

Introduction

The presidential elections in December 2005 in Bolivia represented a milestone in the country's history, with social leader Evo Morales being chosen as the first president of indigenous origin. The uniqueness of this situation was also reinforced by the absolute majority the Movement towards Socialism (MAS) – a left-wing coalition of social movements that had chosen the coca farmer as their leader – won in the vote. Since Morales came to power in January 2006, the country has been the scene of a series of reforms that have substantially transformed the relationship between state and society. Equally important is the fact that, since then, the MAS and Evo Morales have managed to consolidate a regime that has lasted for more than ten years. During this period, Bolivia has experienced significant economic growth, together with political transformations such as the formulation of a new state constitution, the implementation of redistributive policies and the nationalisation of strategic sectors. At the same time, serious questions have been raised about corruption, deficiencies in the justice system and authoritarianism.

Despite this, the MAS's staying in power has equalled economic and political stability. This is important, since Morales' electoral victory occurred after a period marked by an insurgence of strong social movements and a legitimacy crisis in the political system. Between 2000 and 2005, there were several episodes of social unrest, in which an increasingly structured set of social movements opposed the state, forcing U-turns in state policies as well as the resignation of two constitutional presidents on more than one occasion. The socio-political crisis in this period resulted in a scenario of 'ungovernability' that posed serious questions to the state of democracy, twenty years after it had been reinstalled in the Andean country. The first years of the Morales government were marked by social unrest but, after the new constitution was passed, although social conflict has been pervasive, the political impasse seems to have been overcome. The high number of votes won by the MAS and its leader in the re-elections reflect the confidence the Bolivian population has in the regime – and particularly in Morales – as carriers and guarantors of continuity. In effect, his charismatic leadership is identified as being key to the MAS administration, and to some it is even deemed 'indispensable'.

More recently, however, there have been signs of change. On 21 February 2016, a referendum was held asking the population whether Morales should stand in the 2019 elections. The referendum proposed a reform of the new constitution concerning the article that prohibits a second re-election. The reformation of that article would potentially prolong Morales' power for two decades. Previous electoral victories gave confidence to Morales and the MAS on the referendum but a nip majority of the Bolivian people voted against the governmental plan. In that way, the referendum put an expiry date on Morales' leadership, posing the question of how a political project that had grown so dependent on its political leader could continue without him. The uncertainty surrounding the stability and governability of the country as a result of the leadership vacuum Morales would leave behind was short lived: in December 2017 the Constitutional Court ruled that re-postulating as presidential candidate is an inalienable right of all citizens 'to elect and to be elected', enshrined by the Pact of San José of Costa Rica. By this means the ban on term limits has been lifted, paving the way for Morales' candidacy at upcoming elections, while at the same time raising once again serious questions about the state of democracy in the country.

This book analyses the changing relationship between state and society, and its effect on democratisation processes in the last decade. More specifically, this study analyses the relation between the social movements and the state, particularly the 'indigenous' social movements, as the most important actors in starring and influencing the state–society relation in current Bolivian politics. The analysis aims to part from traditional conceptualisations that place social movements in opposition to the state and institutional politics, building on more recent studies and debates that question the conceptualisation of state and society as two separate spheres. Indeed, the rise to power of Morales and the MAS constitutes perhaps the clearest example in the region of the penetration of social movements into state structures. Thus, the Bolivian case is in need of a theoretical framework allowing us to make sense of a scenario in which the lines that divide state agents from social actors are blurred.

With social movements at centre stage, the arguable convergence between state and society is characterised as 'state–society interface' (Long 2001; Dagnino et al. 2006; Isunza Vera 2005, 2006a, 2006b). Subsequently, the analysis utilises the concepts of 'political networks' and 'network governance' (Kenis and Schneider 1991; Börzel 1997; Zurbriggen 2003; Sørensen and Torfing 2005a, 2005b; Kahler et al. 2009) to grasp the dynamics of the interaction of different socio-political actors who enact processes of decision-making, formulation and implementation of public policies. These concepts not only allow us to solve some of the contradictions and incoherence emerging in more traditional analysis of the state–social movements relation in

Bolivia (for example in terms of ‘autonomy’ and ‘co-optation’); it also makes visible and conceptualises the role of other actors who appear as highly influential on the state–social movements’ relation in Bolivia – that is to say, NGOs and the (new) media, and their impact on the process of democratisation.

