# Indianism and ethnonationalism in Bolivia

## 1 . INTRODUCTION

This paper attempts, albeit very schematically, to identify the factors responsible for the success of the indigenous movement in Bolivia; to explain why it was Morales' MAS rather than Felipe Quispe's *Movimiento Indígena Pachakuti* that gained the ascendancy within this movement and to do so by reference to interpretational aspects of the indigenous discourse that have generally not been remarked on but which throw new light on previous accounts.*

More specifically, we will develop an analysis of MAS's success that takes into account the following four components:

1. The ethnocultural inheritance (culture, language, history, territory, etc.), though always bearing in mind the extent to which perception of this inheritance is itself the product of previous generations of "awareness builders".

2. The existence of socio-economic circumstances favouring awareness of a collective identity, of an "us" as distinct from a "them". Such circumstances may include a network of common interests that actually or potentially conflict with those of some other group or groups; subjection to neoliberal economic policies that erode social ties, destroy the traditional territory of the group and generate rootlessness and the need for an identity and the existence of a sufficient degree of social mobility and/or supralocal communication that facilitate the perception of a common social space.

3. A propitious political opportunity structure, which may be formal -

including various kinds of political decentralization (federalism, municipalization, etc.) and the existence of effective access to the political arena - or informal (electoral realignments, crises in the traditional party system, the emergence of new potential allies, etc.).

4. A political machine that is organizationally and *rhetorically* efficient, creating new opportunities to generalize identification with the ethnic group to a broad social segment on the basis of shared interests and specific objectives of self-government.

In Section 2 I deal in turn with these four components in the case of the MAS in Bolivia, and in Section 3 I use frame analysis to focus in greater detail on the aspect to which least attention has hitherto been paid, the political discourse.

## 2. INDIANIST ETHNOPOLITICS IN BOLIVIA: A MULTICAUSAL EXPLANATION

Of all Latin American countries, Bolivia has the largest proportion of indigenous inhabitants: 62% of the 2001 census, which is generally regarded as reliable, claimed to belong to some indigenous ethnic group, a figure that can be compared, for example, with the 25% of Ecuador. Nearly 31% identified themselves as Quechuans, and over 25% as Aymarans, the remaining 6% being distributed among Chiquitanos (2.2%), Guaranies (1.6%), and others. This has of course been an important factor in the rise of the indigenous movement and its electoral success. As Evo Morales repeatedly reminds us, the indigenous population of Bolivia is not a marginal minority, but constitutes the majority of the country's whole population.

However, it is not by itself a sufficient explanation, because this majority is not homogeneous. Firstly, there is the division into Quechuans, Aymarans and other groups. Secondly, there are a number of socially relevant geographical variables that divide this majority in subgroups: rural Indians *vs.* city dwellers (currently more than 50%); highland *vs.* lowland communities; eastern Bolivians (*cambas*) and western Bolivians (*collas*).

Thirdly, bearing in mind the poverty of the indigenous population and the labour insecurity it suffers, it should be remembered that tra-

ditional left-wing parties and labour unions, in addressing native Indians, have for long subordinated their ethnocultural identity to the conventional classification as "peasants" or "workers", a practice that has played an important role in impeding Indianist mobilization in Peru and, to a lesser extent, in Chile. That the success of Indianism in Bolivia may be due to other factors in addition to the size of the indigenous population is also suggested by the fact that the first South American indigenous parties to achieve a degree of success appeared in Colombia in 1990 in spite of only 2.7% of the Colombian population being indigenous (Van Cott & Rice 2006).

The first factor that must be examined to explain the realization of the potential of the indigenous majority of Bolivia is the ethnocultural inheritance that has been exploited by the indigenous movement.

### 2.1. THE ETHNOCULTURAL INHERITANCE

The Indianism of the high Bolivian plateau possesses an extraordinarily rich and powerful source of myth in the Great Andean Rebellion led between 1780 and 1783 by the Quechuan Tupac Amaru, who besieged Cuzco, and the Aymaran Tupac Katari, who besieged La Paz for 6 months (Mallon 1999). These were historically decisive uprisings in that they put an end to the system of undertakings upon which Spanish dominion was based and, for the first time, placed the Empire in jeopardy; the insurgents included not only Indians, but also mixed-bloods, creoles, and even a few Spaniards (though fewer than in Peru).

More importantly for our present purposes, they became the basis for a comprehensive mythology surrounding the figure of the "new Inca", the restoration of Incan rule, and the revenge of the native peoples subjected to Spain since the 15th century. In a different vein, the Great Andean Rebellion was later reinterpreted as a precursor of the Bolivian war of independence, and even as a precedent of militarist nationalism (Demélas 1992). This mythico-symbolic capital survives today, and in the speeches of Felipe Quispe and Evo Morales is constantly invoked (Albó 2006), for example by references to the indigenous peoples' "500 years of resistance".

