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# Introduction

Indigenous peoples have conquered the global imagination by fighting for everyday needs and claiming collective rights. They have moved well beyond the ‘noble savage’ of environmentalism or the indigenous peoples ‘safeguards’ of the Washington Consensus second generation reforms. Bolivia has been at the international forefront of these developments, providing extraordinary insights into the politics of indigeneity. The 1994 Law of Popular Participation promoted participatory planning and propelled a substantial number of indigenous representatives into municipal government, while the self-proclaimed indigenous government of Evo Morales Ayma pushed through the 2009 constitution establishing Bolivia as a plurinational state. By law, each social group that can trace its history back before the Spanish conquest constitutes a nation within the unitary yet plurinational state, and has the right to govern its territory in accordance with its own norms and customs. These state reforms have changed the political playing field in the country.

Change also occurred in the Andean valley of Toracari, in the utmost northern reaches of the department of Potosí. Still, the 11 years which separate my first and last stints of fieldwork in Toracari show an impact that in the most positive terms can only be described as muted. I started my research in 2002 when the first excitement of the Law of Popular Participation was waning, and wrapped up my last visit to the valley in 2013 when the Morales government had been in power for almost eight years. Most tellingly, local landlords in Toracari had again been able to productively exploit the changing political environment, just as they had in the wake of the 1953 agrarian reform. The government’s ambitious rhetoric promoting indigenous identity and territory, and the nationalisation of extractive industries such as Canadian junior mining company South American Silver—with concessions in Toracari—stand in stark contrast to the persistence of Andean landlords. Such incongruity invites a thorough exploration of the relations between the indigenous population of Toracari, the state and landlords to understand the dynamics of continuity. My key argument is that indigenous practitioners actively recreate longstanding social relations in rituals, in turn explaining the muted impact of progressive national policies. In Toracari, rituals constitute the main sites of cultural reproduction, highly relevant in indigenous experiences while relatively shielded

from transformations that may take place in other social domains. The Toracari ethnography scrutinises the minutiae of ritual techniques that produce normative, affective and aesthetic dispositions—cultural models—shaping indigenous peoples' relations with the state and with landlords. It shines a uniquely Andean light into the conditions created by ritual worshippers that favour the endurance of such models, explaining the viscosity of power relations.

## Kacharpaya, or the Presentation of Dramatis Personae

The ritual of *kacharpaya* (Quechua, farewell) graphically introduces the protagonists in the valley of Toracari. Reconfirming indigenous community and momentarily dissolving the critical relationships with gods and landlords, the ritual reveals some of the local complexities of social and cosmic order. As these relations are shaped and expressed in ritual, they are of particular relevance to the indigenous participants.

It had been raining all day when I arrived in the community that had invited me to share the *kacharpaya* celebrations. Mountain streams had grown into sizable rivers while the deluge replenished the green fields of potatoes, broad beans, sprouting barley, wheat etc. Such was the marvellous sight of the wet season transforming the face of the barren-yellow and dry-brown mountains of the Bolivian Andes for a few weeks every year. Banter and laughter revealed the excitement of the men who had gathered in the former community school. *Kacharpaya* is celebrated on *domingo de tentación*, the Sunday of the week after carnival, and marks the end of these festivities. For a week, powerful and dangerous forces of fertility roam through the community; in *kacharpaya*, they are ceremoniously bid farewell. In the old schoolroom, most of the men of the community were dressing up as these forces: many *Guerra Mallkus* (Sp./Quechua, war condors) donning *monteras* (helmets made of hardened bull skin), gloves, boots, *ch'uspas* (small woven coca leaves holders) and other attire resembling a kind of battle dress (cf. Izko 1986: 98; Bouysse-Cassagne and Harris 1987: 39–40); as well as two *Diablos* (Sp., devils), a miner and a priest. Most comments and ridicule were directed at the men the community had cross-dressed as an urban woman and two indigenous women—including the anthropologist.

In the late afternoon, the *kacharpaya* music and dance got seriously underway. Loudly encouraged by the rest of the community, the men formed two groups, each visiting all 25 houses or so three times. The leading troupe consisted of the two indigenous women and most of the *Guerra Mallkus* playing *pinkillus* (wooden duct flutes). The devils, miner, priest, urban woman

and a few Guerra Mallkus made up the other group; one of them played the *charango* (a small ten-string guitar). Proceeding through the community, every household gave maize beer to the dancers and musicians, offering a few drops to the hosts' divine *Iskina*, sprinkling the liquid over the small stone table that stands in every courtyard (see Chapter 1). En route, the two troupes tried to outperform each other while the two indigenous women were jokingly molested, having sexual innuendos thrown at them. The priest offered (fake) money in an attempt to buy sexual favours from one of the women; the bible he held in his hands was a school notebook including a brochure on contraceptives. During the third and last round through the community, the hosts provided food, urging members of the troupes to vomit over the *Iskinas*, which would guarantee abundant harvests. The festive ritual came to an end well into the night when the whole community gathered at the *ch'isiraya* (Quechua, resting place) above the main nucleus of the community. Here, we took off our disguises. With a huge blast of dynamite, the visitors of carnival were bidden farewell as the indigenous community reunited.

Kacharpaya is not celebrated in all Toracari communities and certainly not everywhere in such elaborate fashion. Nevertheless, the ritual vividly illustrates the local sense of community with the gods, the inclusion and exclusion of relative outsiders such as the landlords, and the reconfirmation of indigenous community. During carnival, the Guerra Mallkus are cheered on and welcomed into the hamlets with the aim of securing the regeneration of agricultural produce and livestock. Despite their menacing status, they are probably the most trusted of visitors since the two indigenous women joined the troupe that the Guerra Mallkus led and dominated. In fact, the Guerra Mallkus of the kacharpaya are identified as the *Kumbres* (mountain gods), the most important gods in the valley. In carnival they come down from the peaks to mingle with their worshippers for several days. Although the two *Diablos* participate in the second, more assertive troupe, they do not necessarily represent the devils of Christian faith, evoking merely negative connotations. In the Toracari valley, the devils stand for all divine forces that are not Christian in origin (see Chapter 1). They include deities such as mountain gods and condors, and denote other sacred forces like mother earth and the *Iskinas*. They—and not so much the Christian God or saints—are placated during carnival, securing another reproductive cycle. Some of them may be threatening or capricious but they are not negative forces, for they provide local prosperity. The ritual communication between indigenous practitioners and gods establishes a temporary community which is vital to the well-being of both.