The state–social movements’ relation and its impact on democratisation situate this book outside the bulk of the literature on social movements. As della Porta and Diani (2006) point out: ‘with few exceptions ..., the literature on social movements has traditionally shown little interest in democratization processes’ (quoted in Rossi and della Porta 2015: 15). The New Social Movements debate dominated the last quarter of the twentieth century, emphasising the ‘a-political’ (Brandt 1986) or ‘anti-political’ nature of the ‘new social movements’. Authors such as Proietto maintained that new social movements embodied a conflictive socio-cultural project whose aim was to transform everyday life and so could not be captured by the state. In that way, strictly speaking, the social movement was not a ‘political actor’ (1995: 370–71). Similarly, Melucci (1980) stated that the potential of new social movements lies in their concern about conquering the autonomous and independent arena of political power and of the institutional state system. In this way, Offe proposed that social movements’ opportunities for action essentially exist in ‘non-institutional politics’ (1985: 826), which are not recognised in the doctrines and practices of liberal democracy or the welfare state. Since then, this strand of the debate has been the object of much criticism and has suffered various adaptations. Particularly the ‘contentious politics’ debate (McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly 2001) was important in bringing the political aspects and effects on social movements back to debate, questioning the ‘a-political’ conceptualisation.

However, the opposition to the state structure – and the political arena in general – has been emphatic in Latin America, particularly because of the unique socio-historic context from which social movements emerge. The wave of authoritarian regimes during the 1960s and 1970s propitiated the articulation of civil society; in other words, a large number of social movements in this period emerged in order to resist state repression and to regain democracy. During and after the democratic transition – from the beginning of the 1980s onwards – the new civil governments were not able to deal with civil society’s demands for the creation of institutional instruments to ensure effective participation. Instead, the majority of the new democratic regimes adopted a top-down and technocratic model, which was combined with the implementation of severe neoliberal economic reforms. In the same way, corruption became systemic in the political class, contributing to a rapid drop in people’s trust of political parties (Philip 2003), in particular in the groups most affected by the negative impact of state policies involving structural adjustments. Thus, the recent historical developments set important

precedents that explain why the relationship between state and society in Latin America continues to be marked by distrust, tension and hostility, especially in Andean countries (Lagos 2001; Gibbs 2004; Drake and Hershberg 2006; Booth and Seligson 2009; Carreras 2012).

This particular socio-historical context serves to explain why the study of social movements in opposition to the state has been endemic in the region. Studies of social movements in Latin America from the 1960s onwards (feminist movements, human rights' activists, those demanding basic services, indigenous movements and environmental movements, for example), studied under the concept of 'new social movements' (Slater et al. 1985), have predominantly characterised them by their manifest opposition to the state, understood as the main source of repression and manipulation of the interests of marginalised sectors of society. For this reason, a large part of the academic discussion on social movements in Latin America has been preoccupied with the distance that should be maintained from state institutions, underlying the importance of autonomy to avoid practices of co-optation (Eckstein and Garretón 1989; Escobar and Alvarez 1992; Bacallao-Pino 2016; Lopes De Souza 2016; Peña and Davies 2017).

This study aims to move beyond traditional approaches of 'autonomy' and 'co-optation'. By looking at the state-society relation, in which social movements take centre stage, and inquiring about the processes of democratisation, the book aims to contribute to filling the gap in the literature about the impact of social movements on democratisation processes (Tilly 2004; Klandermans and van Stralen 2015). In that way, the book is embedded within the academic debate on social movements and democratic construction in Latin America (see Foweraker 1995; Alvarez et al. 1998a; Lievesley 2009; Gutmann et al. 2004; Dagnino et al. 2006; Stahler-Sholk et al. 2008; Domike et al. 2008), particularly the studies that have been acknowledging and studying the growing convergence between the state and social movements, and the impact on democracy (Klandermans and van Stralen 2015; Rubin and Bennet 2015; Wolford 2015; Wickham-Crowley and Eckstein 2015; Gago and Mezzadra 2017; Fuentes-Nieva and Nelli Feroci 2017).

After the dictatorships and under neoliberalism, Latin America saw the emergence of important social movements. Perhaps the most important one towards the end of the twentieth century was the Zapatista movement in Mexico, not only because of its influence but also because it incorporated an indigenous element into the resistance against neoliberalism. Indigenous social movements were also visible in the region from the 1980s onwards. Their degree of importance was seen when Rigoberta Menchú, leader of the indigenous movement in Guatemala, won the Nobel Peace Prize. At the turn of the century, social movements were important actors in several different scenarios: the *Movimiento sin Tierra* in Brazil, the popular movements in

Venezuela that upheld Chavism, the Piquetero movement in Argentina, indigenous social movements in the form of the CONAIE in Ecuador and the MAS in Bolivia, and the student movement in Chile. Most recently, the region shows how ‘social movements’ are evolving with the use of technology, in particular social networks, with clear examples in the #YoSoy132 movement in Mexico and the more regional #NiUnaMenos. The recent removal of President Rousseff in Brazil was certainly not caused by the social movements, but the wide range of demonstrations did contribute to gaining support for the impeachment. Thus social movements, far from being on the political margins, are at the centre of the region’s politics, exerting notable influence in the way democracy is practised.

