivia's mines took place in October 1952 and resulted in the foundation of a new state enterprise known as *la Corporación Minera de Bolivia*

or COMIBOL (Mesa Gisbert et al. 2016; Salman et al. 2014; Bernard et al. 1973). While COMIBOL did encounter a series of problems from the moment it initiated operations, namely experiencing issues around aging equipment as well as a precipitous decline in the global price of tin, this new state enterprise did, in fact, provide more stable employment for the 28,900 employees who now received social benefits from the nation-state (Mesa Gisbert et al. 2016; Salman et al. 2014). However, the 1953 agrarian reform law, which followed one year after the 1952 Revolution, is still considered to be "la piedra de toque de toda la economía política nacional" (*La Nación* 26th July 1953).

The 1953 *Ley de la Reforma Agraria* was hailed by the new revolutionary elite (the MNR) as the "solución del problema de la tierra" (*Cooperativa* 25th January 1953). It was signed into law by president Paz Estenssoro on 2nd August in Cochabamba, a city located in the mountainous valley known as the *Cordillera Oriental* which, as I mentioned earlier, separates the Andean highlands to the south of Bolivia and the Amazonian lowlands to the north (Mesa Gisbert et al. 2016; Crabtree and Chaplin 2013). This geographical distinction is important to reiterate here because, as I will show, the 1953 agrarian reform was implemented differently across the various different geographical regions of Bolivia to correspond with the MNR's domestic economic policy. The main aim behind land reform was twofold. First, as described earlier, land reform set out to address the so-called land problem by returning land "[a los] verdaderos dueños", thus helping to liberate Indigenous people from the *latifundios* (*La Nación* 2nd August 1953: 4). Second, and perhaps more importantly for the MNR, land reform intended to modernise and mechanise Bolivia's agricultural

economy after a long history of underdevelopment and stagnant growth (Mesa Gisbert et al. 2016; Webber 2011; Assies. 2006).

In the Bolivian highlands or *altiplano,* including in the *Cordillera* valley, the MNR government concentrated on expropriating *latifundios* and redistributing this land to families and individuals in the form of small, individually-sized parcels of land that became known as *minifundios* (Mesa Gisbert et al. 2016; Salman et al. 2014; Assies 2006). In contrast to the Mexican *ejido*, with its emphasis on collective ownership, the *minifundio* was strictly individual and represented the MNR's efforts at introducing new, modern scientific based standards of agricultural production which aimed to achieve what Assies (2006) describes here as an "adequate organisation of agrarian economy in order to obtain maximum output" (Assies 2006: 579). The MNR pressed the importance of moving beyond all associations with Bolivia's unsuccessful agricultural past by inscribing new methods of territorial production which focused exclusively on the economic viability and productivity of land or *la tierra*. As Mesa Gisbert et al. (2016: 563) notes, the 1953 agrarian reform law did not intend to reflect "la realidad de las tierras de comunidad, ni las experiences productivas y el sistema de trabajo colectivo de tradición quechua-aimara". In other words, the everyday place of *los indígenas* and their traditional ways of *being* with the land, such as the *ayllu,* were denied any kind of formal or prominent role in the recovery of Bolivian society in this post-1952 revolutionary period. In other words, the MNR state sought to confine traditional ways of *knowing* and *being* with the land to the ancient past in favour of developing and encouraging a new kind of economic agency among Indigenous people who were now collectively refered to by government as modern, mobile, and state-

dependent *campesinos* (Postero 2017; Mesa Gisbert et al. 2016; Crabtree and Chaplin 2013; Assies 2006).

Meanwhile, in the Bolivian lowlands, also referred to as the *Oriente*, the 1953 land reform took on an entirely different character and approach to that discussed above. While in the highlands the focus was on dismantling *haciendas* in favour of small land parcels to be farmed by Bolivia's emerging *campesino* class, in the lowlands the MNR focused on building a strong agroindustrial sector that would employ *campesino* workers who were encouraged by the state, through the *Ministerio de Asuntos Campesinos*, to colonise this region, working to support the commercial production of cash crops including rubber and the Brazil nut (Mesa Gisbert et al. 2016; Crabtree and Chaplin 2013; Antezana Ergueta 1982). Similar to the *Confedración Nacional Campesina* in Mexico, the principle aim of the *Ministerio de Asuntos Campesinos* was to "organizar la economía rural en función de la economía nacional" (Antezana Ergueta 1982: 76). Moreover, this emphasis on class rather than ethnicity was also reflected in the founding of the *Central Obrera Boliviana* (COB), a large-sale umbrella union established in April 1952 which formalised a network of *sindicalismo* or local unionism to provide an official channel between the state and small agricultural and other workers' unions across Bolivia (Antezana Ergueta 1982).

To achieve colonisation of the lowlands, the MNR invested heavily in infrastructure to better connect what was a particularly rural and isolated region of Bolivia. According to Capobianco Ribera (1996), in the ten years following the Revolution of 1952, the state invested in the construction of several different roadway and railway projects, including an asphalt highway between Santa Cruz de la Sierra and Cochabamba, with a view to supporting agricultural production and trade within

the country. However, this commercial approach to territoriality was exclusively one-diminsional and failed to consider the many different lowland Indigenous communities who occupied unrecognised territories in departments like Cochabamba and Beni. Lowland communities including the Chimané or Yuracaré, were neither included in the legal framework of the 1953 agrarian reform law nor were they even considered as active participants in the overall process of revolutionary state building of the mid-twentieth century. Their marginalisation and isolation from historical processes would later fuel a series of protest marches in the decades to come. Meanwhile, as the predicted gains of the MNR revolutionary economy failed to fully materialise in the years following 1952, these weaknesses developed into political struggles between members of the revolutionary class which, in turn, resulted in many more decades of instability and uncertainty as Bolivia struggled with a cycle of dictatorships, military rule and coups well into the late-twentieth century (Mesa Gisbert et al. 2016).

Bolivia's Neoliberal-Turn: *Ley del Servicio Nacional de Reforma Agraria* (*Ley* INRA 1996)

The clearest way to approach discussion of neoliberalism and its impact on territorialisation in Bolivia is to view its implementation in two separate yet interrelated stages of development over a period of twenty years between 1985 and 2005. The first phase concerns the initial wave or first-generation structural adjustments which took effect during the late-1980s whereby a politics of privatisation had immediate and profound consequences on land and society in Bolivia. The second stage relates to the so-called "multicultural turn", which emerged during the 1990s, where neoliberal reforms were paired with a discourse rooted in democracy and civil empowerment in an attempt to better facilitate a policy of decentralisation.

As was seen in the introduction, Harvey (2005: 2) broadly defines neoliberalism as a theory of "political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterised by strong private property rights, free markets and free trade". Goodale and Postero (2013: 27) add that "the state should be restricted to those functions necessary [...] to guarantee the proper functioning of markets". In Bolivia, this early phase of neoliberal reform was heavily marked by sweeping economic and structural adjustments which aimed to redefine the role of the nation-state within Bolivian society and to reduce its public spending. This, in turn, unravelled the national-revolutionary model of governance which had been constructed over time since the 1952 Revolution, whereby the state performed its role as both large-scale employer and provider of goods and services to the Bolivian nation (Salman et al 2014).

This model of economic protectionism or import substitution industrialisation (ISI) led to the accumulation of high-levels of state debt and soaring inflation rates which were exacerbated by a dramatic fall in global commodity prices which negatively affected tin minerals. Quite simply, while state expenditure had either remained the same or increased, its main revenue stream had all but effectively collapsed. It was no surprise, then, that a joint loan offered by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) together with the World Bank (WB) was released to Bolivia on condition that the country unload or restructure loss-making industries. This, of course, included the largest state enterprise in the country, COMIBOL, which employed an estimated 23,000 miners at the time of collapse (Salman et al. 2014).

This closure of Bolivia's tin mining industry marked the formal end of the country's national revolutionary-cycle by releasing thousands of now unemployed ex-miners into an already saturated jobs market. Many of Bolivia's ex-miners either migrated to the cities (namely El Alto) or returned to the agriculture sector as *cocaleros* or coca-farmers. Dunkerley (2007: 40) describes this return to agriculture as a form of "deindustrialisation", whereby modern and partially industrialised wage labourers were abruptly thrown back into social circuits traditionally associated with other historical epochs. Dunkerley (2007: 40) argues that the collapse of Bolivia's tin mining industry, a direct consequence of international neoliberal reforms, resulted in a "reversal" of the "normal" processes of historical revolutionary development which sees so-called developing societies like Bolivia transition away from a reliance on agriculture towards a more industrialised society and economy. Under the watchful eye of international agencies and institutions based in the Global North, Bolivia continued to extend and deepen this cycle of neoliberal reform right across the

country, fully embracing a process of market liberalisation that combined the privatisation of land and natural resources with an even greater decentralised role for the nation-state in economic and social matters (Goodale and Postero 2004).

By 1990, the consequences of neoliberalism and deindustrialisation could be clearly felt along ethnoterritorial lines, as tensions between *cocaleros* and lowland Indigenous communities, namely the Chimané, Yuracaré and Mexeño communities, began to surface. As discussed earlier, during the agricultural reforms of 1953, the MNR state avoided the legal designation of territories to lowland ethnic groups in favour of promoting an agricultural economy that was supported, in large part, by agroindustrialists in the Bolivian *Oriente*. While logging and industrial agriculture intensified in the Bolivian lowlands, additional population growth among *cocaleros* in the Chapare valleys increased pressures for land in this particular region of Bolivia. At a fundamental level, this brought into conflict two very different forms of landownership.

While many *cocaleros* claim Aymara and Quechua ancestry, they traditionally engage in an aggressive form of agriculture which is intimately tied to market-based practices whereby they individually farm land for profit (Crabtree and Chaplin 2013). However, lowland communities felt threatened by this domestic form of agriculture taking place at such close proximity to their collective territories inside the TIPNIS (*Territorio Indígena y Parque Nacional Isiboro-Securé*). In 1989, lowland communities established the *Conferderación Indígena del Oriente Boliviano* (CIDOB), designed to represent the interests of communities in this region. One of the first public acts of defiance undertaken by this newly constituted lowland Indigenous umbrella organisation was *la Marcha por el territorio y la dignidad* which began on 15th August

1990 from the lowland township of Trinidad to the Bolivian capital La Paz. Around 300 people participated in this march which called on the state to officially recognise and legally designate Indigenous collective titles to communities in the Bolivian lowlands. According to CIDOB, "[lo] más importante se refiere a la necesidad de que [las indígenas] tengan un territorio propio con títulos a nivel communitario para que sientan seguros que puedan ejercer sus derechos sobre esta región" (*Presencia,* 30th March 1990).

The outcome of this and the several other marches for dignity that took place between Trinidad and La Paz over subsequent years resulted in the formal designation of the TIPNIS reserve as a *Tierra Communitaria de Origen* (TCO). Following subsequent protest marches from the lowlands to La Paz by CIDOB, the government drafted and implemented *ley INRA* and the *Servicio Nacional de Reforma Agraria* in 1996 (*Ley INRA* 1996). While this gave the appearance that progress was being made in relation to Indigenous ethnoterritorial rights, there are a number of considerations to take into account which reveal the harsh limitations of this new phase of land reform in Bolivia.

One of these limitations concerns the precise way in which this new multicultural law defines territoriality and geographic space. According to Article one of *ley INRA*, "la presente Ley tiene por objecto establecer la estructura orgánica y atribuciones del Servico Nacional de Reforma Agraria y el régimen de distribución de tierras; garantizar el derecho propietario sobre la tierra" (Article 1 *ley INRA* 1996: 3). As the quote suggests, the neoliberal Bolivian state continued to define land and territoriality in terms of its "función económico-social" (Article 2.II *ley INRA* 1996: 3), negating all cultural and historical value which Indigenous communities often ascribe

to land. Under the conditions of this new reform agenda, the state permitted Indigenous groups the right to access renewable resources on their newly designated lands, leaving the Bolivian state to claim exclusive ownership over the non-renewable resources below the surface of the earth (*ley INRA* 1996).

In her critique of this multicultural reform agenda, Rivera Cusicanqui (2015) argues that Indigenous nations were confined to territorial reserves by the government, politically constrained by their minority status as static and, therefore, unchanging cultural objects of the state or, to use Hale's (2005) phrase, *el indio permitido*. Bolivian intellectual and former vice-president of Bolivia, Álvaro García Linera, (2012: 11) shares in this same criticism of *ley INRA*, arguing that it left many Indigenous communities vulnerable to the "mechanisms of seigneurial and hereditary domination by the businessmen-hacendados who use the [community] leaders as intermediaries for the depredation and economic dependency of their communities". In other words, he criticises the fact that the business landowning class "integrated the management of the Indigenous TCOs into the supplying of raw materials for their industrial activities", thus denying them exclusive right to the land and co-opting these ethnoterritorial spaces for commercial action (García Linera 2012: 11).

It is clear, then, that there is unanimous agreement across both ethnopolitical case studies that this era of multicultural reform in Latin America denied Indigenous people their agency, restricting their access to land in different ways. While Mexico halted distribution of the *ejido* in preparation for a new trade deal with the US and Canada, Bolivia experienced a much more complex fallout as a result of widespread neoliberal reforms. Not only were many Bolivian Aymara and Quechua miners forced to return to the agricultural sector following the collapse of the tin industry in the

1980s, lowland Indigenous communities from the country's Amazonian north petitioned the Bolivian state to develop a land reform programme that was specifically tailored to their collective ethnoterritorial needs. However, their rights to *el territorio* were heavily restricted within designated TCOs, where the government prioritised the commercial interests of agroindustrialists over local Indigenous communities (García Linera 2012).

By the turn of the millennium, frustrations with the neoliberal project had reached new heights in Bolivia with the issue of natural resource sovereignty, under a model of privatisation, becoming a growing cause of concern for many Bolivians who questioned the logic of exporting minerals and resources without experiencing the financial or material benefits for themselves. While the Zapatista social justice movement led their ethnopolitical revolutionary campaign from the remote corners of southern Mexico, Bolivia responded with a series of separate, individual protests and mobilisations across this national political space, between the years 2000-2005, that brought about a cycle of revolutionary change which transformed the entire country (Webber 2011; Dunkerley 2007). It paved the way for Evo Morales and the MAS-IPSP to lead a new ethnopolitical model of nation-state governance which promised to break with neoliberal coloniality (Morales 2006b).

Section Two

Evo Morales, Neoextractivism and the 2011 TIPNIS controversy

This section examines the 2011 TIPNIS (*Territorio Indígena y Parque Nacional Isiboro-Securé*) controversy and how this territorial dispute embodies the social and economic complexities which have long overshadowed Evo Morales's fourteen-year tenure as Bolivian president (2006-2019). Following a successful and highly popular anti-neoliberal campaign, Morales and the MAS-IPSP pledged to resolve the legacies of the colonial past by building an alternative decolonial futurescape which prioritised the needs of Bolivia's large Indigenous population. In an inaugural address delivered to the Bolivian nation one month following his election, where he and the MAS-IPSP won a 54% majority share of the national vote, Morales vowed to "recuperar el territorio" and return Bolivian patrimony into the hands of *el pueblo boliviano* (Morales 2006b; Webber 2011). A significant part of this transition included the widely anticipated nationalisation of the country's lucrative oil and gas reserves. While a strong sense of anticipation surrounded Morales's first presidential term (2006-2010), it was unclear whether he would be able to successfully mediate between the various demands of this office, including achieving equilibrium between national economic growth, on one hand, and preserving the integrity of Indigenous collective territorial rights, on the other. An analysis of the 2011 TIPNIS controversy quickly reveals how Morales's struggled to negotiate between this dichotomy.

In this section, I outline how this new national economic framework which centred on a policy of neoextractivism (re)produced scenes of conflict and chaos, where lowland Indigenous communities were forced to confront the hegemonic

tendencies of Morales's Bolivia which unilaterally pursued the development of highway infrastructure directly through the heart of the TIPNIS, a sensitive ecological zone and Indigenous territory (Delgado 2017; Postero 2017; Laing 2015; McNeish 2013; Wickstrom 2013; Hirsch and McNeish 2011; Calla 2011). While Morales and his *cocalero* supporters touted the economic and social merits of this roadway development, the contested nature of this highway has simultaneously transformed the TINPIS into what Gómez-Barris (2017: 2) terms the "extractive zone", a concept I also deployed in chapter one. Like the Zapatistas, who continue to defend Chiapas from further exploitative development, the concept of the extractive zone similarly applies to the TIPNIS where "local geographies" have been "traversed by colonialism and extractive capitalism [revealing] the ongoing force of the colonial encounter" (Gómez-Barris 2017: 2). By analysing locally-sourced print media, this chapter does not just simply reinforce the widely held opinion that the TIPNIS is a geographically contested site where territorial conflict continues to play out. Instead, this chapter advances this view by arguing that the TIPNIS can also be understood as a discursive battleground, where discourse is weaponised transforming once inclusive concepts such as indigeneity and decolonisation into deeply polarising and unstable categories. Before I can address the discursive characteristics of the 2011 TIPNIS controversy, it is first necessary to define neoextractivism as it relates to Morales's Bolivia and where popularity for this kind of policy approach first emerged.

The Origins of Neoextractivism in Morales's Bolivia:
Popular Indigenous Uprisings in the Twenty-first Century

To understand how a policy of natural resource sovereignty and neoextractivism became the cornerstone of Morales's Bolivia, I am required to take a brief detour of the preceding five years which are long remembered as a difficult and uncertain time in the country's national development (Postero 2017; Arce Catacora 2015; Gutiérrez Aguilar 2014; Paz Arauco 2011; Webber 2011). While the country's Indigenous and *campesino* majority staged a series of separate, individual protests across different cities and localities throughout Bolivia, between the years 2000-2005, they all collectively expressed common concern over one key issue: the integrity of national resource sovereignty under the neoliberal Bolivian state. By focusing on three defining protest movements in the city of Cochabamba, the Chapare and the Andean city of El Alto, this section will reveal how a policy of neoextractivism became a leading prioirty for Morales's 2006 administration, transforming the philosophical underpinnings of the entire Bolivian economy (Arce Catacora 2015; MAS-IPSP 2014; Webber 2011).

Acknowledged as the starting point of this five year period of instability and revolutionary social change, *la Guerra del Agua* intensified across the city of Cochabamba in the early part of the year 2000 (Arce Catacora 2015; Gutiérrez Aguilar 2014; Penarando U. et al. 2012; Webber 2011; Dunkerley 2007). While popular protests and mobilisations against the policies and practices of the neoliberal state had already taken place elsewhere, led by other disenfranchised sectors of Bolivian society, including the several *Marchas por el Territorio y la Dignidad* by lowland Indigenous communities between Trinidad and La Paz in the 1990s, the 2000 *Guerra del Agua* is broadly considered to be "la primera victoria popular en Bolivia contra las políticas

neoliberales" (Arce Catacora 2015: 115). Following a decision by president Hugo Banzar (1971-1979, 1997-2001) and his government to legally approve the privatisation of Cochabamba's fresh water supply and sewage system, the city collectively mobilised in defence of their right to water and to retain their power and agency as Bolivian citizens to decide "sobre la explotación y aprovechamiento de sus recursos naturales" (Arce Catacora 2015: 115; Gutiérrez Aguilar 2014; Penarando U. et al. 2012).

On 12th November 1999, *la Coordinadora de la Defensa del Agua y la Vida* was established by *regantes*, or farmers with irrigation rights, to provide a social architecture that would help facilitate and coordinate the diverse array of *Cochabambinos* (citizens of Cochabamba) who turned out to protest the state's "scandalous" water policy (Gutiérrez Aguilar 2014: 3; Arce Catacora 2015). While president Banzar and his government proceeded with *ley 2029,* transferring the right of ownership over Cochabamba's water and sewage systems from the public into the hands of US multinational Bechtel via their local subsidiary *Aguas del Tunari*, protests led by the newly established *La Coordinadora* quickly escalated which included the participation of *campesinos*, local Indigenous people, students and the urban middle-class (Gutiérrez Aguilar 2014; Arce Catacora 2015).[10]

At different stages between January and April 2000, protesters mobilised around several disruptive *bloqueos* or roadblocks (Gutiérrez Aguilar 2014). These protests gradually escalated to include the occupation of local water company offices

[10] Bechtel is a US multinational engineering firm that was originally founded in 1898. In over one-hundred years this transnational has led the development of more than 25,000 infrastructural projects worldwide, across 160 countries. The company specialises in a variety of different engineering markets from nuclear right through to transport infrastructure and continues to conduct operations in South America, most recently in Chile (see https://www.bechtel.com/about-us/ [accessed: 15th November 2019]).

in an angry display of public frustration that made it increasingly more difficult for the likes of Bechtel to commit to the commercial distribution of water under *ley 2029* (Gutiérrez Aguilar 2014; Penarando U. et al. 2012). While *La Coordinadora* quickly disbanded following the successful ousting of Bechtel from the Cochabamba area, the question of resource sovereignty under the neoliberal state was far from resolved. Instead, as neoliberal policies intensified, concern over natural resource sovereignty lingered on in the public consciousness, igniting fresh protests in other key parts of the country (Gutiérrez Aguilar 2014).

As protests in Cochabamba drew to a close, this unsettled period of revolutionary change and social unrest continued in El Alto and the Chapare, two important Indigenous and *campesino* strongholds located elsewhere in Bolivia. While this continuation in social unrest marked a growing dissatisfaction with the policies and practices of the neoliberal state on a nationwide scale, it did not yet signal the beginning of a new national front against the state. Instead, as Gutiérrez Aguilar (2014) reminds us, while Indigenous and *campesino* protesters continued to challenge the state on the issue of natural resource sovereignty in Bolivia, they did so by rooting their resistances in local experiences, knowledges, identities and geographies.

In El Alto, Aymara activists staged a series of *bloqueos* across this Andean city between the years 2000-2002 calling on the Banzar government to amend Bolivian water policy under *ley 2029*. Similar to Cochabamba, many *alteños* expressed a great deal of anger over the transfer of public water rights into the private hands of another European conglomerate Suez via its local subsidiary *Aguas del Illimani* (Arce Catacora 2015; Gutiérrez Aguilar 2014). However, unlike recent events in Cochabamba, these demonstrations in El Alto quickly escalated to include a host of other demands from

territorial autonomy to the preservation of the sacred coca leaf which was, by now, the target of a new national campaign of eradication led by the central government (Postero 2017; Gutiérrez Aguilar 2014; Webber 2011).

Orchestrated over a two year period by Aymara activist Felipe Quispe, who served as then-executive president of the *Confederacion Sindical Única de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia* (CSUTC), this uprising in El Alto was heavily infused with a radical form of Aymara nationalism which foregrounds the central figure of the Indigenous subject in political thought and action (Canessa 2009; Reinaga 2001 [1970]). Building on this revolutionary consciousness originally proposed by Fausto Reinaga in the 1960s, whose *Indianismo* vehemently rejected all occidental ways of *knowing* and *being* in favour of promoting ethnic subjectivities, this contemporary expression of Aymara nationhood in El Alto created a shared space of collective thought and action, where disenfranchised subjects of this predominantly poor Indigenous cityscape could mobilise around a single identity form to challenge and contest the neoliberal state on issues relating to resource sovereignty and privatisation (Gutiérrez Aguilar 2014; Reinaga 2001 [1970]. Not only did embracing this form of nationhood facilitate a radical form of politics which empowered the local citizenry to confront the state on Indigenous rights, it also meant that by reclaiming these rights to natural resources, *alteños* were reclaiming a sense of self that had been eroded and erased through the long and violent history of marginalisation and neoliberal coloniality which brought them to this point of revolutionary confrontation in the first place (Gutiérrez Aguilar 2014).

While these protests continued to play out across El Alto for a further two years, mobilising around four key *bloqueos* in April 2000, September 2000, June 2001

and February 2001, additional social unrest gathered pace in the Bolivian Chapare (Catacora 2015; Gutiérrez Aguilar 2014). Here, the country's large population of *cocaleros* or coca farmers were forced to confront an aggressive military campaign which focused explicitly on the eradication of coca in the region (Gutiérrez Aguilar 2014). While this policy was orchestrated and led at ground-level by the Banzar government, it received a range of financial and material supports from the US to help steer this elaborate campaign of eradication in the Bolivian valleys (Dunkerley 2007).

This military exercise by Bolivian and US governments adopted a very one-dimensional view of the role coca plays both nationally and internationally. Motivated by their international war on drugs, US authorities expressed a great deal of concern over the central role they believed Bolivia's *cocalero* population played in fuelling the international narcotics trade (Gutiérrez Aguilar 2014; Webber 2011; Harten 2011; Dunkerley 2007). The coca leaf is widely acknowledged to be a central ingredient in the manufacture of cocaine. A highly popular drug, demand for cocaine product spiralled in the US during the 1980s and 1990s, fuelling a dangerous, deadly and destabilising cartel economy across North, Central and southern parts of Latin America (Martínez 2016; Chepesiuk 2013; Grillo 2012; Vulliamy 2010). While Bolivia did not directly participate in the manufacture and distribution of cocaine product to the lucrative US market - its distance on the peripheral edge of the US economy meant that it was not in a strategic position for cartels to operate effectively - the *cocaleros* were victims of an eradication campaign which aimed to address the international drugs problem *at the source* (Gutiérrez Aguilar 2014; Webber 2011; Harten 2011; Dunkerley 2007).

What this eradication campaign failed to consider was that Bolivia's *cocaleros* also supplied a lucrative domestic coca market in which the sacred coca leaf serves a number of important cultural, historical, social and practical functions (Crabtree and Chaplin 2013). Regularly consumed by Bolivians, coca is believed to have naturally occurring properties which support the regulation of certain innate functions in the human body. Whether chewed raw, infused with water or blended with other snacks such as chocolate, coca helps to stave off hunger, thirst, fatigue and the negative side effects that often accompany the struggle to adjust to the higher climes of the Bolivian *altiplano*. Besides the practical, everyday use of coca in the lifestyles of Bolivia's Aymara and Quechua communities, coca is also a sacred symbol used as part of ritual performances in and among *ayllus,* where Indigenous communities aim to feed and, therefore, communicate with the other-than lifeworld of the Andean earth spirits I discussed earlier (Gómez-Barris 2017; Alderman 2016; de la Cadena 2015; Canessa 2012).[11]

It is clear, then, that internationally-backed attempts at the total and complete eradication of coca farming in the Bolivian Chapare did not just represent an assault on the lives and livelihoods of *cocaleros* who were forced into this agricultural practice following the collapse of Bolivia's mining industry in the 1980s, but signalled a vehement attack on certain ways of *knowing* and *being* in the world which were

[11] The *ayllu* remains a politically and socially relevant model of community organisation in contemporary Bolivia. It forms the basis for Felipe Quispe's alternative political vision for Bolivia where the Aymara actvist proposes a national return to the decentralised forms of communitarianism and self-government which previously defined the politics of the *ayllu* in the period before the colonial encounter (Ecotopía 2007). As Quispe describes himself, "tenemos el modelo del ayllu [...] donde se vive en condiciones igualitarias, sin opresión del hombre al hombre" (Ecotopía 2007: 73). Quispe was a staunch critic of the Morales administration and strongly disapproved of the president's centralised form of government. Furthermore, the *ayllu* continues to play a significant role in urban spaces like the city of El Alto. Entire neighbourhoods are organised based on the principles of the *ayllu* where it is associated with a very strong sense of community solidarity (Lazar 2008).

completely unknowable to the aggressive and one-dimensional worldview of the neocolonial world order. With this, *cocalero* unions, led by key activists including Evo Morales, staged *bloqueos* and the *Marcha por la Coca, la Vida y la Dignidad* in defence of coca and the economic and social lifestyles that this natural resource represented (Arce Catacora 2015; Gutiérrez Aguilar 2014). These mobilisations drew widespread attention to the militarisation of the Chapare, as four thousand *cocaleros* marched the 600 kilometers from Cochabamba to La Paz (Arce Catacora 2015). Within this increasingly contested national space, the coca leaf became a leading symbol of anti-imperialist struggle and resistance (Gutiérrez Aguilar 2014; Webber 2011; Harten 2011).

Thus far, it is clear to see that the question of resource sovereignty formed the centrepiece of Indigenous and *campesino* resistance to the neoliberal state between the years 2000-2005. Not only did the privatisation of water or eradication of coca resources threaten and destabilise the lives and livelihoods of Indigenous and *campesino* peoples across the country, but it also represented an attack on local epistemologies which are intimately tied to ways some individuals and communities engage the use of certain resources in culturally and historically specific ways.

By 2003, the anger and discontent that had largely been expressed at the local and regional levels now coalesced around the *Guerra del Gas* in El Alto (Postero 2017; Arce Catacora 2015; Gutiérrez Aguilar 2014; Paz Arauco 2011; Webber 2011). A national demonstration which unfolded across the city between September and October 2003, these marches and *bloqueos* destabilised and undermined the long-established neoliberal order in Bolivia. What initially began as a series of local protests against the imposition of additional federal taxes in El Alto, this uprising by Indigenous and *campesino* protesters quickly escalated to include large-scale demonstrations against

the government over its latest decision to permit the private sale of Bolivian gas abroad to Chile (Postero 2017; Arce Catacora 2015; Gutiérrez Aguilar 2014; Paz Arauco 2011; Webber 2011; Dunkerley 2007). While national elections had taken place the previous year, which Morales and the MAS-IPSP successfully contested, the ruling MNR still managed to maintain a firm electoral lead, winning a significant share that allowed party leaders form the next government under president Gonzalo "Goni" Sánchez de Lozada (Mesa Gisbert et al. 2016). Despite Morales and the MAS-IPSP winning a 20% share of the national vote, this did little to alter Bolivia's current economic trajectory which continued down the path towards further austerity and privatisation (Pearce et al. 2011; Webber 2011; Harten 2011). The 2002 election cycle only reaffirmed the country's wholesale commitment to neoliberal orothdoxy, whereby newly appointed president of Bolivia Sánchez de Lozada prepared to siphon off Bolivian gas fields to European and North American transnationals under a new and enticing corporate tax rate of just five percent (Arce Catacora 2015; Gutiérrez Aguilar 2014; Paz Arauco 2011).

Similar to earlier crises over public water services in Cochabamba and El Alto, a low corporate tax rate coupled with the foreign distribution of Bolivian gas to Chile for sale to markets in Mexico and the US, erased any right the domestic citizen in Bolivia had to the collective use of natural resources. With that, tensions escalated further and *bloqueos* were positioned at several strategic sites across El Alto. In particular, a number of *bloqueos* were located along the only highway to provide access to La Paz, starving the city – which contains many government departments, financial institutions and the presidential palace – of key supplies like fuel. In response, Sánchez de Lozada passed a national emergency plan which permitted the Bolivian

military to guarantee the safe passage of oil trucks through El Alto and into La Paz (Gutiérrez Aguilar 2014). However, as Gutiérrez Aguilar (2014) adds, this emergency plan was effectively a "license to kill" by a president who showed little regard for protesters' demands. On 12th October 2003, tensions between protesters and the military came to head when security personnel opened fire on a number Aymara protesters culminating in one of the worst atrocities to afflict Bolivia in contemporary living memory.[12] During the attack, 63 people were killed and a further 247 were injured including men, women and children (Gutiérrez Aguilar 2014). This violent encounter between the neoliberal state and Bolivian society became a catalyst for change, leading first to the swift resignation of Sánchez de Lozada before the eventual collapse of the neoliberal regime altogether less than two years later. Amid the destruction and decay left behind by the neoliberal project in Bolivia, Morales and the MAS-IPSP secured an impressive victory in December 2005, propelling the country into a new era of ethnopolitical governance.

[12] In a similar vein to the Acteal Massacre in Chiapas, Mexico, the fight for justice over this state-led attack in El Alto has been a hard fought campaign. Immediately following his resignation from office, Sánchez de Lozada fled to the US leaving it almost impossible for Bolivian courts to try him for his crimes. According to Trial International, after years of protracted talks, Sánchez de Lozada was eventually tried in a US courtroom on charges of extrajudicial killings and was found guilty on 3rd April 2018. While the defendant has lodged an appeal against the conviction, an award totalling the amount of $10 million has been made available to the victims (see https://trialinternational.org/latest-post/gonzalo-sanchez-de-lozada/ [accessed 18th December 2019]).

The Policies and Practices of the 2006 Morales State

In contrast to chapter one, where the Zapatista movement struggled to have their rights to territorial autonomy enshrined in Mexican constitutional law despite several years of protracted negotiations with the neoliberal state, Bolivia's MAS-IPSP proposed a series of popular policies and reforms which attempted to ambitiously shape and rework Bolivian state matter around Indigenous subjectivities, including a radical re-territorialisation of the country that would ultimately transform the very basis of society and the economy (Smith 2019; Maria Ranta 2016; García Linera 2014; MAS-IPSP 2014; Goodale and Postero 2013; Paz Arauco 2011; Webber 2011; Tapia 2010). Central to this radical process of state renewal and transformation were two key policy frameworks which addressed the long-standing issue of Bolivian resource sovereignty from both a constitutional (Pearce et al. 2011) and economic perspective (Postero 2017; Kohl 2010). Responding to the demands of recent protests, Morales and the MAS-IPSP not only proposed the formation of a constituent assembly and the redrafting of a new Bolivian constitution but he and the MAS-IPSP insisted on the nationalisation of the country's oil and gas reserves, reconfiguring the very basis of Bolivia's economy (Morales 2006b). By discussing the significance of these constitutional and economic changes, I outline here how Morales and the MAS-IPSP attempted to address the legacies of Bolivia's (neo)colonial territorial past.

Unlike the neoliberal Mexican state which refused to reform or even amend part of the constitution to accommodate the Zapatistas' San Andrés Accords, Morales and the MAS-IPSP presided over the redrafting of an entirely new constitutional framework for Bolivia, one which not only recognises the plurinational composition of Bolivian nationhood, but which affords equal rights to the individual and collective

ownership of land and ethnoterritoriality in the country (Eisenstadt et al. 2013; Pearce et al. 2011). While Bolivia's 2009 constitution was drafted by a democratically elected constituent assembly which was majority-controlled by MAS-IPSP delegates, it is not my intention here to elaborate on the details of this particular process nor do I propose to describe at any length the hostilities and tensions which characterised the political climate in which the final constitutional draft document was passed and signed into law on 14th December 2007; I will reserve discussion of these points for chapter four when I reflect further on how the constituent assembly supports Morales's Andean utopian vision. Meanwhile, it is important to recognise in this chapter that the *2009 Constitución Política del Estado Plurinacional* set a new legal precedent in the country, obligating the Bolivian state to not just preserve and protect the integrity of Indigenous collective territorial rights but to acknowledge the economic role played by *campesinos* who require land for commercial agricultural purposes, as I have established elsewhere in this chapter.

Divided into five parts, Bolivia's 2009 constitution contains 411 articles which concerns everything from the basic structure of the plurinational state itself, including national economic and judicial systems, as well as new provisions which accommodate the right to intercultural education, Indigenous customary law and the practice of traditional medicines. Therefore, an obvious yet defining characteristic of this constitutional framework is the role Indigenous people played in shaping this legal instrument. In particular, part two of the constitution, entitled *Estructura y organización territorial del estado,* directly concerns provisions for the re-territorialisation of Bolivia and how the plurinational state proposed to protect and

defend the integrity of Indigenous collective territorial rights without alienating the economic rights of other agriculturalists.

For example, Article 56 of the constitution acknowledges both the right to private and collective property stipulating that all land must serve a social function: "Toda persona tiene derecho a la propiedad privada individual o colectiva, siempre que ésta cumpla una función social" (Article 56; *2009 Constitución Política del Estado Plurinacional*). Not only does this acknowledge the right of *campesinos*, *cocaleros*, agri-industrialists and others to engage *la tierra* in economically and socially responsible ways, but it also considers how the definition of social function has itself evolved under this new constitutional framework since earlier encounters with the concept in twentieth century Bolivia and Mexico.

An embedded feature of land reform programmes almost everywhere throughout Latin America in the twentieth century, the social function doctrine often stipulated that territorial properties, redistributed by the nation-state, should serve a practical, economic purpose in the restoration and modernisation of post-colonial agricultural societies (Foster and Bonilla 2011; Mirow 2010; Ankersen and Ruppert 2006; Foland 1969). Territorial value and productivity was often measured in terms of capital output, transforming the historic relationship Indigenous people once had with the land, as entire societies transitioned further away from traditional ways of *knowing* and *being* in and with the land towards strong national commercial agricultural sectors. Besides guaranteeing the right to individual and commercial properties, the 2009 Plurinational Constitution also develops further protections for *la territorialidad*, acknowledging the whole range of cultural, historical and social rights that accompany

the collective ownership and use of ethnoterritoriality in Bolivia (Article 30 *2009 Constitución Política del Estado Plurinacional*).