A second historico-mythical reference for Indianism relates to the Bolivian Federal War of 1898-1899. The conflicts that resulted in the capital of Bolivia being moved from Sucre to La Paz led the Federalist Pando to seek the support of the now-legendary Aymaran leader Pablo Zárate Willka , offering in return the restitution of formerly Indian lands that had been nationalized some 30 years previously – a promise that was promptly broken once the Federalists had gained power following a battle in which the Aymarans had played a key role. The memory of these events has been zealously kept alive and exploited by Felipe Quispe, who propounds an "imitation of Zárate's armed uprising".

In spite of the mythogenic vigour of these two episodes, they have traditionally been relegated by the republican rhetoric of the Bolivian State, which completely excluded Indians from participation following independence from Spain in 1825. Not until the traumatic loss of most of the Gran Chaco in 1935 did the idea of a mixed-blood nation find a place in Bolivian nationalism, and even the National Revolution of 1952 only recognized the indigenous population as peasants, denying their ethnocultural identity. The system that the Revolution took as its model was that of Mexico, in which the transformation of the indigenous population into a peasantry by re-distribution of the land in exchange for votes through the mediation of corporate labour unions was accompanied by its acculturization and assimilation in a mixed-race national identity – the "cosmic race" of Vasconcelos – in schools, in the army, and in the media.

The corporativist Bolivian State constructed during the 1950s by the MNR (*Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario*) thus had two facets: on the one hand, the establishment of state-controlled labour unions and other top-down mechanisms mediating the standardization and control of local community institutions through the exchange of favours; and on the other, the attempt to generate a Bolivian nationality in the sense of a collective identity shared by all Bolivians, a nationality centred on a common language, a common view of history, a common external enemy (Chile), and common symbols and myths such as the national flag. There was in principle no room for indigenous collective identities. And when Barrientos came to power in 1964, the Peasant-Military Pact – supplemented with outright dictatorial repression - served to continue the erasure of Indian identity.

Only with the suppression of Indian autonomy in the region of La Paz, and the massacre of Tolata, did there arise an opportunity for novel processes of political identity. The first indigenous movements of this kind were the *Movimiento Nacional Tupac Katari* (1968) and Luciano Tapia's *Movimiento Indio Tupac Katari*, and the more moderate, union-oriented *Centro Campesino Tupac Katari* (1971) and *Confederación Sindical Única de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia* (CSUTCB, 1979). It was at the 1983 National Congress of the CSUTCB that it was first publicly proposed that Bolivia should recognize itself as a "plurinational State".

## 2.2. SOCIOECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES

The second requisite for political ethnification is a propitious socioeconomic environment. To evaluate this aspect, we must look back to the agrarian reforms and associated measures introduced between 1952 and 1964 as part of the MNR's National Revolution. These reforms redistributed large amounts of land to Indian owners, thus converting Indian communities into communities of peasants, i.e. individual proprietors of smallholdings. Dialogue with this sector was organized chiefly through corporate peasant labour unions, and these organizations did indeed sometimes work reasonably well on behalf of their members in those parts of the country, such as Cochabamba, where the Indian population was already concentrated in nuclei and there was already a certain tradition of peasant unions on the model of workers' unions (Albó 1995, 2002). In the Andean highlands, however, where many communities were allowed to retain certain common property and a degree of political autonomy, the lowest levels of the union structure were in fact traditional Indian community structures – the union *was* the community; these latter structures thus survived relatively unscathed, but were ineffective within the overall union structure.

In spite of their de-Indianizing nature, for a large proportion of Indian communities the MNR-led reforms afforded access to at least a minimal level of socioeconomic resources, including not only land but also suffrage and the right to education, a right previously actively opposed by many of the 4% of the landowners who had hitherto possessed 82% of

Bolivian land (Dunkerley 1984). However, the mechanisms and ideology through which the MNR achieved these socioeconomic improvements militated against the indigenous identity deriving from Indians' ethnocultural inheritance – as in Peru, a class of "half-blood Indians" emerged, persons of Indian appearance speaking indigenous languages and observing indigenous cultural traditions who nevertheless considered themselves, implicitly or explicitly, as of mixed race.