Social movements in Bolivia – in particular indigenous movements – and their impact on politics and democratisation processes should be understood as part of this theoretical framework and the historical and regional context. The relevance of the MAS, and their leader Evo Morales, coming to power is explained in four parts. Firstly, through the MAS, Bolivian social movements effectively managed to penetrate state structures, demonstrating a clear political orientation while questioning the anti-state nature of social movements, diverging significantly from conceptualisations that place them in the arena of the social or of ‘non-institutional politics’. What at the time was called the ‘government of the social movements’ is the expression and cause of the redefinition of state–society relations. The MAS and Morales’ more than ten years in power have characteristics that cannot be explained by the dominant academic debate and, at the same time, they have posed and continue to pose great challenges for the Bolivian political system.

On the one hand, the Bolivian state has had to face the task of establishing (institutional) mechanisms that allow for society’s demands, articulated in a wide variety of movements, to be channelled and organised. On the other, social movements have played a leading role in qualitative changes on the political scene. Being themselves the result of severe and uncompromising confrontations with the governments of the traditional political elite, who marginalised and repressed them, social movements under the Morales administration have redefined their relation with the state, transforming their traditional understanding of the state as the ‘enemy’ and coming to recognise it as a partner and a vehicle for emancipating reforms. In the same way, their involvement in political institutions has demanded a vision of the ‘common good’ that tensions with social movements’ particularistic interests.

Secondly, the electoral triumph of Evo Morales, an indigenous movement leader, has been key to their further political articulation and involvement in domestic politics, effectively challenging the position of the traditional white mestizo elite. Taking control of the executive and legislative powers suggests

a re-accommodation of social structures, as well as a transformation of the political culture, as exemplified by the constituent process (2006–2009) and the new political constitution (in place since January 2009). Therefore, the recent Bolivian political process not only indicates transformations within the socio-political structure – a new social pact – but impacts on the democratic functioning of the political system.

By becoming the main vehicles for mediation between the state and society, social movements have taken on a role traditionally performed by political parties. On the one hand, the MAS is understood as a coalition of social movements with a structure that is different to that of other parties, but which participates as a political party in the electoral process and in the state structure. On the other hand, as will be seen, the political impact of the social movements does not occur exclusively by means of the political party MAS but it is embodied in a series of changing relations with the state and other important socio-political actors. This study conceptualises such relation in terms of ‘political networks’ that embody the ‘state–society interface’, bringing together various types of socio-political actors and so effectively questioning the state–society dichotomy. The more explicit political role that social movements have adopted needs to be understood in relation to the fact that, like many of its regional counterparts, the Bolivian political party system has suffered from a severe legitimacy crisis from which, arguably, it has still not been able to recover. In the same vein, aside from internal factors, the weakness of the political opposition is an external factor that accounts for the hegemonic nature of the MAS regime. In this study both social movements are understood as vehicles for political participation and representation, and so special attention is paid to the relation between the two, and its impact on the practice of democracy.

Thirdly, the state–society relationship under Morales’ government presents unique characteristics that this study proposes to conceptualise as ‘political networks’ and ‘network governance’. Whereas President Morales’ first term was thrown into turmoil by the constituent process, after the approval of the new constitution and aided by economic prosperity, a relatively more stable political scenario has emerged in which a network governance dynamic can be observed. The political networks approach allows one to understand the central role of social movements in the state–society interface, while at the same time making visible the important part played by other actors, particularly national NGOs and the (new) media, in affecting the political process and the state–society relation.

Finally, the study identifies leadership as a significant factor in the state–society relationship, particularly in regard to social movements as they link up in political networks. The leaders of indigenous social movements act as joining points in the state–society relation, right at the centre of the state–society

interface. Through the MAS, indigenous leaders have made their way into the state to occupy political offices, where they have encountered much tension and many contradictions. Still accountable to their grass-roots constituencies while having to act from a logic of the ‘common good’, social leaders stand at a seemingly impossible intersection. That position has generally been ignored by academics – the only exception, to my knowledge, being the work of Donna Lee Van Cott (2008). The importance of the issue of leadership becomes evident in the figure of Evo Morales. Morales’ leadership started with the *cocalero* movement, then became the indigenous movements leadership, adopting finally the leadership of (popular) social movements. Assuming the presidency, his leadership has grown increasingly pivotal to the political process, and to the MAS project of *proceso de cambio* (process of change). Although the positive economic situation is certainly a factor, Morales’ charismatic leadership has been key to his continuous electoral victories, and paradoxically, it also constitutes the main factor explaining his first defeat at the polls in the referendum held in February 2016. A significant number of his public supporters have come to regard him as ‘indispensable’, but there are also growing concerns about anti-democratic features, such as an alleged concentration of power and a recent, very controversial ruling by the Constitutional Court that has lifted the bans on re-election, annulling the results of the referendum that had rejected his presidential candidacy for the upcoming 2019 elections. In this way, understanding Morales’ simultaneous leadership of social movements and the Bolivian government is an important element of analysis, as it addresses issues of the quality of political institutions, the judicialisation of politics, populism, the rotation of power, and their impact on democracy.