In the process, the kacharpaya displays a notable intimacy between human beings and (mountain) gods dancing side by side through the community. The

sacred aspect of deities sets them apart from mortals but the latter do not experience a clear-cut ontological divide. The Guerra Mallkus or Kumbres tower over their mortal communities; other divine powers can be the earth, in which they work, or the images and statues of the saints they worship in churches, chapels and at home. The rural population feels the continuous physical presence of the deities in the reciprocal community that both create in rituals. People in the communities experience the gods as bodily forces like themselves who they can influence, manipulate and even kick out of the community. This is why I avoid the use of the term ‘spirit,’ since it implies the immaterial existence of the divine independent from corporeal reality—which spiritual entities are often supposed to be able to enter and possess (Boddy 1994; cf. Levy et al. 1996). I prefer words like gods, deities and divine forces for they do not evoke as great a sense of spirituality, which would negate the material experience of the sacred in the Toracari valley.

Akin to the gods, the kacharpaya also provisionally integrates external social actors into community. The miner is probably the most obvious outsider, as the overwhelming majority in the valley plainly identify as farmers (see Chapter 3).<sup>1</sup> The urban woman and the priest instantiate the local small-scale landlords.<sup>2</sup> Of these, the priest is the most complicated figure. He obviously stands for the Catholic church which dominates Toracari—although Protestant sects have been around since the beginning of the 20th century (see Chapter 1). Still, the participants of the kacharpaya mainly recognised the previous *corregidor*, the public officer in charge of local policing and justice, in the priest. The dark glasses he wore during the kacharpaya were an explicit allusion to the man who, during my first year in the field, held this public office; he hid a blind eye behind sunglasses. Blown away by fireworks, it was said. The position of *corregidor* has at all times been filled by landlords. The kacharpaya, then, may show that landlords (and the miner), like the Guerra Mallkus, are intimidating yet beneficial figures with whom rural communities form a tight relationship by performing rituals. This is the argument I will develop in Part Three.

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1. Few families in the valley complement agricultural activities with the seasonal exploitation of small local mines. The community where I participated in the kacharpaya is close to several old (colonial) mining shafts. Of late, it has been one of the staunchest local defenders of cooperative miners to work in the area, with the aim of forcing the Canadian junior mining company South American Silver to rescind its concessions (see Chapter 3). These actions may be related to the presence of the miner in the kacharpaya: dangerous but potentially beneficial for the community.

2. Some ritual participants of the kacharpaya referred to the urban woman as *chola*, a concept that includes landlord women of towns such as Toracari, as well as indigenous women whose habits are urbanised by life in the Bolivian cities.

This does not mean, however, that landlords are ever perceived as proper community members. The priest's action in soliciting sexual services, for instance, confirms the local perception of landlords as people who do not behave appropriately; they are not fully humane.

The indigenous people of the Toracari valley call landlords by various names: *patrones*, *q'ara*, and *llaqtaruna*. In Chapter 5, I shall dissect the exact meanings of these concepts, but for now it suffices to indicate why I prefer to render these terms in English as 'landlords.' The word derives from the local use of *patrón* which literally stands for boss or superior, and is probably best translated as 'powerful other.'<sup>3</sup> In relation to the hard-working rural population, the reluctance of some *patrones* to labour on the lands stands out. What is more, as a substantial part of the lands on which indigenous farmers work is owned by *patrones*, they can grant or deny access to an important practice and symbol—land with work—with which local farmers unequivocally identify. This is why 'landlords' fits the local understanding of *patrones* well. It should be said from the outset, though, that since the 1950s and 1960s, big haciendas disappeared from the valley of Toracari. We are talking about small-scale landlords, some of whom may possess less land than the better-off households in rural communities.

Finally, the main character of the *kacharpaya*—and *Deference Revisited*—is the indigenous population living in the rural communities of the Toracari valley. It is their experiences of ritual, and their perceptions of the state and landlords that are central to my research. This perspective, though, forces a reconsideration of the widely used term 'indigenous' with which I have filled the first few pages. This is a problematic concept because its 'philanthropic' connotations imply a respect for indigenous peoples that ignores the long history of oppression suffered by the *indios*, or indians (Yampara Huarachi n.d.). Most importantly, it is problematic because no inhabitant of Toracari communities identifies as either indigenous (*indígena*) or indio. On the contrary, the few times that I have heard these terms used in the valley, they both in equal measure referred to the state of oppression experienced by the indian population before the revolution of 1952 and the concomitant agrarian reform of 1953. Instead, this revolution turned the despised and self-loathing indians into honourable *campesinos*.

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3. I owe this insight to Gose's discussion of the meaning of *misti*, a common denominator for landlords in the Peruvian Andes (2001:20). Gose adds, though, that *mistis* are normally talked about with "certain venom." This is not necessarily the case in Toracari where indian subsistence farmers and tenants consider the powerful other, the *patrones*, as an external force which is crucial to the reproduction of their livelihoods.