After the MNR years, de-Indianization was intensified by successive military régimes, but gratitude to central government for the economic advances of the 1950s was slow to wane. The post-revolution economic measures that did most to pave the way for the success of the indigenous movement were those of the New Economic Policy of 1985, which sacrificed the remnants of officialist unionism by doing away with support for the rural economy in the form of subsidies, price regulation, etc. There were also drastic cuts in health services and education, and the autonomy of those communities that enjoyed any was further eroded by measures such as the privatization of common land (Yashar 2005:181).

The inoperancy of the peasant labour unions, and the further destruction of traditional community structures, propitiated among the indigenous population a renewed perception of itself as Indian rather than peasant. Furthermore, large numbers of indigenous miners made unemployed when the New Economic Policy dismantled Comibol migrated to coca-growing areas, and in doing so they rejected the ideas of unionism and class struggle from which they had hitherto benefited, turning instead, in their deception, to an identification with local indigenous culture and traditions.

### 2.3. POLITICAL OPPORTUNITY STRUCTURE

The formation of a favourable political opportunity structure, as regards both political institutions and relationships with competing forces, has been decisive in Bolivian indigenous mobilization in general and the success of the MAS in particular. The most salient institutional aspects include the democratization and broadening of the political spectrum consequent on the breakdown of traditional corporatism, the institutional reforms of the 1990s, especially the constitutional reform of 1994,

and the process of decentralization set in motion by the People's Participation Act of 1994. With regard to the relationships among agents, the most salient features of the political context have been the crisis of traditional parties, electoral realignments, and the availability of non-indigenous potential allies. Let us take a brief look at these factors.

It should first be emphasized that it was not only the previously mentioned economic effects of neoliberalism that favoured the indigenization of Bolivian rural politics: the breakdown of the corporative patronage system whereby votes were exchanged for political support provided an opportunity for the formation of "horizontally" organized movements based on links that were nominally ethnic, albeit in a broad sense that I shall analyse in greater detail in Section 3. Networks created in relation to the common interests of diverse indigenous groups, and which in the case of the MAS were subsequently extended to include non-indigenous groups, progressively replaced the divisive, de-mobilizing hierarchical corporative systems of political organization that dated back to the MNR (Fig. 2).

In spite of insufficient enforcement and implementation, the legal and constitutional recognition of ethnic plurality in the 1990s undoubtedly constituted a very significant step forward as regards the "respectability" of the claims of the indigenous movement. The ratification of the ILO's Convention 169 on the self-determination of indigenous and tribal peoples in 1992 was followed in 1994 by constitutional reforms in which Bolivia is defined as a multiethnic and pluricultural State (Art. 1), the "natural authorities" of indigenous communities are recognized for administrative purposes, limited application of indigenous common law is allowed (Art. 171), collective property rights are acknowledged, and bilingual education is accepted (Yrigoyen 2005).

The establishment of new electoral constituencies in 1995 also played an appreciable role (Van Cott 2005), since some of the one-seat constituencies introduced in the lower house alongside proportionally represented multi-seat constituencies coincided with ethnic boundaries, and thus allowed the representation of ethnic minorities.

However, the principal administrative novelty favouring the growth of indigenous movements and their transformation into efficient political

parties was the People's Participation Act of 1994, which created 311 new municipalities (Van Cott 2005; Albó 2006). In fact, this Act included the first legal recognition of indigenous communities, therein referred to as Basic Territorial Organizations. When the MAS and other Indianist parties won power in several of these municipalities, they took full advantage of the opportunity to obtain resources for their localities and gain a reputation that served as a foundation for their subsequent assault on central government. Finally, it should be borne in mind that the 1996 Act that set up the National Institute for Agrarian Reform enabled indigenous communities to register common land as "Original Community Land", which within these communities created a motive for organization to exercise this right, and thereby provided an important opportunity for the construction of a political discourse centred on the key concept of "territory".

The constitutional reforms of the 1990s were thus fundamental in the rise of indigenous political parties because of the new rights and opportunities they afforded to Indians. However, they also assisted this process in more negative ways. The new pluralism of the Bolivian State was in many ways insufficient, and in the light of what it did provide for, its shortcomings provoked more ambitious indigenous aspirations, aspirations that the movement was now confident of its power to satisfy. In the "water war" in Cochabamba in 2000, and the "gas war" in La Paz in 2003, the indigenous movement showed its muscle and proved its capacity to force concessions through disruptive mobilization.

*Vis à vis* the electorate, political Indianism thus took full advantage of the opportunities to exhibit itself that it was offered or created for itself, but it also benefited enormously from the crisis suffered between 1989 and 2002 by the MNR and by the relative newcomers *Acción Democrática Nacionalista*, and *Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionario*, both of which were created during the 1970s. This is evident in the fact that the MAS grew precisely in the most volatile electoral districts (Madrid 2005), where it was turned to by its natural audience following the organizational and electoral collapse of the traditional left-wing as the result of external influences (the post-1989 crisis of socialism; see Máiz 2004), the turn to the right of the MIR (manifested in the neoliberal coalition government formed by Paz Zamora and former dictator Hugo Banzer), and the crisis of Bolivian unionism brought on by neoliberal economic policies.

