INTRODUCTION

THE POLITICS OF SECURITY AND RISK

> Neither floods nor plagues, famines nor cataclysms, nor even the eternal wars of century upon century, have been able to subdue the persistent advantage of life over death.
> —GABRIEL GARCÍA MÁRQUEZ, "THE SOLITUDE OF LATIN AMERICA" (NOBEL LECTURE), DECEMBER 1982

Hurricane Katrina, 9/11, the Indian Ocean tsunami, another off the coast of Japan and the subsequent Fukushima nuclear disaster, earthquakes in China and Chile and Nepal, Superstorm Sandy, Ebola: such catastrophic events, varying in cause, scale, and duration, have contributed to a mounting sense that we now live in a world-historical era of uncertainty and insecurity. Political leaders, media pundits, urban planners, environmental activists, security officials, and health experts all seem to agree that catastrophes and crises are globally on the rise.[1] Social theorists have often seen these developments as signs of a momentous shift within (or even beyond) modernity: the increase in magnitude and frequency of threats has outrun economic and technological progress and our collective capacity to manage risk. Whether or not they are right in heralding an epochal break on a worldwide scale, their accounts reflect what has become a pervasive view of global transformation. Attending the belief that we have entered a time of singular precarity comes a new political imperative: to govern the present in anticipation

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of future harm. *Endangered City* is about that imperative, particularly its consequences for cities and for those who live in them.

To address this concern, key paradigms of social and urban thought will need revisiting. A rich conversation about the rise of risk within modernity already exists within the humanities and social sciences, and it frames a general problematic that remains relevant. It also provides a conceptual lexicon that allows for critical connections between risk, security, liberal governance, and the modern city. The following analysis would not be possible without these contributions, but, as we shall see, they have proven inadequate to the contemporary moment, in two respects. The first is temporal: history is too often understood as a progressive, linear movement of time through discrete periods toward a predictably better future. The second is geographical: for the most part, the accounts we have of risk, governance, and the city reflect how modernity has been understood in and by the West. This book looks to avoid these intertwined biases in offering an alternative approach to the politics of security and risk in contemporary cities. It turns to cities of the global South: once seen to be trailing after models derived from elsewhere, they recently have advanced to the vanguard of urban theory and practice. The turbulent history of Latin American cities positions them at the forefront of discussions about urban insecurity.[2] Drawing on ethnographic and archival research in Bogotá, *Endangered City* aims to shed new light on a world of cities whose future is fundamentally uncertain.

Among twentieth-century theorists, the concept of "risk" has often been seen as a determinant of world-historical change. Ulrich Beck argues that industrial (or first) modernity was the period in which risk became an object of scientific assessment and technological control, and reflexive (or second) modernity followed when risks emerged that could no longer be known or managed.[3] Separating the two historical periods are mechanisms, such as insurance, that enable rational, calculated assessments about the likelihood of future harm; their eventual inadequacy marks the transition to what Beck calls "risk society." In a similar vein, Anthony Giddens claims that the notion of risk is what distinguishes European industrial modernity from medieval feudalism and "modern" from "traditional" societies.[4] Classical anthropological accounts support this view by studying "danger" within the symbolic order of "primitive" groups, associating the rise of risk with the unraveling of cosmologies based on nature, religion, fate, chance, and tradition.[5] Risk

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marks the threshold dividing past from present, before from after, the modern era from what came before.

Michel Foucault, too, locates the emergence of what he calls the "absolutely crucial notion of risk" at the brink of a major epochal transformation.[6] Around 1800, he claims, sovereignty and discipline were superseded by security, a political rationality that governs according to predictive calculations of the likelihood of future harm. Foucault's schema also associates risk with the rise of "modern" society by locating it at the center of the "new art of government" that emerges in the late eighteenth century—liberalism.[7] Since freedom was the crux of the problem confronted by liberal political and economic thought, security became the "principle of calculation" used to determine the limits of state intervention.[8] For autonomous, responsible individuals to be empowered to make choices unencumbered by the constraints of family, belief, superstition, and convention, they had to envision their future as containing dangers that could be potentially avoided. In Foucault's account, risk was the calculative rationality on which these decisions were based, and its simultaneous emergence in a number of different domains (e.g., town planning, food supply, public health) signaled the rise of liberalism as the predominant form of "modern governmental reason."[9]

These perspectives frame a general problematic that understands modernity in relation to risk, security, and liberal governance. However, the temporal and geographical assumptions embedded within them inhibit our ability to comprehend the politics of security and the government of risk in contemporary cities. These assumptions about time and space are hard to separate, mutually implicated as they are, and their repercussions are many. Positioning risk as an epochal marker of the transition to liberal modernity obscures the fact that it often interacts with, rather than supersedes, supposedly "premodern" and "illiberal" ways of governing threats and understanding danger. Other technologies for managing individual and collective insecurity do not simply "belong" to the past, only to be consumed eventually by the inexorable force of history.[10] In Stephen Collier's estimation, we ought to learn from Foucault's later thinking, which rejects the "kind of account that is epochal in both its temporal structure and its diagnostic reach."[11] Instead of the historical progression of successive epochs or societies, he emphasizes coexistent modalities of power that enter into relations of combination, transformation, and correlation. This approach better prepares us to identify

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emergent political rationalities without presuming their overtaking what preceded them.[12] Nevertheless, a key question remains: how to conduct a genealogy of risk and security in parts of the world with histories significantly different from those of the West?

Much of the literature on risk has tracked its rise as a technology of government in "advanced" liberal democracies or its worldwide spread through processes of globalization, securitization, and neoliberalization. We may indeed find ourselves in the midst of a global proliferation of security mechanisms, but the experience of liberal modernity in Europe and North America is not necessarily the best guide for understanding what these mechanisms mean and do in other parts of the world. Anthropologists have long been interested in the intersection of "modern" legal and political institutions with "traditional" or "customary" forms in colonial and postcolonial settings.[13] They have shown that the rise of liberalism outside the West, but also in Europe and North America, coexisted with and even depended on relations of power that were often far from liberal.[14] Moreover, they have found that many cultural and political formations considered quintessentially modern were developed initially in the colonies.[15] These insights unsettle genealogies of political thought and practice that are confined to or centered in the West. Pausing to consider the relationship between risk, security, and the modern city will allow me to propose an alternative—a view from the global South but with broader relevance.

A defining characteristic of modernity has been the belief in the progression of time toward an all-around better future; in turn, this promise hinged on the growth and development of cities. The "modern city" was considered the most advanced stage of social evolution and cultural development. Geographical distance was equated with temporal difference, such that the destiny of cities outside Europe and North America was presumed to be a perpetual game of catch-up with the likes of London, Paris, and New York.[16] The history of urbanization in the West functioned as a chronotope—a representational device for ordering time and space—and the "modern city" was the end point on a time line that stretched indefinitely into the future.[17] The teleological certainty of this narrative was both an impetus for and an effect of the power to colonize.[18] Modernity and coloniality, as Walter Mignolo and his collaborators have taught us, were mutually constitutive—one could not exist without the other.[19] The prosperity gained through unequal and exploitative relations of power and exchange

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enabled modern cities both to manage risk and to project a definitive vision of the global urban future.