Article 30 of the Plurinational Constitution is dedicated to the rights of Indigenous people, defining *las naciones y pueblos indígenas originarios campesinos* as those "que comparta identidad cultural, idioma, tradición histórica, instituciones, territorialidad y cosmovisión, cuya existencia es anterior a la invasión colonial Española" (Article 30.1 *2009 Constitución Política del Estado Plurinacional*). While the Plurinational Constitution guarantees Indigenous people their rights to Indigenous identities and Bolivian citizenship (Article 30.3), to intercultural education (Article 30.12), traditional medicines (Article 30.9), and their political and judicial institutions that operate in accordance with their cosmovisions (Article 30.14), it also stipulates their right "a la titulación colectiva de tierras y territorios" (Article 30.6 *2009 Constitución Política del Estado Plurinacional*). In addition to this full range of ethnopolitical and ethnoterritorial rights, the Plurinational Constitution is also careful to acknowledge Indigenous agency in relation to their *right to decide* regarding the often controversial interrelation between land, natural resources and development. For example, Article 30.15 guarantees Indigenous communities "el derecho a la consulta previa obigatoria, realizada por el Estado, de buena fe y concertada, respecto a la explotación de los recursos naturales no renovables en el territorio que habitan" Article 30.15 *2009 Constitución Política del Estado Plurinacional*).

There are a few considerations tied up in this statement which deserve our attention here for a moment. It is certainly quite clear from the constitution that the Morales state vowed to respect the agency of Indigenous communities in relation to their right to decide on development projects proposed for their land and territories.

Based on this, we can safely say that Morales did not conflate indigeneity with the pre-modern nor did he consider ethnicity to be something that is static and unchanging. Instead, the constitution acknowledges ethopolitical agency and certainly considers Indigenous people to be active *thinking* and *speaking* subjects who may or may not wish to engage in planned development of their lands and territories. Defining ethnicity in this way speaks to the repeated shifts and changes which have taken place to national-political definitions and understandings of this complex identity form and how it relates to, and operates within, notions of place and place-making (Rivera Cusicanqui 2015).

Morales clearly broke with the mould of the political past, particularly in relation to earlier multicultural reforms which, as Rivera Cusicanqui (2015: 83) reminds us, reworked definitions of the "Indigenous emphasising its minority status and static, unchanging nature, expressed in a series of external forms: dress, dance, ritual, always associated with the rural and anchored in a space of production". While Morales moved beyond those particular constraints with the neoliberal past, Article 30.15 does also invite some cause for concern, especially in relation to the role the nation-state plays in the provision of consultations within Indigenous communities.

Article 30.15 explicitly states that the Bolivian government is responsible for delivering consultations to communities in a move which appears to elevate the role of the state in local community decision-making. In other words, Indigenous agency is contingent on the presence of the nation-state hosting consultations inside communities and their voices, either for or against processes of development, will only be legitimately heard through state imposed mechanisms and procedures. While the Zapatistas may have struggled to secure legal recognition in Mexican constitutional

frameworks, their place on the margins ensured that they were largely free of state institutional interference at least in terms of their autonomy from 2005 onwards (see Mora 2017; Harvey 2016). Meanwhile, it is clear that the Plurinational Constitution of Bolivia continues to maintain a close proximity to Indigenous communities, recognising ethnicity as some kind of extension of the state that may or may not be manipulated by the state in the interest of state-led development.

On the issue of development, to accompany the redrafting of the Plurinational Constitution, Morales also proposed the nationalisation of Bolivia's oil and gas reserves on the 1st May 2006 in accordance with the demands laid down by protesters in the city of El Alto in 2003. The nationalisation of Bolivian patrimony formed the centrepiece of the MAS-IPSP government's newly constituted *Modelo Económico Social Comunitario Productivo* (MAS-IPSP 2014; Webber 2011). Proposed by the MAS-IPSP as an economic model of transition, the goal was to establish what has been termed in MAS-IPSP literature as *el Socialismo Comunitario para el Vivir Bien* (MAS-IPSP 2014). In their programme for government, the MAS-IPSP defines this model as "una síntesis de las aspiraciones políticas de la clase obrera hacia la construcción del socialismo, y las naciones y pueblos indígenas orginarios campesinos hacia una potenciamiento de las forma comunitarias de producción y reproducción de la vida" (MAS-IPSP 2014: 21). In other words, this proposed political and economic model works towards the ultimate, long-distant goal of displacing the centrality of the state and traditional modes of capital production in favour of a society "que se basa en la producción y redistribución de riqueza sin la enajenación del trabajo, preservando los bienes colectivos y asegurando el patrimonio común de las funciones ambientales para

el pueblo boliviano, a traves de la no mercantilización de la naturaleza" (MAS-IPSP 2015: 22).

This future plan, rooted in notions of communitarianism and social harmony between humanity and the natural world, began with an immediate focus on the nationalisation of oil and gas reserves during Morales's first-term. Yet, unlike the process of nationalisation which occurred in the aftermath of the 1952 Bolivian Revolution, where the mining industry was brought under the direct control of the revolutionary state, the Morales government simply increased taxes on the profits made by private hydrocarbon companies and their commercial operations in Bolivia (Postero 2017; Mesa Gisbert et al. 2016; Webber 2011; Kohl 2010). According to Webber (2011), this new corporate tax regime generated significant revenue streams for the MAS-IPSP government, with initial tax rates set at over eighty percent for the first three months of his tenure. Under this new centralised model of state-led economic development, the Morales government planned for the redistribution of state revenues back into the hands of the Bolivian people in the form of social welfare programmes (MAS-IPSP 2014; Paz Arauco 2011; Webber 2011; Harten 2011). This cycle of financial exchange, whereby state revenues generated from natural resources are then returned to the Bolivian *pueblo* through social programmes, develops a different, more nuanced, and inclusive approach to national economics (MAS-IPSP 2014). Under this framework, Morales and the MAS-IPSP depart from neoliberal orthodoxy by sharing state revenues with society, investing in Indigenous citizens to support low-income children to attend school through the *Juancito Pinto* programme, for example. This generates a new and different kind of social relationship between state, society and *el territorio*, one which bears a remarkable similarity to the inclusiveness and

harmonious-*ness* of *ayllu* relationality, plurinationality and *vivir bien* discussed earlier (Yampara Huarchi 2017; Alderman 2016; de la Cadena 2015; MAS-IPSP 2014; Canessa 2012; Huanacuni Mamani 2010; Mignolo 2010; Tapia 2010).

Yet, the following analysis of the TIPNIS controversy (*Territorio Indígena y Parque Nacional Isiboro-Securé)* calls into question the inclusive and democratic nature of the plurinational state, where categories such as indigeneity became key epistemological battlegrounds between the Morales state and lowland Indigenous communities, specifically those resident inside the TIPNIS reserve itself. By focusing my analysis on locally-sourced print media, first-hand interviews with activists in Bolivia as well as local and international scholarship, this discussion not only reconfirms the widely held view that the TIPNIS is a contested site of production, what Gómez-Barris (2017: 2) terms the "extractive zone", but that discourse was weaponised, effectively creating conditions of exclusion and marginalisation which links with notions put forward by various scholars that Morales not only practiced a

form of "reconstituted neoliberalism" (Webber 2011: 178) but he presided over "neoliberalism with an Indian face" (Farthing and Kohl 2014: 148; Cusicanqui 2015; 2012). [13]

[13] Thus far, I have largely defined neoliberalism in relation to its economic principles and impact on regions like Mexico and Bolivia and I am acknowledging here that this rather focused view generates certain limitations regarding how we might come to fully understand this global approach to state management and governance. While it has been crucial for me to hone in on neoliberal economics here in order to assess the implications of these policies on land and territoriality in Mexico and Bolivia, Brown (2015; 17) encourages us to consider neoliberalism as a "form of reason that configures all aspects of existence in economic terms" and as such quietly unravels the basic elements of democracy. In addition to viewing neoliberalism as an ensemble of economic policies and packages designed to open up countries to the benefits of free trade, Brown (2015) invites us to consider how neoliberal rationality economises all noneconomic spheres of social life to the point where everything and everyone including people, politics, democracy and its institutions are remade in the image of *homo oeconomicus*. According to this rational, all domains of social life are markets, the figure of the human is an ensemble of entrepenurial and investment capital who competes rather than exchanges with her/his fellow man, and this logic gradually erodes away at public life where politics is reduced to concerns over "power, hegemonic values, resources and future trajectories" (Brown 2015: 39). And the criticism of Morales by Rivera Cusicanqui and others is rooted in what they perceive to be his failure as Bolivia's first indigenous president to radically depart from the norms and attributes of a neoliberal model of nation-state governance. This chapter is not an attempt to resolve the debate over whether Morales facilitated or interrupted neoliberalism in Bolivia. Instead, the strength of this research lies in its ability to transcend binaries and reveal the complex influences of Morales's presidency on the way different Indigenous groups in rural and urban Bolivia struggle for land. For further discussion on the theory of neoliberalism I point to Feher (2009) and Brown (2015) who lead the conversation in this area.

The 2011 TIPNIS Controversy as Discursive Battleground in Morales's Bolivia

Considering the recent political upheaval in Bolivia, I have been unable to ascertain the current status of the TIPNIS controversy amid this national crisis. Still an incomplete project by the time Morales resigned his position, it remains unclear whether the highway will be completed. While Morales approved construction in 2017, after years of stand-offs and protests, current intrim president Áñez has actually been an opponent of the development since she first entered office (2009) (Rodriguez Martíenez 14th November 2019). I will address the TIPNIS controversy in the present tense as there has been nothing to indicate yet that the project is cancelled. Any references to Morales will of course remain in the past tense. [14]

The TIPNIS (*Territorio Indígena y Parque Nacional Isiboro-Securé*) reserve is located in the central lowlands of Bolivia and lies in the direct path of the third and final phase of what is a large-scale interdepartmental roadway development which has been in construction since 2008 and which aims to connect together the departments of Cochabamba and Beni by directly linking the town of *Villa Tunari* in the south with *San Ignacio de Moxos* in the north. The road is expected to cover a total distance of

[14] It is important to acknowledge from the outset that Evo Morales's voice features more prominently in this analysis of the TIPNIS compared to the indigenous communities who live inside the reserve. I propose several brief explanations for this imbalance here. First this speaks to my difficulty as a researcher in gaining access to the TIPNIS reserve while conducting fieldwork in Bolivia for this thesis. This prompted me to consider an alternative approach to this analysis which included focusing on local journalism, something which had not been done before. Not only did this approach contribute something original to the debate on the TIPNIS, revealing the discursive nature of the conflict, it unintentionally highlighted the under represention of indigenous voice in Bolivian media (newspapers), especially those communities and groups of activists who deliberately rallied against the Morales-led state. The question of indigenous representation in Bolivian media lies beyond the scope of this thesis but the concerns raised here certainly do provide scope for further research both specifically in relation to the TIPNIS conflict and the media more generally during the presidency of Evo Morales. It is important to add here too that Indigenous people are active agents in the pursuit and creation of their own media outlets (radio, TV, film) and Zamorano Villarreal (2017) offers an assessment of that, acknowledging the role Indigenous-led media production has played in reimagining the national political landscape.

approximately six-hundred kilometres (MAS-IPIS 2014; *La Prensa* 12th August 2011). In the early stages of this highway development, before signs of conflict emerged, the Brazilian transnational OAS was awarded the contract by Bolivia to carry out construction of the highway at a total cost of $415 million, $332 million of which would be put forward by the Brazilian state (*El Deber* 1st August 2011).[15] President Morales and the MAS-IPSP government justified both the cost of construction and the roadway itself by stressing the need to better integrate Bolivia. A clear intention behind upgrading and enhancing Bolivia's road network, according to the MAS-IPSP is to move beyond "una Bolivia desarticulada" by interconnecting cities and economic zones. This, in turn, will help the country move towards *vivir bien* (MAS-IPSP 2014: 60).

For president Evo Morales and the MAS-IPSP government, this controversial roadway project was a way in which to properly and formally "integrate the country's Amazonian and Andean regions" together, something which had been "a dream since Bolivian independence" (Achtenberg 13th August 2016). As Morales remarked, "esa vía llevará desarrollo a todo la región y cumplirá uno de los anhelos de pueblo desde 1826 para que exista una carretera que una directamente a los departmentos de Beni y de Cochabamba" (*El Deber* 1st August 2011). Morales argued that the TIPNIS highway "será concluida en año 2014 para ser puesta al servicio del desarrollo e integración nacional" (*El Deber* 1st August 2011). Not only was the highway designed to benefit Bolivia, but

[15] The Brazilian firm OAS is a transnational corporation originally formed in 1976 with business interests in over 20 countries worldwide. Primarily an engineering and construction firm, the company's operations have since been broadly divided into two main subsidiaries: OAS Engenharia and OAS Investimentos. While the former is more concerned with heavy-duty construction projects in the area of hydroelectric dams, coastal ports and, airports, the latter is the investment wing of the firm, fronting the money for roadway and other large-scale investment projects throughout Latin America and worldwide (http://www.oas.com/oas-com-1/oas-s-a/). The firm currently has business interests in Ecuador and Bolivia, where it is presently tasked with constructing a roadway between Potosí and Uyuni.

Brazil's significant financial contribution in the earlier stages of the project revealed that country's ambition to lead the way forward in strengthening its own national economic outlook through a better integrated Andean region (*Earth Rights International* 30th July 2014). The *Iniciativa para la Infraestructura Regional Suramericana* (hereafter IIRSA), originally signed in Brasilia in the year 2000, is an example of this (CCI 2011). While the TIPNIS highway is not directly connected to this cross-regional scheme which aims to "avanzar en la modernización de la infraestructura regional y en la adopción de acciones específicas para promover su integración y desarrollo económico y social", Brazil has relied upon these multilateral agreements to aid in "un processo de crecimiento de tipo capitalista, llegando a constituirse en una de las diez economías más importantes del mundo" (CCI 2011: 35-36). In other words, the TIPNIS highway would play a small, perhaps even indirect, role in helping Brazil forge better distribution channels throughout the Andean region. However, while Morales was clear that "la gran mayoría de los bolivianos [...] apoyan la obra" (*El Deber* 1st August 2011), there was a growing ground-swell of anger in the Bolivian lowlands that would change the course of this development project.

On 15th August 2011, 34 Indigenous communities from the lowlands of Bolivia instigated a protest march to the city of La Paz in direct response to the proposed development of the TIPNIS highway. The aim of *la Marcha por el territorio y la dignidad* was to pressure the government into overturning its decision to allow construction of the highway take place. The march was led by the lowland umbrella organisation, *Confederación de los Pueblos Indígenas del Oriente Boliviano,* which, as I mentioned earlier, was founded in 1989 to defend lowland communities against the colonisation of their collectively-held lands by highland *campesinos* and *cocaleros*

(coca leaf farmers), many of whom now settle in an area of the TIPNIS known as *Polígono 7* to the north of the park. However, the presence of these commercial activities alongside the intention of those inside the TIPNIS to preserve and protect collective ethnoterritorial rights raised tensions between these separate groups. As I mentioned earlier, *campesinos* and *cocaleros* share a similar view of the land or *tierra* which is a broadly individualist, mercantile approach to agricultural activity while large swathes of the TIPNIS reserve are held under collective titles by predominantly Chimáne, Yuracaré and Moxeños ethnic groups. Unsurprisingly, the former supported Morales and the TIPNIS roadway because, in their view, a highway would help them better market their produce domestically (Crabtree and Chaplin 2013).

During the three month march, protesters argued against the proposed roadway development, declaring the construction to be a violation of their rights and a threat to the biodiversity of the reserve (Delgado 2017; Rivera Cusicanqui 2015; McNeish 2013; Wickstrom 2013; Calla 2011; Hirsch and McNeish 2011). The latter was a discourse that resonated. In newspaper articles which followed the progress of the march, the resistance was often framed as an Indigenous display of defence against the potentiality of state-imposed development and a clear effort on the part of lowland communities to protect the parkland's unique biodiversity. One article in *La Razón* stated that,

> la carretera impactará de forma negativaen el medio ambiente y en el hábitat del lugar [...] en un período de 18 años la intervención en el lugar provocará una deforestación del 64% del territorio.

(*La Razón* 1st August 2011)

In a similar vein, another article referred to the TIPNIS park "[como] un importante pulmón del país, que resguarda una de las mayors riquezas, la biodiversidad" (*La Razón* 29th September 2010). As Callejas (2011) notes, protests that took place in support of the TIPNIS communities organised in La Paz in the days following the launch of the protest march also shared in this rhetorical defence of the reserve, stressing the need to halt construction of the road in order to protect the ecological diversity of the park. As Laing (2015) observers, leaders and intellectuals of the resistance deployed the environmental question as an important and necessary discursive tactic to make recognisable the protest movement to an audience of international environmental sympathisers. This was emphasised to me in an interview I conducted with a Madidi park guide in Rurrenabaque. In our interview, Rodrigo Mariacz stressed that an environmental defence of the TIPNIS is important considering the negative consequences which can emerge from such development projects. (*personal interview* 5th December 2017). But, he added that divisions also lie within and between Indigenous communities, some of whom identify with development and the overall *proceso de cambio* being led by Morales and others who do not (*personal interview* 5th December 2017).

This links with remarks by McNeish (2013) who argues that the environmental attributes of the TIPNIS controversy must not be overplayed or even fetishized. He argues that essentialist claims should be avoided as well as a tendency to oversimplify Indigenous identity to such a point where they become so intrinsically 'close' to nature that they, therefore, perform this one-dimensional role as 'grand defenders' of the natural world (Laing 2015; McNeish 2013). In one newspaper article, lowland Indigenous communities were simply described as "especialistas y entidades

ambientalistas [que] han pedido que no se construya el tramo II atravesando el parque" (*Página Siete* 6th August 2011). Indigenous identities are profoundly complex forms and are much more nuanced than our assumptions often allow us to see. By tracing political developments along the constantly shifting parameters of territorial politics, we reveal how the boundaries of difference between land, indigeneity and development often become blurred, even overlapping and intersecting to (re)create complex social scenarios. It is clear that protection of Indigenous landscape is an important concern for ethnic groups themselves, however, their environmental concerns are often grounded in the everyday threats these mega-developments pose to their daily sense of being with *el territorio*. It is important to remain aware that this *being with the land* includes engaging in forms of development necessary to promote and sustain their livelihoods. As I discussed earlier, this right is embedded in the Plurinational constitution which lowland groups helped to draft. To reiterate the point, Article 30 encourages Indigenous groups to benefit from the exploitation of resources on their territory,

> se respectará y garantizará el derecho a la consulta previa obligatoria, realizada por el Estado, de buena fe y concertada, respecto a la explotación de los recursos naturales no renovables en el territorio que habitan.

(Article 30.15 *2009 Constitución Política del Estado Plurinacional*)

From this we can see that the real concern here for lowland Indigenous protesters was the fact that the government abandoned its constitutional duty to

engage in a consultation process with lowland communities not only when Morales signed the original construction deal with Brazil but also when the president introduced *ley 180* (Rivera Cusicanqui 2015; Laing 2015; McNeish 2013). Responding, as the government saw it, to the demands of the marchers, Morales defended *ley 180* which defined the TIPNIS parkland *como zona intangible*. The law not only stopped construction of the roadway from taking place, but it also ensured that all other forms of developmental activity important to the livelihoods of TIPNIS communities were also banned from taking place inside the reserve, including *cacao* farming (McNeish 2013).

In their view, CIDOB saw this as an achievement – a limited one no less - because the government did concede to its demands and halted construction of the third and final phase of the roadway development (*personal interview* 5th December 2017). However, it must be said that, according to McNeish (2013), this law allowed the government to secure revenge against the protesters, as he puts it. This executive decree legally preserved the park in what can only be described as an unrealistic state of preservation or untouchability which Rivera Cusicanqui argues was nothing more than a "strategic weapon in the hands of the state" (Rivera Cusicanqui 2015: 104; McNeish 2013). It was an extreme response to what was a plethora of lowland Indigenous demands, above all else, respect for their rights as independent, autonomous agents legally occupying this *territorio*. This new law effectively characterised the TIPNIS park as an ecological 'museum' piece and the communities within it as those seeking to remain 'close' to nature – environmental warriors if you will. This law appeared to reflect a multicultural politics rather than one based on the principles of plurinationality. In many ways, this speaks to what Nancy Postero (2017)

suggests was the racialisation of the conflict where ethnic identity and decolonisation became discursive battlegrounds. Evo Morales (re)framed lowland Indigenous communities as obstacles to 'decolonisation' by engaging in discursive tactics which undermined their position as autonomous agents in plurnational society. Morales was quoted saying the following during the conflict:

> Si yo tuviera tiempo, iría a enamorar a las compañeras yuracarés y convencerlas de que no se opongan [la carretera]; así que, jóvenes, tienen instrucciones del Presidente de conquistar a las compañeras yuracarés trinitarias para que no se opongan a la construcción del camino.

(*La Razón* 1st August 2011)

These remarks which were made along racial and sexist lines rearticulated the logic of assimilation which had long been an inherent and damaging feature of Bolivia's former colonial past. This discursive behaviour revealed a replaying of former colonial narratives, where lowland Indigenous communities were forced to confront the hegemonic tendencies of the Morales-led state. Through these remarks it is clear to see that Morales sought to deny lowland communities' agency by single-handedly categorising them, women in particular, as simple Indigenous people who could easily be appropriated by the romanticism of modernisation and progressive development. While the government did initiate a consultation process – *ley 222* – its delayed implementation brought into question the government's commitment to both listening to and respecting the views of lowland communities as autonomous agents.

Reflecting on the dispute, Fernando Vargas, president of the TIPNIS Subcentral committee, an organisation which defends the interests of communities inside the reserve, sums up this sentiment while participating at a protest in La Paz: "Evo Morales ha creado indígenas de primera y de segunda" (*El Deber* 23rd April 2012).

Thus far, this chapter has addressed the concept of place and Indigenous place-making in Bolivia and, in particular, where Morales situated himself within this evolving debate. From his proposal to break with the legacies of the (neo)colonial past by combining individual and collective territorial rights under a new constitutional framework, the TIPNIS controversy reveals the ongoing contested nature of land and ethnoterritoriality in plurinational Bolivia and how this complex site of ethnopolitical thought and action is not just geographically contested but is also a discursive battleground where categories like race and gender were weaponised to recreate the conditions of marginalisation and exclusion.

However, the final section of this chapter draws attention to the struggle for ethnoterritoriality in urban Bolivia and how certain Indigenous groups (namely Aymara people) "make place" in El Alto. While these two ethnopolitical case studies (Zapatistas and TIPNIS) generally concern the struggle for ethnoterritoriality in contemporary rural Latin America, it is important to consider acts of place-making in the less conventional places and spaces of ethnopolitical thought and action or at least what were once considered non-traditional sites of Indigenous production. In what follows, I argue that *la nueva arquitectura andina* is a form of ethnoterritoriality in urban Bolivia that combines fresh and original Indigenous modernities, what Runnels (2009: 140) refers to as an "Indianizing of the urban landscape", with the struggle for the ethnic self. This results in the presence of new territorial and spatial imaginaries

which endow the undifferenciated nature of urban space with meaning transforming space into place (Tuan 1977).

Section Three

Redefining Place and Ethnoterritoriality in Urban Bolivia: *La nueva arquitectura andina* in El Alto

In the years that Morales served as Bolivian president (2006-2019) many Bolivians took great pride in being Indigenous, embracing their identities through language, fashion or by simply occupying the public places and spaces once formally the preserve of the *creole* and *mestizo* elite.[16] However, with new levels of wealth being generated as a result of the former president's economic reforms, some can afford to take this pride further, creatively expressing this sense of the ethnic self through ostentatious architectural creations. Against the backdrop of what has been a long and deeply unsettling history of colonisation, assimilation, marginalisation and migration, where Indigenous people have consistently struggled to maintain visibility throughout all stages of history since the colonial encounter, the advent of *la nueva arquitectura andina* throughout the city of El Alto reveals how some urban Indigenous groups are now choosing to perform their identity and negotiate the relationship between place, space and the ethnic self. By prioritising elements of the aesthetic in this analysis here, I will describe how this lavish and flamboyant architectural style reveals the alternative ways in which indigeneity is being explored in urban Bolivia. However, given that ethnic identity remains a contested and deeply personal category, it is prudent to ask to what extent these buildings represent the sweeping social changes that have taken place in 'ethnic' Bolivia under former president Morales since 2006 or

[16] *Creole* generally refers to those of European descendent (Spanish) who were born in the colonies and is a term which dates back to the time of the colonial occupation of the Americas by white Europeans, mainly the Spanish. Meanwhile, *mestizo* describes those of mixed European-Indigenous heritage and has been popularied by its usage in scholarship and by governments during the twentieth century (Liss and Liss 1972; Abercrombie 1998; Canessa 2012).

is it that these buildings simply (re)confirm the widely held belief that Aymara now dominates the new social order of things in the country?

La nueva arquitectura andina or neo-Andean architecture is an example of contemporary place-making in a city which owes much of its development to the rather unsettling history of rural-to-urban migration which accelerated during revolutionary changes in the mid-twentieth century and which has steadily continued since then. This pattern of migration has generated what Lazar (2008) has coined an "in-betweenness" both in terms of how Indigenous people experience and perform identity in the urban landscape of El Alto. As I have outlined before, indigeneity is a place-related concept, where a sense of the ethnic self has been intimately tied to the types of relationships forged and mediated between the human and other-than-human lifeworld (de la Cadena 2015). As I discussed earlier, the *ayllu,* which is an example of collective socio-territorial and political organising commonly found along the Bolivian Andes, has been a central component in the way Aymara and Quechua groups have traditionally achieved a sense of selfhood or *jaqi* (Canessa 2012) Through methods of embodied practice and ritual performance, which include communal dance and the offering up of alcohol, coca leaves and llama foetuses to *Pachamama* or Mother Earth, a sense of the self and the collective achieve a state of coexistence or harmony we might otherwise describe here as *vivir bien* (Alderman 2016; Canessa 2012). However, the Bolivian Revolution of 1952 interrupted such traditional acts of place-making by attempting to submerge ethnic difference beneath a newly reconstituted social logic based around national inclusion, class relations and liberal notions of citizenship. This newly reconstituted social relationship between the revolutionary state and society was personified, in part, by the creation of the new

national *campesino* identity which was mediated and institutionalised by the state-controlled union *Central Obrera Boliviana* (COB) I mentioned earlier. However, by tracing the historical development of the migrant city of El Alto, we can in fact observe the hybrid ways in which the liberal and the ethnic self appear to coexist and overlap, revealing the non-static and transformative ways in which indigeneity responds and adapts to urban landscapes and lifestyles (Lazar 2008).

El Alto developed as a consequence of numerous state-led changes which took place in Bolivia beginning in the 1950s and which have actively reworked and reshaped the social fabric of the country in the more than five decades since then. During the late-twentieth century, the city of El Alto experienced accelerated growth as rural and industrial migrants, the majority of whom claim Aymara ancestry, joined this emerging 'ethnic' city in response to a decline in productivity levels across some of Bolivia's more traditional agricultural and mining sectors. While the 1953 land reform successfully disrupted the *hacendado* economy by dismantling landed estates and redistributing this land to communities along the *altiplano,* issues of overcrowding on land parcels quickly emerged, forcing families to send younger members of the community to the city in search of work and to supplement agricultural incomes (Clarke 1968). Meanwhile, by 1985, state-led neoliberal reforms had forced the closure of Bolivian mines right across the country with the loss of thousands of jobs in the sector and a spike in national unemployment rates. For those ex-miners who did not return to agriculture in the Bolivian valleys and lowlands, they were left with little choice but to migrate to the city. However, being the destination of choice for many of Bolivia's migrants, the city of La Paz struggled to cope with this rise in population numbers due entirely to the fact that it is geographically situated deep within the

mountainous confines of the *Cordillera* valley. With that, migrants were therefore forced to inhabit the then-rapidly emerging city of El Alto which began to sprawl out along the geographically unrestricted *altiplano* plateau which overlooks colonial La Paz below (Arbona and Kohl 2004).

Statistics highlight the true extent of this growth in El Alto's population compared with its neighbouring city La Paz during the same period. While, between the years 1950-2010, the population of La Paz increased by a total of 128% from 321,063 to 730,000, in that same fifty-year period, the population of El Alto spiralled upwards from a meagre 11,000 residents in 1950 to nearly one-million by the year 2010, a total growth rate of around 8646% (Crabtree and Chaplin 2013; Arbona and Kohl 2004). While this pattern of migration swiftly transformed El Alto into one of the fastest growing cities in Bolivia and Latin America, this level of inward migration also had a profound impact on how the city developed and organised. In line with the idea that hybrid liberal-ethnic subjectivities characterise *being alteño*, Lazar (2008) confirms that citizenship in the city combines both liberal and ethnic elements to reproduce what she describes as an "inclusive Indigenous and popular identity, which can be the source of considerable political strength" (259). Lazar (2008) of course refers to the influence of the more traditional forms of political and social organising in Bolivia which have now penetrated the social fabric of the city and informed the day-to-day development of society and economy. These broadly fall under syndicalism, trade unionism and the traditional Andean-Bolivian *ayllu,* for example. The politics and practices of syndicalism and trade unionism, for example, arose out of the spread of the Marxist labour movement in the twentieth century and featured prominently as methods of organising in Bolivia's agricultural and mining industries respectively pre-

and post-1952 Revolution. In addition to that, *ayllu* governance, which pre-dates the colonial encounter as a system of community organising, experienced a resurgence in the 1970s as a method of social practice in response to decades of submergence beneath Eurocentricism. Lazar (2008) was writing based on the fact that, as a result of this considerable inward flow of migration from Bolivia's agricultural and industrial sectors, syndicalism, trade unionism and even the *ayllu* have all played a role in shaping the development of El Alto's society and economy.

The residents of El Alto have had to effectively build this city themselves from the ground up, developing and participating in neighbourhood and school councils to provide local infrastructure and services. While participation in these local organisations is 'voluntary', there is a strong sense of obligation to attend monthly neighbourhood assemblies for fear of fines and being shamed by the community (Lazar 2008; Zibichi 2005). In his article, Zibichi (2005) argues that these neighbourhood councils operate in a similar fashion to the more traditional forms of rural Andean community organising such as the *ayllu*. He considers these similarities in terms of the way in which these neighbourhood councils are structured, organised and how they relate to territoriality. In the same way the *ayllu* combines both individual and collective elements in relation to the ownership and use of land and resources, families must also mediate between the public and the private of neighbourhood councils (Zibichi 2005). In other words, "even though each family owns their own place of residence, there are communal spaces such as plazas, soccer fields, and schools. In order to buy or sell a lot or house, the family must appear before the neighbourhood council to determine whether there are pending debts or some other factor that would prevent the transaction." (Zibichi 2005).

The rather mundane monochromatic cityscape of El Alto, defined by low-rise, redbrick buildings made from inexpensive construction materials, represents the long history of poverty in the city. While Bolivia's economy has only recently formally evolved into one which is now largely based on a policy of neoextractivism which aims to redistribute wealth through social programmes and welfare benefits for many of Bolivia's poor (it remains to be seen how long this will last), El Alto's economy has remained rooted in a state of informality. This state of informality means that *alteños* mainly work as entrepreneurs trading cheaply imported products from abroad or producing furniture, textiles and other handicrafts themselves for distribution and sale at local markets. The concept of economic informality was originally coined by Hart (1973) and has since been applied to identify the exclusion of often undereducated or under-skilled participants from formal economic circuits. As Wilson (2010) writes, "those who populated this economy [...] were considered marginal and excluded from the modern, capitalist, formal economy whether because of human capital deficits or because of the underemployment of the national economy" (341). However this broad understanding of the informal economy as an exclusionary site or outside space does little to fully encapsulate the true meaning of El Alto's economic potentiality and the role that this site of production has played in the overall economic evolution of Bolivia since the 1950s.

As Lazar (2012) points out, we must avoid painting a deliberate picture of Bolivian economics in terms of formal and informal economic worlds that never meet or interact. Instead, she argues it might be more fruitful to consider the formal and informal economic sectors as mutually dependent and coexisting social realities that interrelate and even overlap. This she adds would best be measured in terms of

"degrees of (in)formality" rather than to consider them as economic categories which can be placed along a continuum suggesting that more developed economies have undergone a transition from informal to formal or that even the participants within so-called informal economies seek to formalize this space of work (Lazar 2012: 16). This is reflected in the fact that El Alto's so-called informal economy has played a key role in the historical evolution of Bolivia's more formal economic sector acting, as I describe here, as a space of last resort for many former miners and *campesino* workers who either lost jobs through the sluggish development of the revolutionary state in the 1950s or as a consequence of the dismantling of state institutions and agencies during neoliberal reforms in the 1980s and 1990s. Bringing with them, as I mentioned earlier, their tradition of unionism to the city, *alteños* have constructed an economic network governed by unions such as the Federation of Street Vendors of the city of El Alto which grants permits and negotiates with state authorities on behalf of representatives. This, I add, speaks in part to a degree of formalisation within this generally informal sector. And, while this state of informality is perceived negatively given that many *alteños* live day-to-day without receiving state benefits including pension contributions or holiday pay, there are also clear positives too with this approach to informal economic organisation: they have limited contact with the federal state and manage to avoid paying taxes to the government. This therefore generates a degree of personal and commercial freedom as *alteños*, through their participation in union governance and activities, control and mediate this economic environment themselves. Over time, the *Feria 16 de Julio* has become the beating heart of this informal economic network in El Alto. This market takes place twice a week in the city where,

> Todo tipo de productos desde alimentos, pasando por ferreterías, venta de vehículos, materials de construcción, carpintería, mecánica, electricidad, hasta ganado, ropa, lanas, productos agrícolas, objectos a medio uso, y otros objectos, concentra alrededor de 60 mil personas entre compradores y vendedores.
>
> (Paz Arauco 2011: 231)

According to estimates by the *Gobierno Municipal de El Alto*,

> en la feria se mueven dos millones de dólares, cuenta con más de 10.000 puestos de venta que muevan una impresionante candidad de productos locales y nacionales importados y de contrabando, lo que refleja la diversidad y complejidad de la propia realidad alteña.
>
> (Paz Arauco 2011: 231)

This wealth has generated new opportunity for some *alteños* to rethink the use of space and place in the city and to renegotiate that relationship between the liberal and the ethnic self. This is why a Neo-Andean style of architecture, originally created by Aymara engineer and architect Freddy Mamani Silvestre, has appealed to over 300 wealthy *alteños* who have opted to commission this elaborate design (López Cruzado 20th June 2015). These buildings can cost anywhere between 690,000bs (*est. €90,000*) up to 3,400,000bs (*est. €500,000*) to construct, firmly rooting their origins in economic processes and capitalist relations. Not only does this architectural style recreate an

association with the ethnic past through the use of vibrant colours and Andean iconography, but these large buildings are also viable businesses operating as *salones de eventos* or 'party-halls' for hire. For the remainder of this section I am going to spend time reflecting on how these buildings combine commercial and ethnic elements together through an analysis of their aesthetic and social contribution. This will also allow us to observe the ways in which the parameters of what constitutes indigeneity is constantly shifting and being rearticulated in relation to place, revealing the evolving and non-static nature of ethnic subjectivities in urban, contemporary Bolivia.