Methodology

This book is the result of qualitative research based on an ‘actor-oriented approach’ (Long 1999, 2001; Bigs and Matsuert 1999). This perspective explores how social actors, both ‘local’ and ‘external’ to a unique power, are continuously connected through struggles over resources, meanings and control, and institutional legitimacy. Therefore, social actors are involved in a constant process of training and transforming society, of network dynamics and of producing multiple realities, whether personal, interpersonal or collective. In this sense, society becomes ‘provisional’ and is never complete, but constantly in construction. The concept of an ‘interface’ is important in this methodological approach, since it describes where a range of actors are to be found in the processes of accommodation and conflict when generating new forms of organisation and understanding (Long 2001). The actor-oriented

approach thus emphasises the effect of social actors on social structures, assigning a greater impact to the first.

This approach is particularly apt for the case study. It can be argued that, in the recent Bolivian history that preceded Morales' coming to power, social structures – in the form of state and political institutions – were not capable of capturing or reflecting the social dynamic. In this context, from a conceptual division between state and society, social movements as 'local' actors in the dominion of society have become more intertwined with other actors of the 'political institutional' domain that are understood as 'external' to society. By emphasising social actors above any kind of structure, this type of analysis makes the point of intersection – the interface – visible as an opportunity for conflict and negotiation, and in which multiple social realities are constructed. It is worth noting that the result of these encounters does not necessarily respond to what is planned or projected by these actors and may have unexpected results.

The 'interface' is made up of a series of actors who act according to a network dynamic. This aspect of the actor-orientated approach particularly stands out in this research, since it corresponds to the type of analysis that is gaining terrain in the study of the state–society relationship (Kenis and Schneider 1991; Zurbriggen 2003; Sørensen and Torfing 2005a and 2005b). The network perspective in political theory emerges from a proliferation of the concept in sociology. According to this, social organisations are the result of individual actors' planned interaction in a continuous exchange of information and other important resources, which is why society stops being exclusively controlled by a central intelligence (for example, the state). In a network analysis, modern political decision making can no longer be interpreted as being based only on formal political-institutional functions, as it is understood that such processes occur within the framework of a complex constellation of actors and of the interdependence of resources that escape the reach of formal institutions. According to Börzel (1997), network analysis has the advantage of allowing for a more detailed representation of sectorial and sub-sectorial differences, of the role of public and private actors, and of their formal and informal relations.

Taking into account these aspects of the methodology, this book considers the results of research that started in 2009. Between 2010 and 2012, two extensive research visits were carried out in the country's most important cities – La Paz, Cochabamba and Santa Cruz de la Sierra. During this seven-month period, more than fifty interviews were carried out with representatives from the MAS government, from social movements and from support institutions, as well as with intellectuals and academics working at think tanks and academic institutions. Later, the study was complemented by shorter stays in 2014 and 2016, when more than ten interviews were carried out and new

material for analysis gathered. The research thus includes the analysis of a wide body of printed material. Apart from the relevant academic literature, government publications and political programmes, MAS documents and printed material from the different social movements, as well as archives from the Bolivian and international press, were studied. From 2009 onwards, different types of event were attended (in Bolivia, Chile, Europe and the United States), as well as political meetings, workshops, book launches, conferences and congresses, in which diverse types of information were collected.

Theoretical Approach

This book can be situated within the rich and ongoing debate on social movements in Latin America. At the same time, it aims to move beyond more traditional conceptualisations that emphasise the confrontation with the state, to build on more recent studies that aim to explore how current social movements – in their interaction with the state – affect the process of democratisation. In that way, the study finds embedding in the regional research agenda on the quality of democracy.

In consideration of the above, this study sees a close relationship between the academic debate on ‘democratic transition’ in Latin America and the antagonism or opposition that has characterised the state–social movements relationship in the dominant literature on the region. The source of the tension that marks the state–society divide is found in the real regional experiences with authoritarian and repressive regimes (although arguably the origin could be traced to the legacy of colonialism and its impact on state formation). This opposition found continuation after the transition to democracy, where the characteristic institutional weakness of the state and the failure of the neoliberal reforms to deliver citizens’ expectations served to reinforce the characteristic hostility and distrust of state–society relations.