In recent years, this arrangement has come undone as even archetypical modern cities have begun to anticipate more uncertain and insecure futures. A global trend toward forecasting futures of catastrophe and crisis has enabled security to take hold as a dominant rationality for governing cities from North to South.[20] Conventional assumptions about progress have been thrown into doubt, and we now face what Daniel Rosenberg and Susan Harding call the "crisis of modern futurity," here in a specifically urban form.[21] One of the implications of this crisis is the imperative to govern the present in anticipation of future harm. This imperative is actively reconfiguring the politics of cities, rich and poor alike. But the conceptual paradigms we have inherited from twentieth-century social theory and urban studies, forged in the global North and predicated on progressive temporalities of growth and development, are unprepared to respond to the twenty-first-century urban condition. In an unexpected twist of fate, cities of the global South have much more to say about a world in which the unlimited improvement of urban life, even its sustained reproduction, are no longer taken for granted.

Latin America is particularly instructive in this regard. Given its position in the world since colonization—always in an awkward relationship to modernity and its future expectations—preoccupations with risk and security run deep. Referring to a current of anxiety running through the genealogy of urbanism in the West, Marshall Berman once wrote: "Myths of urban ruin grow at our culture's root."[22] His comment is even more applicable to Latin America, where cities have long been plagued by security concerns and future uncertainty, as García Márquez's remark in the epigraph attests. In the colonial period, urban settlements in the Americas were haunted by the specter of destruction. From hurricanes and earthquakes to pirate attacks and slave revolts to famines and epidemics, the list of potential threats was extensive. This mattered significantly since, for the Spanish colonizers, the city was the symbolic and material foundation of empire.[23] Yet its stability and longevity—and therefore that of the colonial enterprise itself—were fundamentally uncertain.[24] This continued after independence, as Latin American cities were caught in a continual struggle between "civilization" and "barbarism," aspiring to become "modern" yet facing the impossibility of that dream.[25] From military dictatorships, populist movements, and democratic reforms to experiments with socialism, neoliberalism, and multiculturalism:

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visions of the ideal society were hotly contested throughout the twentieth century, and the city was often the stage on which these contests played out.

To fast-forward to the present: Latin America's future remains in question, as Fernando Coronil aptly put it.[26] Security tops the agenda from Caracas to Ciudad Juárez and La Paz to Guatemala City, making these strategic sites for examining how uncertain futures shape cities and urban life. The entanglement of extraordinarily high levels of crime and violence with extreme poverty and inequality has contributed to the production of widespread feelings of fear and insecurity. These sentiments reverberate through everyday experiences of the city, but they also saturate public space and the built environment, politics and government, aesthetics and popular culture, religion and ethics, and law and justice.[27] The centrality of security across each of these domains enables scholars of contemporary Latin America to provide insight into a predicament of global importance. Recognizing this fact, *Endangered City* asks what the region's cities can tell us about the urban condition at large. Given Colombia's long-running struggle with conflict and violence, Bogotá is an especially good place from which to consider how the politics of security and the government of risk is changing what it means to be a twenty-first-century city and urban citizen.

The Pursuit of Security in Colombia

On a January afternoon in 2010, a massive earthquake hit the Haitian capital of Port-au-Prince, leveling the city, killing over three hundred thousand people, and leaving more than a million homeless. This catastrophe was one among many to have received global attention in the early twenty-first century. It struck while I was doing fieldwork in Colombia on how the city of Bogotá was preparing itself for similar threats. My focus was the municipal government's management of disaster risk and its housing relocation program for vulnerable populations living in areas recently designated *zonas de alto riesgo*, or "zones of high risk," for landslide, flood, and earthquake.[28] It came as no surprise that both government officials and the media in Bogotá responded to Haiti's disaster, either to publicize their city's readiness or to call for still greater preparedness.[29] Less predictable was the news that came three weeks after the earthquake: Haiti's interior minister, Paul Antoine Bien-Aimé, flew to Colombia with the express purpose of visiting Armenia, a city of three hundred thousand people in the country's mountainous coffee-growing region that had itself been struck by a massive earthquake in 1999.[30]

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Bien-Aimé was accompanied by his Colombian counterpart, Fabio Valencia Cossio, on a visit to El Refugio (The Refuge), a seismic-resistant housing development constructed for survivors, which had been subsequently praised by the United Nations for integrating reconstruction and risk reduction efforts.[31] Sparking comparisons and exchanges in both directions, the Haitian earthquake reflected the global interconnectedness both of catastrophic events and of techniques for mitigating their potential effects.

When I heard about this diplomatic mission, I was initially surprised that Bien-Aimé had not looked to other countries in the global South, for example, Indonesia, Pakistan, or China, where recent earthquakes had resulted in comparable scales of devastation and destruction. Or why not visit San Francisco or Tokyo, two of the most earthquake-savvy cities in the world? But the Colombians I spoke with had a different response: better to be associated with the management of disaster risk, they proudly quipped, than with the masked guerrilla and the murderous *narcotraficante*. They recognized that as a result of its self-promotion as a leader in the field and the praise it had received as a model for the rest of Latin America and the developing world, Colombia's global image had taken on a new cast.[32] As Bien-Aimé's visit to the city of Armenia confirmed, Colombia had become the place to go to learn how to understand, manage, and live with high levels of risk.[33]

Colombia's association with security and risk extends beyond the field of disaster preparedness. Consider, for example, an advertisement circulating on CNN while I was doing fieldwork in Bogotá. Sponsored by Colombia's Ministry of Commerce, Industry, and Tourism, this promotional video was the centerpiece of an elaborate media campaign. Its images were predictably seductive: tropical beaches, snow-capped mountains, verdant countryside, friendly locals. The voice-over evoked a timeless paradise of harmony and beauty—"a place where the past lives harmoniously with the future, and the word 'infinity' is written in color on the beach, the mountains, the jungle, and the sky"—and it showcased a host of enraptured gringos expressing their newly discovered love for the country's countless wonders. The ad's crowning touch was its final sentence: "Colombia, el riesgo es que te quieras quedar" (Colombia, the risk is that you would want to stay).

This slogan had become the unifying concept of a tourism campaign that depicted Colombia as an exotic, bountiful, and flirtatious temptress (as figure I.1 so clearly demonstrates), one who uses her sensuous beauty and

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FIG I.1 "Colombia, the risk is that you would want to stay."
Source: Ministerio de Comercio, Industria y Turismo de Colombia.

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Latin charm to entice helpless visitors into staying forever. There is a hint of danger to the siren call: you might never return home, not because you've been kidnapped or shot, but because you've fallen in love with the place and its people. The campaign exploited the fact that, for as long as one can remember, travel to Colombia had been seen, above all else, as a risk. It sought not simply to forget Colombia's turbulent, traumatic past and occlude its persistently violent present, but also to acknowledge and capitalize on the power of "risk" as a brand. Risk was thereby converted from threat to allure and Colombia from danger zone to tourist haven.

This campaign cleverly played on the grim reality that has plagued Colombia throughout the twentieth century. Hollywood films and the international news media have sensationalized this reality, to be sure, but there is no denying it. An ongoing history of violence, armed conflict, and political instability continues to orient the popular and political imagination toward the ultimate pursuit of security. This can be traced at least as far back as the late 1980s and early 1990s—a period, in terms of violent crime, comparable to the worst years of *la Violencia*, the bloody midcentury political conflict between the Liberal and Conservative parties that claimed the lives of an estimated two hundred thousand people. However, the soaring rates of crime and violence in this more recent period were tied to the rapid growth of drug trafficking. Many assaults, murders, and kidnappings took place among rival cartels, but drug lords also responded to government crackdowns by carrying out indiscriminate attacks on major cities and assassinating political figures.[34] Although the cartels were eventually dismantled, the production and distribution of narcotics survived the crackdown and continue to fuel armed conflict in the present. Throughout this period, political authority, national unity, and social order were commonly framed in terms of security.