In April 1952, the country lived through an insurrection that in a matter of days toppled the sitting military regime, replacing it with a government led by the *Movimiento Nacional Revolucionario*, the National Revolutionary Movement (MNR). This party had been the first left-leaning political movement in Bolivia able to win at the polls—in 1951—only to see the results annulled by a new dictatorship. Once in power (1952–1964), the MNR followed up on its progressive promises, many of which were radical for the continent in its time: universal suffrage, nationalisation of the major mining companies, education for all including the indian population, and land reform. The latter—the agrarian reform of 1953—meant that the lands of the haciendas and communities of the Bolivian Andes were supposed to be parcelled out to individual farmers actively participating in the market, free of bondage labour. Lack of a tradition of historical narration and the continued presence of landlords in the valley of Toracari probably explain why the local population did not experience a historical watershed while the reform haphazardly progressed (see Chapter 7). Yet, the indians of yore definitely adopted the new government’s rhetoric defining them as ‘campesinos.’ As analysis of the Independence Day celebrations will show (Chapter 2), rural communities enthusiastically embraced this identity which publicly acknowledges them for the first time—in theory at least—as equal and full members of the Bolivian fatherland, equal before the law (Albó 1987: 381). Up to this day, the indian farmers of Toracari primarily identify as campesinos or its synonym *campuruna*, people of the land, proud of their agricultural skills and hard manual work. I have opted to maintain this term both in respect of local self-classification and in contrast to national and international indigenist or indianist oratory. As I argue in Chapter 5, the local conception of campesino already implies key elements of the discourse recently promoted by advocates of the plurinational state and indian rights in general: the term puts into perspective their progressive credentials. A common English translation of campesino is ‘peasant,’ subsistence farmer. Because such a rendition oozes derogatory connotations, I stick with the positive self-identification of campesino.

Defining clear terms for some of the main protagonists, however, does not mean that their meanings are unambiguous and uncontested. By now it has become common practice in Andean anthropology to state the obvious that indigenous—and other—identities are historically contingent. Identities shift depending on conditions of time and place, and are constructed in varying social interactions. Identities are also moulded in relation to what they are not, as in the case of campesinos’ self-understanding in contrast to the landlords in Toracari (Weismantel 2005: 182; De la Cadena and Starn 2007: 3–4). Importantly, in the Andean countryside, indians and campesinos may actually lose

their identity if they do not constantly maintain it (Canessa 1998: 241). A certain lifestyle and association with the community need continuous hard work to be reconfirmed. People who migrate, who assume another profession instead of labouring the land, who do not participate in rituals or pay their community fees etc. transform into something that is not campesino anymore. Frequently they are considered *q'ara*, landlord. For the argument of the present book, though, it is critical to emphasise that this is not an attempt to map out detailed descriptions of identities and their contingent transformations. It is a study of the experiences of campesinos acting upon the gods, the state and landlords, external agents to various degrees. Of course, what campesinos feel and say about these social and cosmic actors also says much about the campesinos themselves. Critical anthropology once taught us that what anthropologists write about the 'other' reveals as much as or more about themselves and their societies than about the people they study. Similarly, campesino perceptions of others such as gods, the state and landlords tell a great deal about their own preoccupations and predispositions.

Contentiously, the contingency of identity or meaning also implies a critique of a great deal of anthropology which explains culture in terms that may be too coherent and consistent to involve social diversity and conflict within communities. Leaders exposed to external sources of information may have diverging experiences from the 'grassroots' they represent (Martínez Novo 2006: 156; Spedding 2010a: 511–513); school-going youths will adapt the norms and values of previous generations who did not receive much education; affluent households may ignore calls for communal labour; and the specific social roles of women suggest they may have aspirations and interests that differ from men's. Indeed, my arguments run the risk of being too unidimensional and too articulate. This, though, is not only due to the inherent restrictions of a male ethnographer passionately trying to make sense of his ethnographic material, but also to the main site of research: rituals. Culturally defined attitudes and norms are unevenly distributed within communities, but the campesinos of Toracari all aspire to become a full person. This process involves an increased knowledge of, and participation in, rituals. In the Andes, you are not born a person, but personhood is acquired and gradually perfected during one's life (Canessa 1998; 2012b: 119–165). Rituals play a vital part in this process of human perfection in Toracari. Progressively, then, men and women of all stripes are exposed to ritual techniques that mould cultural models into personal dispositions. It is this process and its outcome that I lay bare, aware of a context that is dominated by middle-aged and older campesino men. Over time, rituals transform personal variability into a more homogeneous cultural condition.

## Ritual Prominence

Victor Turner was forced to take an interest in ritual because of the continuous sound of Ndembu drums. For me, the most noticeable sign announcing ritual activity was the smoke of fires brewing maize beer. I was taken aback by the sheer number of rituals going on in the valley of Toracari. I participated almost every month in a major celebration: the feasts of Lord *Sak'ani* in October, All Saints in November, carnival in February or March, Easter in April, *Tata Espiritu* (Pentecost) and Corpus Christi in June, Independence Day in August, and Christ Crucified in September were the most important I attended. Each feast means at least three days of worship, some more than a week. It is during these feasts that I observed the strongest experiences of well-being among the campesinos realising community with the gods. Fathers encourage their teenage offspring to participate in family rituals; young couples are eager to assume their first ritual responsibilities as the *alféreces* (sponsors) of a communal feast; houses are built with the proper ritual invocations; and every community has a *yatiri* or *costumbrista*—ranging from ritual experts and diviners to ritual healers and sorcerers. They observe the behaviour of adolescents, happy to notice when one shows signs of *yatiri* power bestowed on them by the gods. Furthermore, good harvests and healthy livestock require constant vigilance and care, often ritual in nature. In one way or another, campesinos invoke the gods while labouring the fields, and anxieties concerning the weather produce ritual reactions. The drought of December 2002, for instance, triggered the *llanthu* rite that opened my eyes to campesino cosmology (see Chapter 1). Thus, paraphrasing Holston (2008: xiii), I might not have studied rituals if the Toracari campesinos had not insisted on its importance. My interest developed from theirs.

Studying rituals and power, anthropologists have veered between opposite perspectives. Ritual has been considered the key site of the reproduction of political authority on the one hand, and the principal cultural tool creating the imaginary of social subversion by dominated groups on the other. And everything in between. On this spectrum, the rituals of Toracari definitely conform to the political authority view: campesinos ritually generate deference towards the state and, in particular, landlords in the valley. The effects of these ritual practices make it hard for alternative social and political praxis to transform existing local power relations.