During the transition, Schumpeterian or minimalist interpretations of the practice of democracy, that emphasized the existence of political parties and electoral practices as conditions of democracy, were dominant. This placed social movements’ actions at the margins of institutional politics as ‘undesirable’ for the establishment and consolidation of democracy: social movements had the potential to undermine and destabilise the still fragile ‘democratic’ institutions (political party system and elections). Later, minimalist concepts of democracy gave way to a research agenda concerned about the *quality* of democracy. As it became evident that the new civilian governments were not capable of responding to their people’s most urgent needs, the return to democracy was soon encountered by increasing disillusion and citizen discontent. This stimulated the rejection of the definitions of procedures

that impeded a qualitative appreciation of the democratic regime, opening the way for a more positive valuation of the role for social movements in democracy, understanding them as the empiric expression of that rejection. In opposing to the state, using pressure and protecting their autonomy, social movements played a ‘democratising’ role, forcing the state to be more responsive to society’s needs and demands. In this way, two opposing views on the role of social movements can be distinguished. Yet, whether destabilising the democratic regime or making it more democratic, social movements are in both views understood to be in conflict with institutional politics and the state structure, reproducing or reinforcing the state–society dichotomy.

As stated before, this study aims to move beyond this opposition, to account for the visible collaborations between state and social movements, and their impact on the process of democratisation. For that reason, it is important to define democracy as a type of relationship between the state and society. The definitions of ‘democracy’ and ‘democratisation’ formulated by Charles Tilly (2007) are useful. Tilly defines democracy as a type of relationship between the state and citizens in which the state acts according to the will of the people. According to this definition, Tilly understands that ‘democratisation’ occurs when there is an increase in the level of correspondence between state politics and the will of the people. As a result, if this goes down, a ‘de-democratisation’ process is observed. Thus, Tilly offers a way of appreciating the democratic quality of a regime that has previously been qualified as (minimally) democratic, such as the case of Bolivia since the beginning of the 1980s. This definition of democracy allows us to understand how changes in the relationship between the state and social movements in particular – and the state and society in general – affect the ‘democratisation’ (and the ‘de-democratisation’) process in Bolivia.

The joint responsibility of the state and society that Tilly’s definition suggests is in line with the most recent studies on social movements, in which the practice of these kinds of actor has caused the state–society dichotomy to be questioned. The dichotomy assumes a homogeneity in both spheres and thus produces a qualitative division between ‘institutionalised politics’ (party politics) and ‘non-institutionalised politics’ (e.g. social movements). However, such homogeneity does not seem to find empiric support. On the one hand, critics argue that conceptualising the state as a single body with extraordinary faculties in an elevated sphere, that exercises tutorage on citizens in a vertical relationship, minimalises and trivialises ‘the rich negotiations, interaction and resistance that occurs between multiple systems of rules in human society’ (Migdal 2001: 15). Dagnino et al. (2006) explain that, in the Latin American context, the state has been conceptualised as a homogenous entity that has come to embody all the vices of politics, but that this conceptualisation has failed to acknowledge the diversity of the practices and interactions that can

be observed in different political acts and in different periods. On the other hand, Goldstone et al. (2003: 2) propose that social movements make up an essential element of normal politics in modern societies, questioning the dominant vision that places social movements in the domain of the 'non-institutionalised'. This view has found support in important authors (Costain and McFarland 1998; McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly 2001). In as far as it challenges a qualitative separation between political parties and social movements, this line of analysis appears particularly relevant, allowing us to make sense of the MAS party as a coalition of social movements.

These questions and propositions are congruent with the recent academic debate on the construction of democracy in Latin America, which states that in order to improve the quality of the democratic practice it is key to recognise plurality as characteristic of modern societies. Social movements have played an important role in this sense, emphasising pluralism and tolerance, pushing democracy to be constructed in a context of a multiplicity of subjects and spaces, and mutual recognition of the difference (Fals Borda 1992). Cannon and Kirby have proposed the need to conceive the state–society relationship as 'dialectic' (2012: 7) – in a process of mutual shaping and constitution – to gain a deeper understanding of the region's democratisation process. Along the same lines, Dagnino et al. (2006) suggest understanding the democratisation process as links, coordination and movement between civil society and the state, under the premise that both actors are historically mutually constitutive.