Alongside the spread of drug trafficking, Colombia has also seen a continuation of the battle between the state and leftist guerrilla movements under way since the 1960s. Various attempts at reconciliation have been made, such as a ceasefire negotiated by President Belisario Betancur with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) in 1984, which led to the formation of a new political party, the Patriotic Union (UP). This peace process was short-lived, however, as UP members, leaders, and elected officials were routinely murdered. Attempts to end the conflict gave way to waves of violence, which occasionally struck at the heart of the capital city. The 1985 siege of the Palace of Justice in Bogotá by the M-19 guerrilla group

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would become a watershed event in the politics of risk and security. Coinciding with a volcanic eruption that took the lives of over twenty-five thousand people, it sparked a crisis of authority and expertise. Future-oriented modes of government were the proposed solution, as they appeared to offer a suitably technical rationality for governing human and nonhuman threats.

As the leftist guerrillas funded their protracted insurgency by kidnapping government officials and wealthy landowners, private militias were formed for the purpose of protection and retaliation. These paramilitary armies would eventually grow in number and strength to the point of controlling major economic interests and exerting broad political influence. They took hold of large territories beyond the reach of the national army and police, and delivered their own version of security by organizing death squads and conducting social-cleansing missions to rid towns and cities of suspected insurgents and *desechables* (disposables), whom they eliminated with impunity. The lines eventually blurred between the paramilitaries and other illegal armed groups as the narcotics trade offered profits irresistible to all sides of the conflict. But paramilitarism was also embraced by right-wing politicians as a quasi-official strategy for governing challenges to political authority and economic stability. *Parapolítica*, as it is called, would eventually be countered by the moderate Left's efforts to promote an alternative, progressive version of security and, thus, to prevent the Right from monopolizing this key political terrain.

In the 1990s, Colombia underwent a process of major political and economic reform initiated by the administration of President Virgilio Barco and subsequently led by his successor César Gaviria. Amid a wave of democratization throughout Latin America, the adoption of a new Constitution in 1991 expanded civil and political rights, decentralized government, strengthened the judiciary, and officially recognized multiculturalism. While liberal democratic ideals and institutions expanded, they were often fused with or subordinated to security imperatives. The impact was strongest on poor and vulnerable populations, whose status as citizens was often predicated on their need for protection. Meanwhile, President Gaviria ushered in a period of neoliberal restructuring, which opened Colombian markets to foreign direct investment, reduced trade barriers, privatized state assets and services, and reformed fiscal policy. This restructuring shaped the pursuit of security thereafter, which has tended to privilege economic interests over social concerns and to favor individualized solutions to structural problems.

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Yet center-left mayoral administrations have deployed security logics to such ends as providing social housing, pursuing environmental justice, and building a political base among the urban poor.

The economic liberalization of the 1990s was paired with increased militarization as the defense budget and the size of the army steadily rose, thanks to the flow of military technology and training from the United States. Likewise, the paramilitary movement led by the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia increased its operations against the guerrillas in order to gain control of strategic territories and the drug trade. With either tacit approval or explicit cooperation from the army, paramilitaries unleashed terror campaigns and civilian massacres targeting peasants suspected of siding with insurgent groups. Violence in the countryside combined with economic shifts forced millions to flee their lands for the city in what has become one of the world's largest crises of internal displacement. This led to the continued growth of self-built settlements on the urban periphery, where the majority of zones of high risk are now located. Internal displacement created a highly vulnerable population of Colombian citizens who, for the most part, reside in precarious living conditions now targeted by the municipal government's relocation program. Adding to the hardship of the armed conflict, Colombia along with other Latin American countries entered a major recession in the late 1990s. As the economy shrank and unemployment shot up, Colombia accepted loans from the International Monetary Fund along with accompanying structural adjustment measures aimed at promoting fiscal austerity and budgetary discipline. In 2000, the U.S. government approved Plan Colombia, which would send hundreds of millions of dollars in military aid to Colombia each year (US$8 billion overall) for drug eradication programs and counterinsurgency operations.

After the breakdown of former president Andrés Pastrana's attempts at reconciliation with the FARC and the National Liberation Army (ELN), hopes of finding a peaceful solution to the armed conflict were all but abandoned. In 2002, Álvaro Uribe was elected president after running a hardline campaign that promised to defeat the guerrillas with military force. Tapping into prevailing "War on Terror" rhetoric, Uribe's policy of *seguridad democrática* (democratic security) sought to rid Colombia of "narcoterrorism" by demonstrating military superiority and establishing the presence of armed forces throughout the country. Democracy and security were fused such that the rights to life and to protection overshadowed certain entitlements, such as

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the freedom of speech, and reconfigured others, such as the right to housing. During Uribe's two terms in office, the FARC was significantly weakened, Colombia's urban areas and main roads were secured, and the economy grew. However, internal displacement continued, violence became concentrated in rural regions, human rights violations were widespread, poverty and inequality deepened, and drug trafficking adapted yet again. Uribe's successor, former defense minister Juan Manuel Santos, distanced himself from the hardline policies of his predecessor, paying attention to the social underpinnings of the conflict and reopening peace negotiations with the FARC. And a succession of centrist mayors—most notably Antanas Mockus and Enrique Peñalosa in Bogotá and Sergio Fajardo in Medellín—succeeded in reducing urban crime and violence by expanding public space, investing in infrastructure, promoting social inclusion, and fostering civic responsibility. Yet popular sentiments and political campaigns remain oriented toward security as the overarching goal.

Critics argue that "security" in Colombia has been too narrowly focused on combating drug cartels and illegal armed groups in order to ensure political stability and economic growth. Influenced by the geopolitical frictions of the Cold War, the War on Drugs, and the War on Terror, they claim, security has been understood predominantly in military terms, far outweighing mechanisms of social protection.[35] Security, they insist, should focus more broadly on livelihoods and on protecting the life of the population against a range of threats. These demands have found expression within the Polo Democrático Alternativo—a coalition of leftist political parties that has attempted to counter the hegemony of the Right on the national level by focusing on city politics, and in doing so has articulated alternative versions of security focusing more on social and economic factors than on combating the internal enemy.[36] But so, too, centrist mayoral administrations, such as those of Mockus and Peñalosa, have had to position themselves within the national security landscape. As a result, a political consensus—a governing pact, if you will—has formed around the imperative to protect vulnerable populations from threats, both of environmental and human origin. Risk management has been accepted across the political spectrum, in part for its ability to encompass a range of objectives while insulating its proponents from the conservative establishment's efforts to criminalize, persecute, or annihilate anything resembling radical ideology. In this form of government, a series of mayoral administrations with varying political commitments

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and different visions for the future of Bogotá found an ostensibly neutral, "postpolitical" way to address the social and environmental problems of the urban periphery and to build a political constituency among the urban poor. The politics of security in late-twentieth-century Colombia have set the parameters by which urban life can be governed and lived.