The break between the indigenous movement and the traditional left-wing allies that as class-bound organizations were unresponsive to Indianist demands allowed the MAS, as a non-exclusive Indianist party, to attract not only disaffected left-wing voters but also to steal disaffected militants from these former allies, thus reinforcing its organizational capacity. These converts included leaders such as the Guevarist journalist Antonio Peredo, Gustavo Torrico (formerly a member of the Socialist Party), Manuel Morales (formerly of CONDEPA), and the Trotskyite miners' leader Filemón Escobar. Additionally, this growth in some cases allowed the MAS to reach agreements with residual left-wing groups, thus further broadening its potential electorate.

It was not only strictly political parties and groups that were affected by the crisis of the traditional Bolivian parties in the 1990s. The crisis orphaned numerous organizations that, though not themselves political parties, had traditionally supported and been supported by these parties: rural teachers unions, small business associations, craftworkers' associations, business federations, etc. These organizations were now receptive to the possibility of reaching an understanding with indigenous parties. In particular, the MAS attracted lowland indigenous organizations, including both religious groups and the CIDOB (which by then had extended its influence outside the lowlands). In spite of the difficulties associated with such heterogeneity, and the need for those with a union background to adapt to the new ethnically oriented discourse, such alliances afforded the MAS an invaluable plurality of material, organizational and reputational resources (Madrid 2005).

A final component of the political opportunity structure that favoured the rise of the MAS was the international context: the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989, the break-up of the Soviet Union, the ILO's Convention 169 (which was ratified by Bolivia in 1991 following the March for Territory and Dignity, and was partially incorporated in Art. 171 of the 1994 Constitution), and the celebrations surrounding the 500th anniversary of Columbus' discovery of America, which together with the increasing presence and activity of international NGOs provided Indianists with an international showcase that they took advantage of with the "500 years of resistance" campaign. It is noteworthy that this campaign made a major contribution to coherence between the demands of eastern and western

Bolivian Indians, as is shown by its inclusion of a defence of traditional uses of coca leaves that would subsequently become a national symbol of resistance to US policy in Latin America (Stefanoni & Do Alto 2006).

## 2.4. THE POLITICAL MOBILIZATION

The final decisive factor in the success of the MAS was the mobilization policy it inherited from its precursors, the way in which it created and exploited opportunities. This approach differentiated Bolivian Indianism from, for example, its Peruvian or Guatemalan counterparts. Here and in the next section I shall focus on two closely interrelated aspects of this policy: the organization of collective action, and political discourse.

Efficient organization is essential for any party to exploit and build on the political opportunities that circumstances provide it with. From this point of view, two features of the history of the MAS stand out: the prior existence of a rich network of organizations and movements; and the willingness of the MAS to take this plurality on board and make use of its organizational experience and capacity (Máiz 2003a, 2004). As I insinuated previously, Indianist political mobilization required the establishment of strong horizontal organization in order to combat division and demobilization, tendencies that had not only been promoted by the virtually defunct vertically organized labour unions, but which were also favoured by the weakness of territorial structure, community isolation, local rivalries, inward-looking communities, and a general lack of social communication. Thus the MAS (but not the MIP) coveted and welcomed the organizational structure and capacity of existing groups such as the lower levels of vertical unions, independent unions, religious congregations, and, of course, Indianist groups that had survived from the 1970s. Although these latter had failed to thrive in the pre-1993 political context, they were nevertheless fundamental in the organization of successful post-2000 mobilization.

It is also true, of course, that the split in the indigenous movement between MAS and MIP had its origins in the 1970s. Firstly, the indigenous organizations that had arisen in the highlands differed widely from their counterparts in the lowlands. More importantly, the 1970s already exhibited divergence between the radical Indianism of leaders such as Luciano

Tapia and the pluralist Katarism of Genaro Flores, for example, which was explicit in the Manifesto of Tiahuanacu. Both currents were strengthened by the Tolata massacre of 1974, but it was the Katarists who, following the foundation of the CSUTCB in 1979, created a political party, and who in 1982 entered the Bolivian parliament. The 1988 unification of eastern unions and coca growers' organizations, and their subsequent control of the CSUTCB, laid the foundations for the creation of the MAS as a broad-based indigenist party.