Below is an example of the exterior and interior aesthetic of this bold architectural design. With a strong emphasis on colour and elaborate stylistic elements both inside and outside the property, Neo-Andean architecture is a deliberate attempt to negotiate place in urban Bolivia:



(Image one captures the imposing presence of Neo-Andean architecture at street-level with the bright red colour of the façade contrasting with the monochromatic streetscape in the background)



(Image two captures the main floor space of the party hall or salón de eventos. This image was captured the day after a large fiesta had taken place. The clean up operation was in full swing)



(*Image three provides an overview of the interior party hall or salón de eventos from the baloncy which overlooks the main hall below)*

In designing this architectural style, Mamani was responding to the limitations of Western-European architectural epistemology, taught throughout universities in Bolivia, which have, in his view, failed to incorporate traditional Indigenous design. In response, Neo-Andean architecture combines a number of aesthetic elements which directly associate these buildings with the wider Andean universe. As images one to three above show, the one striking aspect of these buildings is the vibrant choice of colours used to adorn the façades. As the images reveal, these elaborate colours define both the exterior and interior aesthetics of the buildings. As Cárdenas (2010) notes, these colours feature on Aymara textiles, the most noteworthy example here being the *aguayo,* a textile traditionally worn by Aymara women in Andean Bolivia. It is a rectangular cloth tied around the upper torso, just below the neckline, which is used to transport infants (Bertelli and Lill 13th February 2016; Cárdenas 2010). But we also see these vibrant Andean colours feature on the *wiphala*, a multicoloured flag which has been made famous through its close association with Indigenous protest and social mobilisation in the Andes, particularly since the 1970s. While the *wiphala* is now a constitutionally recognised emblem of the plurinational state, displayed alongside the tricolour on all municipal and state buildings throughout Bolivia, it continues to draw close historical association with the pan-Andean Empire and Inca civilisation. The colours and geometric shapes used in the design of the *wiphala* correspond with celestial and cosmological relationality in the Andean universe. According to Hernández A. (online publication), each of the seven colours displayed on the flag – yellow, white, orange, red, blue, violet and green – carry important meaning in relation to Andean cosmology, representing time-space, duality, earth, culture and society, and the cosmos to name but a few. The way in which these colours are

geometrically and diagonally aligned across the flag in 49 quadrants also speaks to the importance of unity, reciprocity and complementarity between these different elements of Andean cosmology.

This interrelation between Neo-Andean architecture and Andean cosmology continues through to the iconography displayed both inside and outside of these buildings. As I mentioned before, Mamani has incorporated into the design of this contemporary Andean architecture specific shapes and symbols which resemble the semiotics found at the pre-Columbian site of Tiwanaku. However, the origins of Tiwanaku itself remain largely unknown. Holton (n.d) argues that, as a direct consequence of this site's ambiguous relationship to the past, the predominantly white governments of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries appropriated the archaeological site of Tiwanaku by way of identifying the ancient site as an important source of cultural imagination and nationalism. This form of cultural appropriation contributed towards the designation of Tiwanaku as a cultural artefact which displaced alternative, Indigenous-based claims to the site, thus undermining their place in the history of Bolivia and the Andean world (Holton n.d). However, Holton (n.d) further writes that, even though the origins of Tiwanaku are not necessarily rooted in a specific history of the Aymara peoples, the appropriation of Tiwanaku by Morales and the MAS-IPSP has allowed the Aymara community in Bolivia to regain a sense of their past by restoring Tiwanaku to its 'rightful' owners (Holton n.d: 9). In each of the three presidential elections which Evo Morales contested and won, he has thrice opted to be inaugurated at Tiwanaku, cementing the importance of this particular site in the historical and political imaginary of the Aymara people (I will reflect further on the significance of Tiwanaku as place in chapter four). Furthermore,

Mamani's incorporation of specific geometric shapes and designs reveals the significance of this ancient place to the everyday performance of Aymara identity in Bolivia today, channelled through this architectural style. The circular and square shapes found on the façade as well as inside the buildings represent the duality between the masculine and the feminine in Tiwanaku culture (Truman 2016). There are also strong angular and geometric shapes which aim to resemble the *chakana* or Andean cross. According to Truman (2016), the Andean cross has special significance in Andean cosmovision and was used across the pan-Andean region as a celestial calendar to predict seasonal change and maximise agricultural output.

It is also pertinent to explore the significance of the communal space located inside Neo-Andean buildings with a view to identifying the ways in which these *salones de eventos* have become an-other space which *alteños* use to perform identity. As 'party halls', these communal spaces host *fiestas* (Andreoli 13 July 2015). According to Lazar (2008), the *fiesta* has and continues to be an important way in which *alteños* negotiate their citizenship and develop and maintain a sense of unity between the self and the collective. As Lazar (2008) writes, the *fiesta* is "central to how people experience their membership in local and national communities in Bolivia" (118). To this end, both dance and the consumption of alcohol are important, basic elements in the performative repertoire of the *fiesta*. In other words, when these elements combine - the collective execution of rhythmic movement lubricated by the consumption of alcohol – a sense of communal belonging, not unlike that experienced in the *ayllu,* is reproduced, strengthening and enhancing group cohesion between the ethnic self and the collective, while also ensuring the mediation of social relations between the human and supernatural worlds. Alcohol is often poured on the earthen

ground as an offering to *Pachamama* and, according to Cárdenas (2010), this often takes place before the foundations of these contemporary Andean buildings are even constructed. This once again bears similarities to the way in which *ayllu* relationality is executed where offerings are frequently made to *Pachamama*. Canessa (2012) reminds us that Aymara migrants brought with them the tradition of the *fiesta* upon their arrival into the city as an important way in which to maintain a sense of their ethnic self despite the fact that they had physically removed themselves far outside the limits of the *ayllu,* beyond the spirits, streams, fields, and mountains without which "one's sense of person must inevitably be different" (164). But, Indigenous identity is experienced and performed differently in the urban landscape of El Alto and this is something that Neo-Andean architecture clearly captures. In the same way *alteños* have developed a broadly hybrid sense of self which moves between liberal notions of citizenship and ethnicity, Neo-Andean architecture is a product of that hybridity.

As I have shown this architectural style is associated with a sense of Andeanness by the way in which it mimics key features of that past. By drawing on the vibrant Andean colours found in Bolivian textiles as well as the symbols and shapes sourced from the ancient site of Tiwanaku, architect Freddy Mamani Silvestre is creating an overall sense of belonging between architecture, its inhabitants and the wider Andean-Aymara cultural community. Furthermore, the hosting of *fiestas* inside these buildings also speaks to the ways in which Neo-Andean architecture plays host to the performance and mediation of relationships between the self and the collective. And, because these spaces must be hired out, there is a very strong sense of the commercialisation of ethnicity as Neo-Andean architecture becomes an-other place/space in which communal relations are expressed. In the end while Neo-Andean

architecture reflects recent upward trends in wealth creation and economic mobility in Bolivia, the distinctly Aymara quality of the aesthetic highlights the increased social mobility of *alteños* and how some are choosing to spend their money.

Conclusion

This chapter addressed the nature of place-making in Bolivia and, in particular, how the Morales state both facilitated the struggle for ethnoterritorial rights while also disrupting acts of place-making too. Transcending the rural-urban divide, this analysis explored the concept of ethnoterritoriality across different territorial and spatial imaginaries to reveal the dynamic ways in which Indigenous people struggle for land and identity in the contemporary Bolivian lifeworld. In his promise to rupture with the (neo)colonial past, Morales presided over the development of a new constitutional framework which foregrounds the right to commercial property while also maintaining the integrity of Indigenous collective territorial rights. However, analysis of the TIPNIS controversy points to the still contested nature of land and territory in Bolivia. While this discussion not only reconfirmed the widely held view that the TIPNIS is a deeply contested geographic site of production, this chapter also defines the TIPNIS as a discursive battleground, where categories such as indigeneity have become contested and weaponised, recreating the conditions of marginality and exclusion once formally associated with the politics of (neo)coloniality.

Meanwhile, Neo-Anden architecture in the city of El Alto invites a fresh, original perspective on the struggle for ethnoterritoriality in contemporary Bolivia, as wealthy Aymara people reengage the use of place in urban settings to recover and renegotiate the ethnic self. By combining commercialism with symbolic representations of the ethnic past, Aymara peoples create bold new architectural aestectics that redefine the interrelation between ethnicity and territoriality in the modern Bolivian lifeworld. While the Zapatistas face ethnoterritorial opportunities

(*Caracoles*) and challenges (*El Tren Maya*) in their position outside and in opposition to the neoliberal state, it is clear that Morales encountered different opportunities (*la arquitectura nueva andina*) and challenges (TIPNIS) as a result of his decision to inhabit state architecture and transform it from within.

With the complexities of ethnoterritoriality and Indigenous place-making now firmly established across these two ethnopolitical case studies, attention turns to the question of space in the ethnopolitical lifeworld. In particular, this thesis is most concerned with how ethnopolitics in Mexico and Bolivia addresses the issue of representation within wider politics, where the processes and practices of global coloniality continue to challenge and destabilise ethnic visibility. There is no one way to explore the politics of representation in contemporary Latin American contexts, where representation can find meaning across a host of artistic and other cultural practices (architecture; fiestas; textiles; muralism) as well as in the development of new political infrastructure (*Caracoles*) which rivals the state.

For this comparative thesis, I have opted to foreground primary Indigenous sources, where I will engage in a textual analysis of the Zapatista *Declaraciones de la Selva Lacandona* in chapter three followed by analysis of Evo Morales's two 2006 inaugural addresses in chapter four. Not only does this approach foreground Indigenous agency, examining how these various different ethnopolitical social movements author key texts and documents which challenge and destabilise power in the neoliberal lifeworld, but neither the Zapatista declarations nor Morales's speeches have themselves been isolated in a single study before, which makes for some interesting insights on the nature of power, discourse and ethnopolitical visibility in

contemporary Latin America. For now, attention turns to chapter three, where I begin analysis of the Zapatista *Declaraciones de la Selva Lacandona*.

Chapter Three

The Politics of Space in Chiapas: Analysis of the Zapatista *Declaraciones de la Selva Lacandona*

Introduction

Having established the complex nature of ethnopolitical place-making in Mexico and Bolivia, attention now turns to the similarities and differences which characterise what our two primary case studies tell us about how Indigenous people carve out space for themselves within highly contested national and global imaginaries. In this chapter, I will analyse the Zapatista *Declaraciones de la Selva Lacandona* which function as destablising tools within the neoliberal world order. As an example of Zapatista discourse, the *Declaraciones de la Selva Lacandona* reveal how the Zapatistas engage alternative knowledges and ways of doing democracy in Mexico which aim to accelerate the struggle for social justice outside the limits of electoral democracy. Applying Foucault's (1970) theory of discourse and power, this chapter will carefully analyse how Zapatista revolutionaries evolve textual space in the declarations, forging a new relationship with civil society which elaborates a more hopeful and utopian

ethnopolitical space of possibility, expectation and transformative action in Mexico. While Khasnabish (2010) has addressed the significance of the *Declaraciones de la Selva Lacandona* as political texts, he does so in relation to a more elaborate discussion of *Zapatismo* in Mexico, failing to acknowledge the power and agency of the *Declaraciones* themselves in undermining the legitimacy of the neoliberal state. By isolating and foregrounding the declarations in this analysis, this chapter seeks to elaborate Rabasa's (2010) claim that "we ought to read the corpus of declarations, communiqués and political analyses as contributions to the dismantling of capitalist regimes".

To achieve this, this chapter will first engage in a discussion of the origins of the Zapatista declarations before justifying them as a form of discourse using Foucault's theory of discourse and power (Foucault 1970). Following this, chapter three will begin by scrutinising the first declaration which declared war on the neoliberal Mexican state in 1994. As Zapatista discourse evolves across this textual space, it becomes apparent that civil society forms an important trope which embodies the hopes and expectations of the Zapatista movement to create new possibilities and forms of social organising outside the limits of electoral democracy (Dinerstein 2017; 2016). In the final stages of the chapter, I draw attention to a noticeable discursive shift in the declarations whereby the Zapatistas no longer position their ethnopolitical struggle at the centre of an anti-neoliberal resistance campaign but, instead, develop an intersectional worldview (Crenshaw 1991; 1989) that facilitates a broader understanding, on their part, of the impact transnational capitalism has across multiples spaces in Mexico and the world and how the Zapatistas

aim to connect these spaces of resistance together through a globalisation of resistance *from below and to the left*.

Section One

The Origins of the Zapatista *Declaraciones de la Selva Lacandona*

The table which follows provides a comprehensive overview of six separate publications which together are collectively referred to as the *Declaraciones de la Selva Lacandona*. As the graph shows, the declarations were published over a period of eleven years between 1994-2005. As such, the publication of the declarations frames one of the most tumultuous periods in Zapatista political history. From that initial intervention, when the Zapatista revolutionaries declared war against the Mexican state on 1st January 1994, the *Declaraciones de la Selva Lacandona* have been regularly published at key intervals throughout the course of this conflict, revealing the challenges and opportunities which lie at the heart of this ethnopolitical campaign for Indigenous rights, justice and democracy in Mexico.

Declaration	Date of Publication	Content	Context
Primera Declaración de la Selva Lacandona	1st January 1994	Declaration of war against the Mexican state; Outlines 11 basic demands which must be met by the PRI government.	NAFTA formally implemented between Mexico, the U.S and Canada.
Segunda Declaración de la Selva Lacandona	10th June 1994	Proposed the *Convención Nacional Democrática* (CND) designed to mobilise civil society around a democratic transition.	Dialogues in Cathedral at San Cristóbal had concluded; Internal crisis within PRI; Assassination of presidential candidate Luis Donaldo Colosio.
Tercera Delcaración de la Selva Lacandona	1st January 1995	Founded the *Movimiento de Liberación Nacional* (MLN) which aimed to secure support from independent political parties across Mexico.	EZLN-CCRI celebrate one-year anniversary of revolution by escalating calls for national solution to the crisis in Chiapas.
Cuarta Delcaración de la Selva Lacandona	1st January 1996	Founded *Frente de Liberación Nacional* (FZLN), a national political force which emerged in response to public vote by EZLN-CCRI.	President Zedillo escalates conflict by approving military offensives and "de-masking" subcomandante Marcos; Peace negotiations collapse after government fails to implement San Andrés Accords.
Quinta Delcaración de la Selva Lacandona	17th July 1998	Urgently calls for solution to the conflict.	Acteal Massacre took place in December 1997, where 45 innocent Indigenous people killed by paramilitary troops aided by the state military.
Sexta Delcaración de la Selva Lacandona	30th June 2005	Introduces *La Otra Campaña,* an alternative form of global resistance which emphasises pluripolitical and intersectional approach to grassroots organisation.	Zapatista movement emerged from two-year period of silence; Implemented San Andrés Accords including provision of autonomous healthcare, education and judicial systems.

(Graph 3.1 provides a summary of all six Zapatista Declaraciones de la Selva Lacandona including the date in which each declaration was originally published, a brief insight into each of their content and an overview of the political context in which they were released.)

All six *Declaraciones de la Selva Lacandona* were drafted and published by the *Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional-Comité Clandestino Revolucionario Indígena* (hereafter EZLN-CCRI). This internal committee of Indigenous revolutionaries constituted the inner workings of the wider Zapatista movement. During the height of the conflict in the late-1990s, the CCRI led all political and military strategy including preparations for the revolution in 1994 as well as all formal encounters with the Mexican state and wider society thereafter. Both the centralised nature of this operation and, the fact that it was orchestrated and led by a committee of Indigenous Maya revolutionaries known as *comandantes*, speaks volumes in terms of how this social movement formatively developed and the kind of epistemologies which inform its discourse as a result.

The EZLN army was formally established in Chiapas, deep within the *Selva Lacandona*, on 17th November 1983 by three *mestizos* and three Indigenous Maya (Khasnabish 2010; Muñoz Ramírez 2008; Mentinis 2006; Weinberg 2000; Womack Jr. 1999; Harvey 1998). The EZLN is the product of two broad epistemological traditions: one shaped by the legacy of twentieth century Marxism in Mexico and the other firmly rooted in Maya cosmology, shaped, in part, by the long anticolonial history of Indigenous struggle in the region. In 1969, the *Fuerzas de Liberación Nacional* (hereafter FLN), a traditionally Marxist *guerrilla* with clandestine cells located across many key cities throughout Mexico, including Mexico City and Monterrey, dispatched a number of operatives to the Chiapas highlands with a view to initiating "a new front of armed struggle" (Khasnabish 2010: 56; Womack Jr. 1999). The popularity of Marxist ideology in Mexico increased in response to the political and economic authoritarianism of the *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* (hereafter PRI) alongside

the successes of other international revolutionary efforts in places like neighbouring Cuba (Khasnabish 2010; Mentinis 2006; Womack Jr. 1999). However, the FLN encountered difficulties in establishing any kind of revolutionary traction in urban Mexico, due in large part to the PRI's heavy surveillance of subversive elements (Womack Jr. 1999). Instead, it concentrated efforts on the southern state of Chiapas, a prime location in which to ferment revolutionary unrest, due, on one hand, to its difficult terrain and high topography and, on the other, the large and deeply impoverished Indigenous population (Rovira 2000).

While the FLN rightly assumed that poverty in Chiapas had indeed fuelled anger among Indigenous communities, it did not predict the already high levels of ethnopolitical activism and organising established across the region (Womack Jr. 1999; Harvey 1998). Rather unsurprisingly, Marxism, a Eurocentric ideological framework which addresses key issues relating to class oppression and liberation, failed to properly translate across an Indigenous region defined by identity politics and land-based conflicts (Khasnabish 2010; Moraña et al. 2008). Indigeneity is not a universal category nor can it be understood solely within a class-based ideological framework. Therefore, Marxism's blind spots were immediately apparent in Chiapas where six main Indigenous groups - all of which descend from the Maya – traditionally dominate the ethnopolitical landscape: *Tzotzil*, *Tzeltal*, *Ch'ol*, *Tojolabal*, *Mam*, *Zoque* (Stephen 2002; Rovira 2000; Womack Jr. 1999; Harvey 1998). While Indigenous ethnopolitical activism and resistance has deep roots in their long history of exploitation dating back to the colonial encounter of the sixteenth century, it was influenced more recently by their interactions with the nation-state (Stephen 2002; Trejo 2002; Weinberg 2000; Womack Jr. 1999). As illustrated earlier, in chapter one, the failure of the state to

properly and adequately redistribute land and provide basic infrastructure and services across the remote regions of Chiapas, encouraged Indigenous people to self-organise following encounters with Catholic and Protestant missionaries and activists (Stephen 2002). Liberation theology fuelled a radically new form of independent thinking among communities which then mobilised around the formation of autonomous unions that addressed unresolved issues relating to land titles, rural transportation and other basic services (Trejo 2002; Stephen 2002; Womack Jr. 1999). In short, the FLN did not encounter a docile and complicit Indigenous population which would be willing to gather in service of their national revolutionary ambitions. On the contrary, the evidence suggests that Chiapas contained a highly active and vibrant ethnopolitical environment which expressed the greatest concern for Indigenous rights.

It is clear, then, that the *Declaraciones de la Selva Lacandona* are a product of an epistemological and cultural encounter between worlds, where modern and non-modern forms of *thinking* and *doing* insurrection in Mexico intersected and overlapped to produce a radical approach to resistance (Rabasa 2010). The amalgamation of these two histories produced a dynamic discourse which, as this chapter will show, shifted and evolved both in terms of style and form adapting and responding to the challenges posed by a system of power in Mexico based on the logic of coloniality. And, while the declarations achieve a destabilizing effect without ever articulating claims to that same form of negative power, this textual space refocuses the attention of the reader on alternative possibilities and hopeful solutions to this dystopian crisis which has been inflicted upon Mexico. But, before this chapter can

proceed any further, it is necessary to clarify two outstanding issues: first, what is discourse and, second, what constitutes Zapatista discourse?

Defining Discourse

This chapter will use discourse analysis to frame this discussion of the Zapatista *Declaraciones de la Selva Lacandona* and how they might be seen to serve as a form of resistance against the neoliberal Mexican state. In order to undertake such an approach, it is first necessary to elaborate, on a more fundamental level, what I mean by the use of the term discourse. In his text *L'Ordre du Discours* (1970), the French philosopher Michel Foucault pioneered discourse analysis in what has become a "growth industry" in recent decades across major disciplines including the social sciences and the humanities (Hook 2001: 1; Diaz-Bone et al. 2008). The idea of discourse immediately brings to mind speech, including the grammatical structure of narratives as well as the order that is expressed over the level of the sentence (Diaz-Bone et al. 2008; Foucault 1970). However, Foucault expanded the meaning of discourse beyond our own instinctive discursive habits - dialogue or philosophical monologue - to conceive it instead as "social structure and discursive practice" (Diaz-Bone et al. 2008: 9; Foucault 1970). With this view in mind, the definition of discourse has shifted to include "group[s] of ideas or patterned way[s] of thinking which can be identified in textual and verbal communications, and can also be located in wider social structures" (Powers 2015: 18; Foucault 1970).

But, not only did Foucault express a great deal of interest in establishing the meaning of discourse *as* practice, he was also concerned with the types of meaning produced by discourse *in* practice and how rules and procedures govern what is thinkable, sayable and knowable (Angel Martínez 2018; Powers 2015; Miller 1989; Foucault 1970). For Foucault, discourse produces a series of statements or formations

that generate knowledge and this knowledge constructs our realities in a process that Spivak refers to as "worlding" (Diaz-Bone et al. 2008: 12; Angel Martínez 2018; Miller 1989; Foucault 1970). Knowledge is not understood as something objective or neutral but is instead the "perspective that is definitive of some society, group [or] institution" (Miller 1989: 117; Foucault 1970). Knowledge is put to work through certain strategies of application where it acquires authority or truth (Angel Martínez 2018; Miller 1989; Foucault 1970). Knowledges are held to be the function of power relationships which means that those who produce knowledge exercise power but conversely not all knowledge effectively becomes truth (Miller 1989). At different historical moments certain subjects embody particular kinds of truth, articulating hegemonic strategies that inform reality (Diaz-Bone et al. 2008; Foucault 1970). Hence, powerholders aim to use discourse to consolidate, reproduce and enact their power over and throughout the social body, transmitting forms of truthfulness that "ward off its powers and dangers", help it "gain mastery over its chance events [and] to evade its ponderous, formidable materiality" (Young 1981: 53).

However, for Foucault, "discourse is not simply that which translates struggles or systems of domination but is the thing for which and by which there is struggle" (Young 1981: 52-53). There is no power without resistance and the potentiality to enact forms of domination lie as much which those who are oppressed as it does with those who currently dominate the lifeworld (Powers 2015; Foucault 1970). Foucault clearly left open the possibility for alternative groups or institutions to challenge strategies of domination by generating alternative discourses that would threaten and undermine the legitimacy of current powerholders. For Foucault, power is not the exclusive domain of certain individuals, groups or institutions. In other words, power is not an

object which the nation-state or any of its agencies or institutions can permanently acquire. Instead, power reverberates throughout the social body in a "shifting web or grid of individual positions of tension between power and resistance" (Powers 2015: 29). Based on this understanding, everyone or everything has the potentiality to enact new forms of power through discursive practice, generating new ideas or new ways of thinking that challenge systems of domination that enact certain forms of negative power. Thus, power can be reclaimed through individual acts of resistance. And so, the potentiality to enact change over and throughout the lifeworld is embodied through other forms of discourse and discursive practice which produce alternative meanings and knowledges that can, in theory, enact alternative truths.

Situating my discussion of the Zapatista *Declaraciones de la Selva Lacandona* firmly within this context of power and resistance, I address how, collectively, the declarations directly confront the negative and dystopian reality of electoral politics in Mexico. With that said, I must exercise caution here not to overstate or to conflate the relationship between Zapatista discourse and the six declarations as the only possible form of Zapatista discursive practice. If I am to take into full consideration here Foucault's meaning and use of the term discourse, then it is only fitting that I acknowledge, albeit briefly, the other forms of Zapatista discursive practice that exist outside the declarations themselves, what Foucault broadly identifies as non-discursive practices. In other words, the declarations are not the only form of Zapatista discourse to generate meaning which challenges, undermines and destabilises the power and authority of the neoliberal state. Nevertheless, unlike symbols and gestures, the declarations serve as important ethnopolitical manifestos which elaborate

alternative meanings in relation to politics, democracy and society in neoliberal Mexico and, as such, they deserve our full attention in this chapter.

The Zapatista movement is a social movement of symbols and gestures (Conant 2010; Holloway and Peláez 1998). Whether assessed individually or collectively, these symbols and gestures transmit certain meanings within and throughout the wider social body, challenging and destabilising the nature of state power in the Mexico. For example, Conant (2010: 120) argues how the *pasamontañas* or ski-mask "bloomed like a dark flower across the cultural landscape" of Mexico, transforming the mask into a leading symbol of this insurrectionary movement from 1994 onwards. He acknowledges, of course, how the *pasamontañas* serves a series of practical functions first and foremost. Donning the ski mask helps protect the face against the cold, harsh winters of Chiapas, "where it is common to see people wearing ski masks to protect against frostbite" (Conant 2010: 128). Moreover, like all masks everywhere, the Zapatista *pasamontañas* covers the face to conceal identity, protecting individual revolutionaries from being personally identified and, therefore, targeted by federal security forces (Conant 2010). However, the true nature of any mask does not lie in its ability to conceal and hide but in its power to transform and to make knowable and visible the presence of the *Other*.

Conant (2010: 129) adds that there is a strong culture of masks among Indigenous communities in Chiapas and elsewhere, where the use of the mask in dance, ritual and warfare induces something of a metamorphosis, allowing individuals and groups embody an anti-imperialist spirit "just as they had hundreds of years before against the Spanish". Rather than be seen as individuals, the mask performs a unitary function revealing the presence of a new collective force (Conant 2010). In the

case of the Zapatistas, the ski mask transforms Indigenous people who were once without power or agency into ominous and threatening figures ready to challenge and destabilise traditional power dynamics in Mexico (Conant 2010). The nation-state itself emits a "pathological fear" of the ski mask which is commonly associated with terrorist acts, petty criminality, and bank robbery among other things (Conant 2010). By donning the ski mask, the Zapatistas do not just simply reclaim their place in Mexico but they also reveal their intention to slip beyond the confines of institutional and legal norms, where they challenge the very logic of power, how it is exercised over and throughout the Mexican social body, *robbing* it and returning it in a different form to the Indigenous communities of Chiapas (Conant 2010).

Meanwhile, the image of Subcomandante Marcos, who performed his role as EZLN spokesperson between 1994 and 2014 when that *nom de guerre* was erased and replaced by another (Subcomandante Galeano), also transmitted certain meanings about the nature and trajectory of this revolutionary event in Mexico.[17] Long before the *Primera Declaración de la Selva Lacandona* was read aloud by revolutionaries from San Cristóbal de las Casas on 1st January, the image of Subcomandante Marcos in the jungles of Chiapas smoking pipes, dressed in fatigues and even riding horseback through the *Selva Lacandona* revealed what Holloway and Peláez (1998: 20) have termed "living memory". These gestures and images enact remembering, encouraging

[17] In a communiqué released by the EZLN on 25th May 2014, Subcomandante Marcos delivered his final address to Mexico. In this communiqué, entitled *Entre la Luz y la Sombra*, Marcos expressed resentment over the celebrity status attributed to his persona and how this distracted from the many other achievements of *Zapatismo* in recent decades including the implementation of autonomy in Chiapas. Speri (2014) argues that this was all part of a much wider strategy designed to dis-associate Marcos from the Zapatistas and to restore public focus on the achievements of the revolutionaries. The elevation of Marcos as spokesperson in 1994 created a "boomerang effect" where the movement became personalised in the persona of Marcos (Speri 2014). By signing off his last communiqué as Subcomandate Galeano, a revolutionary killed by paramilitaries, Marcos reinventes a new role for himself within the social movement (Speri 2014).

Mexico to re-engage with the political past when twentieth century revolutionary heroes, including Emiliano Zapata and Pancho Villa, rode horse-back through rural Mexico struggling for land and social justice. By drawing on these symbolic connections between the political past and the present, Zapatista revolutionaries paint a clear picture of historical continuity, acknowledging that the struggle for land and social justice remains as much an urgent task today as it did around one-hundred years ago. These gestures, images and symbols, promoted by the Zapatistas, challenge the PRI as legitimate heirs of *that* revolutionary history, drawing attention instead to the failure of twentieth century revolutionary state politics to address injustice which continues to permeate the lifestyles of Indigenous communities in Chiapas.

Despite the obvious power and agency that these symbols and gestures contain, it remains quite clear that there is a limit to the role non-discursive practice plays in defining strategies of resistance against dominant powerholders. In the immediate aftermath of the 1994 Chiapas revolution scholarship became distracted with the elusive figure of Marcos and the symbol of the balaclava, rapidly propelling these icons into the cultural stratosphere as universal symbols of resistance against globalism and imperialism in twentieth century Mexico.[18] Yet, these symbols do not reveal much

[18] In his play *Todos Somos Marcos*, playwright Vicente Leñero deploys the use of the *pasamontañas* to illustrate the different political affliations of his three main protagonists, Laura, Raúl and Miguel. An engaging treatment of Mexico's political Left, Leñero's play skilfully examines how *Zapatismo* upset the country's political landscape in 1994, destabilising the political loyalties among left supporters, personified by the breakdown in the romantic relationship between Laura and Raúl. In a key scene, midway through the play, Laura returns to the small apartment she shares with boyfriend Raúl having just participated in a large mobilisation in defence of *Zapatismo* in the Zócalo, Mexico City. With his girlfriend wearing the *pasamontañas* inside the apartment, Raúl "feels compelled to take a stand and turns to Mexico's public transcript in order to combat Laura's quest for a more democratic society" (Day 2001: 112). Representing the static political left, Raúl fails to convince Laura to renounce her revolutionary ways, where she appears relucant to share his bed. In a desperate attempt to assert his power, he rapes Laura in a statement Leñero deploys to symbolise the violence and coercion of the Zedillo administration towards the EZLN in Chiapas (Day 2009; 2001). A deeply symbolic play that explores liberalism, apathy and *machismo* in Mexican politics, Leñero's play was originally staged in 1994 as part of *Teatro Clandestino* at the *Casa de Teatro* in Mexico City (Day 2009; 2001).

about the nature of Zapatista strategy going forward. For that, it is important to return to the more familiar and, therefore, conventional forms of Zapatista discourse which, I contend have often been overlooked by scholarship, where they have not featured as part of any independent study until now. By exclusively examining all six Zapatista *Declaraciones de la Selva Lacandona* this chapter will acknowledge the complex ways in which the Zapatista movement engages the struggle for social justice in Mexico in their attempt to carve out new ethnopolitical space that will make this possible. Using Foucault's discourse analysis, this chapter will reveal how the Zapatistas *think* and *do* outside the limits of electoral politics, reimagining democracy in Mexican society with the help and support of civil society. With that in mind, this chapter now turns to section two, where it will analyse the first of six declarations which openly and deliberately declared war against the Mexican neoliberal state.

Section Two

Declaring an Alternative War: The *Primera Declaración de la Selva Lacandona*

As the title suggests, the *Primera Declaración de la Selva Lacandona* is the first declaration published by the EZLN-CCRI. It was originally circulated by the Zapatistas throughout local media in Chiapas on 31st December 1993, a day before the Chiapas Revolution broke out. However, it only began to receive widespread notoriety when it was read aloud by a number of Zapatista Indigenous revolutionaries from the balcony of the *Palacio Municipal* in San Cristóbal de las Casas, a local state building which the EZLN army had seized earlier that same morning on the 1st January 1994 (Muñoz Ramírez 2008; Womack Jr. 1999; Harvey 1998).

The *Primera Declaración de la Selva Lacandona* certainly brought a degree of clarity to the unfolding situation in Chiapas (Khasnabish 2010). While the EZLN had long been an established presence in the *Selva Lacandona*, recruiting and training anywhere between 3,000 and 6,000 Indigenous Maya in clandestine training camps scattered throughout the rainforst since 1983, few civilians were in fact aware that an insurrection was about to take place in the region (Weinberg 2000). Despite efforts by Guatemalan officials to alert Mexican authorities to the possible threat of armed insurrection - a threat which Mexico ignored - the entire country was taken by surprise when this group of armed Indigenous rebels descended down the mountainside of the *Selva Lacandona* to occupy prominent positions across several key towns in Chiapas (Muñoz Ramírez 2008; Weinberg 2000; Womack Jr. 1999; Harvey 1998).

At the heart of the *Primera Declaración de la Selva Lacandona* lies an unmistakable declaration of war. However, the Zapatistas are very specific about who they are declaring war against (Khasnabish 2010). In the declaration itself, the Zapatistas identify,

> [el] ejercito federal mexicano, pilar básico de la dictadura que padecemos, monopolizada por el partido en el poder y encabezada por el ejecutivo que hoy detenta su jefe máximo e ilegítimo Carlos Salinas de Gortari.
>
> (EZLN 1st January 1994)

As the declaration makes clear, the EZLN command instructs their army to advance on Mexico City and to demobilise Mexican security forces which they view as guardians of the illegitimate one-party state. They hope this will generate space going forward where alternative national powers can step in and restore the legitimacy of the Mexican nation. In the document they write, "conforme a esta declaración de guerra pedimos a los otros Poderes de la Nación se aboquen a restaurar la legalidad y establilidad de la Nación deponiendo al dictator" (EZLN 1st January 1994).

It is clear that the *Primera Declaración de la Selva Lacandona* does not in any way reflect a desire on the part of the EZLN to seize state power and install an alternative regime from above. Instead, behind this revolutionary language lies a much deeper, more meaningful call for a democratic opening in Mexico through which the most basic needs of all of Mexico's citizens can be collectively met (Khasnabish 2010). This is reflected in the eleven key demands outlined by the Zapatistas in the declaration which, they argue, motivated this revolutionary activity in the first place. Alongside

the call for healthcare, education, food and housing, the Zapatistas outline their demand for greater democracy, freedom and justice in Mexico. In the declaration, the EZLN-CCRI write, "pedimos tu participación decidida apoyando este plan del pueblo mexicano que lucha por trabajo, tierra, techo, alimentación, salud, educación, independencia, libertad, democracia, justicia y paz" (EZLN 1st January 1994).

As Womack Jr. (1999) notes, the *Primera Declaración de la Selva Lacandona* makes no racial or ethnic claims in a strategic move, I believe, resisted the regionalization of the conflict within Mexico. By identifying demands that are not specifically related to the Indigenous condition per se, the Zapatistas nationalise what is effectively a small and local revolutionary campaign centred on Indigenous communities in Chiapas. Highlighting a series of general demands in this way draws together the attention of a wider Mexican social body who almost certainly can relate to the realities of life without proper healthcare, housing, and a political system which appears to favor the PRI one-party state (certainly in the period before the 2000 election cycle). In other words, the first declaration draws the attention of Mexicans back to some of the more fundamental issues of the day including a struggle for existence, born out of 500 years of coloniality, that seeks to embrace basic demands for education, healthcare, food, housing, democracy, liberty and justice. This is why the Zapatistas seek a national popular struggle in the first place and why they specifically cite Article 39 of the country's 1910 revolutionary constitution in the declaration:

> la soberanía nacional reside esencial y originalmente en el pueblo. Todo el poder público dimana del pueblo y se instituye para el beneficio de este. El pueblo tiene, en todo tiempo, el inalienable derecho de alterar o modificar la forma de su gobierno.
>
> (EZLN 1st January 1994)

It is clear then that the Zapatistas are eager to forge a relationship of cooperation with elements of Mexican society with a view to overcoming the negative and exclusionary politics of the PRI. In a final passage of the declaration, the Zapatistas write,

> PUEBLO DE MÉXICO: Nosotros, hombres y mujeres íntegros y libres, estamos conscientes de que la guerra que declaramos es una medida última pero justa. Los dictadores están aplicando una guerra genocida no declarada contra nuestros pueblos desde hace años por lo que pedimos tu participación decidida apoyando este plan del pueblo mexicano que lucha por trabajar, tierra, techo, alimentación, salud, educación, independencia, libertad, democracia, justica, y paz.
>
> (EZLN 1st January 1994)

In this passage, the aims of the *Primera Delcaración de la Selva Lacandona* are very much clarified. The Zapatistas express a desire "to participate with the Mexican people in forming a government for our country that is free and democratic" (Khasnabish 2010: 113). This represents the Zapatistas' first attempt at strategically connecting with elements of Mexican civil society, something which would later go on to form the centrepiece of their strategy. Such a deliberate focus on the national explains why there was no direct mention of Indigenous people in the declaration (Womack Jr. 1999). It is clear that the EZLN were

attempting to avoid the localisation of the revolution by opting instead for a language and style that maintained a deliberate focus on national-level issues.

