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# Dilemmas of Modernity

*Bolivian Encounters with Law and  
Liberalism*

Mark Goodale

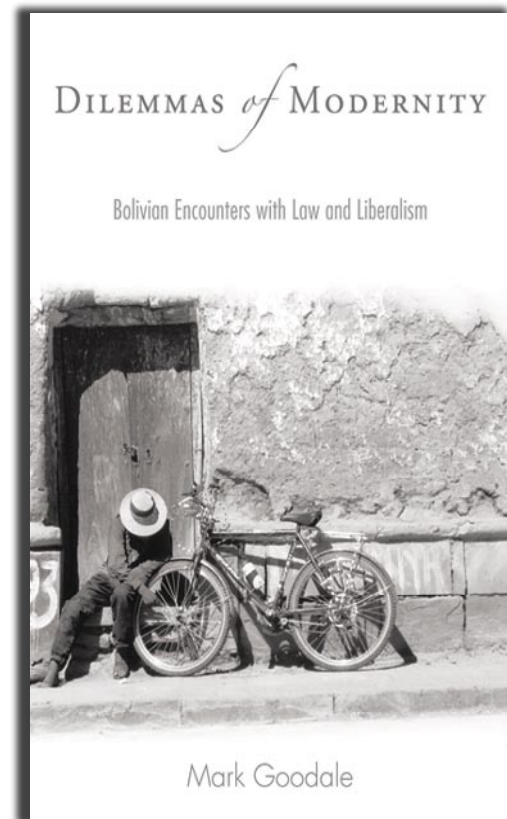
*Dilemmas of Modernity* provides a new framework for understanding Bolivia's contested present through the study of local encounters with transnational law, liberalism, and the institutions and agents of development.

**D**ilemmas of *Modernity* provides an innovative approach to the study of contemporary Bolivia, moving telescopically between social, political, legal, and discursive analyses, and drawing from a range of disciplinary traditions. Based on a decade of research, it offers an account of local encounters with law and liberalism. Mark Goodale presents, through a series of finely grained readings, a window into the lives of people in rural areas of Latin America who are

playing a crucial role in the emergence of postcolonial states.

**T**he book contends that the contemporary Bolivian experience is best understood by examining historical patterns of intention as they emerge from everyday practices. It provides a compelling case study of the appropriation and reconstruction of transnational law at the local level, and gives key insights into this important South American country.

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*"Dilemmas of Modernity* is a cunning ethnography of patterns of law, intention and meaning in Bolivia. Yet it is more besides: the book is a reflection on and demonstration of anthropology's relevance not just to the study of law but to the formation of what Goodale calls 'theory pursued by the social' . . . Richly evoking the worlds of Bolivians' making — perhaps not as they would have chosen, yet in a sense still self-imposed — Goodale presents a fascinating study that is likely to . . . enhance the conversation in the anthropologies of law and modernity, sociolegal studies on human rights, liberalism's vernacularization, and the paradoxes of the law's universalist claims in a world of wrenching particularities."

— Bill Maurer, University of California, Irvine

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Mark Goodale is Assistant Professor of Conflict Analysis and Anthropology at George Mason University and Series Editor of Stanford Studies in Human Rights.

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“Goodale's examination of law and liberalism in Bolivia makes a compelling argument: that the social and political revolution underway in contemporary Bolivia, which seems to be a rejection of liberal strategies of the past decades, is in fact a renewal of the values of liberalism. Clear and often lyrical, this is an interesting and original contribution to the literature on Bolivia.”  
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“Mark Goodale convincingly argues that one can best understand the Bolivian experience only through examining the articulation of historical patterns of intention and concrete social practices. This is a fascinating read that presents much new and original analysis.” — Shannon Speed, University of Texas at Austin

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