Briefly leapfrogging the coming seven ethnographic and historical chapters on which the argument is built, this research confirms that rituals are at the core of the cultural workings of continuity, explaining the muted impact of the

present government politics of indigeneity on the local authority of the landlords. Toracari campesinos performing rituals establish relations with the deities which function as templates for social relations within and outside the community. I focus on two such templates, moulding respectively the relationship between campesinos and the state, and campesinos and landlords. The rituals of Independence Day, All Saints and wakes of the dead combine to establish a strong association between the Christian God and *Gobierno*, government, in campesino eyes. As a result, campesinos experience their relations with government in the same way as they experience their relations with God: an asymmetric yet reciprocal relationship of distant yet beneficial command. Likewise, most campesino rituals reconfirm a compelling affinity between mountain gods—Guerra Mallkus, Kumbres—and landlords. As don Julián, a well-respected local yatiri, once told me: ‘You have to do a lot, you have to fulfil many obligations, but in the end they will always give.’ He is referring to both the mountain gods and the landlords who are extremely demanding but whose generosity is critical to campesino livelihood. They generally prevail over God and government, establishing an asymmetric yet reciprocal relationship of immanent command. The dangerous and demanding powers of mountain gods and landlords are much more effective and productive than God or government in daily campesino life. I call the ritually generated dispositions of campesinos in relation to God/*Gobierno* and Kumbre/landlord ‘cultural models.’ It is the latter cultural model which helps explain why landlord authority did not crumble in the face of either the 1953 agrarian reform or the latest government policies.

Above all, two books of immense ethnographic and historical wealth inspired development of the concept of cultural models in greater detail. Both Sherry Ortner’s history of Sherpa Buddhism (1989) and Alexander Hinton’s exploration of Khmer Rouge genocide (2005) constructively turn detailed local knowledge into vital anthropological understanding of cultural production, identifying relatively durable cultural repertoires that explain human experience and action, as I do in Toracari. These scholars may seem awkward bedfellows. Ortner plainly falls within the tradition of symbolic anthropology, reworking and deepening Geertz’ insights. She is particularly interested in Geertz’ ideas about ‘models for’ a worldly order, its ethos. Vital social practices constantly recreate the experiential and behavioural dispositions of their practitioners with which they act upon the world. Hinton, instead, declares his allegiance to cognitive anthropology—especially Brad Shore (1996)—skilfully distinguishing five cultural models that favour a local cultural proclivity towards Khmer Rouge practices and ideology. Both, then, delve into the dynamics of cultural durability akin to the cultural models I explore with the

help of these authors. Moved by the overwhelming campesino interest in rituals, I take up Ortner's suggestion to scrutinise the qualities of ritual to understand the resilience of these models. I will explore in depth how the technicalities of rituals manage to persuade their practitioners to reproduce the cultural models of either distant yet beneficial command or immanent, dangerous yet highly productive command, reproducing social relations in the valley. Critically, such analysis involves techniques of closure as rituals produce mental conditions that bar external economic and political transformations from having much of an impact on the cultural models they recreate. The social force of rituals blunts the effects of such transformations taking hold in other local social domains.

The exploration of cultural models implies a strong sense of culture determining or at least affecting local actions in reaction to national state reforms. In the coming pages, four such cultural dispositions defining social relations will come to the fore: distant command, immanent command, institutions (characterised by lack of obligations of reciprocity), and territory. I will scrutinise the first two of these cultural models as they are reproduced in ritual. The model of institution is not established in rituals, while the significance of the local experience of territory may have ritual foundations which I have not examined in detail. What is more, other Andean anthropologists have carried out extensive research on recurring types of social relations within communities, the most important of which is the complementarity between male and female (*chachawarmi*). In the analytical framework I develop, *chachawarmi* is also considered a cultural model reproduced in rituals. The robustness of cultural models, then, does not imply that the campesinos of the valley of Toracari can be understood by developing an all-encompassing coherent concept of culture. Individually, cultural models are relatively durable and consistent, but taken together they jar. They provide contrasting models to act upon the world: in certain circumstances certain models dominate, in other circumstances other models do.

The captivating contrast between the permanence of landlords and the ambitions of recent or not so recent state reforms has drawn me to the study of cultural models whose templates are grounded in campesino relations with God and the Kumbres respectively. Rituals explain their vigour. Ironically, the Morales government has realised the importance of rituals in legitimising the (plurinational) state it considers having 're-founded.' Presidential inauguration ceremonies take place on the ruins of Tiwanaku, the old capital of a major, pre-Inca civilisation, and the government created a new public holiday with concomitant rites on 21 June, the Andean or Aymara New Year. However, it has probably not realised that the new and existing rituality it supports may also

turn indigeneity into an authoritative means of reproducing the social relations it professes to transform.

## The Valley of Toracari

In mid-2012, Toracari becomes world news. The valley included concessions for the Canadian junior mining company South American Silver to explore the mineral riches of what is popularly known as the Mallku Quta mine. Protests against the purported mine turn violent, resulting in the death of a campesino. Subsequently, the Morales government reversed the concessions and eventually militarised the region in an attempt to quell the dispute which has pitted campesino community against community. The state had never come so close to the valley of Toracari.

These actions can be seen as the dramatic culmination of a recent process in which the state has taken a renewed interest in the Andean countryside. In 1994, the Bolivian government kick-started a process of radical decentralisation by promulgating the Law of Popular Participation. This reform has been presented as the most advanced endeavour of any government to promote and institutionalise civic participation (Molina Monasterios 1997; Ticehurst 1998: 358; Van Cott 2000). One of the law's main objectives is the improvement of local, i.e., municipal, government through the direct participation of marginalised groups such as women, the urban poor, campesinos and indian communities.<sup>4</sup> In Toracari, this law reverses a general trend in which the state had mostly disappeared from the rural areas (cf. Harris 2000c: 80). During the colonial period, indian communities had been tied to the state and the market by tribute payments in cash and *mita*: compulsory labour drafts. The latter was brought to an end in the early 19th century, while the 1953 agrarian reform formally abolished rural taxes. Tribute payments by the *ayllus*, comprising the indian communities, had been the young Bolivian Republic's most important source of revenue until the 1860s when a mining boom caused the state to lose interest in the shrivelling tax income they provided. Accordingly, *ayllus* of North Potosí had successfully wrested control of tribute collection out of the hands of state agents at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries (Platt

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4. Much has been written about Popular Participation in Bolivia, see for example República de Bolivia (1997), Ticona Alejo and Albó (1997: 280–311), Medina (1999: 243–270), Thévoz (1999), Patzi (2000), Goudsmit and Blackburn (2001), Lema et al (2001), Medeiros (2001), Albó (2002b), McNeish (2002), Gray Molina (2003), Postero (2009).