Before I conclude this discussion on the *Primera Declaración de la Selva Lacandona*, and its significance as part of the wider textual repertoire of the Zapatista movement, it is important to draw attention to the fact that this - and all the other declarations discussed later in this chapter - are published in the Spanish language. This, I argue, not only reminds us to "take language seriously" as an act of resistance to what Singh (2018) describes as "colonial mastery" but should also draw our attention to the fact that the many iterations, statements and proposals written and/or vocalised by the Zapatistas and other ethnopolitical struggles often remain forcibly "entangled with [...] masterful thought and practice" (Singh 2018: 67, 94). Here, Singh (2018: 2) reflects on the challenge many decolonial struggles face in liberating themselves and how, in particular, practices of countermastery remain entangled with masterful ways, sometimes even reproducing "new masterful subjects". While her work exclusively centres on the writings of anticolonial thinkers such as Frantz Fanon, Singh's (2018) observations have implications for textual analysis everywhere, where she specifically concentrates her discussion on the challenges and/or opportunities associated with mastery over colonial languages and the implications this has for anticolonial thought and action.

All six of the Zapatista *Delcaraciones de la Selva Lacandona* are published in the Spanish language, where a number of others were selected for further translation into English, French, German and Italian. The Zapatista declarations are not publically available online through Indigenous languages nor do the Zapatistas vocalize strategy

using local vernaculars (Marcos, a *mestizo*, spoke on behalf of the Zapatistas in Spanish). While this may appear like an obvious statement of truth, it does, I argue, speak to the more precarious nature of anticolonial resistance and ethnopolitical struggle in Mexico. In particular, it showcases how ethnopolitical struggles remain permanently trapped between a desire for agency, on one hand, and their fear of perpetual obscurity, on the other.

In her battle to decipher meaning in this debate, Singh (2018: 83) argues how colonial languages can and should be weaponised against the conditions of mastery and should be used as a "mobilising force [..] wielded by the self regardless of the historical stakes that have led to its utterance" in the first place. This metaphor of weaponry empowers speaking subjects to rework and regain mastery over language that once disempowered their ancestors. The use of the Spanish language in the first declaration, in particular, certainly has the effect of making the revolutionaries knowable to the Mexican state, uniquely positioning them within the wider social body as speaking subjects that can be seen, heard and, above all, understood. For Singh (2018: 83), "language itself cannot limit human expression even when it is an imposed or inherited tongue". By reengaging the use of Spanish in the declarations, the Zapatistas rearticulate this language in ways that not only inscribe new meaning(s) but embrace a language that was once used to colonise, thus returning it " through the colonised pen with a vengeful, recuperative force aimed toward decolonisation" (Singh 2018: 83).

Of course, while empowerment flows from engaging and reworking former colonial languages, it does not deny the fact that, in this case, Indigenous

communities remain trapped, in what I describe here, as a permanent state of untranslatability. This, I add, is marked by an urgent need to embrace *other* languages, usually that of the oppressor, to guarantee their place of visibility within public-political spaces. It can still be seen as a form of subjugation that not only burdens ethnopolitical struggles but reinforces the centrality, once again, of a logic of coloniality that condemns the Indigenous *Other* to a permanent state of obscurity (Quijano in Moraña et al. 2008). As a perpetually unfolding debate, we are left with a sense that ethnopolitical struggles like the Zapatistas remain forced to navigate an *in-between* space that is neither stable nor unstable but filled with a range of tools that allow Indigenous people to conquer mastery while also, potentially, forcing them to recreate new masterful narratives (Singh 2018).

Here postcolonial translation theorists such as Bassnett and Trivedi (1999) argue that this in-between space need not be considered a place of disempowerment. Instead, the luminal spaces generated by acts of translation are full of creative potential and embody a process of negotiation which actively eludes the politics of polarity (Bassnett and Trivedi 1999). By inhabiting this third space, the Zapatistas generate a new language of resistance for the twenty-first century aimed at challenging the then relatively new and untested reality of neoliberalism. This language of resistance characterizes the declarations and evolves and adapts over time as the struggle matures. It creatively borrows from different languages, cultures, histories and political traditions to tell the story of Indigenous suffering in Chiapas and to actively imagine an alternative futurescape where poverty, suffering and inequality are eradicated.

In what follows we continue with the *Segunda Declaración de la Selva Lacandona* where the Zapatistas do not just simply question democracy in Mexico but pursue a democratic ideal which fundamentally challenges the traditional dynamics between Mexican state and society.

Section Three

The Zapatistas and Civil Society: Rethinking Democracy in Mexico

Section three focuses exclusively on the role civil society plays as part of the Zapatistas' struggle for social justice in Mexico. Of course, any immediate mention of civil society warrants in-depth discussion of the concept itself and how it relates to the Mexican context. With this in mind, this section will unfold in two separate stages. First, I will provide a detailed definition of civil society to reveal how the concept relates to the Mexican context, acknowledging, in particular, the changing interrelation between state and society during the country's transition from twentieth century statism to twenty-first century neoliberalism. Following on from this broader, more elaborate discussion of civil society theory, this section will then return to the Zapatista declarations to reveal how the revolutionaries *think* and *do* democratisation outside the theoretical and conceptual limits of electoral democracy in Mexico. By focusing specifically on declarations 2-5, this section will not only reveal how the Zapatistas encountered civil society, incorporating this conceptual framework into the delcarations as part of their strategy of resistance against the neoliberal Mexican state, but how their understanding of civil society transcends all theoretical and conceptual limits, where it organizes in more utopian ways that aim to move Mexico beyond the dystopian realities of neoliberal logic. Positioning a detailed discussion of civil society theory before my analysis of the declarations later in this section will allow me to point out more effectively the ways in which the Zapatistas both engage and transcend the theoretical limits of civil society scholarship in the declarations.

Defining Civil Society in Mexico

While the concept of civil society evades simple or straightforward definitions, it does offer us an array of interesting and varied opinions on the relationship between state and society in the context of modern democracy (Kastrati 2016; Beasley-Murray 2010). Of course, civil society is not a contemporary construct that has just suddenly appeared in public debate. On the contrary, it has a rich and layered history, and its origins as a political concept date as far back as the early European philosophies of the third century (Kastrati 2016; Beasley-Murray 2010; DeWeis 1997). Throughout that long history of conceptual development, it has slipped in and out of political discourse, experiencing its most recent resurgence in public debate alongside the rise of neoliberalism and the New Left across Latin America from the 1980s onwards (Cannon and Kirby 2012). At a time when the revolutionary utopias of the twentieth century gave way to the liberal values of the twenty-first century, civil society became the locus around which this social transformation took place, where it entered a new and complex social arrangement with the nation-state. It is precisely at this moment of change in the lifecycle of the Mexican nation-state where I take up this discussion.

Broadly speaking, civil society is best understood as everything that does not constitute the state and/or the economy. For Beasley-Murray (2010), "civil society gathers together all those organisations, associations, and movements that mediate, formally or informally, between private and public, state and market, particular and universal" (69). In this way, civil society constitutes a "multiplicity of diverse groups and organisations [that act together] for a variety of purposes, some political, some cultural, some economic" (Lummis 1996: 31). As Lummis (1996) adds, civil society

provides space for public discourse, for the development of public values and public language [and] for the formation of the public self" or citizen. In short, civil society may simply be considered a space that is separate from the formal political sphere dominated by state power and political parties that aim to control that power" (Lummis 1996: 31).

In Mexico, this "third space" opened up at a time when revolutionary nationalism could no longer contain the collective hopes and aspirations of a nation. I point here to Gramsci's theory of hegemony as a useful framework which will reveal to us with greater clarity the nature of the relationship between state and society throughout much of twentieth century Mexico. Following the Mexican Revolution (1910-1920), the PRI developed what Gramsci terms the "integral state" (Mentinis 2006: 32). Central to the formation of this national whole is the total and complete coincidence of political society and civil society. In order for the PRI to achieve hegemony in Mexico and to secure its place as governing authority, it was necessary to dominate all oppositional forces while also seeking to win over the passive and active consent of civil society (Mentinis 2006). In other words, as Morton (2003) notes, "this expression of hegemony was based on the development of a diffused and capillary form of indirect pressure relying on the organic development of a relationship between leaders and led, rulers and ruled, where real predominance was concealed behind a veil of consent" (635). In this context, the 1917 Mexican Constitution was a firm way for the revolutionary class to achieve the goal of hegemony.

A proud symbol of revolutionary achievement and the centrepiece of nationalist expression, the 1917 Mexican Constitution became an important source of legitimacy for PRI hegemony. Following the defeat of several oppositional forces, chief

among them Emiliano Zapata in the south and Pancho Villa in the north, the constitutionalists drafted this new legal instrument which aimed to secure widespread power for the PRI and promote social cohesion (Krauze 1997). To that end, embedded within the constitution were a series of reforms that had been made popular by a number of revolutionaries in the previous decade, among them Zapata whose chief concern was to secure a national agrarian reform policy (Krauze 1997; Barry 1995). A treasured addition to the constitution, Article 27 allowed for the federal redistribution of national lands to Mexico's rural *campesino* and Indigenous masses with the additional aim of transforming vacant plots of land into economically viable and agricultural places of productivity (Barry 1995).

By absorbing this revolutionary demand and translating it into state matter, the "popular will was deposited in the Constitution and from there passed to the state". As Williams (2011: 11-12) adds, this implied "that the will of the state was and is the de-facto will of the people and vice versa". Of course, land reform, in its most basic legal form, was not enough to secure the loyalties of the popular masses. Federal unions, such as the *Confederación Nacional Campesina* (hereafter CNC), formed early on in the development of the agricultural sector by president Lázaro Cárdenas (1934-1940) in 1938, shaped the cognitive and affective structures through which citizens perceived reality (Mentinis 2006). In other words, the CNC was an effective device deployed by the PRI to build up and strengthen loyalty among *campesinos*, promoting a strategic alliance between state and agricultural workers which the PRI could - and often did - mobilise during times of political turmoil and crisis.

While the agricultural sector remained loyal to this nationalist ideology, experiencing "an impressive record of growth" (Barry 1995: 29) between the years 1940-

1970, other sectors of society began to question the merits of this statist model. As Lomnitz (2001: 54) makes clear, "urbanisation and the generally growing complexity of national society began to complicate the management of state representation" leaving the PRI open to criticism from urban and middle class sectors that enjoyed their economic mobility yet questioned the social conservatism of the nation-state. Between the years 1957-1960, railroad workers staged a series of strikes calling on the government to increase wages amid a recent devaluation in the Mexican *peso* over the previous years (Sergi 2009). While the government conceded a relatively small hike in workers' wages, it vehemently resisted an additional campaign by railroad workers for an independent union executive (Sergi 2009). Like the CNC, STFRM, the Mexican railroad workers' trade union, was strongly connected to the political leadership of the PRI which frequently used both corruption and open repression to guarantee co-optation (Sergi 2009). Years of strikes and stand-offs by the rail workers eventually culminated in military intervention which led to the arrest of 3,000 workers, 500 of whom were imprisoned for several years (Sergi 2009).

While the state managed to stem the flow of social unrest in the short-term, public frustration with the PRI continued to mount. In 1968, the Mexican student movement staged a series of demonstrations in Mexico City demanding an end to state violence and repression and for a more transparent and democratic political society (Kriza 2019; Poniatowska 1971). What originally began as a series of concentrated protests by university students from nearby *Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México* (UNAM) quickly escalated into large-scale street demonstrations which consisted of "many different left-wing groups [as well as] Christian and conservative groups too" (Kriza 2019: 85). *Testimonios* gathered by Poniatowska (1971:

16), from students who participated in the movement, capture the excitement and desire for change that was driving the momentum behind these demonstrations: "Nunca se habian visto en México manifestaciones espontáneas tan grandes y tan extraordinariamente vivas como las estudiantiles. En realidad, el Movimiento Estudiantil sacudió a la sociedad mexicana y por eso el gobierno empezó a tener tanto miedo".

As the quote suggests, the Mexican state did, in fact, fear further escalation in street protests, particularly when the country was set to host the 1968 Olympics. There was also strong suspicion too across government that the outlawed communist opposition had infiltrated the student mobilisation. The communist party in Mexico had been outlawed by the PRI since the 1940s (Krauze 1997). However, following the rise of Marxist ideology, which I mentioned earlier, Mexican security forces initiated a widespread clamp down on all forms of opposition that were deemed politically subversive (Krauze 1997). Amid this politics of confusion and chaos, government security forces fired shots into a crowd of student protesters on the evening of 2nd October 1968, following the end of a peaceful demonstration in *Tlatelolco* square. Among the ensuing chaos, the Mexican armed forces killed and disappeared hundreds of young protesters in a massacre which has remained permanently etched in the public consciousness ever since (Poniatowska 1971). The *Tlatelolco Massacre*, as it became known, forced the Echeverría government (1970-1976) to enact a series of economic reforms in a populist move designed to quell social unrest and steer Mexico's restless urban and middle class sectors back towards the embrace of the PRI (Krauze 1997). While many of these reforms did indeed curtail further social unrest, aided in large part by the oil boom of the 1970s, it was quite clear that, by the 1980s,

the "mechanisms of state bureaucratic representation could not avoid the country's bankruptcy in 1982" (Lomnitz 2001: 54; Levy et al. 2001). As Lomnitz (2001: 54) adds, not only did this mean that "foreign economic demands had to be attended to", but it also signalled the beginning of a new kind of relationship between state and society in Mexico.

The rise of neoliberalism from 1982 onwards in Mexico revealed a newly emerging relationship between state and society that was very different to any that had been experienced before. After more than fifty years of protectionist polices, the Mexican state committed to withdrawing from its traditional role as central economic arbiter with the implementation of *el Tratado Libre Comercio de América del Norte* (TLCAN) in 1994 (Browning 2013; Wise et al. 2003; Levy et al. 2001). Preparation for this trade deal between Mexico, the United States and Canada involved a process of state transformation that was decidedly reformist in nature and which resulted in a series of institutional changes within the organisational structure of the nation-state (Morton 2003). As Cannon (2016) points out, the 1917 Mexican Constitution, once again, became the locus for this latest cycle of change which resulted in a process of national deconstruction and neoliberal rebirth. Moreover, many of the revolutionary guarantees that were once formally the centrepiece of revolutionary achievement were either removed or heavily reformed to facilitate this "one way journey toward neoliberalism" (Cannon 2016: 63). Barry (1995: 117) adds that the "hallowed" Article 27, the legal basis for land reform in Mexico, suffered a series of amendments which equated to the "termination of land reform [...] to make Mexico's farm sector more compatible with the international market". This included the right to sell, rent, sharecrop or mortgage *ejidal* lands in a move that then-President Salinas de Gortari

(1988-1994) marked as an end to state paternalism (Barry 1995). Unions too, including the CNC, lost significance overnight, as the government was no longer interested in micromanaging this agricultural sector, relying instead on market forces to govern demand and competition between *campesinos*. It is open to debate whether this disarticulation between state and society did indeed liberate civil society as "the principle locus of legitimation", (Beckman 1993: 23). However, this separation between state and society certainly attracted interest from scholarship.

With this rise in neoliberalism worldwide, Cohen and Arato (1992) were the first to propose a workable theory of civil society. In their view, there simply was not a "sufficiently complex theory of civil society available" to adequately explain the opaque relation between the "normative model of democracy or project of democratization and the structure, institution, and dynamics of civil society" (Cohen and Arato 1992: xi). In other words, with the role of the state as national guarantor now fully paired back, how do we begin to conceptualise this new arrangement between society and state? How do they relate to one another and where do they stand vis-à-vis the other going forward? Does one regulate the other or is there an egalitarian interrelation between political and social spheres?

Amid the disintegration and collapse of "old hegemonic paradigms", Cohen and Arato (1992) note that there was an urgent need to account for an emerging "discourse of civil society" which "focus[ed] precisely on new, generally non-class based forms of collective action orientated and linked to the legal, associational, and public institutions of society" (1-2). In response to this theoretical gap, Cohen and Arato (1992: 19) "locate the genesis of democratic legitimacy [...] within a highly differentiated model of civil society". In their view, a tripartite model "distinguishes

civil society from both the state and the economy" which, in their view, is the only way to "underwrite the dramatic oppositional role of this concept under authoritarian regimes and to renew its critical potential under liberal democracies" (Cohen and Arato 1992: ix). In other words, it is important to distinguish civil society from "a political society of parties, political organisations, and political publics" on one hand and "economic society composed of organisations of production and distribution" on the other (Cohen and Arato 1992: ix). As Lummis (1996) says, civil society refers to that sphere that generally organises itself autonomously as opposed to an alternative space that is established and directly controlled by the state.

For Cohen and Arato (1992: 25), this third way positions civil society at a unique crossroads between the state and the economy where it functions as a buffer or mediator between the separate worlds of state and economy, facilitating the progressive governance of a neoliberal model. Civil society takes over where the state leaves off, allowing government to roll back its presence in both society and the economy leaving the marketplace free to expand unhindered while society self-mobilises to address its own social needs. This model is both progressive and utopian in that it avoids any return to the oppressive social conditions of state welfarism, on one hand, while also maintaining the integrity and credibility of the nation-state on the other, a "precondition" they add, "for modernity" (Cohen and Arato 1992: 30).

However any claims made by Cohen and Arato (1992) to the utopianness of their model is quickly dismissed by Beasley-Murray (2010) who takes aim at the self-limiting and differentiated role civil society plays in this elaborate tripartite theory. For Beasley-Murray (2010: 93), this theory "imposes a series of boundaries" that draws upon the "force of social movements to legitimate political order" while also

"restraining the force at the point at which it might challenge the state". Cohen and Arato (1992: 598) are clear that civil society should *know its place*, that is it should respect the boundaries of difference between nation-state and the economy and that it is only permitted to engage in forms of civil disobedience that aim "at either the defence or assertion of minority rights or the democratization of political society and [...] economic institutions". There is no legal justification for exceeding the legal and institutional limits of modernity. Of course, this is all based on the rather utopian expectation that the nation-state and economic institutions are themselves receptive to change and that they would be willing to acknowledge and accept - with enough pressure applied by social movements within the legal limits laid down by the nation-state - the *Other* in their policy and planning. Yet, as we are all too aware, modernity, symbolised here by the nation-state, has a historically poor record of acknowledging difference across the many social and racial stratospheres which make up the lifeworld. Naturally, this is a point I take up once more in my more detailed discussion of *Zapatismo* and civil society in the following subsection. For now, like Beckman (1993), Beasley-Murray (2010: 113) contradicts the idea that somehow the state rolls back or shrinks under an emerging neoliberal paradigm. Instead, he contends that it "slip[s] its bounds and invest[s] society as a whole [...] legitimising itself through direct and total coincidence with the social [therefore] erasing any distinction between state and society".

This "alternative reconfiguration of state power" (Beckman 1993: 30), where "everything becomes one" (Beasley-Murray 2010: 113) within a socio-political and economic totality is very much akin to Hardt and Negri's (2000: 329) concept of Empire. They argue that the "structures and institutions that constitute [civil society]

are today progressively withering away". Unlike previous European imperial projects between the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries, which had a dominant geographic centre and subordinated geographic periphery, “Empire” is a decentred and deterritorialised concept. “Empire” does not coalesce around any particular geographic or territorial centre of articulation and production (Hardt and Negri 2000). Instead, this contemporary view of empire explores the "globalisation of economic and cultural exchanges" across a delimited world space where control over this new universal standard does not lie with any one individual or group of individuals (Hardt and Negri 2000). Alternatively, it is governed by the many intermediations, transactions and capital flows which formidably take place between transnational corporations, agencies and industries which constitute this global lifeworld (Hardt and Negri 2000). Empire operates along the "plane of immanence", a device deployed by Hardt and Negri (2000) which explains the radical and total deconstruction of borders, in particular those borders which at one time formed a protectionist shield around the nation-state. With those removed - certainly at an economic level - there is a "smoothing of social space" where, "the geographical divisions among nation-states and between central and peripheral, northern and southern clusters of nation-states are no longer sufficient to grasp the global divisions and distribution of production, accumulation, and social forms" which now define the politics and practices of empire today (Hardt and Negri 2000: 334). In the authors’ view, civil society no longer serves as an adequate point of mediation between capital and sovereignty and NGOs are the most powerful pacific weapons of the new world order” (Hardt and Negri 2000: 328-326).

Of course, the so-called Rise of the Left or the Pink Tide offers additional perspectives on the interrelation between state and society in Latin America. While this topic is not necessarily the centrepiece of my analysis in this chapter, nor did it directly impact Mexico, any definition of civil society in the Latin American context more generally would be incomplete without at least a brief mention here. Beginning with Hugo Chávez in Venezuela in 1998 and continuing throughout many countries in Central and South America including Brazil (2003), Ecuador (2007), Argentina (2003), Bolivia (2005) among others, the Pink Tide saw a string of left-wing and left-of-centre governments unanimously elected across the region on a broad anti-neoliberal platform which encompassed a wide mix of concerns from human and environmental rights to Indigenous issues and other social justice claims (Cannon and Kirby 2012). Such widespread reaction to neoliberal ideology was almost entirely led by domestic civil society networks which no longer appeared willing or able to absorb further levels of inequality generated as a result of extreme welfare cuts and industry privatization (Kirby and Cannon 2012). As the so-called Pink Tide intersected across a variety of different national contexts, generating a host of different political outcomes, I will avoid further generalities here and will focus instead on the Bolivian context which serves as the alternative case study in this thesis.

Following my discussion in chapter two, Bolivia's *Movimiento Al Socialismo-Instrumento Político por la Soberanía de los Pueblos* (MAS-IPSP) was elected in 2005 marking an end to more than 20 years of neoliberal rule in the country. Unlike more traditional political parties which articulate policies around a neatly packaged ideological framework with the added aim of convincing society to vote for it, the MAS-IPSP acted as an umbrella group, absorbing a wide range of demands pertinent

to many of the country's Indigenous and *campesino* majority including natural resource sovereignty (Webber 2011).

As I discussed, between the years 2000-2005, a series of protests by Indigenous and *campesino* groups in Cochabamaba, the Chapare and El Alto expressed a great deal of concern over the widespread privatisation and/or foreign redistribution of Bolivian natural resources. Protests in El Alto, the *Guerra del Gas* (2003), forced the resignation of two neoliberal presidents, paving the way forward for MAS-IPSP victory in 2005 (Postero 2017; Pearce et al. 2011; Webber 2011). Theoretically speaking, Bolivian civil society, which is largely defined by the activities of *campesino* and Indigenous groups, visibly transcended the boundaries of Cohen and Arato's (1992) self-limitation, radically destabising the dynamics of neoliberal state power by replacing the regime with a new and inclusive ethnic one (Postero 2017). This radical over-reaching on the part of civil society is described here by Álvarez et al. (2017: 3) as the "uncivic society" where civil society extends its reach beyond all theoretical norms and distinctions to directly challenge the very basis of neoliberal state power. However, despite the euphoria that surrounded Morales's election victory and his promise to radically decolonise Bolivia by nationalising renewable and non-renewable resources and foregrounding Indigenous rights in national policy frameworks, the MAS-IPSP party continued to consolidate power around the nation-state in what Harten (2011: 232) describes as a "project of institutionalizing social movements tactics and traditional Indigenous practices as official mechanisms of Bolivia's democratic system" (Webber 2011). This is something which I will return to in chapter four where I explore how Morales incorporated ritual practices as part of his wider communicative strategy in Bolivia.

In the meantime, having established the theoretical and historical basis of civil society in the Mexican and Latin American contexts, attention now turns to examining how the Zapatista social justice movement addresses the concept in their own discourse. By focusing on declarations 2-5, this next section will analyse how the Zapatista revolutionaries develop their struggle for social justice and democracy in Mexico with the support of Mexican civil society.

Civil Society and the Zapatistas:
***Declaraciones de la Selva Lacandona* 2-5**

This section will discuss how the Zapatista *Declaraciones de la Selva Lacandona* offer an altogether entirely different utopian perspective on the role that civil society should play in a process of democratisation in Mexico, one which radically departs from any of the leading approaches outlined above. While the historical and contemporary study of civil society has focused to varying degrees on the interdependence between civil society and the state and/or market, the Zapatistas no longer identify the state as the locus of democratic accountability and legitimacy in Mexico (EZLN 17th July 1998; EZLN 10th January 1996; EZLN 1st January 1995; EZLN 10th June 1994). Instead, while civil society has been central to the construction and reconstruction of powerful state and neoliberal hegemonic projects since the turn of the twentieth century in Mexico, declarations 2-5 propose a total and complete deconstruction of state hegemony in favour of a democratic transition which elaborates a new form of power founded entirely on the democratic and sovereign will of civil society.

The *Segunda Declaración de la Selva Lacandona* is the first declaration to introduce the concept of civil society into Zapatista discourse. The Zapatistas acknowledged the potentiality of civil society following a series of interventions led by civil society in the early stages of the Chiapas conflict (EZLN 10th June 1994). In response to the intense battle taking place between the Zapatista army and the Mexican military over the first twelve days in January 1994, the Mexican and international community staged a series of protests both at home and abroad (Muñoz Ramírez 2008; Earle and Simonelli 2004). Overseas, hundreds of protesters had gathered outside Mexican embassies and consulates across key European and North

American cities expressing solidarity with the revolutionaries. As Muñoz Ramírez (2008) notes, vigils were held at key locations in Washington, Canada and Madrid while the international human rights organisation Amnesty International observed and condemned the actions of the Mexican state from their base in London.[19]

While the international community remained focused on events in Chiapas as they unfolded, Mexico City also became the site of a much more important and influential demonstration. On 12th January 1994, around 100,000 civilians from across Mexico peacefully gathered in Zócalo, the central square in Mexico City (Muñoz Ramírez 2008). While the main intention behind this mass demonstration of students, workers, Indigenous people and activists was to publically showcase their support for the Zapatista revolutionaries, it also aimed to apply pressure on both sides to bring an end to the bloodshed and to peacefully reconcile their differences. With the weight of public opinion visibly stacked against any further escalation in military action, President Salinas de Gortari was left with little choice but to concede to protester demands. On 12th January, Salinas declared a ceasefire in Chiapas which came into effect less than 24 hours after the protest began (Muñoz Ramírez 2008).

While this intervention by a national and international network of individuals, social movements and organisations was entirely unexpected, it was also a hopeful and

[19] Amnesty International had already been keenly observing political events in Chiapas since the 1980s when civil unrest had broken out between various *campesino* and indigenous unions and the state. In their report, *Mexico: Human Rights in Rural Areas*, published in 1986, the organisation outlines the extensive nature of political killings across Oaxaca and Chiapas, "where those responsible for these killings have enjoyed effective immunity from prosecution as a result of collusion at the local level between law enforcement officials and powerful individuals" (Amnesty International 1986: 22). The report provides a full list of victims and notes a worrying trend in acts of torture and disappearing. While this civil unrest can be traced along deep colonial lines, it was more immediately the result of failed state policies in the region particularly in the area of land reform and the distribution of fair and adequate legal titles.

optimistic sign that the Zapatistas were not alone in their struggle against the Mexican state. This optimism carried through to the publication of the second declaration. According to Khasnabish (2010), the *Segunda Declaración de la Selva Lacandona* marks a decisive change in the nature and style of Zapatista discourse. Unlike the *Primera Declaración* with its "bureaucratic [and] ridged style", the *Segunda Declaración* - including subsequent declarations 3-5 - are decidedly more optimistic and upbeat in tone, defined by a strong "literary flair", according to Khasnabish (2010: 115). While Khasnabish (2010) delivers a more general overview of the declarations, situating them within the context of that time, this chapter develops a more nuanced approach, focusing on the declarations as ethnopolitical manifestos designed to challenge and destabilise neoliberal power in Mexico (Rabasa 2010). Key to this is an emphasis the Zapatistas place on a language of reason, dignity and hope which the rebels weave throughout the declarations as a way to frame their new ideas and proposals for the future. Emboldened by the abundance of moral support during their earlier unsuccessful and, at times, violent encounters with the Mexican state over the previous six months, the Zapatistas turn to "los elementos honestos de la sociedad civil" in order to establish "un diálogo nacional por la democracia, la libertad y la justicia" (EZLN 10th June 1994). They do so in the hope that civil society will respond by continuing to organise in the valleys and in the streets just as the revolutionaries did in the mountains in early January, "que la esperanza se organise que camine ahora en los valles y cuidades como ayer en las montañas" (EZLN 10th June 1994).

As a strong discursive category embedded within the newly evolving revolutionary narrative of *Zapatismo*, we might link here the concept of hope to that elaborated by Dinerstein (2016). For Dinerstein (2016), the concept of hope embodies a

"desire for change and the belief in a situation that is better than the existing one". In this sense, hope resembles utopia and embodies a strong "utopian function" (Dinerstein 2016). According to Stillman (2000), utopias are critical spaces which promote thoughtful action. The author acknowledges that in their most stereotypical form as literature, utopias are blueprints for the ideal society. However, Stillman (2000) goes on to add that the concept of utopia also serves a more meaningful purpose as analytical tools which raise and reflect on the possibility of alternatives to everyday social reality. In chapter four, I discuss the concept of utopia in relation to *la utopía andina* where Andean histories contain the hope and expectation for transformative revolutionary political projects in contemporary Bolivian politics (Flores Galindo 2010 [1986]). Thus, it is clear that hope, like utopia, "enables us to engage with the not yet conscious and the not yet dimension of reality that inhabits the present and that can be anticipated here and now" (Dinerstein 2016). However, Dinerstein (2016) adds that, unlike utopia, the concept of hope is not purely intellectual but rather is that emotional antithesis which rallies against the anxieties induced by the dystopianness of everyday reality. It is clear that hope is not just a political project but a personal endeavour which lies at the heart of decolonial struggle and remains a central driving force behind the search for new ideas, new social relations and alternative horizons which seek to challenge and undo the legacies of our (neo)colonial past (Dinerstein 2016). In other words, hope articulates both a personal and political quest for new imaginaries that challenge with "urgency the hegemonic [and] catastrophic" condition of our realities (Dinerstein 2016). To think, articulate, and do a politics of hope opens up new possibilities to forge meaningful,

concrete endeavours which aim to create better lifeworlds beyond the current limitations of our unimaginative and, at times, dystopian realities (Dinerstein 2016).

With this in mind, the Zapatistas deploy the concept of hope across their declarations as a way to challenge the dystopian reality of the Mexican condition. In their view, Mexico is characterised by "[una] política de extermino y la mentira [donde] los poderes de la Unión ignoraron nuestra justa demanda y permitieron la masacre" (EZLN 10th June 1994). In particular, the Zapatistas take issue with the institutionalised nature of power in Mexico which is exclusively exercised by the one-party state system. Moreover, in their view, such an approach to power cultivates a culture of fraud, violence and criminality which impedes the practice of democracy throughout Mexico. To this they add,

> todos comprendimos que los días del eterno partido en el poder [...] no puede continuar más; que el presidencialismo que lo sustenta impide la libertad y no debe ser permitido, que la cultura del fraude es el método con el que se imponen e impiden la democracia.
>
> (EZLN 10th June 1994)

The Zapatistas specifically point to the 1994 August elections which, in their view, provide clear evidence for the fraudulent and criminal way in which the institutional PRI behaves. While the PRI won this election with a solid 50.18% of the national vote, it was unclear to opponents how the party had managed to secure such a decisive victory in light of recent challenges (Scherlen 1998). Not only had the party endured an Indigenous rebellion, a political assassination and internal crises, all of which unfolded during the first six months of 1994, but it also had not recovered from

the election of 1988, when the party was vehemently accused of rigging the result, denying the PRD victory. To this, the Zapatista response is clear,

> la multitud de irregularidades, la inequidad, la corrupción, el chantaje, la intimidación, el hurto, la falsificación, fueron el marco en el que dieron las elecciones más sucias de la historia de México.
>
> (EZLN 1st January 1994)

During this election cycle which included federal and state elections, the Zapatistas accuse the PRI of imposing handpicked governors on states which had particularly high levels of voter absenteeism. For the Zapatistas, this is clear evidence that the party had committed fraud in an attempt to maintain its authoritarian grip on power,

> los altos porcentajes de abstencionismo en las elecciones locales en los estados de Veracruz, Tlaxcala y Tabasco demuestran que el escepticismo civil volverá a reinar en México. Pero, no conforme con esto, el sistema de partido de Estado volvió a repetir el fraude de agosto imponiendo gobernadores, presidentes municipales y congresos locales.
>
> (EZLN 1st January 1994)

In Chiapas, there was also controversy over the election of PRI governor Eduardo Robledo Rincón (Muñoz Ramírez 2008; Womack Jr. 1999). While Robledo Rincón was elected to office with a clear, decisive 50% share of the state-wide vote, local opposition, groups including the *Partido Revolucionario Democrática* (PRD) candidate Amado Avendaño Figueroa alongside the Zapatistas contested the result staging blockades, seizing radio stations and occupying farms and ranches along the Pacific

coast of Chiapas (Womack Jr. 1999). Collectively, they demanded that Avendaño Figueroa, who officially received a 35% share of the vote, be recognised as governor-elect (Womack Jr. 1999). Of course, these accusations of fraud did little to alter the mindset of the federal executive or to encourage any reconsideration of the national or local vote by the electoral commission. And so, in December 1994, both president Zedillo and Governor Robledo Rincón assumed office, securing another six years of PRI rule.

Yet, despite concern over the dystopian nature of electoral politics in Mexico, characterised by the fraudulent and criminal activities of the PRI, the Zapatistas make clear that they do not have issue with the nature of power itself. Rather, the rebels express much greater concern over *who* exercises power and how *that* power is articulated over and throughout the entire Mexican social body. As the Zapatistas clarify, "el problema del poder no será quién es el titular, sino quién lo ejerce" (EZLN 10th June 1994). This distinction is important to note here because it draws attention to the precise ways in which the Zapatistas acknowledge and define power in the declarations and, in turn, how that power should be exercised throughout Mexico in order to achieve a more democratic and egalitarian society in their view.

Instead of acknowledging the legitimacy of state power and PRI hegemony, the Zapatistas directly challenge it, exclusively turning towards the concept of civil society in the declarations in order to instigate a democratic change in Mexico and to begin reclaiming national sovereignty from the so called "ladrones de la esperanza" (EZLN 10th June 1994). For the Zapatistas, it is civil society "en quien reside nuestra soberanía [y] es el pueblo quien en todo tiempo altera o modifica nuestra forma de gobierno (EZLN 10th June 1994). Here, the Zapatistas explicitly recognise the democratic and

sovereign will of civil society while simultaneously rejecting the authority of the state. This clear, decisive statement undermines and destabilises the centrality of the nation-state in the modern political lifeworld by revealing instead the opportunities and possibilities that arise in *thinking* and *doing* politics outside the physical and epistemological limits of electoral politics.

The Zapatistas share a Foucauldian view regarding the nature of discourse, power and power relations by acknowledging that power does not emanate from any one "central point" such as the state or any of its agencies and institutions (Powers 2015: 29). On the contrary, by shifting their focus away from the state and towards the democratic potentiality of civil society in declarations 2-5, the Zapatistas acknowledge that power exists within a "continually shifting web or grid of individual positions of tension between power and resistance", to reiterate the point originally made by Powers (2015: 29). In other words, the Zapatistas do not base their politics in a “confrontación entre organizaciones políticas” (EZLN 10th June 1994). Rather, they define their politics as a “confrontación de sus propuestas políticas con las distintas clases sociales" (EZLN 10th June 1994). Power is clearly not conceptualised here as property nor does it exist in any kind of objective form (Angel Martínez 2018). Instead, power is viewed more as an exercise and something which circulates throughout the social body in a series of dynamic and fluid exchanges between those with power and those who resist that power (Angel Martínez 2018). This, in turn, leaves the concept of power always open to contestation between the various subjects of the lifeworld, where it can be lost, reclaimed and lost again in a continuous albeit at times contentious cycle of exchanges and intermediations, as I noted earlier (Angel Martínez 2018).