Governing Risk in Bogotá

Enrique Peñalosa was elected mayor of Bogotá in 1998 and immediately established a lofty set of goals for his two-year term. High among them was the recovery of public space, a necessary component of his plan to create a more inclusive, accessible, and secure city.[37] At the time, the mayor's vision for the city must have seemed something of a pipe dream: the infamous barrio of El Cartucho was only a stone's throw from his new office in Plaza de Bolívar, the historic center and political heart. Few dared to set foot in an area that over the past fifty years had become "a sinister urban myth of the capital."[38]

After the *Bogotazo* riots of April 1948 sparked by the assassination of populist presidential candidate Jorge Eliécer Gaitán, the downtown area was left in shambles.[39] Residents started to flee the center in the 1950s, abandoning its stately buildings and elegant streets to a half century of precipitous decline. As a result of the mass exodus of *gente decente* to the north and west, spacious, respectable homes were converted into working-class tenements or simply fell into disrepair. By the 1980s, El Cartucho was the unsafest corner of the inner city, the epicenter of insecurity in one of the most violent and dangerous cities in the world (figure I.2).[40] When Peñalosa took office in the late 1990s, it housed a combination of homeless people, drug addicts, and criminals involved in a range of illegal activities—from drug trafficking and arms dealing to prostitution, theft, and street crime.[41] Cocaine, crack, and their cheap by-product, *bazuco*, were ubiquitous. The streets were lined with rubbish, and petty crime was rampant. So close to the city center and the seats of both national and municipal government, this neighborhood epitomized the dereliction and insecurity of Bogotá's public space.

For Peñalosa's vision to become reality, all this would have to change. As long as El Cartucho remained a blight, he later recalled, "it was impossible to envision the center of Bogotá as dynamic, lively, and attractive to locals and visitors alike."[42] To that end, Peñalosa created the Urban Renewal Program. In the hands of his successor, Antanas Mockus, the program would

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FIG I.2 From a series of photographs taken in El Cartucho by a French photographer. Source: Stanislas Guigui, El Fiero, Calle del Cartucho, Colombia.

eventually acquire and demolish 615 properties and relocate thousands of their former occupants, destroying the heart of the barrio. This transformation complemented Mockus's drive to instill a "culture of citizenship" (*una cultura ciudadana*) among those seen to be lacking civility and civic responsibility. To symbolize Bogotá's commitment to a different future, El Cartucho would be replaced by the twenty-hectare Parque Tercer Milenio, or Third Millennium Park.

As the clearance of El Cartucho was under way, a sudden event intensified the need to secure the city center. During President Uribe's inauguration ceremony on August 8, 2002, mortar shells exploded a few hundred feet from where the newly elected leader was being sworn in. Uribe had won on a pledge to crack down on leftist guerrillas, and his *mano dura* stance had been countered by the FARC in the weeks leading up to the election with an escalation of bombings in both rural and urban areas.[43] The shells detonated on Inauguration Day matched those used previously by the FARC, supporting the theory that this group was responsible. Although one of the missiles hit the facade of the presidential palace, at least two others went astray and landed in the midst of the still occupied El Cartucho. Once the damage was fully assessed, twenty-one people were found dead.

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Although the strike's origin remained unverified, the government responded as if the bombs had been launched from El Cartucho. Immediately after the explosions, tanks and troops dispatched to patrol the city quickly sealed off its perimeter, attempting to regulate who and what flowed in and out. El Cartucho, in this case, was more victim than perpetrator of violence; nevertheless, it continued to be identified as a security threat. If there had been any doubt before the bombing that the neighborhood would be razed, this event sealed its fate. What began as an *urban* problem had now been raised to the level of counterterrorism and national security.

The inauguration-day bombing fueled latent fears that guerrillas, known for perpetrating violence in the countryside, were coming to terrorize Colombia's cities. President Uribe saw the explosions as an early justification of his intent to govern with a firm hand and to increase military operations targeting rebel groups. He believed that FARC militias were forming in peripheral urban settlements throughout the country and were "time bombs" waiting to go off.[44] While the city center required heightened protection, it was these impoverished, densely populated, and loosely governed neighborhoods—and the possibility that they could become fertile ground for guerrilla recruitment—that were identified as the greatest threat.

This shift from center to periphery was encouraged by the progress of the Urban Renewal Program in El Cartucho. In December 2003, the media celebrated the fall of the last house, drawing a close to what the news magazine *Semana* called "forty years of embarrassment."[45] The creation of Third Millennium Park brought twenty hectares of public space and recreational facilities to the city center to symbolize the dawn of a new era—what urban planners, politicians, and the media now celebrate as its "rebirth."[46] As Ángela Rivas remarks: "It is hard to believe that Bogotá, a city that just a few years ago was known, with good reason, to be an urban area as chaotic as it was violent and insecure, could now be considered a model of urban governance and an exemplary case of the reduction of violence and crime for Latin America."[47] But while crime and homicide rates fell, fear abated, and the physical space of the city was transformed, the problem of urban insecurity did not disappear. There were still hundreds of thousands, if not millions, living in the city's shadowy peripheries. In response, new policies emerged that would redefine security and reconfigure the techniques through which it could be pursued.

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As the demolition of El Cartucho was drawing to a close, the municipal government of Bogotá initiated a disaster risk management program aimed at protecting the lives of poor and vulnerable populations from environmental hazards, such as floods, landslides, and earthquakes. The Caja de la Vivienda Popular (or Caja, for short) was put in charge of the program, which began with an inventory of zones of high risk in the two lowest socioeconomic strata. Studies found the peripheral settlements of Ciudad Bolívar—the largest and poorest of Bogotá's twenty localities—to be the most vulnerable (see map 1). Though it became illegal to settle in these areas, qualified existing residents would be granted housing subsidies conditional on their willingness to abandon their homes and relocate to housing developments on the extreme southwestern edge of the city or in the adjacent municipality of Soacha. The sprawling, self-built settlements of the urban periphery—formerly seen as potential breeding grounds for urban insurgency, as threats to political stability and social order, as risks *to* the city—turned out to have the greatest concentration of families living *at* risk.

We have, then, two forms of urban security, each with different ways of defining problems and acting on them.[48] Like the Urban Renewal Program, the Caja was charged with relocating poor and working-class bogotanos. But rather than securing the city as a whole, its primary objective was to protect the lives of vulnerable populations living on the urban periphery. Rather than evicting residents and demolishing buildings, the municipal government began encouraging households to relocate. And rather than relying on the strength of the military and the police to force evacuation, the Caja turned to the technical expertise of engineers, architects, and social workers, who were to play no more than a facilitating role in what was to be a self-directed process of resettlement. While living in these zones had previously been prohibited by law, a hallmark of the program now was that it was voluntary. And whereas security logics motivated both slum clearance in the city center and disaster risk management on the urban periphery, the definition of threat had shifted from disorder, criminality, and insurgency to floods, landslides, and earthquakes. Uniting these two forms of government was the problematization of the city as a security concern and, in response, the relocation of either "risky" or "at risk" populations. This latter approach to governing risk in Bogotá is the empirical focus of the chapters that follow. To understand the processes of displacement central to it, key paradigms of urban theory need rethinking.