1987b: 318). After the agrarian reform—and the 1952 revolution from which it emanated—large parts of the Bolivian countryside came under the spell of local strongmen who ruled them as a sort of ‘mini-state’; national and departmental government authorities could not enter these regions without their explicit permission (Malloy 1989: 275, 370; Whitehead 2003: 36–37). This seems to have been the case in Toracari as well. Regional leaders drove a wedge between national government and the rural population. In northern Potosí, these leaders were frequently ex-miners or landlords and, even if they were of campesino descent, they often operated in cahoots with local landlords.

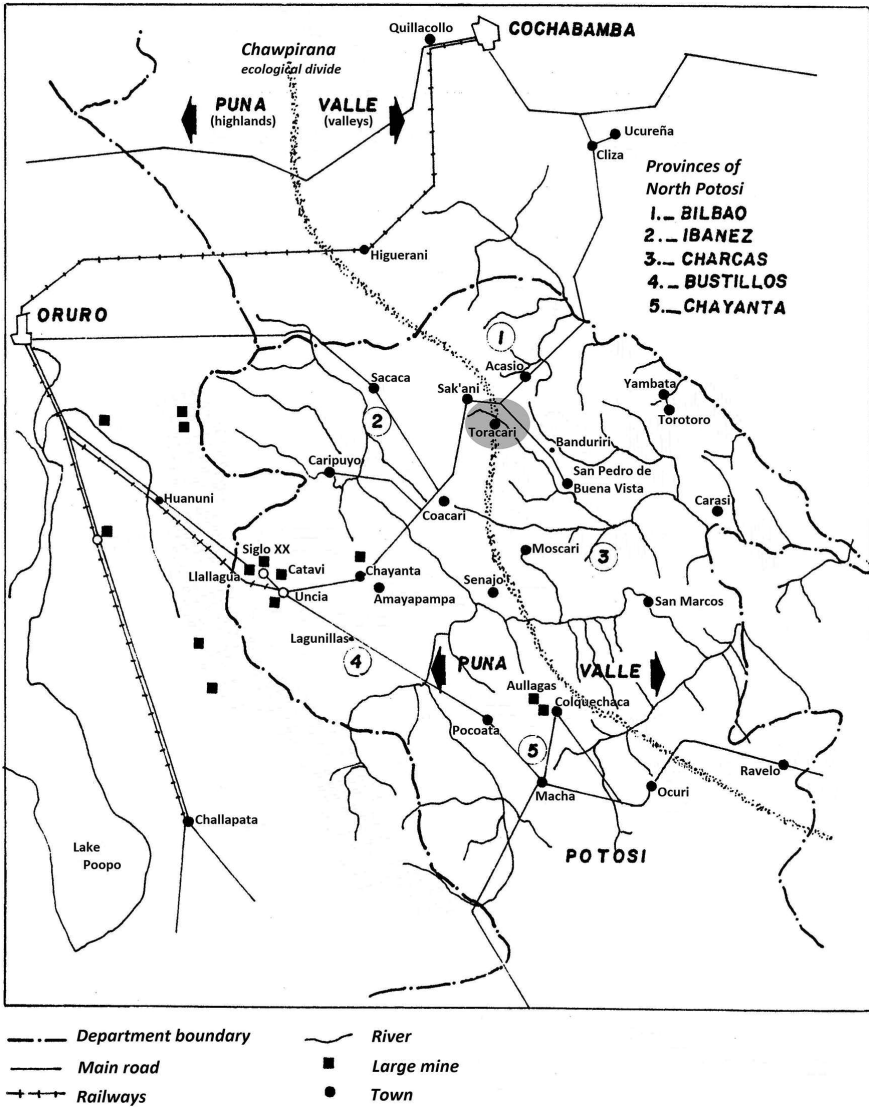
Political analyses abound of the rise of Evo Morales and the political party he represents, the *Movimiento al Socialismo* (Movement to Socialism, MAS). These have been written about extensively, both within Bolivia (e.g., Mayorga 2011; Zegada et al. 2011) and outside (e.g., Pearce 2011): hopeful (e.g., Crabtree 2008), partisan (e.g., García Linera et al. 2010), inspired (e.g., Soruco Sologuren 2011) and highly critical (e.g., Lazarte R. 2010). The few anthropological studies that have explicitly considered the local interest in the Morales government—and may have shown either its relevance or relative irrelevance—are urban-based (Goldstein 2012), focus on indian activists (Burman 2011a) or are situated in Bolivia’s eastern lowlands (Fabricant 2011; Gustafson 2011). Toracari, instead, offers an in-depth ethnographic account of the local significance of Morales’ government policies converging on the Andean countryside. The valley shows the complexities of local appropriation of the newest policies: nationalisation of extractive industries and the promotion of indigeneity. It does so from a perspective that compares the valley before and after Evo Morales’ first overwhelming electoral victory in 2005 supported by fieldwork carried out primarily in 2002–2003 and 2012–2013. For many of the (ex-)ideologues of the Morales government, Andean regions such as Toracari are supposed to provide living experiences of the core conceptions of the politics of indigeneity. Reality is more intractable as policies fail to combine with campesino rituals. In the Toracari valley, campesino deference towards landlords and Morales’ immense popularity sit side by side.<sup>5</sup>

The Quechua-speaking valley of Toracari forms the uppermost part of the large San Pedro valley lying in the *chawpirana* (or *taypirana*) of North Potosí, an intermediate ecological zone between the highlands and the lower valleys of the Andes (see map: Highlands and valleys of northern Potosí). The Toracari valley extends between altitudes ranging from 3,000 to 4,000 metres, covering

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5. For some causes of the continued popularity of Evo Morales in Bolivia after eight years in power, see Ayo (2013) and Molina (2013).