As noted previously, the "500 years of resistance" campaign of 1992 was a landmark in the mobilization of the indigenous population of Bolivia. It was in the Assembly of the Original Peoples held on October 12th that the creation of a specifically political organization for channelling indigenous claims – the "political instrument" – was first discussed in public. In consonance with this initiative, there was a deepening of the rift between Indianists wishing to enter the political arena, and those who proclaimed the need to fight the system from the outside, for whom the self-determination of the original peoples required a return to the *ayllu* and the *quyasuyo* (Stefanoni & Do Alto 2006:57). A later example of these aspirations was provided when the National Council of Ayllus and Markas of the Quyasuyo, constituted in 1997, proposed – in opposition to the CSUTCB – that the legal device of the Original Community Land be employed to reconstruct the ancient Andean territories.

In the case of the MAS, there was an inversion of the traditional order of events in the relationship between social movements and revolutionary left-wing parties in Latin America: instead of an urban party sending out expeditions to rural areas to organize peasant disturbances, the MAS, a political party, was the result of the unification of peasant and indigenous organizations and their subsequent adoption of urban allies and goals so as to extend their influence nationwide in both geographical and political senses. Even the anti-bureaucratic style of the MAS leaders proved attractive to voters who were tired of bureaucracy, corporativism and the makeshift dealing among neoliberalist parties, and to militants in the traditional left-wing parties that were now in downright decadence.

This novel relationship between party and movement led to the MAS being constituted by a multiplicity of different organizations. In fact, the

"political instrument" discussed at the Assembly of the Original Peoples was from the start realized as a federation of heterogeneous social movements that would be controlled from the bottom up, and Evo Morales' leadership has thus always been subject to the will of this variegated web of independent organizations, as he continually indicates by such far-from-rhetorical phrases as "never stop correcting me" (Morales 2006:13). Not only does the party not replace the movement; the party is in principle just one more component of the movement's organizational repertoire (Van Cott 2006). This operative plurality of the political instrument and the MAS, together with the discourse to be examined in Section 3, is what makes it wrong to regard the MAS as populist in the classical sense (Stefanoni & Do Alto 2006; Madrid 2006).

It was in 1995, at the Santa Cruz Congress, that the CSUTCB finally decided to create a "political instrument" to compete in municipal elections. The Assembly for the Sovereignty of the Peoples (ASP) and the IPSP (*Instrumento Político por la Soberanía de los Pueblos*) were constituted, but since the electoral authorities refused to recognize the IPSP it fought the elections under the banner of United Left (*Izquierda Unida*), an uneasy coalition of residual left-wing parties headed by the Bolivian Communist Party.

Thus the inclusive, pluralist organizational strategy I have just described was complemented by a strategy of action based on three decisions: inequivocal rejection of armed conflict, acceptance of representative democracy, and entry into electoral politics. The electoral fruits of these strategic policies and decisions began to be gathered in the municipal elections of 1995, in which ten mayorships were won, and in the general elections of 1997, in which IPSP/IU achieved 18% of the vote and four seats in Cochabamba. One of these seats was won by Evo Morales, who was already known nation-wide following his arrest and subsequent release from gaol as a leader of the 1994 coca growers' march (Patzi 1999), and who now obtained 60% of the vote in his constituency. In 1999, to become legal, IPSP took over the name of an existing but inactive party, so becoming the MAS.

As I hinted a moment ago, the organizational development of what was to become the MAS was hindered not only by competition with agents external to the Indianist movement, but also by perpetual strife with Indi-

anists who radically rejected association with non-indigenous agents. This internal conflict within the Indianist movement, which was far more than a question of personal antagonism between Evo Morales and Felipe Quispe, dated back to the beginnings of Katarism in the early 1970s, and was acutely manifested in 2000 when Quispe, who had led MITKA in the 1980s and the Red Offensive of Tupakatarist Ayllus since 1986, founded the MIP with an anti-white programme that established as its objective the reconstruction of the Incan dominions (Quyasuyo) under monoethnic Aymaran rule. However, these extreme proposals, which excluded not only whites and mixed-bloods but also indigenous Quechuans and Guaranies, were met by an electoral débâcle, the MIP obtaining only 6% of the vote in the 2002 elections (which did not stop Quispe from continuing to fragment the movement in 2004, when he gave up his seat in order to continue to "fight for Quyasuyo" from outside the system).