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Displacement in (and of) Urban Theory

Since the late nineteenth century, studies of the modern city have been concerned with the problematic of displacement. The seminal works of Émile Durkheim and Georg Simmel were motivated by the unprecedented dislocation of peasants and their mass migration to the rapidly industrializing cities of western Europe.[49] Both struggled to explain the social and psychological ramifications of uprooting predominantly rural populations and relocating them in urban environments. A similar concern drove the Chicago school of urban sociology to search for patterns of urban form and function by studying the influx of immigrant populations to the American city.[50] Henri Lefebvre's writings reflected his preoccupation with the ever-expanding reach of urbanization as a process of spatial commodification and its disruptive effects on nature, the countryside, and the rhythms of everyday life.[51] Urbanists today remain attuned to related social and spatial processes: from gentrification and resettlement to dispossession and expropriation, from migration and mobility to evacuation and eviction. This list points to a general problematic that is a central feature of contemporary urban studies—the uncoupling of people and place.

Two influential paradigms structure our understanding of displacement in contemporary cities: urban political economy and neoliberal governmentality. The field of urban studies is too heterogeneous to be sorted quite so neatly. But referring to these two paradigms is a way to highlight key assumptions underlying much writing on social and spatial transformations in today's cities and to identify what those paradigms reveal and occlude.

The geographer David Harvey, a tenacious and insightful critic of urbanization, has played a key role in advancing the first as a powerful analytic. At the heart of capitalism, argues Harvey, are interrelated spatial processes he calls "creative destruction" and "accumulation by dispossession."[52] Creative destruction refers to the cycles of violence required "to build the new urban world on the wreckage of the old" as existing social and spatial orders are destroyed to resolve political and economic crises and create future opportunities for profitable investment. While Karl Marx referred to the "original sin" of "primitive accumulation," which hastened the transformation from feudalism to capitalism, accumulation by dispossession is the ongoing process by which land belonging to poor, marginalized, or otherwise powerless groups is captured by circuits of capital accumulation and converted into a

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source of surplus value.[53] These interrelated dynamics of displacement, Harvey argues, "lie at the core of urbanization under capitalism."[54] Although modes of accumulation and forms of power vary in scale and scope, according to this paradigm their fundamental logic remains the same from Paris and Manchester in the nineteenth century to New York and Chicago in the twentieth to Mumbai and Rio de Janeiro in the twenty-first.[55]

Like many proponents of urban political economy, Harvey analyzes cities within the overarching structures of global capitalism, for the urbanization process itself, as noted by Henri Lefebvre, "has now become genuinely global."[56] To demonstrate the generality of this framework, Harvey often turns to specific geographies and histories. Having dedicated previous books to North American and European cities, notably Baltimore and Paris, he occasionally references cities outside the West—for example, Mumbai.[57] There he highlights financial interests backed by state power that, in their quest to turn the city into a global financial hub, ratchet up pressure on 6 million slum dwellers without legal title to surrender territories they have occupied for decades. This dispossession is permitted, in Harvey's view, by the state's failure to uphold its constitutional obligation to protect the life and well-being of the population and to guarantee rights to housing.[58] Harvey then shifts to urban transformations in other parts of the world, where he identifies the same dynamic.[59] All processes of urban transformation, it seems, fit within this conceptual framework.

The armed conflict in Colombia is a classic case of displacement: there are now at least 5 million *desplazados*, or internally displaced persons, residing mostly in the self-built settlements of the urban periphery. So, too, is the relocation of "at risk" populations living in these very same areas in Bogotá. To investigate the changes under way, then, we might ask: Who is being dispossessed, and of what? Who is doing the dispossessing? And how, exactly, are they accumulating?

Dispossession was famously analyzed by Marx as the "freeing" of peasants from their attachment to land and access to the means of production.[60] But unlike the dispossession of agricultural producers, whose labor provided them with subsistence, inhabitants of zones of high risk were casual laborers already alienated from the means of production, working primarily outside the formal economy in jobs such as recycling, construction, street peddling, or domestic service. The high-risk designation and the resettlement program that accompanied it have not stripped these settlers of their

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property; indeed, this program legally entitled them to houses of equal or better value. They became like the enfranchised liberal citizen who, as Marx pointed out, "was not liberated from property; he received the liberty to own property."[61] Their newly acquired rights made them eligible for a government subsidy that equaled the price of a new home, and thus enabled them to become legal property owners—a status that had long eluded them.

If it is not entirely clear who was being dispossessed by the resettlement program, it is even less clear who would have been profiting from their dispossession. Familiar forms of capital accumulation were present, but peripheral. The resettlement program created a population of potential homeowners, thereby increasing demand within the formal property market that private developers could step in to meet. But given the high cost of real estate in Bogotá and the rather strict regulations on developments that qualify as *vivienda de interés social* (social housing), resettling the urban poor is not a lucrative emerging market. Moreover, the requirement that resettlement beneficiaries take out loans to supplement their government subsidy generated income for lending institutions, but not after 2006, when the subsidy was increased to equal the cost of a new home.[62] Nor did the utility companies profit significantly from the formalization of these populations, for most settlers were already account holders paying flat rates for water and electricity, despite lacking official connections to municipal infrastructural systems.

Other possible motives for the resettlement program are even less plausible. Rumors spread among some settlers that their relocation was spurred by the discovery of uranium and other valuable resources. The rich were decried for hoping to build country homes on these hillsides once the poor were resettled. More plausibly, it was thought that as the risk designation caused property values to fall, speculation and gentrification would set in by capturing the land for more profitable forms of extraction and development. But even this seemed highly unlikely, and not just because of the area's stigma as the most dangerous in Bogotá. For no sooner were these zones evacuated by the resettlement program than another round of settlers would move in. Legal eviction orders could not be enforced because of the sheer density of people inhabiting these spaces, and there was no political will to remove them. After more than a decade, despite the failure to turn the situation to profit, the resettlement program remained in effect.

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Perhaps in recognition of the difficulty of commodifying the urban periphery, official plans for the future of these high-risk zones now envision their reforestation, their use for recreation, their protection from development, and their function as "lungs of the city." The goal of making Bogotá a "global" or "world-class" city may stimulate these ecologically minded projects; by attracting foreign investment, corporate offices, tourist dollars, and financial markets, they would predictably benefit the elite. But this logic fails to capture the entire process of urban transformation occurring on the edges of Bogotá. While there is no doubt that urban political economy is key to diagnosing displacement and dispossession in cities of the global South, this analytic does not fully explain why, how, and to what end the state has committed itself in Bogotá to protecting the lives of the urban poor from environmental hazards.

An alternative is the paradigm of neoliberal governmentality.[63] Popular throughout the social sciences, this paradigm associates "neoliberalism" with the rise of modern governmental rationality and seeks to identify its dislocating effects. In contrast to proponents of urban political economy, who tend to privilege global, structural, and macropolitical explanations, adherents to this paradigm focus more narrowly on specific governmental techniques and the kinds of subjects created by them.[64] Their analyses draw on Foucault's oft-cited lecture on "governmentality," as well as the many related studies that have followed in its wake, extending their conclusions to rationalities of urban planning, government, and development.[65] In diverse contexts, scholars have examined the deployment of market-based logics, the valorization of private enterprise, the spread of entrepreneurialism, the reform of governmental institutions, the retrenchment of the public sector, and the formation of responsible, self-governing subjects. While many of the influential early works emphasize contingency, diversity, and variability in the specific forms that neoliberal government can take, their analyses have often been transposed uncritically to processes of urban transformation throughout the global South.