Highlands and valleys of northern Potosí  
 adjusted from Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui and THOA (1992: 48)



what in 2003 became the municipal district of Toracari, one of eight districts in the municipality of San Pedro de Buena Vista. It comprises the ayllu of Qullana and Urinsaya, and the ex-haciendas of what is now known as *cabildo* (minor ayllu) Chirimira. The Andean ayllus are pre-Hispanic in origin and in North Potosí represent strong communal moiety groups that each has a territorial base incorporating several communities. The 21 communities of the valley average 29 households (calculation based on Villegas Paredes 2008). As a consequence of the 1952 revolution, all ayllu and (ex-)hacienda communities changed into *sindicatos*, rural community unions, adjusting to the exigencies of the modernising state. However, in ayllu Qullana and Urinsaya, where I did most of my fieldwork, campesinos have continued to identify with the original ayllu, maintaining many of its cooperative practices. In fact, just before and during my first year in the valley, the *sindicatos* reverted back to become officially ayllus once more under the guidance of a growing national indian movement.<sup>6</sup>

Yaykunaqa is one of the three communities of ayllu Qullana. I lived here with Remo Quenaya Chambi, his wife Reina Berna de Quenaya, his children Pablo, Edelberto, Milton, Guillermina and the young Victor Hugo, and his old father don Julián—the yatiri I mentioned earlier. Yaykunaqa formed my main ethnographic reference point, from which I regularly visited other communities.<sup>7</sup> On one such visit, I participated in the *kacharpaya* I have described taking place in one of the ayllu Urinsaya communities. It is important to note, though, that ayllus are socially and economically differentiated between and within communities. The *kacharpaya* was a moment of utmost campesino communality, but communities continue to split as the hamlets within them contest

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6. Few men and even fewer women speak Spanish fluently as a second language. This book employs the normalised Quechua spelling of the Educational Reform dictionary (Secretaría Nacional de Educación 1996). The local dialect in Toracari has many Spanish loan words, most of which I have preferred to render in the original Spanish spelling.

7. My main hosts have suggested these names; the names are pseudonyms. They chose anonymity because they are aware that the information presented here can be used for political ends, most threateningly in the Toracari valley itself as the indian movement and the state seek to strengthen their foothold. In line with their suggestions, I also decided not to name the specific community where I lived and worked for most of the time. I do not want this community to become emblematic in any kind of public debate. I have called it Yaykunaqa. I stuck with the name of Toracari, though, which is the existing name of town and district. ‘Toracari valley’ refers to an area that is wide enough to allow people and communities to deflect possible criticism. And from a research point of view I think it is necessary to give an indication of location so that the ethnographic results can be compared both in space and in time (cf. Silverman 2003: 130 n.10). If not indicated otherwise, the names I use for campesinos are pseudonyms and for landlords are their real names.

financial support from the state and non-governmental organisations; conflict between households is common fighting over land, women, animals etc.; and gender relations determine access to information, ritual knowledge and other resources. In addition, fluctuating numbers of campesinos migrate from the valley to the Bolivian city of Cochabamba and beyond, creating alternative economic opportunities. Some come back, others do not.<sup>8</sup>

While not ignoring such differentiation, my analysis of campesino deference focuses on relations between campesinos and the state, and campesinos and landlords. They are the campesinos' most clearly defined external agents since their imageries stem from ritual practices. But they have evidently not been the only outsiders with whom campesinos have interacted. Trade flourished during the first half of the 19th century, for instance, as northern Potosí and the valleys of the adjacent department of Cochabamba constituted the core of Bolivia's grain and flour production, producing for both the national market and export to the south of Peru (Platt 1982: 35). When I visited the area for the first time—drawn by the local feast in honour of Lord or Tata Sak'ani—the richly decorated mantle draped on a donkey caught my eye. It contained many coins including Peruvian and Chilean currency from the 1860s. At the present, specific, historical conjuncture of the early 21st century, trade has dwindled and the majority of the population of the Toracari valley are subsistence farmers. Non-governmental organisations have also left traces of their presence in the valley, in particular because a few campesino families heeded their advice to plant trees. When I came back in 2012, I was impressed by the quantity and size of the eucalyptuses and pines on the lands of Remo and one other family in Yaykunaqa. Intriguingly, the effects of recent external developments had become noticeable in the few shops in the one and only town of the valley, San Francisco de Toracari—locally referred to as Toracari. These shops did not sell gas cylinders and kerosene anymore. The electricity grid had come to town which meant people did not need gas for lighting; at least the landlords living in town did not need it. Kerosene, on the other hand,

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8. The sharp increase of lands lying idle between 2003 and 2012—that is, not as part of a communal fallow rotation system—indicates that permanent migration from the Toracari valley has intensified (see Chapter 6). This has mainly been the result of the construction boom in the city of Cochabamba. However, I did not discern a historical trend of dramatically increased campesino migration since it started in the 1960s as the result of demographic pressure. Migration seems to fluctuate depending on variable external factors. Similarly, Urioste, Barragán and Colque find that migration in the highlands of Bolivia has remained fairly stable since the 1950s (in Spedding 2010b: 23). One or two siblings stay in the respective community while other potential heirs seek an economic future somewhere else.

had been strictly rationed by the government as part of its drug policy. It is an ingredient in the production of coca paste, the precursor of cocaine. Instead, *tarwi* (Andean species of beans) had become the most profitable agricultural product in the valley. It was rumoured that the beans contain chemical elements that make them suitable for, ironically, the production of coca paste. Of course, therefore, the valley shows the “... productive friction of global connections ... messy and surprising...” (Tsing 2005: 3–4). I shall scrutinise key features of this friction as national and global interactions are appropriated by campesinos.