To facilitate this democratic transition, the Zapatistas propose an elaborate and ambitious initiative known as the *Convención Democrática Nacional* (hereafter CND) in the second declaration (EZLN 10th June 1994). The aim of the CND is to mobilise civil society around the common goal of achieving a democratic transition in Mexico. In doing so, the CND proposes the formation of a provisional government of transition that will draft a new set of laws for Mexico as well as a new national constitution which will guarantee the popular will. In the second declaration the CCRI write, "Llamamos a la realización de una Convención Democrática, nacional, soberana y revolucionaria, de la que resulten las propuestas de un gobierno de transición y una nueva ley nacional, una nueva Constitución que garantice el cumplimiento legal de la voluntad popular" (EZLN 10th June 1994). The idea, according to Womack Jr. (1999) is that the Zapatistas would rally Mexican civil society to organise free and fair elections which the PRI would then win given its previous historical record. But when civil society takes to the streets to protest this electoral result, it would force a political crisis on the PRI that the party itself would not be in a position to resolve, thus paving the way forward for the Zapatistas to join civil society in the formation of a transitional government that would conduct politics in a free, fair and democratic way (Womack Jr. 1999). As the Zapatistas themselves note in the second declaration,

> [la] Convención Nacional Democrática y Gobierno de Transición deben desembocar en una nueva Carta Magna en cuyo marco se convoque a nuevas elecciones. El dolor que este proceso significará para el país será siempre menor al daño que produzca una guerra civil. La profecía del sureste vale para todo el país, podemos aprender ya de lo ocurrido y hacer menos doloroso el parto del nuevo México
>
> (EZLN 10th June 1994)

What the Zapatistas propose here is an altogether different, more radical view of civil society and the role it plays in a process of democratisation in Mexico. With a clear emphasis on drafting new legal infrastructure through the CND, civil society appears to transcend the limits of modernity to become a self-organised, self-empowered social whole that exists outside the state "[en] un espacio libre y democrático" (EZLN 10th June 1994). The Zapatistas are clear that they do not believe in the self-limitation of civil society nor do they confirm that it should operate within the legal and institutional parameters laid down by the laws of the nation-state (Cohen and Arato 1992). The Zapatistas appear to encourage civil society to slip between the boundaries of self-limitation and differentiation to engage in utopian forms of organising. As the Zapatistas propose,

> [un] proyecto de la transición a la democracia, no una transición pactada con el poder que simule un cambio para que todo siga igual, sino la transición a la democracia como el proyecto de reconstrucción del país; la defensa de la soberanía nacional; la justicia y la esperanza como anhelos; la verdad y el mandar obedeciendo como guía de jefatura; la estabilidad y la seguridad que dan la democracia y la libertad; el diálogo, la tolerancia y la inclusión como nueva forma de hacer política.
>
> (EZLN 1st January 1996)

From this quote it is clear to see, that the Zapatistas do not intend to lead in the creation of a new Mexican hegemony nor do they intend to develop a new social order that rearticulates familiar forms of institutional power which, as the declarations have established thus far, guided Mexico to this point of political crisis in the first place. Instead, the Zapatistas reiterate "[que] no estamos proponiendo un mundo nuevo, apenas algo muy anterior: la antesala del nuevo México" (EZLN 10th June 1994). This

revolution is not about recreating "una nueva clase, fracción de clase o grupo en el poder" (EZLN 10th June 1994). Rather, it concerns the hopeful and, therefore, utopian possibilities embodied within civil society which, through initiatives like the CND, the Zapatistas unleash, encouraging Mexico to organise "[en] una sociedad plural, tolerante, incluyente, democrática, justa y libre" (EZLN 10th June 1994).

As the declarations unfold, it is clear to see that the Zapatistas remain committed to Mexican civil society and to the role it plays in further constructing and developing spaces of physical and epistemological encounter that will, according to the rebels, fulfil their ambition to forge a new and more meaningful democratic society in Mexico. Following on from their earlier successes with the CND, both the third and fourth declarations propose the development of two additional initiatives designed by the Zapatistas themselves which they claim will help motivate and facilitate further organising outside the limits of electoral democracy. In the *Tercera Declaración de la Selva Lacandona*, published by the EZLN-CCRI on the 1st January 1995, the Zapatistas call on,

> todos las fuerzas sociales y políticas del país, a todos los mexicanos honestos, a todos aquellos que luchan por la democratización de la vida nacional, a la formación de un Movimiento Para La Liberación Nacional incluyendo a la Convención Nacional Democrática y todas las fuerzas que sin distinción de credo religioso, raza o ideología política están en contra del sistema de partido de Estado.
>
> (EZLN 1st January 1995)

As the quote references, the *Movimiento para la Liberación Nacional* (MLN) is an inclusive, national space designed to unite all those forces across Mexican society that specifically oppose the neoliberal state. By explicitly calling on individuals, groups and organisations of different backgrounds, religious creeds and political persuasions, the Zapatistas emphasise their commitment to a national front that challenges the centrality and authority of the neoliberal state without reclaiming power either for themselves or for any one specific individual or group. In a gesture towards the diverse nature of this proposal, the Zapatistas remove specific references to civil society as a conceptual framework in this declaration, replacing it instead with a call,

> a los obreros de la república, a los trabajadores del campo y de la ciudad, a los colonos, a los maestros y estudiantes de México, a las mujeres mexicanas, a los jóvenes de todo el país, a los artistas e intelectuales honestos, a los religiosos consecuentes, a los militantes de base de las diferentes organizaciones políticas que, en su medio y por formas de lucha que consideren posibles y necesarias, luchen por el fin del sistema de partido de Estado.
>
> (EZLN 1st January 1995)

While the Zapatistas continue to push for a national solution to the crisis of democracy in Mexico, the third declaration also raises and reflects on *la cuestión indígena*, in a move designed to conflate the national and the ethnic in the mind of the reader or Mexican public. In contrast to the *Primera Declaración de la Selva Lacandona*, where I suggested that the Zapatistas strategically downplayed references to the ethnic characteristics of this revolution, the rebels now appear to fully embrace the ethnopolitical nature of this struggle, specifically emphasising how a national solution is the only way in which Mexico will bring about an end to this conflict in

Chiapas. This strategy is, then, designed to appeal to the wider Mexican public who are sympathetic to an Indigenous rights-based agenda and to prevent any further localisation of the conflict by the state and security forces. For example, within the first twelve months of the revolution, when the third declaration was originally published, military troops had established a tightly guarded conflict zone in Chiapas, with heavily-manned security checkpoints that controlled the flow of individuals and communities in and out of the Zapatista territory in a strategic move designed to both intimidate and confine and isolate the rebels within Mexico (Khasnabish 2010; Muñoz Ramírez 2008).

Meanwhile, the third declaration may be viewed as an attempt by the Zapatistas themselves to unravel these constraints and breakdown these physical divides in an epistemological endeavour designed to contest a basic assumption of the modern worldview that indigeneity can and should be confined to the small places and spaces of ethnopolitical thought and action. Instead, the declaration reveals how the state *misses the point* and fails to acknowledge that this conflict is not just simply about ethnicity and the apparently *unreasonable* demands put forward by the rebels for territorial and political autonomy (Ryan 2011; Khasnabish 2010; Reygadas et al. 2009; Muñoz Ramírez 2008; Ross 2006). On the contrary, the declaration outlines how this is a conflict that affects all Mexicans who identify and suffer the same injustices and conditions of poverty that originally led to the revolution in Chiapas in the first place. In other words, the Zapatistas attempt to underline, with the greatest of clarity, that Indigenous issues are in fact Mexican issues and vice versa and that confining ethnicity, whether physically or epistemologically, only perpetuates rather than solves the wider crisis of democracy afflicting Mexico. I am reminded here of Bonfil Batalla

(2002) who argues that the struggle for *México profundo* is a struggle against the imposition of modern imaginaries that marginalise other, "more profound" ways of knowing and being. As Bonfil Batalla (2002: 10) writes, "las relaciones entre el México profundo y el México imaginario has sido conflictivas durante los cinco siglos que lleva su confrontación. El proyecto occidential del México imaginario has sido excluyente y negador de la civilización mesoamericana". By embracing a national struggle for democracy, liberty and justice, the Zapatistas encourage the development of a new relationship within and between the wider civilian population that will lead to a more fair and inclusive society.

In a similar vein to previously published declarations, the Zapatistas propose the formation of yet another national initiative in the *Cuarta Declaración de la Selva Lacandona*, released to the public on 10th January 1996. While the *Frente Zapatista de Liberación Nacional* (FZLN) continues to showcase the revolutionaries' commitment to their ongoing pursuit of democratic change in Mexico, it also begins to highlight the inherent challenges facing this relatively small ethnopolitical movement in their efforts to maintain consistency between discourse and practice. In the fourth declaration, the Zapatistas, once again, call upon Mexico to participate "en una nueva etapa de la lucha por la liberación nacional y la construcción de una patria nueva" which they define here as "el Frente Zapatista de Liberación Nacional" (EZLN 10th January 1996). The aim, they write, is to form "[un] organización civil y pacífica, independiente, democrática, mexicana, nacional, que lucha por la democracia, la libertad y la justicia en México" (EZLN 10th January 1996). The FZLN was established on the back of a very promising and highly successful EZLN-led initiative in August 1995 known as the National and International Consultation for Peace and Democracy

(Khasnabish 2010; Muñoz Ramírez 2008; Womack Jr. 1999). The intention behind this referendum was to forge a dialogue between the Zapatistas and national and international civil society networks with a view to assesing the public's opinion on several key questions that were pertinent to the rebels at the time. Below I compiled together a list of the six questions proposed by the Zapatistas during this consultation alongside the results in favour of said proposal:

Questions	**Support (in favour)**
Does the respondent support the EZLN's eleven demands?	98%
Should the democratic forces in the country work together to achieve these demands?	92%
Does the Mexican state require a profound reform to achieve democracy?	95%
Should the EZLN transform itself into a political force?	57%
Should the EZLN join with other democratic forces to form a new opposition alliance?	43%
Should women be integrated on an equal basis into the nation's developing democratic culture?	90%

(*Graph 3.2 provides a full list of the six questions proposed by the Zapatistas during the National and International Consultation for Peace and Democracy. See also Khasnabish 2010 and Womack Jr. 1999 for original list of questions*)

Conducted between 23rd and 27th August, 1.2 million ballots were collected nationally by 40,000 volunteers who manned 8,000 polling stations located in every single state across the country (Khasnabish 2010; Womack Jr. 1999). Moreover, a further 100,000 votes were cast online by international supporters across 55 countries worldwide (Khasnabish 2010; Womack Jr. 1999). While it is clear from the results that there was overwhelming support for both the Zapatistas and their revolutionary cause, I take issue with Khasnabish (2010: 129) and others who suggest that "the idea of the Zapatistas becoming a more conventional political force was deeply attractive" following this consultation. The vote was certainly a clear act of defiance against the state which would naturally view any unmandated polling within the Mexican jurisdiction as a threat to electoral democracy and an attempt at destabilising and undermining the government's legitimacy and authority over this national space. Yet, it is quite clear from the results that support among the wider Mexican public significantly drops with the suggestion that the Zapatistas should either lead or join other democratic forces in the formation of a new opposition front in Mexico. While many Mexicans and members of the wider international community continued to support the Zapatistas in their difficult negotiations with the state at San Andrés Larráinzar, where they aimed to secure rights to land, culture and political autonomy in Chiapas, there was a greater reluctance on the part of wider society to support and join in the formation of a national democratic alliance in Mexico (Muñoz Ramírez 2008; Higgins 2001).

This certainly explains why all three Zapatista initiatives outlined in the declarations thus far from the CND, the MLN right through to the FZLN failed to sufficiently mobilise lasting democratic change in Mexico outside the institutional

frameworks of the nation-state. Despite their efforts to try and nationalise the conflict in Chiapas, developing a strong nationalising rhetoric within the declarations, civil society continued to view the unfolding situation in Chiapas as a predominantly local matter but one which needed strong levels of national sympathy and support.[20]

It is within this context that I draw attention to the *Quinta Declaración de la Selva Lacandona* published by the EZLN-CCRI on 17th July 1998. Unlike previous declarations published before it, where Zapatista discourse is defined by a sense of hopefulness and optimism, the fifth declaration appears to be marked more by a sense of urgency on the part of the revolutionaries who have arguably entered one of the darkest periods in the Chiapas conflict (Khasnabish 2010; Womack Jr. 1999). In the more than two years since the publication of the previous declaration, the Zapatista command not only failed to secure their rights to Indigenous autonomy in national law but, equally as worrying, witnessed an escalation in violence which resulted in one of the worst atrocities to befall Indigenous communities in contemporary Chiapas.

Rhetorically speaking, the fifth declaration frequently stresses that "es la hora de la lucha por los derechos de los pueblos indios, como un paso a la democracia, a la libertad, y la justicia para todos" (EZLN 17th July 1998). This specific emphasis on *la hora* invokes a sense of urgency in the collective task to reform Mexico and to secure

[20] Addressing the reasons why the Zapatistas failed to inspire widespread political action for democratic change nationally are many and lie beyond the scope of a chapter where the primary aim it is to assess the *Declaraciónes* themselves as tools in the dismantling of capitalist regimes (Rabasa 2010). However, Adler Hellman (2000) points to the internet as a possible root source of the problem. While the Zapatistas themselves did not directly engage the use of internet technologies to draft or disseminate declarations and communiqués (Pitman and Taylor 2007), the flurry of online activity by sympathizers of the movement is likely to have transferred a lot of support to the virtual space, where activists set up blogs and shared information online about the resistance in solidarity with the revolutionary cause. In contrast to Cleaver's (1998: 622) optimistic assertion that this "electronic fabric" provided the "nerve system for increasingly global organisation in opposition to the dominant economic policies of the present period", Adler Hellman (2000: 179) questions the virtue of this claim by suggesting instead that internet activism or slacktivism or hashtag activism generates the "illusion of connectedness and political effectiveness where little exists".

Indigenous rights in national law (Khasnabish 2010). While the Zapatistas had managed to successfully secure a deal with the Mexican state that would, in theory, permit the practice of Indigenous autonomy in Chiapas, the government failed to elevate the San Andrés Accords to constitutional level thus denying the Zapatistas legitimacy and stability in Chiapas. Instead, federal security forces escalated their military campaign against the revolutionaries, even funding and supplying arms to a number of clandestine paramilitary groups operating within the *Selva Lacandona* (Muñoz Ramírez 2008). Rather than resolve the conflict in Chiapas, the government increased tensions between Indigenous people and the state, permitting the military to engage in the forced displacement of entire communities in an effort to destabilise the region. While this certainly tested the resolve of Zapatista rebels, it positioned many more communities, organisations and groups in danger.

As I mentioned in chapter one, on the 22nd December 1997, 45 Indigenous people from the pacifist, Catholic organisation *Las Abejas* were killed by a paramilitary group in the small hamlet of Acteal where they had been seeking refuge from earlier displacement (Khasnabish 2010; Rabasa 2010; Hayden 2002; Womack Jr. 1999; Centro de Derechos Humanos Fray Bartolomé de las Casas 1998). Within the context of this dystopian image of death, destruction and displacement, as well as the repeated failure of Zapatista initiatives to mobilise Mexican society around any meaningful or lasting democratic reform of Mexico, the fifth declaration can be seen as a reminder to Mexico that the crises it faces cannot be resolved unless Indigenous people in Chiapas and across the country are recognised fully in law: "no habrá transición a la democracia, ni reforma del Estado, ni solución real a los principales problemas de la agenda nacional sin los pueblos indios" (EZLN 17th July 1998).

Thus far this chapter has established the ways in which the Zapatista *Declaraciones de la Selva Lacandona* have challenged and destablised traditional power dynamics in Mexico. From declaring war against the Mexican state in the *Primera Declaración de la Selva Lacandona* to emphasizing a politics of hope in declarations 2-5 that encouraged civil society to exceed the limits of modernity and organize outside the parameters of electoral democracy in more hopeful, utopian ways, the Zapatista revolutionaries use the declarations to *think* beyond political norms and conventions to reimagine democractic spaces and possibilities in Mexico to achieve social justice and liberty for Indigenous people and Mexicans more generally. However, analysis of the *Declaraciones* also reveals a growing divide between Zapatista discourse and practice, particularly towards the latter years (1998). With political initiatives such as the *Convención Nacional Democrática* (*Segunda Declaración*), *Movimiento de Liberación Nacional* (*Tercera Declaración*) and *Frente Zapatista de Liberación Nacional* (*Cuarta Declaración*) struggling to mobilize Mexican civil society in any meaningful or democratic way, the Zapatista revolutionaries radically reconsider their strategy which is revealed to us in the *Sexta Declaración de la Selva Lacandona* and which is analysed in the fourth and final section of this chapter.

Section Four

From Civil Society to a Globalisation of Resistance: *Sexta Declaración de la Selva Lacandona*

The publication of the *Sexta Declaración de la Selva Lacandona* on the 30th June 2005 marks a decisive change in the nature and style of Zapatista politics and discourse. After nine years of political uncertainty, hostility and alienation perpetuated by state, military and paramilitary forces against Zapatista loyalists and sympathisers in Chiapas, the Zapatistas prepared to take measures into their own hands by implementing the San Andrés Accords. This manoeuvre was a particularly radical one because it was carried out by the rebels themselves without the backing or consent of the Mexican government. This move followed more than five years of false hope and denial, where, despite its commitment to the agreement in 1996, the Mexican government, along with Congress, repeatedly refused to implement the Accords which would, in theory, permit the practice of Indigenous autonomy in Chiapas (Muñoz Ramírez 2008; Manaut et al. 2006; Higgins 2001). Following a two-year "strategy of silence", whereby the Zapatistas set about an internal reconfiguration of their movement between the years 2001-2003, the rebels reappeared a completely transformed social movement (Dinerstein 2016: 241; Muñoz Ramírez 2008).

This radical transformation brought about renewed interest in *Zapatismo* once more. No longer was this conflict simply about the struggle for Indigenous autonomy. Rather, this form of ethnopolitical activism had reached new heights. The Zapatistas had now committed themselves to fully translating the idea of Indigenous autonomy, something which had been the source of violent conflict between Indigenous people

and the state, into a tangible, workable reality. As with any radical transition, this new phase in Zapatista development naturally drew the attention of scholars across a variety of disciplines curious as to the nature this form of autonomy would now take. In particular, some expressed a great deal of interest in the practical and, therefore, institutional aspects of Zapatista autonomy (Mora 2017). This included a focus on areas like autonomous healthcare (Kozart 2007; Cuevas 2007; Warfield 2015;), education (Neils 2008; Zibechi 2013; Warfield 2015;) and justice (Mora 2015) and how, in particular, the health and wellbeing of communities improved as a result. Meanwhile, others were more concerned with the conceptual underpinnings of this radically new form of Indigenous self-government (Dinerstein 2016; Harvey 2016). This included, among other things, interest in the *Caracoles* (see chapter one) which not only serve a practical function as the new locus of Zapatista political administration - replacing the CCRI as the political and military core of this social movement - but also act as metaphorical conch shells "that open to the outside world and through which the outside world can know the Zapatistas" (Ross 2005: 39).

Yet, despite this body of literature which deals exclusively with the institutional and symbolic nature of Zapatista autonomy, I contend that several gaps still remain. In particular, how did this radical transition shape Zapatista discourse in the declarations? Moreover, how did their approach to the conceptual ideas of democracy, civil society and the state, all of which were dominant and interrelated themes across the five previous declarations, evolve in response to this transition? Through an analysis of the *Sexta Declaración de la Selva Lacandona*, I will reveal the discursive and epistemological nuances which underpin this period of transition, including how ideas around democracy, civil society and the state have been shaped by their new

transnational view of the world which, in turn, influences their uniquely intersectional approach to political resistance.

As the final declaration published by the CCRI, the *Sexta Declaración de la Selva Lacandona* offers a long-term view of Zapatista political resistance. While *La Sexta* does express certain continuities with previous ethnopolitical strategies, particularly in relation to the revolutionaries' intention to maintain arms despite evolving into a much more peaceful social movement, this final declaration does mark a rupture with the political past (Hernández Navarro 2013; EZLN 30th June 2005). As one of the longest declarations published by the CCRI it is divided into six separate subsections which include as follows: 1) De lo que somos; 2) De dónde estamos ahora; 3) De cómo vemos el mundo; 4) De cómo vemos a nuestro país que es México; 5) De lo que queremos hacer; 6) De lo que vamos a hacer.

Throughout the course of this evolving narrative, *La Sexta* offers the reader a more profound take on Mexico's current political situation, where the rebels focus precisely on the imposition of transnational capitalism across the geopolitical space and the consequence this universal reality has for Mexico in particular. Similar to the argument put forward by Hardt and Negri (2000) in their book Empire, the Zapatistas no longer identify either the nation-state or civil society as useful political categories. For example, the term civil society which populated many of the previously published declarations no longer features in the *Sexta Declaración de la Selva Lacandona* and the Zapatistas leave behind reference to the nation-state in *De lo que somos* to focus instead on transnational capitalism as the root source of their and Mexico's democratic problems. In particular, the declaration considers how transnational capitalism, which they acknowledge here as neoliberalism, intersects across different

corporal and geopolitical lines to produce different kinds of personal and political struggles which manifest around the world in different ways. *La Sexta* reads like an awakening, where the Zapatistas acknowledge how other groups also appear to be affected by neoliberalism and how this generates new possibilities to collaborate and learn in a globalisation of resistance. The Zapatistas aim to connect these different anti-neoliberal struggles together by developing a new kind of global resistance, one which does not have any epistemological or geographic centre but which, instead, forges a new alliance from *below and to the Left*. As the Zapatistas say, they aim "no a tratar de resolver desde arriba los problemas de nuestra Nación, sino construir desde abajo por abajo una alternativa a la destrucción neoliberal, una alternativa de izquierda para México" (EZLN 30th June 2005). This political ideal is not just reflected in their decision to disband the EZLN in 2003, thus decentralising the decision-making process across this social movement but also in their outward support of political causes. In the previous decade alone, the Zapatistas have stood in solidarity with the families of the victims of the forty-three students kidnapped and disappeared at Ayotzinapa in 2014 – a struggle for justice which has received worldwide attention as a result of social media – and backed the presidential campaign of Mexico's first indigenous and first female candiate, María de Jesus Patricio Martínez (Marichuy), in the recent 2018 elections.

The 2000 election cycle was a momentous occasion for Mexico. After more than seventy years of PRI rule, then-president of Mexico Ernesto Zedillo conceded electoral defeat for the first time in the history of the PRI. While unexpected, this development paved the way for Vicente Fox and the *Partido Acción Nacional* (hereafter PAN) to assume control over the federal executive later that same year (Shirk 2000). This

peaceful transfer of power between opposing political parties marked the beginning of Mexico's formal transition to a modern, liberal democracy (Levy et al. 2001). While the basic elements of multi-party competition had already been in place up to that point, the PRI had maintained an exclusive form of authority over the federal executive, often resorting to suspect means in order to secure its grip on power (Levy et al. 2001). With Vicente Fox and the PAN now prepared to take office for the first time in history, it appeared as though Mexico had now finally achieved a new democratic norm.

For the Zapatistas, however, this peaceful, democratic transfer of power between political parties does not sufficiently get to the root cause of Mexico's underlying problems. While many different countries across Latin America began to collectively challenge the authority of neoliberalism, including Bolivia where Indigenous and *campesino* groups staged a series of protests between 2000-2005 against the Sánchez de Lozada government over the privatisation of natural resources, the 2000 election cycle in Mexico revealed the country's ongoing commitment to this international economic order. A traditionally conservative party, the PAN was founded in 1939 by professionals, intellectuals, entrepreneurs and Catholics who sought an alternative to the secular, dominant and, above all, paternalistic PRI (Shirk 2000; Cornelius and Craig 1988). The PAN was a liberal, democratic party which encouraged "individual development by helping citizens to help themselves rather than by offering government handouts" (Shirk 2000: 26). Naturally, this policy framework appealed to urban middle-class Mexican voters, the PAN's principal constituency, who had been showing their frustration with PRI hegemony since the late-1960s (Cornelius and Craig 1988). While the PRI remained a dominant force in Mexican politics, supported in large part by the rural *campesino* vote, the PAN had been making steady yet

significant electoral gains in many gubernatorial and local elections since the 1990s (Levy et al. 2001; Shirk 2000; Cornelius and Craig 1988). Within a decade or so, the PAN went from governing just one percent of the Mexican population in 1987 to more than 27 million citizens by the time it entered government in late-2000 (Shirk 2000). Based on this history and trajectory of development, it is no surprise, then, that newly-elected PAN President, Vicente Fox, favoured free-market reforms with an economic agenda that would guarantee continuity rather than complete rupture with the international neoliberal order (Shirk 2000).

With the Mexican electoral system largely unresponsive to the wider challenges afflicting the country, the Zapatistas take it upon themselves to lead the anticapitalist narrative in Mexico through the publication of their sixth and final declaration. This more profound discourse is largely in line with other leftist Latin American leaders including the then newly-appointed president of Bolivia, Evo Morales, who also developed a strongly anticapitalist discourse during his ethnopolitical campaign. By replacing capitalist ideology with new cosmological epistemologies, Morales garnered widespread support among Bolivia's majority Indigenous and *campesino* population, securing victory in 2005 as the country's first Indigenous president. 2005 was the same year in which the sixth declaration was published. While the Zapatistas had always expressed their strong opposition to neoliberal ideology - it was a key reason why the Zapatistas led the 1994 Chiapas insurrection in the first place - previous declarations had been more preoccupied with formalising alternative, concrete democratic arrangements with civil society and against the nation-state including the CND, MLN and the FZLN. However, as *La Sexta* makes clear, the revolutionaries shift gear almost entirely, expressing a more profound concern for the underlying social, cultural,

environmental and human impact a modern, capitalist framework is having across Mexico (EZLN 30th June 200).

The *Sexta Declaración de la Selva Lacandona* recognises capitalism as a dominant form of social architecture, one that goes about organising entire societies into those who have and those who have not (EZLN 30th June 2005). The success of such a regimented system of social control is predicated on the widely held belief that those who accumulate the most wealth, measured by the Zapatistas here in terms of financial and capital resources, exercise the most power over society while the remainder of the social whole are forced to comply, obey and serve on the margins: "en el capitalismo mandan los que tienen el dinero y las cosas y obedecen los que nomás tienen su capacidad" (EZLN 30th June 2005). This exploitative network between the oppressor and the oppressed, whereby the wealthiest in society "les sacan todo lo que puedan", extends beyond human interactions to include the ways in which humanity relates to the natural world, to culture and to our own consciousness and morality as beings in the lifeworld: "el capitalismo todo lo convierte en mercancías, hace mercancías a las personas, a la naturaleza, a la cultura, a la historia, a la conciencia" (EZLN 30th June 2005). The Zapatistas are clear that capitalism as a social system not only legitimises such actions as robbery and theft but even celebrates the plunder of human and other resources "donde los robadores están libres y son admirados y puestos como ejemplos" while capitalism "encarcela y mata a los que rebelan contra la injusticia" (EZLN 30th June 2005). It is clear, then, that capitalism is embedded within the Mexican lifeworld, where the exploitation of everything and everyone is justified by the logic of market forces such that,

> vemos el café empaquetado, en su bolsita o frasco muy bonitillo, pero no vemos al campesino que sufrió para cosechar el café pero no vemos al coyote que le pagó muy barato su trabajo, y no vemos a los trabajadores en la gran empresa dale y dale para empaquetar el café.
>
> (EZLN 30th June 2005).

But, the Zapatistas are clear about how capitalism continues to evolve, beyond the boundaries of the nation-state, to become an aggressive global model of development "[donde] los capitalistas tratan de dominar todo en todo el mundo" (EZLN 30th June 2005). For the Zapatistas, the nation-state, formally the centrepiece of twentieth century geopolitics, has become absorbed into one large country that is defined only by the logic of money or capital: "la globalización neoliberal quiere destruir a las Naciones del mundo y que solo queda una sola Nación o país o sea el país del dinero, del capital" (EZLN 30th June 2005). In this way, the Zapatistas mirror many of the sentiments expressed in Hardt and Negri's (2000: xii) *Empire*, where the global order is no longer defined by nation-states but is instead "united under a single logic of rule". As I mentioned earlier, the concept of "Empire" is not based on any of the traditional imperial projects that were, at one time, defined by geographic boundaries. Instead, the concept of "Empire" eradicates spatial and epistemological divisions to create a global whole, where this "smooth world" opens up every possible corner of this geopolitical space to the penetrable forces of capital (Hardt and Negri 2000: xiii). In this way, neoliberal globalisation, the term used by the Zapatistas here to describe the globalised nature of capitalism's universal expansion, is a war of conquest by corporate interests for a delimited territorial and geopolitical space "[donde] los grandes capitalistas que viven en los países que son poderosos como Estados Unidos quieren

que todo el mundo se hace como una gran impresa donde se producen mercancías y como un gran mercado" (EZLN 30th June 2005).

Yet, the consequences of this globalised regime are many according to the Zapatistas. In the declaration, the Zapatistas reveal how this neoliberal ideological framework intersects across economic, social, cultural, gender, sexual, and ethnic divides producing a range of victim experiences among subaltern groups that suffer beneath the weight of this homogenizing and evasive geopolitical world order. *La Sexta* appears to adopt an intersectional worldview that sheds light on the multiple realities of life beneath the global neoliberal paradigm and how this produces many different experiences of discrimination, marginalisation, subjugation and invisibility that may not necessarily be so obvious at first glance. Crenshaw (1989) was the first to propose and develop a theory of intersectionality through her legal work which she uses as a method for uncovering the many different ways in which African-American women experience racism and discrimination under legal and political institutions and agencies that fail to capture and account for the nuances of identity. For Crenshaw (1989), laws, policies and other mechanisms of governance will remain perpetually blind and ignorant to the experiences of the *Other* if they do not begin to consider the fact that identities are borne at the intersection where gender meets race meets sexuality and so on. By neatly constructing the world around dominant categories and worldviews that never meet, intersect or overlap, legal, political and social institutions recreate and perpetuate the conditions of marginalization and discrimination that condemns the *Other* to a lifetime of obscurity (Crenshaw 1989).

In this context of intersectionality, it appears as though the sixth declaration is an attempt by the Zapatistas to challenge and destabilize conventional categories like

civil society and subalternity that are so often bound up in our attempt as scholars to collectively account for the experiences of marginalization, discrimination and resistance at the hands of global neoliberal forces. The sixth declaration becomes a useful tool to cut through the overpowering presence of categories and groupings to reveal the many different, often individualized experiences of trauma that lie behind the veil of our assumptions. Perhaps the question should not be whether the subaltern speaks but rather who exactly says what and when? In other words, the assumption that the subaltern speaks with a unified voice, something which instantly assumes that trauma is a universal and shared experience that can be captured with one voice, is dismantled under *La Sexta* which exposes multiple traumas resulting from the homogenization of neoliberalism. Viewing the sixth declaration through an intersectional lens reveals the overlaps where neoliberal theory negatively and, sometimes, traumatically intersects across different social barriers.

Therefore, the sixth declaration is an exercise in thinking beyond categories such as ethnicity to expose instead the many other identity forms across the Mexican space that are also negatively bound up in the neoliberal experience. For example, the Zapatistas point out how small *campesino* farmers and business peoples are affected by transnational corporations, "si alguien se trabajaba en una pequeña o mediana empresa pues ya no porque se cerró y la compró una gran transnacional" (EZLN 30th June 2005). Moreover, the declaration sheds light on how homosexual and transgendered peoples find themselves forced to resist the homogenizing tendencies of this global order, "hay homosexuales, lesbianas, transexuales, muchos modos, que no se conforman con que los burlan, y los desprecian, y los maltratan, y hasta los matan porque tienen otro modo que es diferente" (EZLN 30th June 2005). The

revolutionaries also point towards the many Mexican women who resist discrimination under the patriarchal forces of capitalism, "hay mujeres que no dejan que les traten como adorno o que las humillen y desprecien nomás por ser mujeres" (EZLN 30th June 2005) and, the many young students who continue to resist the privatization of education services across the country, "hay los estudiantes que no dejan que se privatice la educación y luchan porque sea gratuita y popular" (EZLN 30th June 2005). While the Zapatistas do not deny that the fight against neoliberalism is a collective one, the sixth declaration stands out as a reminder to first acknowledge the presence of subjectivity in a world that consistently tries to challenge the basic principles of alterity and difference.

Compared to previous declarations, the Zapatistas reimagine the landscape of resistance in Mexico, adopting their worldview to consider all the ways in which global capitalism, which they also refer to as neoliberalism in *La Sexta*, intersects across different subjectivites to produce a political space that neither experiences nor resists neoliberalism in uniform ways. Unlike previous attempts to mobilize civil society, the Zapatistas no longer locate themselves at the heart of this new global resistance. Instead, by acknowledging that neoliberalism impacts individuals and groups across Mexico in multiple ways, the Zapatista now struggle for a globalization of resistance that emphasizes solidarity and respect for difference. They propose an exchange of ideas and material supplies with other, different anti-neoliberal struggles taking place globally, drawing distinctive and meaningful connections between spaces of resistance.

For example, the Zapatistas support the Cuban resistance against US hegemony, offering the Cuban peoples *maíz*, "que ya lleva muchos años [los cubanos]

resistiendo en su camino que no está solo y que no estamos de acuerdo con el bloqueo que les hacen y que vamos a ver el modo de mandarles algo aunque sea maíz para su Resistencia" (EZLN 30th June 2005). Moreover, looking beyond Cuba, the Zapatistas acknowledge anti-neoliberal resistances being led in Ecuador and Bolivia at the time (2005), offering them "un poco de maíz no-transgénico" as part of material aid in their struggle (EZLN 30th June 2005). "A los hermanos y hermanas de la Europa Social", the Zapatista revolutionaries offer to supply *pozol* "que da mucha fuerza en la Resistencia" (EZLN 30th June 2005). Of course, as a sign of their awareness of *difference* in a globalization of resistance, *La Sexta* also draws attention to the fact that this fermented alcoholic corn drink, which is highly potent, may not necessarily be of any advantage to other struggles elsewhere across the world "porque pozol es más bien de nuestro modo y qué tal que les prejudice la panza y se debilitan sus luchas y los derrotan los neoliberalistas" (EZLN 30th June 2005). *Pozol* is a symbolic way for the Zapatista revolutionaries to acknowledge respect for difference in this global resistance against the universal imposition of neoliberal coloniality in Mexico and around the world (EZLN 30th June 2005). Through the exchange and transfer of ideas and material supplies the Zapatistas open up fresh space "[donde] quepan todos los mundos que existen porque quieren destruir los neoliberalistas y porque no se dejan sí nomás sino luchan por la humanidad" (EZLN 30th 2005).

Conclusion

This chapter has shown, in great detail, the importance of the Zapatista *Delcaraciones de la Selva Lacandona* as destabilising influences in the political dynamics of neoliberal Mexico. Not only do the Zapatista *Declaraciones* raise and reflect on issues of democracy and justice in Mexico, but they present alternative ideas and proposals that critically evaluate the world, rearticulating a much more hopeful and utopian space that lies just outside the limits of electoral democracy with the support of civil society. The *Declaraciones* describe how Zapatista ideas concerning democracy and civil society change as they adjust to new political realities in a constantly evolving lifeworld where space is continually reshaped and reimagined in ways often beyond their control. From a declaration of war against the neoliberal state in the *Primera Declaración de la Selva Lacandona* in 1994 to a globaisation of resistance in the *Sexta Declaración de la Selva Lacandona* in 2005, Zapatista revolutionaries continue to operate and evolve a dynamic and adaptable ethnopolitical model that thinks beyond the conditions of modernity/coloniality (Mignolo 2011; 2000) towards a more hopeful futurescape, permanently committed to the dismantling of negative capitalist regimes (Rabasa 2010).[21]

The final chapter of this thesis remains focused on the theme of utopia as an important analytical device in the study of ethnopolitical struggle in the neoliberal

[21] In the years since the Zapatistas downgraded the role of the EZLN in the mid-2000s, each of the five *Caracoles* have been responsible for developing and articulating their own communication strategy. The Zapatistas now publish all communiqués online (http://enlacezapatista.ezln.org.mx/) which also serves as a digital archive, where one can source every declaration and communiqué that was ever published by the EZLN since 1994. However, considering that this chapter is the first of its kind to formally analyse the long-standing Zapatista *Declaraciones* in terms of their content and influence in Mexico, it is clear that there is relatively little scholarship which adequately explores the power and potency of Zapatista text. With political figures like Subcomandante Marcos and the EZLN no longer speaking for the Zapatista grassroots, there is significant scope for research to consider the ways in which outward communication is strategised by the Zapatistas and whether any tensions and challenges emerge between *Caracoles* in this post-guerrilla phase of their development.

lifeworld. While Zapatista revolutionaries reflect on a future *not yet* in the declarations, chapter four examines how former Bolivian president Evo Morales combines the use of performance and discourse to draw attention to Andean histories which he then applies to the construction of Andean utopias in contemporary Bolivia. While both ethnopolitical social movements engage the use of utopias as critically reflective tools to *think* and *do* beyond the limits of modernity and neoliberal coloniality, both utopian frameworks appear to work or *look* in opposite directions.