Thus, building on the aforementioned academic debates, this study sets out with the idea that the state–society dichotomy obstructs rather than facilitates the analysis of the state–social movements' relationship in Bolivia. With the aim of moving beyond a dichotomist vision, this research introduces an alternative view, making use of the concepts of 'state–society interface', 'political networks' and 'network governance'. The concepts are particularly useful since they make explicit reference to the crossroad – the connections between different actors that are dominantly understood as coming from either the sphere of the state or from the sphere of society. By laying the focus on the points of interaction, where the borders are blurred, from this approach actors are more accurately labelled as 'socio-political'.

The network approach is initially presented as a tool that helps to visualise the complexity in the state–society relationship. However, considering the theoretical debate surrounding the concept, 'political networks' also suggests a new type of governance that responds to the nature of modern societies. The so-called 'network governance' entails a more flexible and complex kind of governance, in which socio-political actors form different alliances and collaborations, according to the specific matters they are involved in. The network approach seems more capable of dealing with the diversity, conflict

and complexity characteristic of modern societies, while considering their democratising potential (Börzel 1997; E. Sørensen 2002).

Finally, the concept of ‘network governance’ implies a more explicit political role for organisations in society – the social movements in this particular case study – which poses the question about the effect of a state and social movements network dynamic on the democratisation process. For this reason, the study also registers – though in a limited way – the debate on ‘governability’ (Revilla 1994; Camou 2000; Prats 2001; Silva and Rojas Aravena 2013), since this allows for an analysis of the functionality of the state–society/social movements relationship, without losing sight of its regulatory component.

Academic and Social Justifications

In theoretical terms, Latin American social movements have long appeared as social actors – that is to say, beyond or on the margins of institutional politics – who have organised according to particular interests with the aim of pressuring the state and gaining attention for their demands. In this model, questions about autonomy and co-optation take on a central role, since they define a social movement’s capacity to influence the state. More specifically, social movements’ autonomy in relation to the state and political institutions is highly valued as the expression of the democratic values and citizen participation that oppose and challenge the vices of the political system. By avoiding manipulative co-optation by the state, social movements can effectively pressure formal political institutions, making these more responsive to the needs of sectors of society that have remained voiceless in formal channels. In this way, social movements, while maintaining a tense distance from the state, provide a significant contribution to consolidating or strengthening democracy.

The inclusion of indigenous social movements in formal politics in Bolivia, and their capacity to effectively influence national politics, is a very recent political phenomenon. As such, the rise to power of the MAS – as a coalition of social movements – has characteristics that do not fit well with the dominant model described above. In Bolivia, the social movements have taken on a very central political role as they have effectively entered the state structure. In this sense, the Bolivian political scenario under Evo Morales’ government offers an excellent opportunity to explore both the possibilities and the contradictions of a growing convergence between state institutions and social movements organisations.

In the same way, the overlapping in the interaction reinforces the questioning of the state–society dichotomy and points towards the need to complement the debate on social movements and the construction of democracy

in Latin America with a theoretical perspective that allows for a more reliable appreciation of the complex relationship and the challenges to governance that modern scenarios present. In this sense, a network analysis is advantageous, since it allows for a wider and more dynamic vision of socio-political actors in a 'state–society interface', where social movements play a central role, and where other decisive actors become visible: NGOs and the media.

As far as social relevance is concerned, Bolivia has historically been one of the region's most politically unstable countries, and the country's prior experiences with democratic regimes shows that these were not viable over long periods of time. Although the period 2006–2016 has been characterised as one of relative political stability and economic development, clashes with indigenous movements, and current developments surrounding the extended presidency of Evo Morales, have given way to the questioning of the democratic quality of the regime. Social movements have undoubtedly been the main actors in Bolivian politics in the last few years, and it can be argued that they have always played a significant role in domestic politics in the country's modern history. The relationship between the state and social movements seems to have changed substantially under Morales, with the country embarking on a reform of the state–society relationship, and on the basis of this study, it is expected to continue to be a key aspect of Bolivian politics. For these reasons, it is important to question how this type of relationship, characterised by a greater convergence between social actors and politicians, has affected the Bolivian process of democratic consolidation. Indeed, the study argues that only by understanding the complexity of the state–society relationship can the regime's democratic quality and its process of consolidation be appreciated.

Likewise, it should be considered that the Bolivian case is highly linked to its regional context. Countries such as Mexico, Guatemala, Peru and, in particular, Ecuador have active indigenous social movements in politics that see Bolivia as an important regional reference as far as the emancipation of indigenous populations is concerned. More generally, despite the economic boom in Latin America in the last decade, levels of inequality have remained high. This inequality inevitably translates into the exclusion of groups in society, pointing to the need to study the institutional experiments and innovations that underpin a more democratic relationship between the state and society, as well as the more inclusive political decision-making processes. The political reforms carried out in Bolivia in this sense during Morales' administration are a clear opportunity for this.