Meanwhile, the MAS thrived with its policy of appealing not only to Aymarans and Quechuans but also to mixed-bloods and whites, and its willingness to form broad alliances with left-wing groups and even to include mixed-blood and white politicians among its own candidates and leaders, the most striking example of this being the Vice-Presidency of García Linera. In the 2002 elections it received 19.4% of the vote (almost as much as the 20.8% of the winning party, the MNR). The MAS therefore successfully differentiated itself from the exclusive Indianism of the MIP, and established itself as a "catch-all" left-wing party in keeping with its slogan "*Somos incluyentes*" (Morales 2006:171); by 2005 it had managed to attract not only the miners and the urban left (in crisis since 1985), but even middle-class professionals and intellectuals. To achieve this required not only organizational success, but also a political discourse that appealed to these wider audiences and avoided raising the fears raised by the attitudes of the MIP and others. Let us now take a closer look at this discourse, and how it differed from that of the MIP.

## 3. THE DISCOURSE STRATEGIES OF THE MAS AND THE MIP

The ideologies of both the MAS and the MIP include all the elements typical of nationalism: humankind is divided naturally in nations; each

nation is internally homogeneous, with an identity defined by differential ethnic traits that differentiates it from other nations; a person's freedom and authentic existence depend on his or her identification with a nation; loyalty to one's nation takes priority over loyalties to class or other groups; a nation is only free to develop if it controls its own sovereign, independent State; the State should serve the interests of the nation, its language and its culture; the world as a whole will only be free and at peace when all nations are free and independent. Nevertheless, the inclusive *Bolivian* nationalism of the MAS, in which Indian ethnic groups are just the nucleus of a project to refound the Bolivian nation for the benefit of all Bolivians, is clearly distinguishable from the exclusive, strictly *Aymaran* nationalism of the MIP, which denies the reality of Bolivia as a nation and aspires to the reconstruction of the Incan Quyasuyu under the slogan "The Two Bolivias".

Although the framing strategies of the MAS and the MIP have shared a number of common features (anti-neoliberalism, defence of resources, defence of indigenous languages and autonomy), in other respects they have differed radically with regard to all three kinds of frame. In what follows, I subject the discourse of the MAS and the discourse of the MIP to comparative frame analysis, taking as my raw material a corpus comprising speeches by and interviews with Evo Morales and Felipe Quispe, together with official programmes, proposals and statements of the MAS and the MIP (see the list of References).

As can be seen in Table 1, in which all entries correspond to literal fragments from the sources just mentioned, there are differences between MAS and MIP right from the beginning, in the definition of the problem to be resolved. Granted, both discourses include colonialism as a general descriptor of the Bolivian Indian's plight; but whereas the MAS takes a decidedly *Bolivian* view of the effects of colonialism (it is *Bolivia* that has been sold, split and subjected, and the *Bolivian* national State that has been destroyed by neocolonialism), the MIP has formulated the problem in much narrower terms as the denaturalization of the indigenous nation and the destruction of the original Indian national heritage (where by "Indian" it means in particular "Aymaran"), the blame for which is specifically placed on the culture of white peoples (*q'ara*). In consonance with its description of the problem, the MAS identifies its causes as

basically originating *outside* Bolivia, though implemented by Bolivian nationals (Table 1, Diagnosis: Causes); and, as we shall see, the solution it offers is the re-founding of Bolivia *around* the Indian nucleus.

For the MIP, however, Bolivia is not, and never can be, a nation; it is merely a colonial State that oppresses the true nation to which its territory, or a large part of it, corresponds. For the MIP, the Republic of Bolivia *as such* is a cause of the woes of the Aymaran people, being merely the form adopted by colonialist oppression during the past two centuries, and therefore an intrinsically artificial structure. By contrast, the Aymaran nation is an objective reality defined by its distinguishing marks: by its history, which goes back beyond the 500 years of resistance to Western invaders, to times immemorial; by its natural territory, the Quyasuyo, which does not coincide with the artificial frontiers of the internationally recognized Andean States; by its language, Aymara, which has survived in spite of the imposition of Spanish; by its culture, including in particular its traditional system of production, which does not depend on "capital or institutionalized exploitation", but on bartering, reciprocity and redistribution (Quispe 2001); by its ancestral forms of self-government and communal institutions (participative communal democracy; the network constituting the "ayllu of ayllus"); and by its Andean religion, which preaches brotherhood, peace and harmony with Nature (the *Pachamama* or *Cocamama*) in contrast with violent imperialist Catholicism.

When judged by these criteria for nationhood, Bolivia is fundamentally a contemptible artifact: in particular, it has no territory, since it merely occupies a territory that in reality belongs to the true nation, the frontiers of which it has distorted artificially to its own disadvantage (unlike modern Bolivia, the Tawantinsuyo reached to the Pacific Ocean) and it has no language of its own, since the imposition of Spanish has not managed to eradicate the native languages.