Critiques of neoliberalism regularly treat power as something to denounce and resist. They frequently imply the disintegration of earlier, progressive models of governance, which were committed to providing benefits and services to the majority of the population, and the rise of new, regressive ones indifferent to the living conditions of the poor. The foil for these critiques, however, is usually the social democratic welfare state of postwar

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Europe and North America and its urban forms, neither of which have been fully established in most other parts of the world.[66] Neoliberalism in Latin America, for example, has been more about imposing loan conditionalities and enforcing structural adjustment measures than rolling back social welfare mechanisms and forming self-governing subjects. In Colombia, it has been so tightly entangled with militarization and armed conflict that the violent terminology used to characterize neoliberalization in the North Atlantic (e.g., "attacks" on the public sector, "war" on the working poor, "infiltration" of market logics) is more than metaphorical.[67] While most critiques in this vein are sensitive to the circulation of neoliberal techniques of government beyond their "sites of origin," they often ignore the fact that these techniques now intermingle with political projects that, in Latin America at least, are set on challenging neoliberalism's hegemony.[68]

Without discounting the theoretical sophistication and political utility of these two paradigms, some urbanists have begun to question the degree to which they adequately explain contemporary transformations in cities of the global South. There is a growing gap, they argue, between the lived reality of these cities and the canon of urban theory, which has by and large been produced in and about the "great" cities of Europe and North America, including London, Chicago, New York, Paris, and Los Angeles. Urban political economy and neoliberal governmentality are based on historical developments in these cities and then "applied" elsewhere. Ananya Roy is critical of the way cities of the global South are treated as "interesting, anomalous, different, and esoteric empirical cases" that either highlight blind spots in existing theories—thereby reinforcing the fiction of universal applicability—or require a different set of theories altogether, creating artificial divides between First and Third World, global cities and megacities, modernity and development.[69] Roy insists that it is time to "articulate a new geography of urban theory" by decentering the Euro-American locus of theoretical production.[70] Urban theory, this suggests, requires displacement of a conceptual sort.

The task of comprehending contemporary cities demands that we interrogate theories of urban transformation—not simply validate them—and query the concrete processes under way.[71] How does urbanization under capitalism function according to specific histories and geographies? Are creative destruction and accumulation by dispossession the logics underpinning every instance of displacement, or are there other dynamics at work?

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When does neoliberal governmentality enhance and when does it constrain our ability to understand emerging rationalities of rule? What conceptual tools are necessary for comprehending cities distant from the traditional centers of theoretical production? In considering the adequacy of existing theories, however, we must not forget that processes of urban transformation "always outpace the capacity of analysts to name them," as Achille Mbembe and Sarah Nuttall remind us.[72] Nevertheless, these questions will lead us toward a fuller understanding of cities both in and beyond the West. And they may help us better chart the terrain on which the majority of the world's population struggles to live in cities and to make their cities livable.

This book takes up such challenges in relation to the politics of security and the government of risk in Bogotá. Its burden is to describe urban phenomena that cannot be fully understood by the paradigms of urban political economy and neoliberal governmentality. For example, the displacement of settlers on the urban periphery is based neither on the state's failure to protect the lives of vulnerable populations nor on the negation of urban citizenship, but rather on the fulfillment of these very same rights and responsibilities. Moreover, there is no simple antagonism between acts of dispossession and the popular political responses assumed to oppose them. While our theories predispose us to expect those subject to the municipal government's resettlement program to fight tooth and nail to remain in place, there are many more people who demand relocation than those who reject it. For it is within this program, not outside of or in opposition to it, that thousands of settlers on the urban periphery engage in struggles for political recognition, incorporation, and entitlement. It might be tempting to understand the clamor for resettlement as reflecting a new variety of accumulation by dispossession or neoliberal governmentality that works through the very logics that might otherwise challenge it. But rather than treating cities of the global South as either continuations of or deviations from familiar scripts of urban transformation in Europe and North America, we must attend to dynamics that do not fit neatly within them.

The Politics of Risk

When I began fieldwork in Bogotá, these two theoretical paradigms together had prepared me to investigate "neoliberal urbanism" at work.[73] After all, the resettlement program was run by a public agency (the Caja) founded in 1942 to build housing for the working class according to a social welfare rational-

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ity. In its recent adaptation, the Caja was adhering more strictly to neoliberal ideals: valorization of markets and their efficiency, skepticism about the role of the state, devolution of responsibility onto the community and the individual, privatization of public goods and services, and so on. The target of governmental intervention was no longer a social class, such as workers, or society as a whole, but individual households belonging to a narrowly delimited "at risk" population. But since resettlement was ostensibly voluntary, the Caja had to educate members of this population to become rational, responsible, and prudent—that is, to desire and actualize their own relocation. As a result, thousands of settlers on the urban periphery, previously marginal to formal economic and legal institutions, were being thrust onto privatized markets for housing, credit, and utilities. In the process, relocation enabled them to become consumers, taxpayers, and debt holders. But rather than improving lives and livelihoods, the Caja seemed to be shredding the social, economic, and cultural fabric of these communities and pushing them farther to the extreme periphery of the city or even outside its municipal boundaries. Not surprisingly, it was the World Bank that loaned the city of Bogotá substantial sums of money and subsequently praised the municipal government as a model of "good governance."

While Bogotá's recent effort to govern risk did at first look like a typical case of neoliberal urbanism, my first formal interview with two leaders of the Caja's resettlement program challenged this initial assumption. Teresa was the director of the team responsible for relocating households in zones of high risk, while Yolanda was the manager of the Caja's field office in the peripheral locality of Ciudad Bolívar, the hub of the program's day-to-day operations. After the usual pleasantries, I asked Teresa and Yolanda to tell me about their backgrounds. "We're both government functionaries, public servants," Teresa began, gesturing to the bureaucratic officialdom of our surroundings. "But this was not always the case," she said; "I had the good fortune, the opportunity, to have participated in organizing 100 families to lay claim to land in Ciudad Bolívar—*tomárnoslo* [to take it for ourselves]," she paused to exclaim, and then continued:

> I organized the community to arrive at night, and we worked all night long to make sure that we could establish shacks and lay down pathways. The next day, we were ready for a fight when the police tried to remove the *invasión* ["invasion" has become the common name for the

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occupation of land by popular classes]. We weren't going to let them kick us out; that was our barrio and we were the ones who built it. Yep, this was back in 1984. We won and the families stayed on the land, in part because the state didn't really care about those hillsides. The authorities must have thought, well, how nice that the poor settled up there and left the flat part of the city to us.

Teresa then fast-forwarded to the present: "Twenty-five years later," she said, "this same area has been declared a zone of high risk. So now I have to show up not as the person who organized the invasion, but as the government agency that is coming to say to them: *Señores, tumbamos y nos vamos* [Let's knock it all down and get out of here]."

Teresa did not specify with whom she had been working as a community organizer. Since many activists who helped during this period to build, defend, and eventually legalize peripheral urban settlements were allied with leftist movements—some that have since been criminalized and persecuted—I thought it best not to press. Her political commitments were implied as she explained how the struggles between different factions in Colombia's decades-old armed conflict played out among the settlements of the urban periphery: "those guys from the M-19 who helped settle a few people over here, *los elenos* [members of the ELN] who staged the invasion of that parcel, the paramilitaries who came along and disoccupied it, the FARC who set up their militias there." "The root of the problem," she told me, "is the same as always: the distribution of wealth under savage capitalism and the absence of both agrarian and urban reform." Yolanda chimed in with a sigh: "Yes, the land reforms that we've never had." Then, laughing, she pointed to Teresa: "Es que ella es medio comunista, y yo, comunista y medio" (She's half communist, whereas I'm a communist and a half).