At the centre of the valley, then, lies the town of Toracari, a typical *pueblo* of the Bolivian Andes with a Catholic church, the office of the municipal district, a town square with a bandstand, a small hospital, a high school with boarding facilities, a few shops, the public registrar, several *chicherías* (bars selling maize beer), and a couple of water mills where campesinos come to grind their grain. It has a few cobbled streets which are lined with one- and two-story adobe houses including a few old crumbling buildings whose fancy balconies and large wooden doors opening into spacious courtyards are reminders of a more prosperous past. The town lies at the end of a track that forks off from the main road connecting the area with the Bolivian cities of Cochabamba in the lower Andean valleys and Llallagua in the highlands, both about a day's drive by truck, in opposite directions. At present, daily bus services to Cochabamba and less regular services to Llallagua pass on the main road, shortening these journeys somewhat. It is in the town of Toracari that most of the estimated 72 landlord families of the valley have their houses, either living there or visiting at least once a year collecting their share of the harvest cultivated by campesino sharecroppers. A few campesino families have started buying dwellings in town to house their school-going children during the week.

The economic rewards of the valley have diminished. Landlords living and working in the area earn a modest income from agricultural produce, some trade and transport, and teacher salaries. Most teachers in town and the surrounding communities come from landlord families. Moreover, older landlords can rely on the purse of their children who may live in the Bolivian cities, having joined the absentee landlord families. Many of the latter left the area in the 1950s to work in the nationalised mining industry; several returned to buy lands in the valley, spending the relatively generous salaries they had earned in the state mines. All the same, over the centuries, landlords established smaller and larger haciendas and acquired swathes of land within the operating ayllus of Qullana and Urinsaya. In 2012, only seven communities in the valley did not contain lands owned by patronesses; in Yaykunaqa three out of every 10 campesino households continued to work as sharecroppers on landlord lands.

The location of Toracari is significant in this regard as it historically represented a kind of frontier of fairly uninterrupted landlord presence stretching from the valleys of Cochabamba upstream along the River San Pedro and other major rivers in the region. It is here that ayllus and patrones have coexisted side by side, defining themselves in relation to one another. The state's recent identity politics has mostly reconfirmed the social divide between Toracari's indigenous population and local landlords. However, campesino experiences of the government's discourse on the 'anti-nation' — in particular its rants against the traditional 'oligarchy' — are mitigated by rural deference towards landlords, reproduced or expressed by land ownership, oral history, godparent relations, the school system, development projects and other social practices: most importantly, rituals.

The exploration of local practices involving landlords fills a vacuum within Andean anthropology which tends to ignore the persistence of such powerbrokers in the countryside. With notable exceptions such as Skar (1982), Poole (1987), Nugent (1997) and Gose (2001), scholars have disregarded dominant groups because of the indigenous population's ethic of community that attracted them to the Andes in the first place (cf. Starn 1991). Sallnow (1987) probably comes closest to what I seek to do in the following chapters, showing how indians symbolically reproduce their submission vis-à-vis the local elite in rituals that they regularly perform in the Andean town of San Salvador in the Cusco department in Peru. However, his discussion of the relationship between the rural population and the townspeople of San Salvador only forms a minor part of his monograph which principally deals with Andean pilgrimage. On the other hand, haciendas have been studied quite extensively in the Andes, which allows for a good understanding of the relationship between hacienda farm labourers and a specific kind of landlord, the *hacendado* (e.g., Anrup 1990; Lyons 2006; Qayum et al. 1997). This kind of study, though, is mostly historical in nature downplaying the fact that campesino lives are still influenced by powerful outsiders. The valley of Toracari shows that relations between campesinos and landlords are very much part of the Andean present. Furthermore, many hacienda studies focus on internal relations within the hacienda, failing to pay attention to the relations of hacienda labourers with outsiders. If anything, my findings indicate that working on landlords' lands has constituted one of several indian strategies to make a living. Accordingly, some scholars mention the possibility of indian labourers moving to native communities, towns and other haciendas when hacienda exploitation becomes exceptionally acute. However, they do not always acknowledge the leverage indians or campesinos may be able to muster under certain circumstances, negotiating the terms of their social and economic relationships with the hacendados or patrones.

## Deference Revisited

In the valley of Toracari, such campesino sense of negotiating agency is based on an attitude of qualified acquiescence, created by positively motivated ritual practitioners aiming at communication and community with the gods. This personal motivation of the campesinos explains my use of the term ‘deference’ in preference to concepts such as ‘submission’ and ‘subalterns.’ The literal meaning of the latter terms evokes the agency of the oppressors or superordinates instead of the submissive and subalterns—despite the use of such concepts in Subaltern Studies ascribing remarkable autonomy to subaltern groups. Alternatively, ‘hegemony’ does imply constructive action by the subjugated and exploited, but does not necessarily highlight the positive connotations of respect, affinity and aesthetics that deference brings when addressing the powerful. Interestingly, Tomlinson finds in Fiji that chain prayers provoke a miserable, pervasive sense of human powerlessness in the ritual participants (2004: 12). Orsi describes his Catholic grandmother as a tragic figure wounded in her worship by (meaning available in) her favourite Virgin (2005: 144–145). And I may despair of the inescapable cultural baggage of a Calvinist heritage inducing a harsh work ethic, rude self-righteousness and a pathetic need of personal space and privacy. These represent instances of agency of the subjected, but nothing of the kind of well-being that campesinos in Toracari feel when they ritually reproduce deference to the gods, landlords and the state. Actions of deference are critical to the regeneration of campesino livelihood and the aspired order of community although, of course, individual campesinos may at times have ill-feelings towards any one of these three actors and try to maximise the benefits of their relationship with them.

Looking at indian issues from the angle of deference, then, may partially explain Yashar’s contention that, compared to Africa, Asia and Eastern Europe, ethnopolitical conflict has been rare in Latin American history (2005: 3 (n.1), 33). Such assertion is at odds with the usual view of Bolivia specialists who argue that indigenous peoples have been involved in continuous struggles and rebellions (Albó 2008: 15–18). It is not up to me to decide whether indians and campesinos have revolted often or not in light of their plight, but a thorough understanding of the reproduction of deference in the valley of Toracari should definitely caution scholars against assuming ‘structural’ transformations brought about by the 1953 agrarian reform, the Law of Popular Participation or the Morales politics of indigeneity.