Lastly, after a wave of leftist regimes that justified terms such as 'the pink tide' and the 'turn to the left', progressive regimes seem to have lost their impetus: the election of Macri in Argentina put an end to ten years of the Kirchners' rule; Brazil had serious difficulties in overcoming the political

crisis that led to the removal of Dilma Rousseff while we await the impact of the recently elected extreme right candidate Jair Bolsonaro; and the rapid deterioration of Maduro's regime in Venezuela all question the left's position in Latin America. After a period of consistent economic growth, these regimes seem to have experienced serious difficulties when dealing with the increasing demands of a growing middle class, particularly in the recent economic downturn. Morales' re-election in Bolivia in 2014 and the real possibility a new re-election in 2019 shows that Bolivia is somehow resisting the regional tendency, which immediately leads to questions of 'how?' and 'for how long?'

Structure of the Book

After this Introduction, Chapter 1 presents a theoretical framework on the state–social movement relationship and its effect on democracy. Firstly, it looks at how the relationship was understood by academics during and after the 'democratic transition' within a specific conceptualisation of 'democracy' in direct relation to the socio-historic context. This debate is identified as key to understanding the dominant antagonistic vision of the relationship and the reification of the state–society dichotomy. The discussion is followed by an overview of the different roles that have been ascribed to social movements in the construction of democracy, and that have been embedded in the division between 'institutionalised politics' and 'non-institutionalised politics'. At this point, views that make a case for a more integrated vision of state and society are introduced. The concepts of 'state–society interface' and 'political networks' are put forward as they contribute to a more accurate appreciation of the state–society relation in general, and the state–social movements relation in particular. Finally, the concept of 'governability' is briefly discussed with the aim of including in the analysis the element of *viability* of state–society relations. Indeed, if we can recognize that there is a more integrated relation between state and society actors, then it is necessary to pose questions about the impact of this for the political model. In other words, it is not sufficient to look at how democratic the relationship is, but also at how feasible the model or political system is in terms of governability.

Chapter 2 analyses the socio-historic context, tracing the development of social movements from marginal social actors to central political agents. The most significant facts from after the return to democracy at the beginning of the 1980s are collected, following the trajectory of the political articulation of social movements. Covering the period between 1980 and 2005, it is seen how, after the transition to democracy, a Marxist analysis and the centrality of the Bolivian Workers' Centre (COB) are gradually replaced

by a culture-based discourse on indigenous identity and indigenous social movements. This is expressed in the growing importance of Katarist political thought, as well as through the creation and rise of what would come to be known as the Unified Syndical Confederation of Peasant Workers of Bolivia (CSUTCB), to the detriment of the Bolivian Workers' Centre.

Taking this into consideration, the chapter continues by tracing the beginnings of the Movement towards Socialism. The creation of the 'political instrument of the social movements' answers to the political articulation and further coordination of indigenous social movements, as well as to their interaction with the neoliberal state. The severe policies that were adopted during the US-led 'war on drugs' were particularly repressive of coca peasants, resulting in the formation of the *cocalero* social movement. At the same time, decentralisation policies and a growing distrust of the *democracia pactada* that characterised the political party system, created a scenario in which the *cocalero* movement would gain more national importance. By projecting itself as a national popular movement against the imperialism of the United States, and by gaining a more national profile as a popular struggle, at the same time as taking advantage of recently created institutional opportunities for participation with their own alternative 'instrument', the movement will gain national recognition and profile, forming the bases for the consolidation of the Movement towards Socialism.

Interaction between the state (in the form of public policies), the *democracia pactada* of political parties and rebel social movements amounted to a governability crisis, known as *el ciclo de las movilizaciones* (the cycle of mobilizations), between 2000 and 2005. Social movements became more visible and influential, with clear episodes in the 'Water War' (2000) and the 'Gas War' (2003). At the same time, the various indigenous movements progressed in the organisation and coordination of strategies, gaining more political influence, and leading to the creation of the *Pacto de Unidad* (Unity Pact) – an expression of the empowerment of the indigenous movement. That development would be seen as a determining factor when explaining the victory of the MAS and its leader, Evo Morales, in the December 2005 presidential elections.