Chapter Four

(De)Constructing Andean Utopia in Evo Morales's Bolivia: Analysis of Presidential Discourse and the 2011 TIPNIS Controversy

Introduction

From thinking beyond the limits of the neoliberal state in the Zapatista *Declaraciones de la Selva Lacandona*, attention now turns to observing the ways former president Evo Morales Ayma reworked and reshaped the parameters of national political space around the historic struggle for Indigenous rights and social justice in Bolivia. Applying Flores Galindo's (1994 [1986]) *la utopía andina* as theoretical framework, this fourth and final chapter analyses, for the first time, two inaugural speeches delivered by Morales in January 2006 in which he strategically combined the use of performance, discourse and memory to convey a new sense of the political which ruptured with the neoliberal past. By drawing on the memories of anticolonial revolutionary figures such as Tupac Katari and Tupac Amaru II together with an

elaborate performance of Indigenous ritual at the ancient ceremonial grounds of Tiwanaku, Morales situated his presidency as the culmination of a long struggle for social justice which defined the previous five hundred years of anticolonial resistance in the Andes. The strategic appropriation and reworking of historical narratives and pre-colonial myth and memory in the political present constitutes the essence of Andean utopias, according to Flores Galindo (1994 [1986]), and has been a characteristic feature of anticolonial revolution in the Andes since the colonial encounter in 1532. Not only does this indicate that Flores Galindo's (1994 [1986]) Andean utopia is a suitable framework for this chapter but that its application in the analysis of Morales's two 2006 inaugural speeches constitutes a new dimension in the study of presidential discourse in Bolivia unveiling the ways Morales redefined space and endowed it with new meaning. However, in addition to the study of presidential discourse and performance in Morales's Bolivia, this chapter also draws attention, once again, to the 2011 TIPNIS controversy. Here, this chapter argues that the planned construction of this highway development both enhanced and destabilised Morales's image as Andean decoloniser. On one hand, I argue that this highway symbolised Morales's commitment to renegotiate a history of chronic underdevelopment and to enhance Bolivia's economic standing across the pan-Andean region. On the other, I draw attention to Morales's excessive use of force towards anti-highway demonstrators at Chaparina on 25th September 2011 and reveal the continuities with the neoliberal past, particularly in relation to the state's tendency to manage and police Indigenous protesters. Finally, I establish broad links between the TIPNIS controversy and the downfall of the president in 2019 which prompts us to ask what his resignation from office might mean for Andean utopias in Bolivia and the Andes going forward.

This chapter is divided into three sections. In section one I spend time defining the concept of Andean utopia in relation to the Andes more generally and Bolivia specifically. In section two, I apply Flores Galindo's concept to the analysis of presidential discourse at La Paz and Tiwanaku, illustrating how Morales uses performance, discourse and memory to redefine the national political space. Moreover, I also explore the significance of the constituent assembly as a mechanism used to bring this utopian vision to life. Finally, section three discusses the significance of the TIPNIS controversy in relation to Morales's utopia, arguing how it both enhances and destabilises his image as an Indigenous president who respects and represents the plurinational character of Bolivia.

Section One

Defining *la utopía andina*

La utopía andina is a concept that was originally developed in 1978 by Peruvian scholar and historian Alberto Flores Galindo in collaboration with his close friend and colleague Manuel Bruga. It emerged through discussions they had on millenarianism in the Andes and was developed and refined through a series of collaborate projects including one funded by UNESCO in 1982 (Aguirre and Walker 2010). However, during this time, both Flores Galindo and Bruga developed differing interpretations of *la utopía andina* which could no longer be reconciled through further collaborative research in this area. This divergence in opinion resulted in the publication of two separate texts on the subject, one by each author (Manrique 2013; Aguirre and Walker 2010; de la Cadena 1990).

Flores Galindo published *Buscando una Inca. Identidad y utopía en los Andes* in 1986 (Manrique 2013; Aguirre and Walker 2010). An immediate success, *Buscando una Inca* was noted for its innovative reinterpretation of Andean *campesino* history. While Bruga released his text, *Nacimiento de una utopía. Muerte y resurreción en los Andes*, almost three years later in 1989, Flores Galindo's text had already drawn substantial attention, winning the prestigious *Casas de las Americas* prize in 1986 (Manrique 2013; Aguirre and Walker 2010). Flores Galindo wrote *Buscando una Inca* at a time in Andean history when he witnessed the beginning of yet another revolutionary encounter take place on the Andean political horizon. In his mind, this ignited fresh concern over the historic divides that still existed between Hispanic and Indigenous populations in the contemporary Andean lifeworld. In particular, *Sendero Luminoso*, a

Maoist guerrilla insurgency began actively recruiting and mobilising *campesino* and Indigenous populations throughout the Peruvian Andes, eventually manifesting in an anticolonial campaign of violence against the neoliberal Peruvian state in 1980. While Flores Galindo did not survive to witness the violent escalation of this conflict and the devastation it caused across Peru - the author prematurely died in 1990 at age forty of a brain tumor - he was most concerned about how this particular revolutionary campaign related to ongoing cycles of Indigenous revolutionary activity in the Andes throughout the previous five hundred years of (neo)colonial rule (Aguirre and Walker 2010). A dedicated socialist, Flores Galindo expressed the greatest of concern for socialism in the Andes and, the persistent failure of anticolonial revolutions more generally to bring about adequate change and to restore social justice for the Indigenous and *campesino* majority. His work is both inspired by and builds upon the intellectual endeavours of Peruvian José Carlos Mariátegui who developed a rigourous critique of Marxist theory (Humberto Flores 2006). Mariátegui disputed the universal and abstract application of Marxism across Latin America which he claimed failed to account for Indigenous experiences and subjectivities and, as such, was limited in terms of its ability to liberate communities from the excesses of capitalism or, as Humberto Flores (2006: 76) writes, "las pretensiones universales del capitalismo de su tiempo". In this context, *Buscando una Inca* must be considered a radical political project of the socialist-Left that sheds light on the strategic role Andean histories play in shaping revolutionary activities and their struggle for social justice.

It is important to point out at this stage that, while Flores Galindo writes from his perspective as a Peruvian historian and scholar, his work does in fact have implications for the wider Andean region. The Andes is a distinctive region in South

America which trancends the nation-state borders of Peru, Ecuador and Bolivia to reveal a geographic space that shares many cultural and historical traits. In *Buscando una Inca*, Flores Galindo is chiefly concerned with the relationship between Andean societies and the western world and how a violent encounter between these worlds more than five centuries ago shaped a perpetual conflict in the political present which manifests around key issues relating to history, memory, identity and nationhood (Aguirre and Walker 2010; Flores Galindo 1994 [1986]). Identifying the recurrent tensions at play between Indigenous and Hispanic traditions, *Buscando una Inca* addresses how Andean societies have consistently engaged the use of specific memories and histories of the pre-colonial world to negotiate political futures beyond the conditions of colonial subjugation and domination in the present (Flores Galindo 1994 [1986]). Divided into eleven essays, *Buscando una Inca* provides the reader with an extensive account of Andean revolutionary history from the time of the colonial encounter in 1532 right through to the political present (*Sendero Luminoso*), a colonial history of revolutionary struggle that is not just exclusively Peruvian but is also shared, in large part, by Bolivia in what is a collective Andean historical imaginary. As Aguirre and Walker (2010) note, Flores Galindo's essayist style allows him to capture hundreds of years worth of Andean history in a single text, to observe not only how memory and history have recurrently featured as important devices in the creation of bold new revolutionary futures, but, more importantly, how these memories and histories of the Andean past have been influenced by interactions, exchanges and mediations within the complex social dynamic of the (neo)colonial lifeworld.

At this point, it is worth noting that the concept of Andean utopia devised by Flores Galindo in the late-twentieth century is neither based on nor linked to Thomas

More's use of the term utopia in a much earlier publication of the same name in 1516 (More 2009 [1516]). While arguably both *utopias* are political projects in their own right, they have separate agendas which places them on decidedly different conceptual pathways resulting in different outcomes. As original founder of the term, More deliberately confused the definition of utopia to simultaneously mean no-place (*ou-topos*) that is also a good place (*eu-topos*) (Vieira and Marder 2012; Claeys 2010; More 2009 [1516]). In his text, More created the fictional island republic of *Utopia* which exists outside history in an imagined space, a complete intellectual creation on his part (More 2009 [1516]; Flores Galindo 1994 [1986]). While More's Utopia served as an opportunity to understand and critically evaluate life in Europe, "where wise social planning [was] not so easy to find", his publication unwittingly founded a literary genre designed to teach and delighted its readership by challenging their perceptions of everyday reality through imagined futurescapes (More 2009 [1516]: 6; Vieira and Marder 2012; Claeys 2010; Quijano 2003). As Davis notes, literary or transcendent utopias were just a collection of futures cut off from the useless burden of the past (Vieira and Marder 2012). They isolated time and space, leaving the past behind as a closed case while encouraging readers to focus only on the future as the privileged seat of all European hope and expectation (Vieira and Marder 2012; Quijano 2003). As Flores Galindo (1986: 22) notes, utopia simply represented "una forma de soñar despierto [...] la imaginación pero controlada y conducida por la crítica".

On the contrary, *la utopía andina* is firmly rooted in time and space and is concerned with the memories of the Inca past as an alternative to the colonial present. According to Flores Galindo (1986: 39), a distinct feature of *la utopía andina* is the fact that notions of the perfect and the ideal do not exist "fuera de la historia o

remotamente al inicio de los tiempos". Instead, as Flores Galindo (1986: 39) writes, *la utopía andina* "es un acontecimiento histórico. Ha existido. Tiene un nombre: el Tahuantinsuyo. Unos gobernantes: los incas. Una capital: el Cusco". In his view, *la utopía andina* "ha sido cambiado para imaginar un reino sin hambre, sin explotación y donde los hombres andinos vuelvan a gobernar" (Flores Galindo 1986: 39). It represented "el fin del desorden y la obscuridad. Inca significa idea o principo ordenador" (Flores Galindo 1986: 39).

Central to *la utopía andina* is what is known and understood across the Andes as *el mito del Inkarrí* (López Baralt 2016; Flores Galindo 1986). Following the arrival of the Spanish in the Andes in the year 1532, Pedro Pizarro and his troops occupied the Inca city of Tahuantinsuyo (López Baralt 2016; Flores Galindo 1986). To cement their authority and control over the region, Pizarro and his troops captured the Inca king Atahuallpa in 1532 and sentenced him to death on 25th July 1533 (López Baralt 2016). The death of Atahuallpa is central to the history of the Spanish conquest and is a profound moment of rupture in the historical consciousness of Andean peoples past and present. As Flores Galindo (1986: 29) writes, "no fue una muerte que facilmente pudiera ser olvidada [y] fue la más mala hazaña que los españoles han hecho en todo este imperio de Indias". While the death of the Inca did indeed symbolise the collapse of the pre-colonial world order and the dawn of a new era defined by the foreign occupation of the Spaniards "[que] habían conseguido tierra e indios mediante sus armas", it did not necessarily bring about an end to the memories of this Andean past which continued to circulate and permeate public consciousness and discourse in different ways across the Andes (Flores Galindo 1986: 29). During his execution, Atahuallpa's head was severed from his body and his corpse then stolen by supporters

so as to avoid any further desecration of his remains by Spanish authorities (López Baralt 2016). The sparation of the king's head and body combined with the unknown location of his burial fuelled what became known as *el mito del Inkarrí,* where many Andeans believe that "algún día las partes del Inka se reconstituirán, se unirán el cuerpo con la cabeza y será el tiempo del retorno a la liberación y a una nueva época de oro, se producirá un Pachakuti" (López Baralt 2016: 7). In other words, someday the Inca king will return and rescue the Andes from the colonial grip of foreign European powers.

Pachakuti is a key concept in the construction of utopias in the Andes and describes a cataclysmic reversal in time and space, where one era is replaced by another in the mental universe of Andean subjects (López Baralt 2016; Postero 2007; Flores Galindo 1994 [1986]). A unique concept to the Andes, *Pachakuti* has multiple complimentary and divergent meanings, where it can assume positive or negative connotations in the minds of Indigenous subjects depending on circumstance (Postero 2007). While commonly associated with the negative consequences brought about by the colonial encounter in 1532, where the Andes became defined by slavery, disease, racism and death, *Pachakuti* was also the name of an Inca king responsible for transforming the Inca civilisation into an imperial superpower that aggressively controlled vast swathes of the Andean region for several centuries until its downfall in 1532. According to Cartwright (2016), the title *Pachakuti*, which the Inca king bestowed upon himself, loosely translates to mean "reverser of the world" or "earth shaker" and, in this context, was associated with the elevation of the Inca in the Andean world order "and the creation of an empire which would eventually be the largest ever seen in the Americas". Therefore, like many concepts in the Andean world, *Pachakuti*

assumes dual meaning, referring to moments of catastrophe or renovation and renewal in a constant cycle or turning about in the lifecycle of the Andean universe. In the context of *Pachakuti,* it is clear, then, that time and space interrelate and overlap, producing a world that is unstable yet full of change, possibility, reform and renewal (Cartwright 2016; López Baralt 2016; Postero 2007; Flores Galindo 1994 [1986]).

As opposed to the strictly linear worldview offered by European utopias, where history remains confined to the past as "another country", cyclicality is a useful way in which to discern how time and space traditionally intersect throughout the Andean lifeworld (Canessa 2008: 355). As the oldest and most fundamental unit of territorial-spatial organisation in the Andes, the *ayllu*, which I discussed in chapter two, offers us a glimpse into how time and space are traditionally organised vis-à-vis the other.

The *ayllu* performs as a cosmic space of interrelationality and duality, where communities mediate between the human or earthly world above and the spirit world below (Canessa 2012). Birth and death are not opposite ends of a horizontal and linear timeline but are key moments bound up in a continuous and repetitive lifecycle, where spirits move between these partially connected worlds inhabiting space as human and non-human lifeforms in the cosmos (Yampara Huarachi 2017; Alderman 2016; de la Cadena 2015; Canessa 2012; Huanacuni Mamani 2010; Abercrombie 1998). To illustrate this point further, I return to Alderman (2016) who describes how the Bolivian-Andean *Kallawaya* community frequently communicate and engage with nearby mountain spirits or *mulchulas* which they believe contain the spirits of dead ancestors who have passed on from the human world and entered a spiritual imaginary where they occupy place and space in different, other worldly forms. This does not exclude the *Kallawaya* ancestors from participating in the daily politics of the

ayllu, where they remain important social actors who must be regularly consulted on issues through rituals and other performances that take place within the community. While this reinforces an-other way in which to *do* politics in the Bolivian-Andes, it also speaks to a particular relationship with history, memory and the past as something that is close and intimate to Andean societies, always present in the lifeworld but just existing in other earthly ways that remain unknown to European epistemologies and *ways of doing* (Yampara Huarachi 2017; Canessa 2012; 2008; Huanacuni Mamani 2010).

Moreover, through his observations, Canessa (2008) notes how the Bolivian-Andean community of *Pocobaya* speak about the ancient, pre-colonial past with a keen sense of familiarity, using grammatical constructions in their native Aymara which reveal their personal experiences of history and of the ancient past. For example, the Aymara word for history (*nayra*) also means eyes which highlights how history is not just something that can be personally experienced but that it also exists everywhere in the places and spaces that can be seen and heard. Unlike the more ambiguous characteristics of European utopian thought, where the past and future remain on permanently separate ends of a linear timeline, both time and space coalesce around the *ayllu,* where history informs the very basis of everything Indigenous people see and do in the Andean lifeworld. Furthermore, Canessa (2012) observes how the *Pocobayeños* frequently hear the Incas in the wind. Following the colonial encounter more than five hundred years ago, *Pocobayeños* believe that the Incas never disappeared. Instead, similar to the ancestors of the *Kallawaya* community, the Incas escaped into nearby mountains, where they can be frequently heard within the *ayllu* as earthly spirits that continue to exist and *be* in the world as other (in)visible lifeforms. It is clear, then, that an Andean sense of history can only be

understood as a living and breathing thing which not only sustains life in some of the most obvious ways (agriculture), but is also the source of all hope, expectation and anticipation in the Andean universe. As López Baralt (2016: 5) writes, *el Inkarrí* or the return of the Inca,

> se relaciona con transformaciones poderosas, es el fin del mundo y el inicio de uno nuevo; es cósmico, deben existir alineamientos y ordenamientos de toda naturaleza, todo debe coincidir y confluir para el momento del gran cambio, de la transformación del Pachakuti. El mundo debe darse la vuelta y ponerse al revés, el Inkarrí es la absorción de todas las energías celestes, telúricas y comunarias que en el momento preciso brotan y estallan de adentro de la tierra, donde por siglos estuvieron acumlándose para iniciar el cataclismo; no es una persona, no es la comunidad y no es la naturaleza. Es el todo que adquiere un sentido en un momento preciso, ni antes ni después. Pero que una vez que está en marcha debe manifestarse en toda su expresión.

Such sense of anticipation and expectation for the return of the Inca or *Pachakuti* opened up new spaces where anticolonial revolutionary struggles could shape and rework myth, memory and history in the political present to organise and unify entire populations of Andean societies around collective action that aimed to wrest control of the Andes from Spanish colonial authorities (Flores Galindo 1994 [1986]). However, it is important to bear in mind that the concept of Andean utopia is neither static nor unchanging but has instead evolved across time and space where, memories, myths and histories intersect and merge with Eurocentric epistemologies in the political present to acquire new meanings in the pursuit of more socially just lifeworlds for Indigenous and *campesino* majorities (Flores Galindo 1994 [1986]). It would be a very difficult task for this chapter to fully capture the enormous length and breadth of anticolonial revolutionary struggle in the Andes and how they all shaped

and reworked myths and memories of the ancient pre-colonial past for their own political and social gain in the present. Moreover, it is also worth mentioning that Andean utopias were not all necessarily located in precise moments of revolutionary change and transformation in Andean colonial society. As Bruga (1989) argues, song, dance, theatre and other cultural rituals are also considered to have transmitted meaning, nostalgia and a longing for the return of the Inca. In this way, *la utopía andina* is best understood in plural form (Andean utopias), where it has developed in two phases (Flores Galindo 1994 [1986]). As I will show, while Andean utopias of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries were broadly infused with elements of Catholicism, emphasising the literal return or resurrection of the Inca, contemporary Andean utopias are much more about the struggle for socially just worlds and the restoration of harmony across the Andean lifeworld which had been interrupted by the colonial encounter (Postero 2007; Flores Galindo 1994 [1986]).

In particular, I focus here on the revolutions led by Tupac Amaru II between the years 1780-1782 not because they represent early evidence for the presence of Andean utopias in Andean colonial society. On the contrary, cycles of anticolonial revolution were well established across the Andes by this stage in history. Instead, the revolutions of Amaru II provide ample evidence for all the ways in which Andean utopias evolved within and infused with elements of colonial society to reproduce a series of revolutionary struggles that engaged the use of myth, memory and history of the pre-colonial world to negotiate alternative futurescapes beyond negative colonial realities.



(Image one is included here to draw attention to the ways in which Andean cosmologies intersected and overlapped with Christianity in the region. Pictured is a depiction of the Cerro Rico outside Potosí on the Bolivian altiplano. The image presents Pachamama, the Andean earth goddess as the Virgen Mary who is worshopped by Spanish religious and political rulers from both heaven and earth. While Christian iconography dominates the frame, careful observation reveals the presence of Andean influences, including the image of the sun and the moon either side of the mountain. Painted by an unknown artist the Virgen del Cerro reveals the types of aesthetics that emerged from within Andean colonial society between the 16th-18th centuries. This painting is on display at the Casa de la Moneda in Potosí.)

Tied to the myth of the *Inkarrí*, Tupac Amaru II, otherwise known as José Gabriel Condorcanqui, claimed himself to be a descendent of Inca nobility and a legitimate heir to the Inca throne (Postero 2007; Flores Galindo 1994 [1986]). Assuming the name of an earlier member of the Inca nobility (Tupac Amaru) who battled against the tyranny of Spanish occupation in the sixteenth century, Amaru II was a devout Christian who prepared to lead an army that would usher in a *Pachakuti*, where world order would be restored and the Inca would reign supreme over the Andes once again (Postero 2007; Flores Galindo 1994 [1986]). As the image above suggests, it was clear that in eighteenth century colonial society notions of Andeanness had long fused with elements of Christianity, where the return of the Inca often consolidated around the elevation of key revolutionary figures who assumed messianic proportions similar to the biblical resurrection of Jesus Christ (Flores Galindo 1994 [1986]). Writers like Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, the son of an Inca noblewoman and a Spanish conqueror, played a key role in this epistemological infusion, producing the first chronicle of the Inca civilisation from the perspective of an emerging *mestizaje* which shaped and reworked elements of the ancient past to negotiate and legitimate their own identities as biological products of the conquest as well as to placate wider European audiences. Fiengo-Varn (2003) writes that de la Vega's *Los Comentarios Reales* were produced under the pressure of European culture and censorship. She adds that they provided an account of Peruvian-Andean history which "celebrates European notions of platonic progression [...] while obscuring the hard realities of colonial practices" (Fiengo-Varn 2003: 119). Inca Garcilasco de la Vega "interpreted the Spanish Conquest as a tragic but inevitable event, to be accepted as the prelude or gateway to a new synthesis based on the union of Spaniard and Indian,

guided by the inner harmony of Christian and Inca laws and wisdom" (Brading 1986: 7).

To that, Flores Galindo (1994 [1986]) writes, that many, including Amaru II, read and disseminated de la Vega's *Los Commentarios Reales* which were circulated widely throughout the Andes. He adds that, in one instance, this narrative specifically presented the Inca Empire not as a diarchy (which it was) but as a monarchy (which it was not), which meant that when Andean peoples in the eighteenth century "se espere o se busque la vuelta del Inca se pensará en singular: un individuo, un personaje al que legítimamente corresponda el imperio y que asuma los rasgos de mesías" (Flores Galindo 1994 [1986]: 43; Fiengo-Varn 2003; Brading 1986). In other words, the world of the Incas was recreated in the mind of a *mestizo* whose greatest concern was mediating the complex relationship between Indigenous and colonial societies so as to avoid his own possible rejection as a member from either one. Narratives like *Los Commentarios Reales* developed an official status among colonial societies, influencing the thoughts and practices of both Andean and European populations and how they perceived and understood the Inca past. This historical text was accepted reading among Spanish and Indigenous nobility, where Andean utopias appeared as elite-led projects that emphasized the important role of charismatic leaders and their ability to unite entire societies around anticolonial revolutionary struggle. It was clear, then, that *Los Commentarios Reales* inspired Amaru's idea of the imperial restoration of the Inca and justified his central position as Andean savior within this wider utopian construction (Aguirre and Walker 2010).

Even though Amaru's eighteenth century rebellion spread across the Andean region, influencing the famous siege of La Paz in 1781 by fellow revolutionaries Tupac

Katari and Bartolina Sisa, it was successfully defeated within two years by colonial authorities. The revolutionary leaders, including Amaru II, Katari and Sisa, were all subsequently sentenced to death by Spanish judges (Postero 2007; Flores Galindo 1994 [1986]; Ainsworth Means 1919; Valencia Vega n.d). While the Spanish considered this defeat a victory, consigning this revolutionary activity to the confines of history, it only sought to reconfirm belief in the perpetual cycle of the *Inkarrí* among wider Andean public consciousness, where the Inca would return when the time was right (Postero 2007; Flores Galindo 1994 [1986]). This sentiment was duly reinforced by Katari's final words before death: "volveré y seré millones" (Valencia Vega n.d). While the memory of these revolutionary figures continues to circulate throughout the Andean imaginary, it was clear that their deaths signified the end of the literal return of the Inca, according to Flores Galindo (1994 [1986]). Instead, Andean utopias of the nineteenth, twentieth and twenty-first centuries embraced the struggle for social justice and the restoration of idylic and harmonious Andean societies (Flores Galindo 1994 [1986]).

In Bolivia, the presence of Andean utopias in the twentieth century was reflected by the rise of the *Katarista* movement which reworked historical narratives of the pre-colonial past to develop a political project of ethnic recovery in the present. The *Katarista* movement emerged in response to the assimilationist agenda of the 1952 Revolutionary *Movimiento Nacional Revolucionario* (MNR) state which promoted *mestizaje* as the new cultural norm in Bolivian society (Mesa Gisbert et al. 2016; Canessa 2000). Central to *Katarismo* was Fausto Reinaga's *indianismo* or Indigenous nationalism which vehemently rejected Occidental modernity in favour of an Indigenous socialism (Reinaga 2001 [1970]). Similar to Mariátegui in Peru, Reinaga

(2001 [1970]) criticised the foreign imposition of socialist-Marxist thought from abroad which, in his view, was unable to account for the collective experiences of local Indigenous marginalization in Bolivia. Instead, Reinaga (2001 [1986]) rooted his socialism in the ancient past "[donde] hace 10,000 años antes de Cristo", he writes, "nosotros edificamos una sociedad perfecta; en que el hombre era felíz porque no tenía ni hambre, ni temor, ni miedo" (Reinaga 2001 [1970]: 444). Reinaga (2001 [1970]: 446) defines in his *La Revolución India* his notion of *la República Socialista India* as follows,

> donde no habrá ni explotación del hombre por el hombre ni discriminación racial alguna. Una República donde el hombre no será valorado, medido, pesado y tasado por el color de su piel, ni por el volumen y brillo de su oro: producto de su crimen, sino por su cerebro, el trabajo creador y la santidad de su vida. Una República, donde día tras día se harán la condiciones para que el hombre pueda, es esta tierra y en esta vida, desarrollar la plenitud total de su personalidad y -superando la aliención impuesta por el Occidente-, alcanzar su verdadera y real libertad.

While Reinaga and his *Partido Indio de Bolivia* (PIB) struggled to motivate any significant social change towards that particular socialist horizon he describes above, many Indigenous people began to question the merits of a revolutionary state system which forced them to reject their ethnic ways in favour of state citizenship that was "organised hierarchially on a clientelist basis" (Canessa 2000: 124). Concerned with ethnic identity and its survival beneath the cultural weight of state-endorsed *mestizaje*, intellectuals from rural and urban communities gathered at the ancient ceremonial site of Tiwanaku in the year 1973 to launch the Tiwanaku manifesto (Escárzaga 2012; Canessa 2000). The Tiwanaku manifesto brought the politics of

Katarismo to the attention of the state and the wider Bolivian public, where they proposed, for the first time in history, the creation of an Aymara state (Escárzaga 2012; Canessa 2000).

As the name suggests, *Katarismo* combined elements of the past, including an emphasis on Tupac Katari and Aymara social organizing and cosmology, with the struggle for social justice in the political present, where they demanded ethnic rights and greater cultural visibility articulated through a language of nationhood (Postero 2007; Canessa 2000). Political radicals within *Katarismo*, including Felipe Quispe, spoke a particular language that was reminiscent of *Pachakuti,* where he celebrated "la forma de organización social previa a la llegada de los españoles, una forma de organización social superior a la que éstos trajeron, que denomina sistema comunista de ayllus, donde hombre y mujer eran felices porque no había hambre y miseria" (Escárzaga 2012: 202). Through his discourse, Quispe promoted an inversion of worlds where the modern-colonial society, symbolized by the prescence of the Bolivian nation-state, would be erased and replaced by "la construcción de un Estado independiente de trabajadores Aymaras, Qhiswas y demás nacionalidades" (Escárzaga 2012: 204). He adds that the total and complete destruction of a modern, capitalist Bolivia was necessary in order to pave the way for the return of what Quispe refers to as *la Comuna Aymara*, "[una] sociedad sin clases, ni razas, donde reine el colectivismo de Ayllus, como en tiempos del Tiwanakense Aymara" (Escárzaga 2012: 204). Collectively, Reinaga, Quispe and *Katarismo* represented the resurgence of a socialist-Left in the Bolivian-Andes that reworked memories of the ancient past around political projects in the present. Capitalising on the eighteenth century image of revolutionary hero Tupac Katari, Quispe and the *Kataristas* generated clear and

decisive Andean utopian imaginaries which aimed to consolidate and unify entire Indigenous populations around the struggle for social justice in Bolivia, to "construir el Socialismo Horizontal Colectivista de Ayllus y volver al Qullasuyu original", the name given to the south eastern region of the Inca Empire (Escárzaga 2012: 203).

Yet, while their presence was significant, their material gains were minimal and, as a result of internal divisions, disagreements and political differences, *Katarismo* eventually disbanded. It fragmented into a series of smaller urban-based political parties which frequently contested elections in cities like El Alto (Aymara stronghold), having limited widespread appeal among the general voting public throughout Bolivia (Lazar 2008; Canessa 2000).

Finally, the 2000-2005 anti-neoliberal protest movements, which I have documented at length elsewhere in the thesis, reflected the presence of Andean utopia in twenty-first century Bolivia by the way in which they combined elements of the past with the struggle for social justice in the political present. While these protest movements in Cochabamba, the Chapare and El Alto did not collectively unite to form a single, national response to the neoliberal crisis in Bolivia, they did all universally resist the tendency of the neoliberal state to privatise the country's natural resources which transferred public ownership rights into the hands of private transnational interests (Gutiérrez Aguilar 2014). Authors, including Dunkerley (2007) and Webber (2011), unanimously agree that this period of social unrest in contemporary Bolivian history can be accurately described as a social revolution because it carved out fresh space for radical transformative action and political renewal. However, Gutíerrez Aguilar (2014: xviii) has since referred to this five year period of social unrest as the "beginning of an era of Pachakuti", where the centrality of the state and neoliberal

institutional power was displaced by a polyphonic and plural social capacity that distorted the heteronymous political order. In her view, these mobilizations represented a historic moment of transformation, where Indigenous communities "rose up forcefully [...] in a proposal to take political power away from the traditional state and subject it [...] to local decision making" (Gutiérrez Aguilar 2014: 187).

Through a series of *bloqueos* or roadblocks in 2003 across the Andean city of El Alto, Aymara protesters staged an elaborate defence of Bolivian patrimony which starved La Paz of all vital supplies in an act akin to earlier anticolonial struggles led by Tupac Katari and his wife Bartolina Sisa in the eighteenth century. Building on the momentum of earlier struggles in Cochabamba and the Chapare, where Indigenous and *campesino* protesters resisted the privatization of water and the eradication of the coca leaf respectively, these mobilizations led to the collapse of the neoliberal state as this era of *Pachakuti* reverberated throughout Bolivia. Gutiérrez Aguilar's (2014) emphasis on the reverberation of *Pachakuti* speaks to the motion or rhythem of this change as it echos throughout the political lifeworld beyond the precise moment at which the neoliberal state collapsed and towards the struggle for a new Andean horizon led by president Evo Morales Ayma and his *Movimiento Al Socialismo – Instrumento Político por la Soberanía del Pueblo* (MAS-IPSP).

In what follows, I locate the presence of Andean utopia in Morales's Bolivia. Through careful analysis of his two 2006 inaugural speeches, this chapter observes the ways in which Morales capitalized on Andean memories, myths and histories to orientate his presidency in the political present. By mediating between the political past and the present, Morales redefined the collective struggle for social justice and

positioned his presidency as the culmination of a long and difficult history of anticolonial revolution.

Section Two

Discourse, Performance, Memory: Constructing Andean Utopia in Morales's Bolivia

Now that the general idea behind *la utopía andina* has been developed for this chapter, my attention turns to unearthing some of the ways in which the concept of Andean utopia was active in Morales's Bolivia. While work in this area remains limited, Postero (2017; 2007) is one of the few scholars to address how utopian visions of Andean culture in Bolivia helped to renegotiate spaces and open up new possibilities for political and social reform. Writing in the aftermath of Morales's 2006 election, Postero (2007: 19) argues how Indigenous myth and memory continued to be reworked and reshaped as a "cultural resource for empowerment" in Bolivia. In particular, she writes how Morales and his MAS-IPSP government frequently deployed the concept of *pachakuti*, the reversal of time/space in the Andean mental universe, as a discursive mechanism "to convince the public that this government is different from all others before it" and that it is here to enact political and cultural reforms "[en] un profundo proceso de descolonización política, económica, social y cultural" (MAS-IPSP 2014).

While Postero (2017; 2007) adopts a considerably broad overview of Andean utopia in Morales's Bolivia, I propose to offer a more focused analysis here. In particular, I propose to locate the presence of Andean utopia in Morales's political discourse and practice. By focusing specifically within the context of his first presidential term (2006-2010), this section will combine an analysis of performance and discourse in Morales's Bolivia to reveal how this president transmitted his sense of

Andean utopia via modern and non-modern forms in the pursuit of social justice. While Morales delivered a more formal speech to Congress on 22nd January 2006, where the president laid out a series of important policy proposals that would shape the legal and institutional framework for Bolivia, the president also participated in an elaborate Indigenous-led ceremony at the ancient site of Tiwanaku. Here, Morales delivered a brief speech at Tiwanaku, where he engaged the use of performance to transmit a new sense of the political which gently coaxed his Andean utopia into life. By combining the use of discourse and performance over this three-day inaugural process, Morales unveiled how myth, memory and history were revived in the political present, forming an important foundation upon which to build successful ethnopolitical futurescapes. To navigate the complexities of this discussion, I have opted to analyse performance and discourse under separate subsections before tying together my conclusions towards the end.

Performing Andean Utopia at Tiwanaku

Following Morales's successful victory at the polls on 18th December 2005, where the MAS-IPSP secured a resounding 53.7% of the national vote, the first of two inaugural ceremonies took place at the ancient ceremonial site of Tiwanaku (Webber 2011; Holton n.d). Tiwanaku was a carefully chosen location for its symbolic appeal among ethnic communities and was indicative of a new era in Bolivian politics. A world heritage site, Tiwanaku is located along the Bolivian *altiplano*, a little over an hour by road south of La Paz (Friedman 2008). While a popular tourist site today, Tiwanaku has been a source of Bolivian pride throughout much of the twentieth century and is the symbolic heartland of Aymara identity. Aymara people collectively claim this site as their ancestral home (Friedman 2008). While Tiwanaku may be considered a symbol of "common identity and shared memory" among Aymara peoples, Holton (n.d) points out how they are the latest in a long line of political and cultural groups to appropriate this site as a landmark of their ancient past. As Friedman (2008) notes, Tiwanaku exemplifies the way Bolivians attach meaning to and organize space and place in a country which has a deeply contested history (Tuan 1977). This ancient archaeological site has been continually recreated, re-imagined, contested and appropriated for thousands of years.



(Image two provides an overview of the ancient ceremonial site of Tiwanaku. Right in the centre of the photo one can see the Andean alter. Also visible in the distance is the famous Puerta del Sol, a large stone arch that is covered in engravings)

Tiwanaku was founded as an ancient city-settlement in 1200BC near lake Titicaca (Friedman 2008). While the origins of this site remain disputed, it is believed that the original inhabitants of this settlement were the Uru or 'water people'. However, they were a marginalised ethnic group who were denied access to their lands and territories first by the Incas and then later by the Spanish *conquistadores* (Friedman 2008; Holton n.d).[22] First, the Incas appropriated the ruins of Tiwanaku in the fifteenth century, refashioning this site as their own place of birth (Friedman 2008). Later, the Spanish *conquistadores* dismantled this ancient settlement as a way to erase the myths and memories that were once formally associated with it (Friedman 2008). In deconstructing Tiwanaku, the Spanish used the materials to rebuild churches of their own nearby for Christian worship, thus reinventing this space in accordance with their own Eurocentric beliefs and values (Friedman 2008). Since then, Tiwanaku has been the subject of historical interest, drawing the attention of European, North American and later Bolivian archaeologists to the region (Friedman 2008; Holton n.d). Over the course of several excavations, the majority of which have taken place at various stages throughout twentieth century Bolivian history, Tiwanaku has been reconstructed and restored, where numerous stonework and artefacts have been appropriated by European and North American museums for preservation (Friedman 2008; Holton n.d). Friedman (2008: 4) writes that German researchers had

[22] Today, the Chipaya, a small ethnic minority who live on the remote Bolivian *altiplano*, are believed to be direct descendants of the ancient Tiwanaku settlers (Langenheim and Morgan n.d). After centuries of marginalisation, the Chipaya have been forced to relocate to the bleak *altiplano* where they struggle to survive without proper lands and water resources. Despite claiming the oldest ethnic lineage in Bolivia today, the Chipaya continue to suffer discrimination in nearby cities like Oruro to where some community members are forced to migrate in search of work (Langenheim and Morgan n.d). For the Chipaya who remain on the *altiplano*, they continue to eek out basic lifestyles in adobe huts, hunting flamingo for sustenance. Tourism has become an important source of income for the Chipaya in recent years. The community received funding from both the Bolivian government and the European Union in a joint partnership which allowed for the construction of several small lodges and a large dining hall that can house and feed guests who come to visit this remote community.

been so distressted by the "looting" and general "state of conservation of the site" that they petitioned the Bolivian government to allow them return some of the stonework to Berlin for "safekeeping". This level of interest by European and North American researchers and writers changed the physicality of Tiwanaku through repeated excavations, (re)interpreting its use and meaning through various historical readings (Friedman 2008).