I was puzzled. Was it possible that the person who once organized the building of settlements for the popular classes was now orchestrating their dispossession? Had Teresa gone through some kind of "neoliberal conversion"? Or did she see a connection between her political activism in the 1980s and what she was doing now? Teresa's account and the questions it raised would continue to stick with me. Perhaps what had changed from the 1980s to the present was not her commitment to improving the lives of the urban poor, but rather the available and legitimate means of doing so.

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While there is reason to see this form of urbanism as recognizably "neoliberal," clearly something else was at stake.

To understand Teresa's story and the many like it I would later hear, we have to situate them in relation to the politics of security and risk in Colombia from the late twentieth century to the present. This history has shaped the terrain on which progressives like her search for ostensibly technical, "postpolitical" approaches to addressing the social and environmental conditions of the urban periphery without exposing their proponents to outright political persecution. It is through such programs that political parties and mayoral administrations from left to center have sought to build a political constituency and an electoral majority among the urban poor. To comprehend attempts by Teresa and her colleagues to mobilize risk as a technique of urban government, we must also rethink some of our most ingrained critical tendencies.

What James Ferguson calls the "progressive arts of government" can be extended to cities.[74] In the face of repetitive denunciations, Ferguson asks: "Are the neoliberal 'arts of government' that have transformed the way that states work in so many places around the world inherently and necessarily conservative, or can they be put to different uses?"[75] By attending to the "uses of neoliberalism," Ferguson reminds us that "social technologies need not have any essential or eternal loyalty to the political formations within which they were first developed," and he draws our attention to the possibility that they can be used for potentially progressive purposes.[76] This approach enables a kind of thinking presently unavailable to dominant paradigms of urban theory, which lack a suitable approach to political rationalities that are pro-poor and come from the Left. Neoliberal governmentality and urban political economy constrain our ability to, as Ferguson puts it, "turn a thoughtfully critical and skeptical eye" toward the progressive arts of government and the dangers *and* opportunities they present.[77]

With this in mind, Teresa's story begins to make sense. During our conversation, she made a claim that would be reiterated throughout my fieldwork: that risk management was progressive and pro-poor. Like many of their colleagues, these activists-cum-functionaries joined the Caja during the mayoral administration of Samuel Moreno or his predecessor, Luis Eduardo ("Lucho") Garzón, both of whom represented the political party opposing the conservative political establishment and often espoused (though

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less frequently delivered) progressive social change. Although the resettlement program was established earlier, these mayors increased both its budget and the number of households eligible for subsidies, and praised it for attending to the problems of the city's most underserved. While some officials were suspicious about the degree to which only the poor were seen to be vulnerable—in the concise words of one, "The mountains of the north [of Bogotá] are high class, but the mountains of the south are high risk!"—my informants regularly stressed that protecting the lives of the urban poor from environmental hazards was a priority of the Left, and one that offered an alternative to the doctrine of "democratic security" that had been a hallmark of the Right for nearly a decade. Most situated the Caja's resettlement program within a spectrum of approaches to security, and they were keen to point out the differences between them. It became clear that security and risk were domains of political struggle over the authority to define terms such as "life," "threat," and "protection," and to govern the city accordingly. These domains shift over time, and people like Teresa position themselves knowingly and strategically within them.

Accounting for the politics of security and risk, therefore, requires that we not only consider how to expose and denounce forms of power but also think about governmental strategies that pursue progressive ends. While it is important to evaluate their impact on lives and livelihoods at the margins of society, must we uniformly oppose the exercise of power or assume that the state invariably works against the interests of those it claims to serve?[78] While I am far from suggesting that risk management in Bogotá is a model to be celebrated and replicated, it attains a new clarity once we consider its political context: from 2002 to 2010, "security" was an overarching imperative across the political spectrum, yet the scope of possibility for pursuing it was radically circumscribed by the conservative establishment in power at the national level. This provokes us to consider what progressive arts of urbanism might look like and, although we may not be satisfied by what we see here, to wonder where else we might find them.

An Ethnography of Endangerment

The politics of security and risk in Bogotá, and the broader implications for contemporary cities and urban life, require an appropriate method: an ethnography of endangerment.[79] Since such a politics is inextricably bound to particular places and histories, understanding how it emerges, and what

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it subsequently comes to mean and do, demands empirical specificity.[80] We already have ways of apprehending the experiential dimensions of everyday life in places where endangerment has outlasted immediate danger. An extensive literature in the anthropology, sociology, history, and psychology of violence has drawn our attention to the trauma that persists in the subjectivities of people who have experienced it and to the enduring cultures of fear that long outlast violent events themselves. What we lack is a way to extend these analyses to the domain of urban politics and government, to the relationship between the state and the urban citizen, to the city as a political community. An ethnography of endangerment allows us to explore how concerns about insecurity influence urban politics in Colombia even as its cities have gotten remarkably safer.

I conducted ethnographic fieldwork and archival research in Bogotá over a twenty-month period from August 2008 to April 2010, with several follow-up visits thereafter. My first objective was to understand why and how the endangered city had emerged in Colombia when it did, and along with it the imperative to govern the present in anticipation of future harm. I analyzed policy documents, newspaper articles, political speeches, technical studies, historical accounts, and cultural artifacts among other materials, and I conducted extensive interviews with those considered expert on the topic in government ministries, universities, nongovernmental organizations, and development agencies.[81] As I constructed genealogies of "security" and "risk" in Colombia, I also strove to locate them within overlapping geographical scales. To account for the intersection of local, national, and transnational forces, I identified the network of actors, sites, and institutions that had been instrumental in bringing risk onto the political landscape.[82] What had happened in Bogotá, in Colombia, and in the world at large so that security could become the reasoned way of governing best?

I then set out to account for how risk had been defined, measured, and managed ever since it became the municipal government's responsibility to do so. On one level, I sought to understand how specific threats to collective life had been brought into the realm of technical and political intervention, and I did so by analyzing the plans, studies, laws, and maps that guided official security and risk management policy.[83] On another level, I wanted to examine the ongoing process of designating certain areas of the city zones of high risk. Approaching these zones not as static and self-evident spatial units but as techno-political objects, I intended to track how they were being

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made and remade on a daily basis.[84] I established a relationship with the Directorate for Emergency Prevention and Response (DPAE), the technical agency responsible for managing risk, interviewed members of its staff, and followed its technicians on their daily rounds.[85] My goal was to observe the routine practices and patterned interactions through which the technical expertise of *gestión del riesgo* (risk management) was being assembled and deployed.[86]

I then set out to learn how the municipal government was going about relocating families from zones of high risk. Here my focus was Bogotá's municipal housing agency—the Caja de la Vivienda Popular, or Caja for short—and its approach to governing the spaces and populations of the urban periphery. In addition to interviewing staff members, I situated myself as a participant observer in the Ciudad Bolívar field office and followed Caja officials throughout their workday. I spent the majority of my time there talking with social workers and observing their interactions with the public, but I also frequently accompanied them on excursions to *el terreno* (the field): visits to households in high-risk zones, meetings with community leaders, tours of new housing developments, and other activities. In each context, I paid attention to how these actors carried out and reflected on the resettlement program, and I observed their regular encounters with members of the population subject to it. Doing so allowed me to identify how and to what degree this agency was reconfiguring the relationship between urban citizens and the state.