A closer look at what the MAS identifies as the causes of Bolivia's current problems shows them to have four kinds of origin: economic policies (in particular, the neoliberalism of the New Economic Policy pursued by Paz Estenssoro and Sánchez de Lozada, with its privatization of public services and resources); international politics (imperialism, colonialism, submission to external policies); internal politics (corruption, "partiocracy", the system of patronage and exchange of favours, centra-

lism); and cultural phenomena (the absence of a specifically Bolivian culture since the exclusion of the indigenous peoples from consideration in the original foundation of the Bolivian Republic). In spite of similarities, the MIP's diagnosis differs markedly: it is anticapitalist, rather than merely anti-neoliberal; anti-Western; anti-Bolivian, as regards the existence of a Bolivian nation; and radically opposed to liberal representative democracy, which it identifies with "officialism".

These differing diagnoses of the causes of the problem bring with them different conclusions about who is to blame. For the MAS, it is basically external agents (the USA, multinational corporations), aided and abetted by traitorous local allies (the Bolivian oligarchy, the traditional parties). For the MIP, in spite of its avowedly not wishing to replace the racism of whites with indigenous racism, it is not only gringos, the USA, multinational corporations and foreign whites in general, but also all white and mixed-blood Bolivians (and even, implicitly, non-Aymaran Indians); and among the local tools or henchmen of the foreign or colonialist oppressors it includes both traditional left-wing parties (which are all accused of having veered to the right) and, in particular, the MAS, which is regarded as the agent that does most harm to the cause of the MIP (Quispe 2001) because of its reformism (seen by the MIP as integration in "the system"), its socialdemocratic nature (seen as subservience to capitalism) and its "opportunism".

In this list of enemies of the MIP's project, a special place is reserved for Álvaro García Linera, once a comrade of Quispe's in the Tupac Katari Guerilla Army and now Evo Morales' vice-president. Regarded by Morales as a paradigm of how support for the indigenous movement can be found among non-Indian intellectuals and the urban middle-class, for Quispe he is prototypical of the traitorous white man. Nothing exemplifies the MIP's enclosure in a ghetto of its own making more than does its invective against "half-blood assessors" and "the mishmash that governs this country".

As is natural, given these different views of the problem and its causes, the prognostic frames of the MAS and the MIP also differ widely (Figs. 1 & 2). The MAS proposes an alternative future consisting in the recovery of national sovereignty, hitherto surrendered to the agents of imperialism and neoliberal globalization, i.e. multinational corporati-

ons and their local allies (traditional parties and the Bolivian oligarchy). It aims for Bolivia to be re-founded as a self-respecting sovereign nation by a Constitutive Assembly that will enact what it calls "the second independence of our nation". This recovery of national sovereignty from external agents will necessarily be accompanied by radical internal reforms of both the State and the nation that can be grouped under four headings: the concept of nation, the form of democracy, social justice, and political ecologism.

Firstly, Bolivia must recognize itself as a culturally and linguistically plural nation. This does not mean a multiculturalism consisting of a collection of separate, inward-looking communities (Aymarans, Quechuans, Guaranies, mixed-bloods, etc.), but a common project that is shared by them all without attempting to obliterate their differences; a project that implicitly treats Bolivia as a nation of nations. Thus invocation of the right of the peoples to "self-determination", "territoriality", "differentiated citizenship" and "linguistic co-officiality" is accompanied by a vision of "unity in diversity", "unity and integrity" and "autonomy with solidarity". The aim is not just to set up a "multinational State", "a plural democratic republic", but to construct a new Bolivian nation based on "dialogue between cultures", "interculturality" and the interterritorial redistribution of wealth.

Secondly, the organization of this nation of nations requires both the autonomy and self-government of the indigenous communities in their own territories, and a synthesis among three styles of democracy: representative democracy; a participative democracy realized through referenda, plebiscites, people's initiatives and the power to revoke the powers of government; and the traditional democracy of the indigenous communities, with their communal forms of choice and decision taking( Van Cott 2008: 175). And this brings with it a relaxation of the monolithic universality of State law to allow recognition of indigenous law to the extent that it may be compatible with the equitable dispensation of justice.

Thirdly, national sovereignty and pluralist democracy are means by which to execute the nationalization of resources and achieve the redistribution of wealth in accordance with a goal of solidarity, social justice and an economy at the service of Bolivians. The socialist spirit of the

MAS (the Movement Toward *Socialism*) is to be realized through sweeping reforms creating a kind of welfare state that the MIP dismisses as social democracy: a "communal social economy" with opportunities for private enterprise, for a national, antineoliberal capitalism that García Linera has called "Andean capitalism". The constitutional proposal submitted by the MAS to the Constitutive Assembly is entitled "Refounding Bolivia to live well".