Loyal to an empirical streak in British anthropology, I first provide the ethnographic and historical details of the dynamics of continuity in the up-

coming seven chapters. They anticipate the key argument that campesino participants actively recreate lasting social relations in rituals, a social practice which simultaneously shields these relations from external transformations. These chapters will appeal to academics and laymen alike with an interest in rituals, indigenous issues or Bolivia. In the eighth chapter, I shall finally indulge in the theoretical ramifications, recombining comprehensive insights into the campesinos of Toracari to challenge some of the orthodoxies of rituals and cultural models. Part One, then, sets the scene, comprising this introduction and Chapter 1; Part Two presents the ethnography of the relations between campesinos and the state—grounding the cultural model of distant command—explained in Chapters 2 and 3; while Part Three covers Chapters 4 to 7, focusing on the relationship between campesinos and landlords—ethnographically underpinning the cultural model of immanent command. Parts Two and Three both start with an extended chapter detailing ritual practices, which mould the social practices analysed in the subsequent chapters. Part Four concludes the book, combining the theoretical explorations of Chapter 8 and final reflections in the Conclusion.

Chapter 1 describes a sole ritual with a double purpose: analytical and experiential. It not only explains Toracari cosmology—which is critical to understanding the cosmic templates that fashion relations between campesinos, the state and landlords—but also attempts to prompt the audience to feel the intensity and significance of such ritual practices. Readers may get a sense of the sheer physical presence of some of the local divinities, their fickleness—sometimes providing, sometimes not—and their ambiguity, causing good fortune and calamities.

Chapter 2 introduces Part Two and campesinos' relationship with the state, elaborating the argument of a previous article (Goudsmit 2006). At the centre of this relation are the rituals of Independence Day, All Saints and the wakes of the dead. In these events, which are specifically dedicated to either government or God, indigenous participants employ similar ritual techniques. In contrast to any other deity or social agent, both God and government receive prayers that are uttered out loud. I maintain that, due to the similarity of ritual techniques, the cosmic relationship with God is evoked when the campesino population relates to government. Moreover, the analogy of the ritual symbols associated with God and government reinforces the experiential and cosmological resemblance between the two. In line with God, then, campesinos experience government as a force for moral constraint and social justice, benevolently orienting local praxis without much interfering in people's daily lives. Chapter 3, in contrast, shows how some of president Evo Morales' actions substantially diverge from the campesino conception of government. Most dra-

matically, people within the campesino communities of Toracari have identified Morales as a patrón, a local landlord.

Chapter 3 delves into the conflicts generated by the operations of the Canadian junior mining company South American Silver in Mallku Quta involving Bolivia's highland indigenous movement CONAMAQ and mining cooperatives. Economic figures related to this mine are astonishing, showing its potential to become the largest mining operation in the country. However, this potential is stymied by the Morales government which 'nationalises' (reverts back to the state) the company's mining concessions in August 2012 and subsequently militarises the region in an attempt at pacification. Such direct interference flaunts Morales' credentials as a landlord. However, this association shows it is campesino perception of Morales that is shifting, not the ritually produced imagery and aspirations of distant yet benevolent government command.

Chapter 4 opens Part Three returning to local rituals, this time focusing on the campesino experience of landlords. The mechanics of ritual reproduction are different but—like Independence Day and All Saints generate the association between government and the Christian God—most Toracari rituals establish the experiential connection between landlords and Kumbres, mountain gods. These are the most formidable of divine forces in local cosmology: dangerous, fickle, exploitative but ultimately generous, securing campesino well-being and prosperity. Such a cosmic template of immanent and generative command shapes campesinos' appreciation of landlord authority. In Chapter 5, I develop this insight, scrutinising campesino appropriation of the national discourses of the politics of indigeneity in Bolivia. The ascendancy of the Morales government has amplified the resonance of such discourses. On the one hand, they commend and promote elements of a noble, timeless indigenous culture; on the other, they substantiate the critique of what has been called the *antinación*, synthesising the negative references on which the MAS political project of change is built: anti-foreigner, especially the USA; anti-multinationals, particularly in the extractive industries; anti-globalisation; anti-neoliberalism; anti-party politics, lamenting the detrimental actions of the traditional parties; and anti-oligarchy, mainly in Bolivia's eastern departments. I argue that the negative discourse of the anti-nation has been far more successful among Toracari campesinos than the positive discourse of indigenous identity. One of the reasons is that the former integrates key elements of the cultural model of immanent command although the concomitant deference towards landlords takes the antagonistic sting out of the anti-nation. Conversely, identity politics are neutralised by the historical circumstance that the 1952 revolution had already turned the loathed indios into campesinos. In contrast to much indianist critique, this has been a liberating and not so much an ethnically ho-

mogenising experience for campesinos in Toracari. Chapter 6 updates an earlier article (Goudsmit 2008) presenting a historical description of the continued prominence of landlords as landowners employing campesino sharecroppers. Not even the recent conversion of ayllus Qullana and Urinsaya, and cabildo Chirimira into state-sanctioned *Tierras Comunitarias de Origen* (TCOs) seriously dents landlord claims on the respective lands. In Chapter 7, expressions of landlord authority are explored in oral history of the 1952 revolution, fictive kin relations, local state offices, community organisation and development projects.

Finally Part Four, and Chapter 8 in particular, bring the loose ethnographic and historical ends together, developing the aforementioned argument of the prominence of rituals which involve cultural techniques that reproduce cultural models. What are these models? Why are they so persuasive? How do they become relatively durable and culturally dominant? These are the central questions of this chapter. Inspired by Ortner and Hinton, I employ categories taken from symbolic as well as cognitive anthropology to structure answers to these questions. The resulting theoretical explorations provide a distinctly Andean flavour to a comprehensive understanding of the interplay between cultural models and rituals producing campesino deference in spite of the professed ambitions of the Morales government.