My study would not be complete, I felt, until I also understood what it meant to be endangered—that is, to be "at risk" in contemporary Bogotá. This led me to focus closely on how people navigated the terrain of political engagement created by official efforts to protect the lives of poor and vulnerable populations. How were they negotiating the rights and responsibilities accompanying the political imperative to govern (and govern through) security and risk? Did this new dynamic of inclusion intersect with older forms of exclusion along lines of class, gender, and race? To complement the insights gained from my ethnography of the Caja field office, I undertook case studies of resettlement beneficiaries. I made contact with a group of families undergoing resettlement, interviewed them, visited their homes, and followed them through the relocation process. Beyond the Caja, I made regular visits to a *comedor comunitario* ("community cafeteria," or soup kitchen) also in Ciudad Bolívar. These combined efforts helped me see whether the

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Caja's mission to protect vulnerable lives was producing new forms of citizenship and political subjectivity throughout the self-built settlements of the urban periphery.

Historical specificity is necessary for understanding the emergence of the endangered city in Colombia. However, a common historiographical procedure among ethnographers is to search the archival record for precursors to existing forms of power; when a plausible antecedent is found, the present is understood as its "legacy," "echo," "trace," or "afterlife." While this procedure highlights the complex temporality of what historians may treat as inert artifacts belonging to an earlier period, it often does a poor job of tracing the proximate causes of contemporary political formations. In such cases, the temporality of the present and recent past is flattened as colonial histories, for example, are privileged over the events of the preceding fifty years.[87] Attempts to give ethnographic accounts historical depth often inadvertently strip the present of its own temporality, treating it as an isolated, static "moment." By contrast, this book undertakes a different kind of inquiry into the contemporary politics of security and risk—one that accounts for both how these politics emerge and, when they do, how and what they seek to govern.

During my fieldwork in Bogotá, I was often told that my methodology lacked the one thing expected from it: a direct focus on violence. In one extreme example, a graduate student (referring to a presentation I had just given) demanded to know: "¿Donde está la sangre?" (Where's the blood?). As a topic of research, violence is often isolated and given primacy. This is especially true in studies of Colombia—a place long synonymous with violence, perhaps as much in the social-scientific literature as in the popular imagination; a place where in the 1980s and 1990s *violentología* effectively gained the status of a discipline in its own right. On a rhetorical level, sensational topics like violence demand our attention by signaling urgency and promising relevance. By returning to them compulsively, we endow them with discursive power and authority that overwhelm critical thinking. The overall effect is the elevation of violence to the status of master-signifier and the obfuscation of other, equally important social phenomena.[88]

Much to the displeasure of many I spoke to in Bogotá, I chose to approach violence not head-on, but obliquely. After all, its peripheral position was something I wished to emphasize, for the governmental imperative to protect lives "at risk" opposed itself to violence and often removed violence from its field of vision by temporally locating it either in the past or in the

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future. The phenomenon of endangerment I sought to document explicitly marks the tension between the presence and absence of violence—it refers not to direct experiences of violence, but to how violence indirectly conditions urban politics, governance, and everyday life. However, I will bring violence directly into view throughout the book in acknowledgment of its centrality to the politics of security and risk in Colombia. Histories of violence are clearly integral to the political formations I analyze, yet the former do not lead in any direct way to the latter. The relationships between violence and security that interest me are contingent and reciprocal rather than causal and linear. This will become clear as I highlight how different forms of endangerment as well as efforts to govern them frequently intersect in time and space, at times reinforcing and at others opposing one another.

Organization of the Book

In the broadest sense, *Endangered City* is an anthropological study of how and to what effect twenty-first-century cities are being imagined, governed, and inhabited in anticipation of future threats. It seeks to provide critical insight into the increasing influence of security and risk on contemporary urban life that defines the endangered city. To understand this wide, even global phenomenon, we must recognize the particular, and sometimes unpredictable, ways that techniques for securing cities are assembled and deployed in specific locations. Both ethnographic and historical in nature, the chapters of this book focus on Bogotá, where, after a long history of insecurity, risk has emerged as a techno-political framework for governing the city's uncertain future. Ultimately, this study reveals how the politics of security and the government of risk are changing what it means to be a city and an urban citizen in the twenty-first century.

Endangered City begins by attending to the cultural sensibilities and political contingencies specific to Colombia's modern history. Chapter 1, "Apocalypse Foretold," centers on the convergence of two catastrophes in 1985. This chapter traces the way these occurrences were constituted as "events" in the ensuing twenty-five years and, in turn, came to underpin the state's responsibility to protect life from potential harm. The focus shifts in chapter 2, "On Shaky Ground," to the invention of the zone of high risk in the capital city and to the everyday work required to render the uncertain future the basis for governmental intervention. It shows that risk management, far from a

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closed technical domain, is a contingent social field shaped by the politics of security in contemporary Colombia.

The task of chapter 3, "Genealogies of Endangerment," is to investigate how the mandate to protect the lives of vulnerable populations in Bogotá's high-risk zones affects state-subject relations. Focusing on the daily workings of the municipal government's housing resettlement program, it highlights how this emergent political technology combines modern, liberal ideals of rights, citizenship, and freedom with other enduring forms of relationality, such as kinship, patronage, and religion. This chapter argues that the imperative to protect poor and vulnerable populations from environmental hazards reconfigures but does not replace well-established forms of social collectivity, political authority, and ethical responsibility. Chapter 4, "Living Dangerously," then examines how security mechanisms produce novel formations of citizenship and subjectivity and thereby shape the terrain of political engagement for settlers of the urban periphery. It is through the gendered and racialized categories of vitality, vulnerability, and victimhood that those with little other recourse to state benefits negotiate the official imperative to protect them from threat. This chapter reveals how security and risk impact urban politics by highlighting situations in which the rights of urban citizens are mediated by and predicated on the degree to which their lives are in danger.

The book then returns to its concern with futurity. The forms of temporality integral to the endangered city are the subject of chapter 5, "Securing the Future." By examining temporal framings, practices, and sensibilities among municipal authorities and their subjects, this chapter shows how the future becomes the common ground of both urban politics and government. Both the state and the urban poor engage in projects to make and remake the city within an anticipatory domain. However, as counterintuitive as it may sound, security and its predictive calculations of harm are not incompatible with modernist future visions and progressive temporalities of development. The conclusion, "Millennial Cities," broadens the book's scope to examine the implications of seeing the future of cities, and the cities of the future, as problems of risk. Linking recent developments in Bogotá to wider shifts in paradigms of urbanism, it concludes by posing a question of both conceptual and practical importance: what future projections other than apocalyptic and dystopian ones are available or imaginable?

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The coda offers a provisional response by reflecting on the surge of urban climate change politics in Bogotá in the time since this research was conducted. This recent development represents an expansion of established approaches to governing risk and security, only now under a different name, suggesting that the phenomenon of the endangered city may continue to condition urban politics, governance, and everyday life for the foreseeable future. However, if the world has indeed entered a new historical age, as scientists, philosophers, and social theorists are claiming, in which the ecological impact of humans is now felt on a planetary scale and the global future is fundamentally uncertain, then Bogotá may be an important source of inspiration for new urban visions emerging from within the politics of the Anthropocene.

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