By the mid-twentieth century, Bolivia developed interest once again in this ancient archaeological site, elevating it as an iconic emblem of Bolivian nationhood following the tumultuous Revolution of 1952. The revolutionary MNR sought to identify national symbols that would form the centrepiece around which a new and cohesive Bolivian nationalism could be articulated. While the image of Tiwanaku featured on postal stamps, formly situating it within the national imaginary, the site itself became an "apogee of Bolivian civilisation and history" (Friedman 2008: 5; Holton n.d).

By the 1970s, Tiwanaku became the platform for a new kind of nationalism. This ceremonial site became associated with the anticolonial resistance of the *Katarista* movement, which, as I mentioned, mobilised in the 1960s against the assimilationist agenda of the earlier revolutionary period of 1952. Leaders of the *Katarista* movement, which included the radical Aymara intellectual Felipe Quispe as well as former vice-president of Bolivia Álvaro Garcia Linera, converged on the grounds of Tiwanaku in 1973 to launch their Tiwanaku manifesto. As noted earlier, this manifesto called for Bolivia to be re-founded as an Aymara state and for the country to be referred to as *Qullasuyu* (Canessa 2012; 2008; 2000; Abercrombie 1998).

Alongside these historical-political (re)appropriations, it is also worth mentioning that Tiwanaku forms an important part of cultural life in Bolivia. For example, Tiwanaku cultural iconography has influenced several Bolivian artists down through the decades, among them, the country's most famous muralist Miguel Alandia Pantoja.[23] According to Holton (n.d), Pantoja often turned to the imagery of flowers, animals and other Tiwanaku symbols in his murals which thematically depict the hardship of *campesino* and Indigenous life before, during and after the Bolivian Revolution of 1952. Furthermore, today, Tiwanaku continues to influence cultural practice. As I discussed at length in chapter two, Bolivian-Aymara engineer and architect Freddy Mamani Silvestre continues to draw inspiration from Tiwanaku culture, inscribing images like the *Chakana* or Andean cross onto the façades of his bold architectural aesthetic which celebrate ethnicity and plurinationalism in Morales's Bolivia (Lerchs 2017; Bertelli 2016; Little 2016; Andreoli 2015).

As a result of these multiple appropriations, it is clear that Tiwanaku is a multivalent signifier which acquires meaning through the various discursive and non-discursive practices that shape a collective understanding of place in reality. The combination of symbols, gestures, performance and discourse during the Indigenous-led inaugural ceremony for Evo Morales in January 2006 (re)appropriated this space

[23] Born in Catavi in the Department of Potosí, Miguel Alandia Pantoja had an illustrious career as a muralist producing some 43 works. Many of his paintings were inspired by the twentieth century muralist tradition in Latin America which was led by Mexican painters including David Alfaro Siqueiros whose work is considered to have influenced Pantoja's aesthetic and thematic style. Pantoja's murals depict "el activismo político en defensa de los derechos de los indígenas y más tarde de los de la clase obrera, en especial los mineros" (Querejazu 2015). As Montoya (2007) notes, Pantoja's work "no solo estuvo vinculado a los momentos claves de la historia nacional, sino que llego a constituir una síntesis simbólica de la cultura y el instrumento eficaz para transmitir las aspiraciones populares". Like Mexico, many of Pantoja's murals adorn key sites across La Paz, including *el Banco Central de Bolivia*, *Hospital Obrero* and the headquarters of the *Federación Sindical de Trabajadores Mineros de Bolivia* (FSTMB). During the military dictatorship of General René Barrientos Ortuño many of Pantoja's murals were destroyed which forced the artist into exile in neighbouring Peru where he later died in 1975.

once more, transforming Tiwanaku into a platform which Morales and the MAS-IPSP used to transmit his new sense of the political in Bolivia. Against the backdrop of an impressive election victory, thousands of spectators from across Bolivia as well as a series of invited guests including then-Cuban president Fidel Castro and Guatemalan activist Rigoberta Menchú arrived at the ancient ceremonial site to witness Evo Morales be crowned *Apu-Mallku*, "the highest power of the Andean world" (Postero 2007: 1). Over the course of this two-day ceremony, Evo Morales engaged in a series of ritual performances designed to ready him for his forthcoming presidency. Throughout the ceremony, Morales donned a bright red tunic or an *unk'u* traditionally worn by Aymara priests (Postero 2007). In a ritual and symbolic gesture of purification, Morales washed his hands, head and feet before making offerings of alcohol and coca leaves to *Pachamama* or Mother Earth. In a final performance of indigeneity, Morales was blessed by a number of female and male shamens before being officially anointed as the chosen leader of the 36 Indigenous nations of Bolivia whose representatives were present during the ceremony (Postero 2007).



(Image three caputures up close the Andean alter used by Morales at Tiwanaku during his three inaugural ceremonies, where he, along with spiritual guides, made offerings to the earth goddess Pachamama)

Before Morales even uttered his first words at Tiwanaku, this elaborate performance of Indigenous ritual and purification gently coaxed his Andean utopia into life. This ceremony revealed how performance enacts memories of the past that, in this case, reproduce a new sense of the political in the present. Of course, defining the concept of performance is a challenge. Taylor (2003) is clear that performance may be more broadly understood as a means through which knowledge is transmitted through embodied practice. While performance is traditionally understood within the narrow confines of artistic practice, Taylor (2003) is clear that performance is, in fact, a wide-ranging and difficult practice that holds many, at times conflicting, meanings

and possibilities. In her view, performance "functions as vital acts of transfer transmitting social knowledges, memory, and a sense of identity through reiterated or [...] twice behaved behaviour" (Taylor 2003: 2-3). "Histories" writes Taylor (2003: 271, 21), "become visible through performance", where "embodied or performed acts generate, record and transmit knowledge" in a constant cycle of "againness" from one group/generation to the next. While she admits that performances or "embodiment" may change with the passage of time, "the meaning might very well remain the same" (Taylor 2003: 20). Therefore, the types of performances, gestures, rituals and symbols on display throughout the course of this two-day inaugural ceremony aimed to revive memories and transmit meanings, revealing a form of the political that described, or better still, embodied an-other way in which to know the world and do politics in Bolivia (de la Cadena 2015; Taylor 2003).

This form of ethnopolitics, embodied and enacted by Morales himself, expanded a Western sense of the political to include the participation of both human and other-than-human elements of the lifeworld (de la Cadena 2015; Postero 2007; Taylor 2003). For example, shamens and spiritual leaders from across the 36 Indigenous nations of Bolivia were invited to participate at the two-day ceremony to allow ethnic communities to personally bless their new political leader in accordance with their own *usos y costumbres (*Postero 2007). In contrast to Bolivia's long-standing colonial history, where ethnic groups were either marginalised or assimilated by the political leadership, Morales demonstrated a form of ethnopolitics that was ethnically inclusive and which depended upon the spiritual support of the social whole to succeed politically. Moreover, president-elect Morales actively engaged with other elements of the lifeworld, including the earth goddess, *Pachamama*. He did so in order

to receive the wider blessing of the Andean universe which acknowledged that Morales was not just a president for the living-speaking Andean world but that his ethnopolitical project also extended beyond the tangible and the visible to include unseen cosmological forces which underpin the Andean lifeworld he looked set to govern (de la Cadena 2015). It was only through performance and embodied social practice did Morales engage with this sense of the ethnopolitical which is deeply entwined with the memories and histories of the pre-colonial past (Taylor 2003).

Performance - gestures, orality, movement, dance, singing and so on - has always been a fact of life for Indigenous people (Taylor 2003). It has been a fundamental way in which communities across the Andes traditionally communicate within the lifeworld, conduct politics and other social and economic activities, mediate the internal relationship with the ethnic self as well as their external association with human and non-human others (Alderman 2016; de la Cadena 2015; Canessa 2012; Taylor 2003; Abercrombie 1998). The *ayllu*, the oldest living example of social organising in the Bolivian Andes which pre-dates both the colonial encounter and the Inca civilisation, collapses the "false dichotomy" between man and nature, a familiar logic to western modernity, to reveal instead a universal social whole that can only be understood and mediated through embodied actions (Canessa 2012: 162; Yampara Huarachi 2017; Alderman 2016; de la Cadena 2015; Abercrombie 1998). As I noted earlier, the Andean *Kallawaya* regularly perform ritual offerings of coca leaves, alcohol and llama foetuses to the nearby *mulchulas* or mountain deities. This acknowledges the political agency of these non-human beings in the *ayllu*, bridging a peaceful and harmonious relationship between these partially connected worlds, making them knowable and understandable to each other (Alderman 2016; de la

Cadena). With ancestral spirits like the *mulchulas* permanently inhabiting social space, the past is always present and is revived and relived through performance. This reflects what Yampara Huarachi (2017) suggests when he argues that "landscapes are history settled on the earth which provide information both about the memory of men's time and the memory of nature". Even within urban environments, Indigenous people continue to perform dances and other ceremonies in places like El Alto as a way to mediate the relationship with the ethnic self and to maintain close association with their history and heritage despite the great distances that now arguably exist between themselves and their ancestral lands (Canessa 2012; Lazar 2008).

By engaging in a variety of rituals and gestures that are commonly and historically associated with *ayllu* relationality, Morales normalised this form of embodied ethnopolitical practice in the modern political lifeworld.[24] In so doing, he acknowledged how embodied practice transmits certain epistemologies or *ways of knowing* the world and *doing* politics which are only revealed to us through the behaviours or rituals or gestures that are correctly performed in space (Taylor 2003; Tuan 1977; Relph 1976). In accordance with Tuan (1977), who argues the importance of the human body in spatial organisation, Morales's body *in action* organised Bolivian political space to conform with and cater to his cosmological view of the world. He elevated the idea of performance as a concrete form of political practice which transmitted memories, meanings and a new sense of the political reording Bolivia around new spatial imaginaries that included human and non-human political actors.

[24] There is a variety of video footage available online which shows Morales attending inaugural ceremonies at Tiwanaku. However, it is difficult to both source and verify video footage depicting his 2006 inaugural ceremony. Instead, I will insert a link to a video clip which showcases some highlights from Morales's third inaugural ceremony at Tiwanaku in 2015 which should provide the reader with an idea of how performance was harnessed by this indigenous president.
The footage can be found here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NslbPQOJPhE

However, his performances at Tiwanaku were accompanied by a series of speeches delivered both at Tiwanaku and later in La Paz which developed further his vision for a more socially just Bolivia. Similar to the EZLN in Mexico, who relied on the lettered word to challenge the neoliberal state and organise civil society, Morales, too, turned to conventional forms of discourse to further translate his new political agenda throughout Bolivia. While Taylor (2003) is clear that there has always been this uneasy relationship between the repertoire and the archive, between performance and discourse, across Latin American history, where performances have been devalued as forms of epistemology or *ways of knowing*, it is clear that Morales incorporated both elements in his politics. [25]

[25] While I acknowledge the importance of performance to indigeneity, it is neither the intention of this chapter nor this thesis to consider the performative aspects of ethnopolitics in contemporary Mexico and Bolivia. Extensive and thorough research has already taken place in this area (see Graham and Penny 2014; Gilbert and Gleghorn 2014) and reveals how Indigenous people harness the power of performance to shape their identity. Instead, the aim of this chapter (and thesis) is to focus on indigenous text and to analyse the content of Morales's 2006 inaugural speeches. The aim is not to downplay or deny the importance of performance in ethnopolitics but to strongly consider the alternative ways (speeches, declarations) in which Indigenous people express themselves, produce knowledge and define their political resistance in contemporary Latin America.

Discourse and Memory in Morales's Bolivia

Having engaged in a series of ritual performances at the ancient site of Tiwanaku, where Morales embodied a new sense of the political through an elaborate display of rituals and gestures that reveal another way in which to know the world and do politics in Bolivia, Morales turned to the more conventional sphere of discourse to further articulate and elaborate his Andean utopian vision. His political speeches at Tiwanaku and La Paz combined rhetorical flair and stylistic flourishes that generated a sense of anticipation about the cultural, social and political changes set to come. Moreover, unlike performance and embodied practice, Morales's speeches provided him with the opportunity to develop policy detail and to put in place a new architectural framework that supported this ambitious transformation of Bolivia. In particular, his inaugural address to Congress in La Paz on 22nd January 2006 revealed, with great clarity, the important pillars of his presidency including the Constituent Assembly, tasked with redrafting the constitution. Moreover, Morales's political discourse framed these new policies using a particular language and vision rooted in the Andean cosmological philosophy of *vivir bien* which emphasises harmony and kinship ties between the human and non-human elements of the lifeworld, something which Morales previously expressed through performance and embodied ritual practice at Tiwanaku (Postero 2017; 2007; Alderman 2016; de la Cadena 2015; 1990; Canessa 2012; 2007; Bendezu 2011; Flores Galindo 2010; 1983; Abercrombie 1998; Stern 1989). Through this analysis, I will demonstrate how memory and history intersected with political discourse to reveal the alternative futurescapes articulated by Morales for Bolivia.

Following the ceremony at the ancient site of Tiwanaku, Morales returned to La Paz, the political and administrative capital of Bolivia, to deliver his formal address to the nation. Following his official swearing-in as Bolivia's new president, where he became the first Indigenous man to don the presidential sash and be presented with the presidential medal, Morales proceeded to deliver this speech which began in a rather unusual and uncharacteristic way. As Morales says,

> Para recordar a nuestros antepasados por su intermedio señor presidente del Congreso Nacional, pido un minuto de silencio para Manco Inca, Tupaj Katari, Bartolina Sisa, Zárate Villca, Atihuaiqui Tumpa, Andrés Ibañez, Che Guevara, Marcelo Quioga Santa Cruz, Luis Espinal, a muchos de mis hermanos caídos, cocaleros de la zona del trópico Cochabamba, por los hermanos caídos en la defensa de la dignidad de pueblo alteño, de los mineros, de miles, de millones de seres humanos que han caído en toda América y por ellos presidente pido un minuto de silencio.
>
> (Morales 2006b)

This request for a minute silence was quite a profound gesture and a unique way in which to begin an inaugural address. With an opportunity to speak for the first time as Bolivia's first Indigenous president - a momentous occasion for many - Morales opted instead to offer up a minute silence to honour, in the presidents words, "mis hermanos caídos" (Morales 2006b). By enacting this deliberate form of silence, Morales immediately promoted remembering and generated a unique kind of space wherein Andean histories, memories and myths converged in the political present to find voice and meaning through Morales. From the passage it is clear that Morales did not identify nor did he isolate any one particular figure or moment in history. Instead, much like the Zapatistas in their *Primera Declaración de la Selva Lacandona*, Morales positioned his presidency as the product of a long and difficult history of Andean

revolution which began with Manco Inca in the fifteenth century and which has since continued right through to the political present, where miners and the *cocalero* movement fought against the neoliberal state which proposed the privatisation of Bolivian industry and the eradication of coca farming in the Chapare (Postero 2017; Gutiérrez Aguilar 2014; Crabtree and Chaplin 2013; Harten 2011; Webber 2011; Corr 2006). Morales actively sought to situate his presidency at the intersection between the revolutionary past and present, where he drew attention to the continuity of historical struggle in the Andes and how this long and complex history of anticolonial revolution shaped the very foundations of his political presidency. Morales says,

> Esa lucha democrática cultural, esta revolución cultural democrática, es parte de la lucha de nuestros antepasados, es la continuidad de la lucha de Tupac Katari; esa lucha y estos resultados son la continuidad de Che Guevara. Estamos ahí hermanas y hermanos de Bolivia y de Latinoamérica vamos a continuar hasta conseguir esa igualdad en nuestro país.
>
> (Morales 2006b)

From this passage, it is clear to see that Morales captured the very idea of *la utopía andina*. His political speech engaged the historic struggle for social justice, a mainstay of Andean history, and a cause that had been taken up by many of the region's most prolific revolutionary figures. Not only did this historic struggle permeate the political present but it also bore down on Morales who carried the weight of responsibility for this historic legacy and who needed to ensure that the hopes, dreams and revolutionary ambitions of his ancestral counterparts would be realised during his presidential tenure.

> Estamos acá para decir basta a la resistencia. De la resistencia de 500 años a la toma del poder para 500 años, indígenas, obreros, todos los sectores para acabar con esa injusticia, para acabar con esa desigualdad, para acabar sobre todo la discriminación, opresión donde hemos sido sometidos como aymaras, quechuas, guaraníes.
>
> (Morales 2006b)

By embracing this ongoing struggle for Indigenous justice, Morales was determined to bring about an end to centuries of Indigenous oppression and discrimination, something which characterised the previous five centuries of Indigenous life in Bolivia. In many ways, Morales's political discourse performed the Andean concept of *pachakuti*, where he pointed to a major turning about in the social order of things in Bolivia. As I discussed earlier, *pachakuti* is deeply associated with the negative and traumatic events surrounding the colonial encounter, where the Incas were replaced by the Spanish as rulers of the Andean world (Mesa Gisbert et al. 2016; de la Cadena 2015; Canessa 2012; Abercrombie 1998). However, objectively speaking, *pachakuti* is neither an inherently positive nor negative mental experience in the Andean universe. Rather, as outlined earlier, it describes a turning about in the social order of things, where one era is replaced by another in a cataclysmic reversal of time and space (Postero 2017; Flores Galindo 2010; 1983; Stern 1989; Bruga; 1988). While *pachakuti* is frequently used to refer to the Andean world and its decent into colonial disorder and chaos, it also equally suggests that therein lies the possibility that world orders might one day reverse. There has always been this shared anticipation and hope, which has transcended generations of Andean peoples, that one day the colonial world order might collapse in the same cataclysmic way in which it once formally began all those many centuries ago (Flores Galindo 2010; 1983; Stern

1989). Through his political discourse, Morales captured this sense of anticipation and expectation by situating his presidency on the verge of *pachakuti* or, as he described in his speech, the dawn of a new era of social justice for Bolivia's Indigenous majority,

> Hoy día empieza un nuevo año para los pueblos originarios del mundo, una nueva vida en que buscamos igualdad y justicia, una nueva era, un nuevo milenio para todos los pueblos del mundo, desde acá Tiahuanacu, desde acá La Paz, Bolivia.
>
> (Morales 2006a)

This passage, which is part of a short inaugural address delivered by Morales during the 2006 Indigenous-led ceremony at Tiwanaku on 21st January 2006, provides important insight into how Morales framed his Andean utopian vision for a contemporary Bolivia. Unlike a number of his ancestral counterparts, including Amaru II, Katari and Sisa, who led a series of anticolonial revolutions throughout the pan-Andean region between 1780-1782, Morales did not presume himself to be the 'return of the Inca' nor did he seek to self-impose any particular kind of personalised view of how this Andean futurescape should be (Serulnikov 2016; Flores Galindo 2010; 1983; Stern 1989). Instead, Morales was very keen to downplay the personal nature of his recent presidential victory, emphasising instead how Indigenous people will now play a leading role in governing both him and Bolivia,

> Quiero decirles, con mucho respeto a nuestras autoridades originarias, a nuestras organizaciones, a nuestros amautas, a controlarme, si no puedo avanzar, empújenme ustedes, hermanas y hermanos. A corregirme permanentemente, es posible que pueda equivocarme, puedo equivocarme, podemos equivocarnos, pero jamás traicionar la lucha del pueblo boliviano y la lucha de la liberación de los pueblos de Latinoamérica. El triunfo del 18 diciembre 2005 no es el triunfo de Evo Morales, es el triunfo de todos los bolivianos, es el triunfo de la democracia, es el triunfo, como una execpción, de una revolución democrática y cultural en Bolivia.
>
> (Morales 2006a)

In this passage, Morales acknowledged the inclusive and, therefore, collective nature of this contemporary Andean utopia. Like the Zapatistas, Morales emphasised how the Indigenous principles of community organising and governance such as *mandar obedeciendo* will reduce errors and failures on his part as president by ensuring that both he and his MAS-IPSP administration will be held to account by the popular will. Similar to the Zapatistas in their *Declaraciones de la Selva Lacandona*, Morales ruptured with the neo-colonial past by decentering the role of the self and the executive in the Bolivian political lifeworld, rearticulating a new form of power located among the Bolivian *pueblo*. Morales positioned Indigenous people right at the heart of this new ethnopolitical campaign, where Indigenous episteme now functioned as an important moral authority over his presidency, guiding the development of this new MAS-IPSP administration going forward. While Morales identified indigeneity as a leading dimension for his new MAS-IPSP administration, he also cautiously avoided overstating the ethnocentric nature of his presidential victory, highlighting that this was not just a triumphant moment for Indigenous people specifically but that it was a cause for celebration by Bolivians everywhere more generally (Morales 2006a; 2006b).

In particular, Morales noted how the Bolivian middle-classes were also welcome within the ranks of the MAS-IPSP and that his new administration would not seek to alienate those who did not exclusively identify as Indigenous. As Morales says, "quiero decirles, muchos hermanos profesionales, intelectuales, clase media, se incorporaron al instrumento político de liberación, hoy instrumento político del pueblo" (Morales 2006a). While it is clear that Morales expressed great pride in being Aymara and that this presidency would centre on Indigenous issues, he was also adamant about the need to achieve a sense of national unity among the various different social sectors of Bolivian society by highlighting how respect for difference should be a matter of priority for all Bolivians going forward. As Morales stated during his speech at Tiwanku, "buscar una unidad de todos los sectores, respetando la diversidad, respetando lo diferente que somos, todos tenemos derecho a la vida" (Morales 2006a).

This emphasis on the Bolivian *pueblo* emerged as a relatively recent feature of MAS-IPSP discourse and was something which guided their electoral development in the years before their first victory in 2005. The historic roots of the MAS-IPSP lie in the coca-growing region of the Chapare, in the department of Cochabamba, where a strong population of *cocaleros* (coca leaf farmers) began mobilising against the heavily militarised neoliberal state which advanced an aggressive counter-narcotics policy that intended to completely eradicate coca production in the country (Webber 2011). While the coca leaf is a sacred, ancestral symbol of Bolivia's Indigenous heritage, often used to feed the deities in ritual performances to Andean gods such as *Pachamama*, it was also deeply implicated in the international narcotics trade as a central ingredient in the manufacture of cocaine (Alderman 2016; Dunkerley 2007). Many *cocaleros* were former miners who had been forced to return to the agricultural sector following the

collapse of the tin industry in the wake of Bolivia's neoliberal-turn in 1982 (Dunkerley 2007). This increased population in the Chapare encouraged even greater levels of production of coca product which, in turn, led to the neoliberal state aggressively pursuing an anti-coca campaign that was politically and materially motivated by US interests (Mesa Gisbert et al. 2016; Webber 2011; Harten 2011). In his autobiography, Morales detailed how the "DEA [Drug Enforcement Agency] no solo cometían abusos contra los pobladores del trópico de Cochabamba, sino también bombardeaban y destruían los caminos y playas vecinales, empleando incluso explosivos de alto poder" (Morales Ayma 2014: 204). These intrusive and violent actions by the DEA "nos ha permitido crear mayor conciencia ideologica, cultural, repasar un poco la historia, por eso nuestras marchas también eran por la soberanía y dignidad" (Morales Ayma 2014: 205). While hunger strikes, road blockades, grand protests and historic marches remained all highly popular forms of struggle and resistance among *cocaleros* and other peasant unions across the *altiplano* at that time, collective moves were also being made by *campesino* leaders in the 1990s to formally establish *un instrumento político* that would channel these marginalised voices into the political mainstream and electorally challenge the logic of established parties including the long-standing MNR (Arbona et al. 2016; Garcia Yapur et al. 2015; Webber 2011; Harten 2011).

In 1996, Alejo Véliz was elected to serve as leader of the newly established *Asamblea por la Soberanía de los Pueblos* (ASP) (Webber 2011; Harten 2011). However, following a series of disagreements among key peasant leaders, including Alejo Véliz, Felipe Quispe and Evo Morales, the ASP was quickly disbanded and two new political parties emerged in its place (Webber 2011). While Quispe went on to lead the *Movimiento Indígena Pachakuti* (MIP), an *indianista* party that specialises in a radical

form of Aymara nationalism which had limited widespread appeal, Morales and the *cocaleros* formed the *Instrumento Político por la Soberanía de los Pueblos* (IPSP) which successfully catered to a much "broader, inter-ethnic and cross-regional social base" (Webber 2011: 60; Mesa Gisbert et al. 2016; Harten 2011; Morales Ayma 2014). Like the ASP, the IPSP experienced difficulties in registering as a formal political party, and was forced to inhabit the empty shell of the now defunct *Movimiento al Socialismo* (MAS). While the MAS-IPSP continued to define a strategy of resistance against the neoliberal state, leading street protests and demonstrations, Webber (2011) notes how the party underwent a significant shift in approach following the 2002 election cycle, where it came in second place to the MNR (22%) winning a 20.9% share of the total national vote (Webber 2011; Morales Ayma 2014). Encouraged by this result, the MAS-IPSP began to actively transition away from a politics based exclusively around protest to a more formal parliamentary strategy that aimed to capitalise on this growing electoral appeal (Webber 2011; Harten 2011). For example, the MAS-IPSP courted middle-class urban voters by appointing Álvaro Garcia Linera, a *mestizo* intellectual, as the vice-presidential candidate for the party. Furthermore, the MAS-IPSP abstained from any direct participation in violent confrontations between citizens and the state during the 2003 *Guerra del Gas* (Gutiérrez Aguilar 2014; Webber 2011). While this decision to abstain from violence was welcomed by a more moderate votership, the MAS-IPSP also translated the popular demands of the anti-neoliberal protesters into a tangible policy platform which not only included calls for resource sovereignty which I discussed in chapter two but also the formation of a constituent assembly.

While it is clear that Morales exclusively relied upon Bolivia's long history of Andean revolution, memory and myth as important contextual markers which helped

to orientate his presidency in the political present, he did not explicitly seek to recreate or restore the precolonial world order. Rather, as I have established thus far, through a combination of performance and discourse Morales focused almost exclusively on establising a new era of social justice for Indigenous people, mediating between the past and the political present to recreate a new Bolivian national imaginary, that both foregrounds indigeneity without alienating other sectors of Bolivian society. For the remainder of this section, I focus specifically on how policies such as the constituent assembly mediated this challenge, igniting this new sense of the political and bringing this Andean utopia to life.

The *2009 Constitución Política del Estado Plurinacional* was the centrepiece of Morales's ethnopolitical model of nation-state governance. While Bolivia is no stranger to constitutional reform, having amended a total of sixteen different constitutional documents in the two hundred years since independence in 1825, this was the first time in the country's history that a constitution had been approved by national popular vote (Mesa Gisbert et al. 2016; Eisenstadt et al. 2013; Pearce et al. 2011). In a similar fashion to the Zapatistas, it is clear that both ethnopolitical case studies emphasised constitutional reform as an important hallmark of their bold new utopian ambitions. Like Bolivia, the Zapatista social justice movement emphasised the merits of a fresh new constitutional framework as a way to transcend the negative and dystopian limits of the neoliberal Mexican state in a collective process of national renewal that invited the participation of Mexican civil society to lead the change (EZLN 10th June 1994). Of course, unlike the Zapatistas, Morales and the MAS-IPSP did indeed manage to preside over the development of a new constitutional document in Bolivia, one which foregrounds the rights of the country's Indigenous and *campesino*

majority. However, this move to explicitly re-found Bolivia was not without its challenges (Eisenstadt et al. 2013).

In his two 2006 inaugural addresses, Morales announced the formation of *una asamblea constituyente* that would be tasked with responsibility for redrafting Bolivia's new constitution (Morales 2006a; 2006b). To reconfirm his commitment to this process of national renewal and social change, Morales proposed to hold elections for the constituent assembly within six months of entering political office on 2nd July 2006 (Eisenstadt et al. 2013; Morales 2006a; 2006b). The decision to entrust this delicate process of constitutional change and transformation to the Bolivian *pueblo* was a strategic move on the part of Morales and the MAS-IPSP and one which reinforced their democratic credentials as an unconventional political party of the Left that remained committed to grassroots democratic participation.

Capitalising on previous electoral successes, Morales and the MAS-IPSP managed to safely retain their majority during assembly elections in 2006, securing 137 seats out of a grand total of 255 (Eisenstadt et al. 2013; Pearce et al. 2011). While other key political parties contested the elections on July 2nd, including the right-wing Podemos and the MNR, which won 60 and 20 seats on the assembly respectively, no other political party came as close to winning the 54% majority share that successfully positioned the MAS-IPSP as leaders of this new constitutional process (Eisenstadt et al. 2013).

It is clear, then, that the constituent assembly carefully mediated between the political past and present, serving as an important hallmark of social justice for Bolivia's Indigenous majority which saw them secure a leading role in a new national conversation over the country's legal and political future. In his speech at La Paz,

Morales was keen to demonstrate to the nation how the formation of the constituent assembly was not simply an exercise in constitutional reform but served as an important opportunity that would help to move Bolivia beyond the legacies of the country's neocolonial past towards a more ethnically inclusive futurescape.

In view of this, the decision to host the constituent assembly in the historic city of Sucre was a move in that direction. In 1825, the quaint, whitewashed city of Sucre hosted the most important moment in Bolivian political history. Colonial leaders gathered in the *Casa de la Libertad* to collectively agree and sign the act of Independence which presided over the breakup of *Alta Peru* thus securing Bolivia's independent future as a republican state (Mesa Gisbert et al. 2016). Relocating the 2006 constituent assembly to the historic heartlands of the Bolivian republic does not just drew attention to the enormity of the political task at hand but, perhaps, more importantly, revealed Morales's intention to secure a clean break from this long republican history, an opportunity to start-over akin to notions of *pachakuti* I mentioned earlier.

As Eisenstadt et al. (2013) recall, while Bolivia has a long history of constitutional reform, Indigenous people have only played a marginal role at best in shaping Bolivian state matter. In 1945, Indigenous people were invited to participate in the *Primer Congreso Indigenal* under the presidency of Gualberto Villarroel (1908-1946) (Mesa Gisbert et al. 2016). While the *Congreso* allowed Indigenous people to channel their demands into the political mainstream, petitioning the government to remove *pongueaje* (compulsory regime of free and obligatory labour imposed by wealthy landowners on the Indigenous population) from all future legal texts, Eisenstadt et al. (2013) makes clear that the *Congreso* simply reinforced the marginal

role played by Indigenous people in the process of state building in this republican-era. It confined them to the role of lobbiests unable to lead in the creation of new laws for their own personal and political benefit. Meanwhile, in the historic surrounds of Sucre, it was clear that the 2006 constituent assembly offered Bolivia an opportunity to rethink the past, 'start over' and develop a more socially just and inclusive society together.

Yet, the constituent assembly encountered a series of internal challenges right from the very beginning which appeared to destabilise the very foundations of Morales's political ambitions. While the Zapatistas struggled to even arrive at this particular point of constitutional change in Mexico, the Bolivian case reveals to us the many challenges that confront Indigenous political actors in mobilising a new national constitutional framework around key ethnopolitical issues. While numerous complex demands emerged among delegates inside the constituent assembly, the contours of political division and disagreement can be broadly traced along more conventional left-right political divides in Bolivia (Eisenstadt et al. 2013). Even though the political Right - Podemos and the MNR - did not necessarily hold the balance of power in the assembly, they collectively controlled enough seats in order to be able to influence a credible opposition to MAS-IPSP delegates and their proposals. Eisenstadt et al. (2013) provides a comprehensive list of all the internal disagreements which plagued the operation of the constitution assembly from day one. Not only did delegates disagree on whether the assembly should modify the existing constitution or redraft it altogether, disputes over voting procedures and political autonomy also delayed progress. However, a proposal by MAS-IPSP delegates to relocate the capital of Bolivia from Sucre to La Paz resulted in near civil war across the country, forcing the Morales

government to suspend the constituent assembly altogether, eventually relocating it to the city of Oruro (Eisenstadt et al. 2013; Pearce et al. 2011). It is clear that to downgrad the status of Sucre as Bolivia's capital was more a symbolic gesture than a practical one on the part of the MAS-IPSP. While it could be seen as a move designed to consolidate political, administrative and judicial resources around one geographic location (La Paz), it more closely reflected a desire on the part of MAS-IPSP delegates to shift focus away from *that* republican history which Sucre so clearly represented.

For Morales and the MAS-IPSP the *capitalía* debate symbolised an opportunity to start over, to re-found Bolivia on different terms, from a city of their choosing which did not necessarily carry the historic weight of Sucre. As I mentioned earlier, while La Paz also has deep roots in the colonial Andes, it has also been the site of important anticolonial struggles, some of which posed a serious threat to the very foundations of the Spanish occupation of the Andes in the eighteenth century (Serulikov 2016; Mesa Gisbert et al. 2016; Ainsworth Means 1919). As Serulikov (2016) notes, between March and October of 1781, Aymara communities led by eighteenth century revolutionary leader Túpac Katari - mentioned earlier in inaugural speeches delivered by president Morales - laid siege to the city of La Paz, blocking off communication and starving the city of key supplies for up to 109 days. Just like Morales's discourse and performance, the constituent assembly very clearly attempted to draw a distinctive line between the past and present, developing strategic associations that emphasised continuity with a revolutionary history of social justice while rupturing with the neo-colonial past. As the MAS-IPSP later wrote about the constituent assembly,

> Fue una estrategia profundamente democrática de los pueblos indígenas originarios campesinos y movimientos populares, para generar un marco de consenso dentro de un nuevo Estado, pero también fue la forma de concretizar la aspiración de las mayorías históricamente marginadas del país. La Asamblea fue el resultado del Poder Constituyente que sintetizaba los proyectos, las propuestas, la resistancia y la lucha de siglos de pueblo boliviano.
>
> (MAS-IPSP 2014: 14)

It is clear, then, that the constituent assembly performed as a legal instrument designed to secure social justice for Bolivia's Indigenous and *campesino* majority. By embodying "[las] aspiracion[es] de las mayorías históricamente marginadas del país", as the passage clearly states, the constituent assembly struggled for social justice in order to "transformer, desde los cimientos, el Estado colonial republicano" (MAS-IPSP 2014: 14).

Amid the chaos, turmoil and ongoing public debate, Bolivia's new plurinational constitution was eventually passed by MAS-IPSP delegates in Oruro without the participation of Podemos or the MNR. As Eisenstadt et al. (2013: 100) note, in a "marathon session lasting fourteen hours, 411 constitutional articles were rapidly read aloud, briefly debated and [...] approved by two-thirds majority". However, before the legal document was put to the people in a national referendum, the Morales government intercepted the text in order to renegotiate portions of it with some rather disenfranchised elements of Bolivia's political Right (Pearce et al. 2011). The constitution that was passed into law on the 25th January 2009 was a decidedly different document to the one originally approved by assembly delegates in Oruro between 8th-9th December 2007. It was clear that while the *2009 Constitución Política*

del Estado Plurinacional was a reminder of the difficulties faced by an Indigenous president forced to compromise on his ethnopolitical agenda, it was a proud symbol of ethnopolitical progress in a global neoliberal lifeworld that had confined Indigenous people to the political margins. From a series of inaugural ceremonies and speeches in early 2006, designed to discursively and performatively embody and enact his vision for a more inclusive and socially just Bolivia, Morales and the MAS-IPSP eventually signed into law a constitutional text that, in their view, underpinned "la transición de un Estado capitalista colonial hacia un Estado Plurinacional, socialista, communitario y con autonomías para el Vivir Bien" (MAS-IPSP 2014: 14).