The following chapters embark on an analysis of the political scenario during the Morales government. Chapter 3 analyses the Bolivian constituent process (2006–2009) as 'state–society interface' (Dagnino et al. 2006). The interaction between state and society, which is identified as key in understanding the political articulation of the social movements, continues and becomes more explicit during the first few years of the Morales administration, where the mutual and continuous reshaping between and state and society actors is observed. The demand for a constituent assembly had served as a container for the plethora of demands and reforms demanded by the different sectors

of society, and so it had been one of the main features of the MAS electoral campaign. The chapter first analyses the constituent process as part of ‘the judicialisation of politics’ and ‘the new Latin American constitutionality’ in which legal structures and a language of rights acquires greater importance. Thereafter, the concept of ‘state–society interface’ is used to analyse the conflicts, contradictions and negotiations that characterised the period. This concept allows for the analysis to be extended beyond the institutional body of the constituent assembly to consider the influence of events and processes that took place in ‘non-institutional’ spaces. Here a defining role for social movements – especially indigenous movement organisations and civic movements – is once again observed, in which the confrontations on the streets were just as or even more important to the result of the constituent process than what happened within the confines of the Constituent Assembly.

The chapter continues by describing the participation of social movements in ‘political networks’. This analysis shows how social movements, while maintaining their political activism in the form of social mobilisation, also connected with state agents and institutions (through the MAS), as well as with other decisive actors such as NGOs (or support institutions) and the media. In this way, the limits between formal decision-making opportunities and those involving social struggle and society are challenged – or blurred, at the very least. During this period, the social movements’ ‘format’ is still the most effective form of political participation, although the connection with other types of actor emerges as key to understanding their impact in the political arena and on decision making.

Chapter 4 analyses the network dynamic in the state–society relationship during the post-constituent period. The political scenario was in turmoil until 2009, with important confrontations between the MAS government and the political opposition. By contrast, the following term of Morales’ government was characterised by *relative* stability, combining the consolidation of the MAS hegemony and strong economic growth. During this period the relationship between social movements and the state acquires a more diverse content, varying over time and frequently contradictory, at least in the traditional analytical terms of ‘autonomy’ and ‘co-optation’. The chapter draws a more complex scenario of changing alliances and oppositions, one that also involves other ‘socio-political’ actors. This is seen in the analysis of the most noteworthy socio-political conflicts between 2010 and 2016, in which, next to the centre state of social movements, NGOs and the media continue to exert considerable influence in politics. Finally, the analysis locates the Movement towards Socialism at the crossroads between state and society, and considering the shortcomings of alternative conceptualisations as ‘political party’, ‘social movement’ and other hybrids such as ‘movement party’, suggests a conceptualisation as a ‘political network’.

The characterisation of the Bolivian political scenario as a 'state–society interface' embodied by political networks, leading to a network governance, may give the impression that they dynamics are relatively horizontal, but the salient role of political leadership in the figure of Evo Morales shows they are not. The last chapter focuses on the topic of political leadership to analyse this factor, which has been identified as a gap in the literature on social movements. The study sees social political leadership standing at the crossroads between state and society, playing a key role in mediation – an extremely difficult position to occupy, full of contradictions and conflict. The most striking example is that of Evo Morales, whose leadership has been key to the political process of the last two decades, and who seems to be indispensable to its future. A network analysis once again helps to discern the central role of political leadership in the state–social movements relationship. As the analysis show, articulating and entering on particular political networks is for a significant part the result of the leaders' agency. Morales appears as a successful leader in a context of network governance precisely because of his capacity to orchestrate and consolidate political networks, despite divergent interests and actors (also international ones).

In that way, the network perspective serves to explain the predominance of Morales' leadership. Subsequently, the chapter reflects on the impact of political leadership in a context of network governance on the process of democratisation. In order to do so, an analysis is presented of the events around the referendum in February 2016, through which Morales aimed to secure his candidature for the elections in 2019. The network analysis shows the involvement of socio-political actors in 'political networks', with a starring role for the media and the new social media, as illustrative of how different political interests act and react in modern political scenarios. More specifically, it analyses the issue of re-election, as the topical materialization of the role of leader in the construction of democracy.

To end, the Conclusion presents a summary of the research's results, as it reflects on the significance of the 'network governance' in understanding changes to the state–social movements' relationship in particular, and the state–society one in general. By suggesting that there is a much more interconnected and dynamic relationship between socio-political actors of different types, the concept of 'network governance' seems apt to describe the characteristics of the Bolivian political process. Likewise, it suggests that Morales' government and the centrality of social movements in the political arena are not quite unique or extraordinary, but rather it presents the Bolivian experience with a type of diverse and complex governance that is characteristic of modern societies.

Lastly, the Conclusion deals with the concept of 'governability'. The central role of social movements and their connection with a state structure

that attempts to be more responsive to the needs of society suggests a greater correspondence between the political projects embodied by society and those enacted by the state as key to strengthening democracy. However, the central role of an actor characterised by activism, aggressiveness and conflict, plus the complexity of the relationship between socio-political actors and the importance of a quite unpredictable factor like the political leader, all suggest at the very least cautious optimism about the governability of this model.