In what follows, I return to the 2011 TIPNIS controversy which I use to demonstrate the complex nature of this Andean utopian vision in action. While the highway construction symbolises a process of economic and infrastructural development designed to elevate and integrate Bolivia into a pan-Andean futurescape, it also represents the deconstruction of other, more locally-based spatial imaginaries. In his pursuit of this highway development, Morales denies TIPNIS communities agency and their legal right to decide on the nature of development on their lands, thus negating the importance of Indigenous constitutional autonomies in favour of economic goals orientated more towards national and even regional gains.

Section Three

(De)Constructing Andean Utopia in Morales's Bolivia: Analysis of the 2011 TIPNIS Controversy

Thus far, this chapter has not only established the presence of Andean utopias in Bolivia but has successfully mapped that struggle for social justice onto the former presidency of Evo Morales. Through careful and detailed analysis of his two 2006 inaugural speeches, this chapter revealed how Morales combined the use of performance and discourse at Tiwanaku and La Paz to engage memories of the distant past which, in turn, ignite a new sense of the political in the present, one which acknowledged the presence of both human and non-human lifeforms in the Andean lifeworld. As I showed, the constituent assembly served as an important hallmark in the struggle for social justice in Bolivia, encouraging Indigenous people to lead in the creation of a new Bolivian state structure.

In this third and final section, however, our attention returns to the 2011 TIPNIS controversy which I previously explored in chapter two. As one of two primary case studies in this thesis, additional analysis of the TIPNIS controversy discusses the development of this disputed highway from an original Andean utopian perspective. Unfolding over two stages, this section will first address how the TIPNIS highway helped Morales to renegotiate a Bolivian history characterized by chronic underdevelopment and limited or fragemented national economic growth. As I will show, by relentlessly pursuing this highway development in the TIPNIS reserve for several years, it symbolized a wider move on the part of Morales and the MAS-IPSP to reinvent Bolivia's role in the Andean region and to position the country at the economic crossroads between east and west.

However, the highway also intersected with local Indigenous imaginaries within the TIPNIS reserve itself, thus destablising the image of Morales and the MAS-IPSP as an inclusive ethnopolitical state model. Building on earlier discussions from chapter two, this chapter will focus specifically on events such as the Chaparina Massacre and the Indigenous consultation to reveal how the TIPNIS highway reasserts the traditional dynamics of the (neo)colonial state which Morales and the MAS-IPSP had hoped to confine to the past.

At this point it worth mentioning that there will be several overlaps from my earlier analysis of the TIPNIS controversy in chapter two. Not only will this provide an opportunity to recap on some key dates and events, but it will also be necessary in order to elaborate and conclude my discussion of Andean utopia in Morales's Bolivia.

Renegotiating the Past, Developing for the Future

There are a number ways in which to consider how the TIPNIS highway development renegotiates the past in order to overcome a history of limited, fragmented economic growth. To begin with, when Morales first announced plans to proceed with this highway, it was confirmed that Brazil would play a leading role in its development. Brazilian authorities originally put forward up to $415 million to finance the project while Bolivian officials contracted Brazilian engineering and construction firm, OAS, to deliver on the highway by the year 2014 (*El Deber* 1st August 2011). This highway intended to link the departments of Cochabamba and Beni together, a distance covering around three hundred kilometers (*El Deber* 1st August 2011). For those who objected, Morales simply claimed that he did not quite understand "cómo es possible que estos sectores estén en contra del progreso, de la integración y del desarollo economico del país" (*El Deber* 3rd August 2011). To understand further the president's insistence on progress and integration here, it is important to acknowledge Bolivia's history with regards to processes of development and how construction of the TIPNIS highway symbolises an effort to overcome this past. Let us recap this history briefly.

As I have discussed elsewhere, Bolivia has not only been been a traditionally very poor and deeply unequal nation-state but it has been regionally isolated and geographically fragmented (Webber 2011). Reflecting on the national question in his controversial *Pueblo Enfermo*, early 20th century Bolivian writer and intellectual Alcides Arguedas argued that the disarticulated nature of Bolivian geography and a lack of modern transport infrastructure to retify this inherent national condition contributed to his pessimistic assessment of Bolivia as "un pueblo enfermo" (Paz-

Soldán 1999). Bolivia's highlands and lowlands have long been historically disconnected from one another, with towns, villages and settlements in the Amazonian north in particular being most isolated. Since formal colonial rule, the majority of investment and development within Bolivia has focused primarily on important and strategic sites along the Bolivian *altiplano*, where minerals and other lucrative resources have been primarily sourced (Mesa Gisbert et al. 2016). For example, as I discussed in chapter two, during formal Spanish occupation of the Andean region in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the city of Potosí developed into a mega-metropolis on the back of silver that was being relentlessly extracted from the nearby *Cerro Rico* mountain (Mesa Gisbert et al. 2016). And, when silver extraction declined following Bolivian independence in 1825, cities like Oruro further along the Bolivian *altiplano* eventually replaced Potosí as important and strategic economic centres (Mesa Gisbert et al. 2016). The highland city of Oruro developed in strength and character during the ninteenth and twentieth centuries as a result of the lucrative tin mining trade which was fuelled domestically by foreign demand from overseas in Europe. Therefore, broadly speaking, development in Bolivia over the last few centuries has been largely concentrated on the *altiplano*, where there has been greater demand for infrastructural investment to facilitate the exploitation of natural resources.

However, the twentieth century Revolutionary government set out to reconfigure this imbalance between northern and southern Bolivia. The rise of the national revolutionary party, the *Movimiento Nacional Revolucionario* (MNR), led to a period of accelerated growth in transport and other infrastructural projects. The intention behind this infrastructural development strategy was to modernise Bolivia

and to better integrate disparate regional geographies together. For example, Capobianco R (1996) describes how the 1952 Revolutionary MNR facilitated the construction of a new asphalt roadway between Cochabamba, in the Cordillera valley, and Santa Cruz de la Sierra, in the *Oriente*. Not only was this roadway designed to integrate these once formally disconnected geographies together but it also aimed to promote a national, state-endorsed process of internal colonisation, where highland *campesinos* would migrate to the underpopulated Amazonian lowlands as agricultural workers to help support emerging agribusinesses in the *Oriente*. As an advertisement in the newspaper *La Nación* attests, "la moderna carretera que unirá Cochabamba y Santa Cruz constituye un motivo de justificado orgullo para el Supremo Gobierno de Bolivia (*La Nación* 9th April 1953).

The MNR's plan to infrastructurally modernise Bolivia expanded beyond just simply roadways. The revolutionary government extended the Bolivian rail network further south towards the national borders of neighbouring Argentina, Brazil and Chile. In the same national periodical I mentioned above, an edition of the newspaper that celebrates the first anniversary of the 1952 Revolution, the government promoted a new rail link between Antofagasta in Chile and Bolivia with additional rail services running to Buenas Aires, Cochabamba, Oruro, Potosí, Uyuni and Atocha among others (*La Nación* 9th April 1953).

Moreover, that same year, the MNR government also inaugurated the construction of *El Aeropuerto Nacional de El Alto* in April 1953 (Mesa Gisbert et al. 2016; *La Nación* 9th April 1953). The development of this new airport infrastructure coincided with the first anniversary of the launch of a new national airline known as *El Lloyd Aero Boliviano* which began operations one year earlier connecting Bolivians

"desde el cielo a la patria", as the advertisement states (*La Nación* 9th April 1953). In turning the sod at this new airport development, revolutionary intellectual and then-president of Bolivia, Dr Víctor Paz Estenssoro, declared that this new airport would form "parte integrante de un verdadero plan de carácter nacional" (*La Nación* 9th April 1953). However, as we know from previous discussions of revolutionary nationalism in earlier chapters, successive twentieth-century Bolivian governments were limited both in terms of their political stability and financial scope to continue this radical redevelopment of the country into a modern and well-integrated nation-state. Instead, burdened by national debt, Bolivia suddenly shifted focus away from state-centred development projects towards a neoliberal political process that focused on decentralisation, free market capitalism and the privatization of industry and services (Goodale and Postero 2013; Webber 2011; Harvey 2005).

In 2000, new opportunities emerged that would help shape the development of Bolivian infrastructure and support Morales's Andean utopian vision which included strengthening his country's standing in the continental region. Between the 4th-5th December 2000, a dozen or so transport ministers from across several South American nation-states descended upon the city of Montevideo to formally agree and sign the *Iniciativa para la Infraestructura Regional Suramericana* (hereafter IIRSA) (*Centro Cuarto Intermedio* 2011). The IIRSA was a long-term infrastructural development plan specifically for the South American region and involved the finance and construction of road, rail, air, maritime and telecommunications infrastructure at strategic locations throughout South America (*Centro Cuarto Intermedio* 2011). Broadly speaking, the intention behind this development plan was to modernise and integrate

South American countries together, to better facilitate trade and economic growth through infrastructure (*Centro Cuarto Intermedio* 2011).

It was clear that a region-wide plan of this nature was drafted to rival development taking place in North and Central America. As I discussed in chapter one, *el Plan Puebla Panamá* (PPP) was first implemented in the year 2001 and was designed to enhance infrastructural ties between Mexico and its Central American neighbours. The intention behind this was to extend the benefits of North American free trade and economic growth further south along the continent. To rival North and Central American economic growth, Brazil favoured a process of South American integration to ensure "que no están al margen del desarrollo económico del capital, situación que oblige a la interconexión vial de países que facorezca a bajar costos de exportación y de esta manera se incremente la competitividad comercial" (*Centro Cuarto Intermedio* 2011: 35-36).

It is clear, then, that as an important and strategic player in the region, Brazil was a leading participant behind the formation and development of IIRSA. Brazil was keen to find ways in which to forge fresh trade routes with Peru. In particular, Brazil had it sights set on the lucrative East Asian market to which Peruvian coastal ports had direct access. To exploit the benefits of trade with China, Brazil first had to establish the necessary infrastructure to connect the east and west coasts of the Andean region together (García Torres 2011). Among other initiatives, IIRSA proposed the development of *el Interoceánico Central*, a series of strategic infrastructural developments that would take place across the Andean region over an extended period of time, eventually forging a cross-continental network of roadways, bridges and tunnels linking Brazil with Peru and, therefore, Brazilian industry with the Asian-

Pacific marketplace. In a similar vein to the Mexican PPP, which was renamed the *MesoAmerica Project* (MP) in 2008, IIRSA was also rebranded, absorbed under a new cross-continental development organisation referred to as COSIPLAN (*Consejo Suramericano de Infraestructura y Planeamiento*). However, despite these organizational changes, *el Interoceánico Central* remained a priority for this regional development committee, placing Morales's Bolivia right at the strategic crossroads of a new and emerging pan-Andean economic zone.

Under proposals for *el Interoceánico Central*, eight out of a total of nine Bolivian departments were identified as locations where infrastructural development would take place to facilitate construction of this strategic corridor. Considering Bolivia's history, the Morales government was all too eager to exploit the benefits of this expansive infrastructural operation across large swathes of Bolivian territory. Even through it was Brazilian commercial interests driving this infrastructural development plan, it was clear that Bolivia would also benefit greatly from fresh access to coastal ports in Peru.

Access to the coast has been a particularly contentious issue for Bolivians over the previous two centuries. Anyone familiar with the geography of Latin America will know that Bolivia has long been a landlocked country, losing its coastline to neighbouring Chile in *La Guerra del Pacífico* which unfolded between the years 1879-1883 (DIREMAR 2014; Querejazu Calvo 1983). At the heart of this conflict lay a dispute over the lucrative, resource-rich region known as the Litoral which, in the period before the war, formed part of Bolivian territory (Mesa Gisbert et al. 2016; DIREMAR 2014; Querejazu Calvo 1983). However, on the 14th February 1879, "Chile invadió militarmente el puerto boliviano de Antofagasta [...] sin previa declaratoria de Guerra"

(DIREMAR 2014: 20). Since then, tensions between Bolivia and Chile have been quite frayed with both governments laying equal claim to the Litoral. Over the years, there have been several attempts by both sides to resolve this territorial dispute through diplomatic channels. The most significant of these came on 18th May 1895 when Bolivia and Chile signed three treaties including *el Tratado de Paz y Amistad*, e*l Tratado de Transferencia de Territorio* and *el Tratado del Comercio* (DIREMAR 2014). While under these agreements Chile remained sovereign owner-occupier of the Litoral, these treaties granted Bolivia access to maritime ports in the region. But given the nature of the conflict itself, and that fact that Chile simply *took* the Litoral away from Bolivia, these agreements did not entirely satisfy Bolivia which has continued to push for more adequate and appropriate solutions to this conflict.

On 17th February 2011, Morales and his government escalated tensions even further between the two countries when he and the MAS-IPSP took Chile to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in the Hague to legally challenge their claim to the Litoral (DIREMAR 2014). While Bolivia's latest legal effort to reclaim sovereign access to the coast failed, this whole process completely underscored the strategic importance of domestic, regional and international infrastructure networks like *el Interoceánico Central* which continue to provide Bolivia with (in)direct access to coastal ports. In all that Morales and his government have tried to achieve, he aimed to capitalize and enhance Bolivia's strategic location at the heart of a pan-Andean economic frontier. Such infrastructural programmes, according to van Dijck (2013), not only aimed to support regional and national intergration within Bolivia but also intended to strengthen the country's influence internationally.

The TIPNIS highway was a symbol of that commitment to foster greater economic integration across the pan-Andean region. While the 2008 TIPNIS highway did not form part of original IIRSA proposals, its recent addition to the Bolivian infrastructural landscape showcased Morales's intention to commit to an ongoing process of economic development and integration across the Andes with the financial and material support of neighbouring Brazil. By connecting together the departments of Cochabamba and Beni, the TIPNIS highway drew together two important departments which had already been isolated for development under previous IIRSA proposals. While García Torres (2011) acknowledges that the TIPNIS highway was not officially included in IIRSA projects, she states that "su relación parece bastante probable en la medida en que se constituye como una ruta auxiliar que permitirá la conexión entre los Ejes principales del IIRSA en el país" including, she adds, *el Eje Interoceánico Central*. It is clear, then, that development of the TIPNIS highway served as an opportunity for Bolivia to reinvent the Andean space and to enhance its economic producitivty. By accepting rather than rejecting development opportunities proposed by neighbouring Brazilian authorities, Bolivia could renegotiate the past, overcome the limitations of history and advance its standing on the economic international stage with the support of Brazil. The TIPNIS highway represented new opportunities for Morales's Bolivia to strategically position itself at the heart of a new and emerging Andean futurescape. As García Torres (2011) adds, "Bolivia resulta clave como país de transito para que Brazil pueda dar salida a sus mercancias por el Pacífico". Moreover, Morales and the MAS-IPSP had already distributed concessions to a number of multinational corporations, permitting the likes of Brazil and other transnational players to begin exploratory drilling in the TIPNIS reserve once the three

phases of this roadway development were completed (McNeish 2013; García Torres 2011). While the highway itself was relatively small in scale considering the vastness of the Andean region overall, it symbolised Morales's commitment to Bolivia's economic integration within the wider pan-Andean region.

For the remainder of the chapter I will focus on the ways in which the TIPNIS highway has also been perceived as dystopian by lowland Indigenous communities from within the TIPNIS reserve who seek to preserve and protect the integrity of their ethnoterritorial rights against large-scale infrastructural development. This controversy also drew attention to the way in which Morales's Andean utopian vision could also be destablised, contributing, I add, to his political demise in 2019.

The 2011 TIPNIS Controversy and Continuities with the Neoliberal Past

The aim of this final section is to argue that, while the TIPNIS highway development may appear to represent new economic opportunities for Bolivia on a pan-Andean scale, it also symbolises a certain degree of continuity with the past for lowland Indigenous communities (Yuracaré, Moxeños, Chimané) who were forced to confront the hegemonic tendencies of the Morales state. Through my earlier analysis of locally sourced print media in chapter two, I argued that the TIPNIS reserve developed into a discursive battleground, where lowland Indigenous people found themselves marginalised by the discursive impulses of Bolivia's former Indigenous president. In this final section, I complement the findings of that earlier analysis by showcasing here how Morales's use of force against lowland Indigenous protesters further alienated TIPNIS communities from the plurinational state. In particular, I focus on events surrounding the Chaparina Massacre, a key moment in the early stages of TIPNIS conflict which, I argue, resembled events during Bolivia's neoliberal past where former president Sanchez de Lózada used military aggression against protesters during the 2003 *Guerra del Gas* (Gutiérrez Aguilar 2014). I conclude that the TIPNIS controversy, in particular the Chaparina Massacre, played a small role in the wider destabilisation of Morales's image as Andean decoloniser and that this contributed, in a very broad sense, to a decline in his support which, in turn, led to the eventual collapse of his regime in 2019. In the context of this chapter, the recent collapse of Morales's presidency encourages us to reflect more profoundly on the nature of Andean utopias in Bolivia, particularly in relation to *Pachakuti* and the ongoing cycle of struggle for justice by Indigenous people in the Andes.

In response to government plans to construct a highway directly through the heart of the TIPNIS reserve and Indigenous territory, lowland Indigenous communities organised for an elaborate protest march to take place between the town of Trinidad, in the Bolivian Amazonia and La Paz (Delgado 2017; Laing 2015; McNeish 2013). The march was coordinated by the lowland Indigenous organisation, *Confederación Indígena del Oriente Boliviano* (CIDOB), which was formed in 1989 to defend the collective interests of lowland Indigenous communities from the threat of logging and other agroindustrial activities taking place on or near their protected territories including the TIPNIS reserve. On the 15th August 2011, several hundred lowland Indigenous people gathered in Trinidad to begin this march which covered a distance of six hundred kilometres (*La Prensa* 12th August 2011; *Los Tiempos* 15th August 2011). The march was entitled *La octava marcha indígena por la dignidad y la tierra y el territorio* (*Los Tiempos* 15th August 2011). The title of the protest itself provides us with our first clue to suggest that this conflict symbolised a degree of continuity with the past from the perspective of lowland Indigenous people (*Página Siete* 15th August 2011). As I discussed elsewhere, lowland Indigenous people had been conducting protests marches from the Bolivian lowlands to La Paz since 1990, when members of CIDOB first co-ordinated the *Marcha por el territorio y la dignidad*. As stated in chapter two, central to this first march was a greater demand for the legal protections of their lowland territories (*Página Siete* 15th August 2011). During a series of multicultural reforms in the mid-1990s, the government implemented Ley INRA (*Ley del Servicio Nacional de Reforma Agraria*) which designated several territories including the TIPNIS reserve as a *Tierras Comunitarias de Origen* (TCO). However, the continuity of these marches under the administration of Indigenous president Evo Morales drew

attention to the limitations of the plurinational state in relation to the land question in the Bolivian lowlands and for its inability to secure dignity for Indigenous people in the region. The fact that this march was the eighth in a long succession of marches that transcended the political change from neoliberalism to plurinationalism under Morales reflected, for lowland Indigenous communities at least, the view that Morales government did not represent the restoration of dignity.

The 2011 march for dignity between Trinidad and La Paz lasted a total of three months beginning 15th August 2011 and concluding the 19th October that same year. Despite the peaceful nature of the demonstration, the Morales state still approached the protesters with aggressive force. In the wake of increasing tensions between lowland Indigenous marchers and *cocaleros*, who staged several *bloqueos* along the route of the march in support of the highway development, the Morales government sent in state negotiators and up to four hundred police officers as a way to somehow mediate hostilities between groups. Amid the standoff between pro- and anti-highway demonstrators, Bolivian police raided a makeshift encampment that been established overnight on the 24th-25th September by lowland Indigenous protesters. In this surprise move, police armed with batons and tear gas attacked and arrested many of the protesters in an event which has been widely remembered as the Chaparina Massacre (McNeish 2013). While some protesters managed to escape the ambush, hiding themselves and their children in nearby overgrowth, many more men, women and children were beaten, arrested and hauled away in a fleet of waiting hired buses (McNeish 2013; Gil 2012).

Video footage of the incident quickly surfaced across national media and sparked outrage among the Bolivian public who then took to the streets in solidarity

with TIPNIS marchers. Events at Chaparina badly damaged the reputation of Morales and his administration which, as I had emphasised earlier, centred on the Indigenous struggle for justice against colonial violence and prejudices. In an effort to quieten national discontent, Morales repeatedly attempted to distance himself from the event claiming that not only had a number of police officers stepped out of line, but that he did not order nor was he aware of any such plan to carry out this attack in the first place (McNeish 2013). As Morales was later quoted saying in a national periodical: "ninguna acción de intervención o represión fue dispuesta el 25 de septiembre de 2011 por mi autoridad" (*Página Siete* 16th October 2013). He repeatedly denied knowledge of or involvement in the Chaparina Massacre and attempted to legitimise this response by reciting his own personal experience of oppression at the hands of US and Bolivian military intervention in the Chapare during the height of the coca eradication campaign in the 1990s (Gutiérrez Aguilar 2014; Actenberg 2013; Dunkerley 2007). Yet, despite his claims to ignorance, both he and his MAS-IPSP administration could not shake off the image of bloodied protesters which circulated widely throughout Bolivia. It was not that long ago when security forces were deployed by the state to quell protests in the Andean city of El Alto during the 2003 *Guerra del Gas* (Gutiérrez Aguilar 2014). At the height of this anti-neoliberal protest, where Aymara activists resisted government efforts to privatise Bolivian gas reserves and redistribute this resource abroad, 45 Indigenous protesters were killed (Gutiérrez Aguilar 2014). The Chaparina Massacre drew fresh attention to the continuities between the past and the present and the tendency of the Bolivian state to police the demands of Indigenous people who appeared to slip outside the limits of multicultural containment (Hale 2005). Despite firing several leading members of his cabinet and the defence forces in

addition to conceding protesters' demands and halting construction of the highway, events at Chaparina left a lasting legacy which continued to permeate the public consciousness. Several years later and Fernando Vargas, former leader of the TIPNIS Subcentral committee claims that lowland Indigenous people still seek justice for events that happened that day. As Vargas is quoted saying, "es una situación tan crítica que a siete años no tenemos a ningún responsable" (*El Deber* 2019). Moreover, Vargas reported in the same interview that Indigenous communities from the TIPNIS reserve commemorated the seven year anniversary (2019) of the Chaparina Massacre with an event organised by *el Comité Cívico pro Santa Cruz*, a right-wing organisation that has always stood in opposition to Morales, leading the separatist agenda in Santa Cruz de la Sierra (*El Deber* 2019). It is controversies like Chaparina that slowly eroded Morales's once formidable political majority, which gradually contributed to the eventual demise of his presidency after fourteen years.

His downfall, however, does raise some interesting questions in relation to Andean utopias in Bolivia and the cycle of anti-colonial revolution which has long characterised this history. Has that moment or cycle of *Pachakuti*, which Morales famously alluded to in his two 2006 inaugural speeches, now come to an end? How will Indigenous people frame the downfall of the country's first Indigenous president in years to come? Does another *Pachakuti* await? These questions are impossible to answer at this stage. Yet, they serve an important basis for future discussion. As Indigenous people prepare for the long-term consequences of Morales's forced resignation from power, the question of socialism, indigeneity and the struggle for justice will remain an ongoing source of consideration and debate in Bolivia for years to come.

Conclusion

This final chapter has been dedicated to observing the ways former Bolivian president Evo Morales Ayma redefined the national character, reworking political space around the historic struggle for Indigenous rights and justice in the twenty-first century. Through an Andean utopian framework, this chapter analysed Morales's two 2006 inaugural speeches concluding that his combined use of performance and discourse enacted a new sense of the political, transmitting memories and myths about the pre-colonial and anti-colonial revolutionary past which helped to orientate his presidency in the political present. By drawing attention to Bolivia's long history of anti-colonial revolutionary heroes in the Andes, Morales positioned his presidency as the culmination of this long historic struggle for Indigenous justice, strategically situating his 2006 election victory as a new era of change, akin to a moment of *Pachakuti* in the lifecycle of the Andean cosmological universe. My discussion of the constituent assembly reinforced that point, drawing attention to the ways Morales applied modern policies and frameworks to consolidate this new sense of the political in the contemporary Andean lifeworld. However, my discussion of the TIPNIS controversy provided impetus to rethink the fragile nature of utopias in the Andes. While I argued the case that the TIPNIS highway enhanced Morales's image, signifying his commitment to redeveloping Bolivia out of its *enfermedad* to borrow Arguedas historic view of it, the TIPNIS conflict most notably left behind a lasting legacy that continues to reverberate throughout lowland Indigenous communities who seek justice for the Chaparina Massacre. It was moments like this, where the Morales state used excessive force against peaceful anti-highway Indigenous demonstrators that contributed towards a gradual decline in his support which, broadly speaking, contributed towards

the eventual demise of his regime altogether. With yet another anti-colonial revolutionary cycle brought to an abrupt end, where does this leave indigeneity, socialism and Andean utopia in Bolivia?

It is clear, then, that the two theoretical utopian frameworks applied across the latter half of this thesis helped to illuminate the similar ways in which former president Morales and the Zapatista social justice movement utilized discourse to endow spatial imaginaries with new meanings in their common pursuit of justice for Indigenous people. While the Zapatistas think outside the democratic and electoral limits of the nation-state, towards a more hopeful space, Morales shaped and reworked the internal dynamics of Bolivia, relying on Andean histories and memories to orientate his presidency in the political present. However, the contested nature of state power revealed the fragile limits of this Andean utopia and Morales's decline in support strongly contrasted with the slow and steady development of the Zapatistas and their globalisation of resistance. In what follows, I develop these points further in the conclusion, elaborating on some of the key findings to emerge from this comparative ethnopolitical study.

Conclusion

This study set out to consider the implications of ethnopolitical research conducted from a "hemispheric frame of reference" (Castellanos et al. 2012). This study focused on two primary case studies drawn from Mexico and Bolivia which offered excellent insight into the elaborate and influential ways in which Indigenous people have, and continue to, resist the politics of the international neoliberal order. From an analysis of the Zapatista social justice movement, which operates outside the limits of the Mexican state, this study also considered the implications of an ethnopolitical state framework in Morales's Bolivia through discussion of the controversial 2011 TIPNIS dispute. As the first study of its kind to examine Mexico and Bolivia from a comparative ethnopolitical perspective, this thesis was guided by two key questions: what happens to our understanding of ethnopolitics when framed within a comparative setting? Does a comparative methodology facilitate a more critical rereading of contemporary ethnopolitical struggles in Latin America? As will be shown, this comparative methodology developed greater critical awareness of the similarities and differences in ethnopolitical activity between Mexico and Bolivia,

which, in turn, generated fresh insight into the contemporary struggle for land and Indigenous rights in Latin America. It is hoped that the findings generated from this study will encourage scholars of Latin American indigeneities to consider the merits of comparative methodologies in future ethnopolitical research.

The focus on place and space adopted in this thesis provided an effective framework for this study. It isolated two key components of the wider ethnopolitical struggle in Latin America and positioned them as organising tropes. Chapters one and two comparatively analysed the struggle for land and place in Mexico and Bolivia and identified several key similarities and differences in the way Indigenous people challenge the logic of the neoliberal lifeworld in order to "make place" in Latin America. Moreover, chapters three and four examined the politics of space and established key findings in relation to Indigenous representation in Mexico and Bolivia and how Indigenous people engage space and endow it with meaning and value through discourse, performance and other acts. Central to the success of this comparative study was the choice of methodology and how this multidisciplinary framework combined local and international Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholarship and print media with several key primary texts published by Indigenous people themselves. This multidisciplinary methodological approach honoured Indigenous agency and provided first-hand insight into how Indigenous people attempt to influence and affect change over and throughout the lifeworld. Additionally, my interest in Mexico and Bolivia stemmed from the radically different ways in which ethnopolitics is conducted in each country which led me to pose the following question in the introduction: how does the Zapatista model of ethnopolitical autonomy compare to former Indigenous president of Bolivia Evo Morales Ayma and

his ethnopolitical model of nation-state governance particularly in relation to the struggle for place and space?

In terms of land and place, several key findings emerge as a result of this comparative methodological framework. From the outset this comparative ethnopolitical study reinforced the widely held view that state-endorsed development agendas, whether led by Indigenous or non-Indigenous presidents, continue to generate considerable ongoing challenges for Indigenous communities and their ability to "make place" right across Latin America. In Mexico, I described how the Zapatista social justice movement resisted the ethnoterritorial and ethnocultural appropriations of the Maya region by president Andrés Manuel López Obrador and his *Tren Maya* development. Even though development of this rail network has yet to commence, it has already divided opinion between Indigenous groups who have endorsed the economic merits of the project and those, namely the Zapatistas, who have not. The already contested nature of this railway development in Chiapas resembles, in part, the long-standing resistance led by lowland Indigenous communities in Bolivia against the construction of a roadway development through the heart of the TIPNIS reserve. However, considering the ethnic status of former Bolivian president Evo Morales Ayma, the 2011 TIPNIS controversy evolved into a discursive battleground, where, I argued, race and gender were weaponised by the Morales state to marginalise and exclude lowland Indigenous people from the nation, representing them as elements acting outside the collective interests of the plurinational state. Yet, despite this nuance, this comparative study acknowledged the universal threat posed by development projects on or near Indigenous territories that are endorsed by governments which promote/d anti-neoliberal agendas.

Alongside universal opposition to state-endorsed development, this comparative study drew attention to other key findings in relation to the ways in which Indigenous people in Bolivia and Mexico "make place". Tracing the contours of ethnoterritoriality along rural-urban lines, chapter two argued that *la nueva arquitectura andina* redefines the act of place-making in contemporary Bolivia, where wealthy Aymara peoples seek out new ways to renegotiate the ethnic self. By transforming the urban landscape of El Alto, *la nueva arquitectura andina* combines the use of vivid Andean colours and ancient Andean iconography to recreate bold architectural aesthetics which reassert new forms of ethnic pride in this predominantly Indigenous city. As I argued, these buildings function as social spaces, where communities gather to mediate social ties through *fiestas* exercising a sense of communal belonging which mimics traditional practices performed within the Andean *ayllu*. Meanwhile, as this comparative framework pointed out, the Zapatista *Caracoles* developed decidedly different conceptual features which radically distinguish them from Neo-Andean architecture in Bolivia. In chapter one I argued that, in a similar way to snail shells which spiral in an inward-outward motion, the Zapatista *Caracoles* differentiate between inside and outside spaces, allowing Indigenous communities to construct the familiar internal world of Zapatista autonomy away from the evasive threat posed by the neoliberal order outside.

Yet, despite the fact that these acts of place-making are aesthetically distinct from each other, highlighting the non-uniform ways in which Indigenous people choose to "make place" in different parts of Latin America, this comparative study revealed that Indigenous place-making operates along similar epistemological lines. In the same way that *la nueva arquitectura andina* reworks the logic of capitalism around

the creation of these modern Indigenous aesthetics in El Alto, where wealthy *alteños* invest considerable money to commission these ethnic designs, the Zapatista *Caracoles* compel the world of neoliberal development aid to conform to the internal standards established by Zapatista communities, thus allowing Indigenous people to decide on the flow and exchange of financial aid and other external assistance between Zapatistas and the neoliberal world. Even though Indigenous people "make place" in decidedly distinctive ways which often appear to bear little resemblance to each other, this comparative methodology has determined that acts of place-making are defined by a universal need to empower communities against the excesses of neoliberal orthodoxy, reworking and conforming the logic of capital around internal ethnic subjectivities which guarantee their agency and visibility in the lifeworld and, above all, secure their place in Latin America.

In addition to land and place, this thesis developed a comparative analysis in relation to the politics of space, revealing the opportunities and challenges which lie at the heart of the wider ethnopolitical struggle for social justice in contemporary Latin America. Applying the use of two separate theoretical utopian frameworks, this comparative study analysed primary texts which illuminated several key similarities and differences in the way Indigenous people in Mexico and Bolivia engaged space and endowed it with meaning through discourse and other embodied acts. This comparative methodology isolated key texts such as the Zapatista *Declaraciones de la Selva Lacandona* and former president Morales's two 2006 inaugural speeches, which were common devices used by both Indigenous groups in Mexico and Bolivia to negotiate the public space and communicate meaning within and throughout the wider social body.

As results from this comparative study show, the politics of space and the ethnopolitical struggle to enact meaning over and throughout the lifeworld is largely influenced by the nation-state and, in particular, whether Indigenous people choose to embrace it as a vehicle for change or reject it altogether. As argued in chapter three, the Zapatista *Declaraciones de la Selva Lacandona* challenged and destabilised the dynamics of the neoliberal Mexican state by first declaring war against the federal executive before then articulating new ideas and proposals regarding the struggle for democracy, liberty and justice in Mexico. By deploying the concept of hope across the declarations, the Zapatistas actively encouraged civil society to transcend the limits of modernity and to organise in more hopeful and utopian ways outside the boundaries of electoral democracy in Mexico. Evolving and adapting their resistance, the Zapatistas gradually developed a transnational view of the world, where they challenged the hegemony of global capitalism by proposing to build a globalisation of resistance from below and to the Left.

In contrast to the pursuit of justice by the Zapatistas outside and in opposition to the neoliberal state, former president Morales embraced the nation-state as a platform and vehicle to enact change throughout the Bolivian lifeworld. Through an Andean utopian framework, chapter four analysed Morales's 2006 inaugural speeches, revealing the way the former president of Bolivia reshaped the internal dynamics of national space around the struggle for Indigenous rights and justice. By combining discourse and performance Morales strategically reworked Andean histories, memories and myths to legitimise his presidency in the political present, positioning his 2006 victory as the culmination of a long anti-colonial revolutionary history. Yet, despite these key differences, this comparative study also pointed to the limitations of

textual space and, in particular, the struggle to enact meaningful, long-term ethnopolitical change in Latin America.

In Bolivia, the 2011 TIPNIS controversy not only revealed how Morales sought to consolidate his victory and enhance his image as Indigenous president by endorsing infrastructural projects like the highway which aimed to improve Bolivia's strategic influence in the Andes, it also pointed to the deeply contested nature of state-driven policies, where Morales violently policed lowland Indigenous communities who exercised their right to reject the president's proposal for development. The decline in support for Morales accelerated as a result of events such as the Chaparina Massacre which destabilised his image as Indigenous president and revealed the fragile limits of his Andean utopian vision. While recapturing the nation-state offered Morales extensive opportunity to enact radical ethnopolitical change over and throughout the Bolivian lifeworld, translating discourse into action and transforming the country into a leading model of Indigenous state governance, the TIPNIS controversy revealed the contested nature of national imaginaries and the difficulty faced by a single Indigenous president compelled to lead a diverse, dynamic and at times contested plurinational state. Meanwhile, in an alternative space outside the confines of the nation-state, the Zapatista social justice movement continue to gradually build a global resistance against capitalism which is an enormous challenge for a relatively small and local Indigenous population that relies on solidarity with other anti-neoliberal forces inside and outside Mexico in order to effect change within this expansive global universe. Collectively, these limitations point to the vulnerability of ethnopolitical actors in Latin America today, who struggle to translate discourse and other embodied practices into long-term transformative change. This ongoing struggle

to enact meaning in space reinforces the value of place which will never be truly guaranteed until Indigenous people see the world as theirs to inhabit too.

All studies are necessarily limited in scope due to time and other constraints. However, it is hoped that the necessary limitations of this study indicate pathways towards further opportunities for comparative research in Latin American indigeneties. This comparative study established a series of findings in relation to the politics of place and space across two primary ethnopolitical case studies drawn from Mexico and Bolivia. I contend that findings from this study would be further enriched through additional comparative research between other leading ethnopolitical case studies in Latin America. For example, Indigenous groups in Chile and Ecuador are heavily involved in a series of anti-neoliberal protests, where the struggle for place and space is very much to the fore of their contemporary ethnopolitical agendas. Moreover, there is also scope to expand a comparative indigeneities methodology beyond politics to include many of the ethnocultural dimensions of Indigenous resistance, where art, literature, textiles, and other cultural practices are applied in different ways across the continent with a view to promoting ethnic visibility amid the homogenous culture of the neoliberal world. The digital space also provides scope for comparative research as Indigenous people across Latin America use the internet to not only to promote activism and awareness of their political struggles but to revive ethnic languages through hip-hop culture in places like El Alto and Yucatán. The scope for comparative research in Latin American indigeneities truly is immense and will definitely draw attention to *un mundo donde quepan muchos mundos*.

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