Finally, a nontrivial component of this discourse is its political ecologism, the goal of living in harmony with the environment, of regaining "fraternal mutual respect between the inhabitants of Bolivia and mother Nature". This goal does not merely refer to the nationalization of natural resources as an economic move, but ties in with the very concept of the Bolivian nation as propounded by the MAS. A relationship with Nature distinct from that perpetrated by Western civilization is to be a hallmark of Bolivian nationality, which is to recognize the biodiversity and environment of Bolivia as "part of the original nation and hence of the *Pachamama* and the *Pacha*". Community and Nature are viewed as a single entity that is to uphold a re-founded Bolivia as an Indian-centred but plural nation pursuing an alternative model of sustainable development, a non-essentialist model that functions, moreover, through deliberative participative democracy: "the State shall consult the indigenous peoples regarding the uses of land and geological resources located in their territories".

By contrast with this programme, the alternative put forward by the MIP is, in consonance with its diagnosis, oblivious of all that is not Aymaran. Its proposal to "recover the original Aymaran national heritage", to construct the "new Quyasuyan land", stems from a view of the indigenous nation of much narrower scope than that of the MAS, specifically denying as it does the reality of the Bolivian nation. The MIP programme accordingly concentrates on eradicating "the white system" through policies corresponding to four goals or mindsets: a single-race Indianism aiming to "cleanse the Indian's mind of Western ideology", replacing it with a specifically Indian philosophy, and to "get rid of colonial trash" so as to reconstruct the Incan realm separate from the rest of Bolivia; an anti-capitalist defence of "the Indian productive system", a communal socialist system that will recover and modernize "ancestral production

techniques"; Aymaran self-determination and self-government "in accordance with our customs", that is, rejection of and secession from Bolivia, however "re-founded"; and the replacement of liberal representative democracy with a participative, communal, deliberative kind of democracy, "democratic communalism".

These different proposals of the MAS and the MIP naturally postulate their realization by different protagonists. For the MIP, it is essentially only "authentic Indian pioneers" – by which it means Aymarans - who can lead the Aymaran people in the proposed direction. By contrast, the MAS is explicitly inclusive in exhorting Bolivians to work "all together" to change the course of history: though rooted in the indigenous left-wing, its appeals to "the great majority" are directed not only at the lower classes (Indians, peasants, workers, marginal minorities) but also at middle-class professionals and intellectuals, and even at "national businessmen" who are not dependent on foreign capital. Its strategic objective is to form a broad alliance, an MAS-led nationwide social bloc in which indigenous claims will not be over-ridden or subordinated but instead constitute central objectives.

Guided by its conception of itself as a revolutionary party that will achieve "total change", the motivational frame of the MIP preaches radical antagonism between "white and Indian republics", confrontation between these "two Bolivias". In its pursuit of racial authenticity, it urges rejection of "Western democracy" and rejection of the Bolivian nation. Bolivia, a Western artifact, is set in opposition to the wholly Andean, Aymaran Tawantinsuyo; the Bolivian flag, to the wiphala; and the presidency of Bolivia (legitimated only by the laws of the State) to the Mallku's ethno-nationally legitimated presidency of "the Republic of Quyasuyo". Western democracy and its elections are at best a means to an end: the openly proclaimed "two-armed" strategy of the MIP is to coordinate electoral contest (when convenient) with armed conflict by a "communal army", an "imitation of the armed uprising of Zárate Willka". Foiled in both directions, it prefers to await "future rebellions" and exclude itself from the parliamentary system so as to be able to deride the "mishmash" that governs Bolivia and to disdain dialogue - "unity for the sake of unity" - and association with allies foreign to Indians.

The inclusive project of the MAS requires a very different motivational frame. In order to attract and mobilize both Indian and non-Indian groups in its favour, it must sanction both the Bolivian flag and the wiphala. Though extremely active in the organization of a variety of un-armed manifestations of intent, notably marches and roadblocks, it prioritizes electoral contest, aiming "to change Bolivia with votes, not bullets" (coherently with this attitude, universal suffrage, instituted by the 1952 Revolution, is itself interpreted as a past conquest of the lower classes). Its strategy is accordingly to construct a political party that is pluralistic yet permanently wed to the indigenous movement, which is regarded as the nucleus that can agglutinate other forces on the path towards a culturally oriented "democratic national revolution", a radical process requiring not merely that the existing Constitution be subjected to more or less drastic reforms, but that it should be completely re-written by a Constitutive Assembly.

In conclusion, the framing strategies of the MAS and the MIP constitute an integral part of their radically distinct alternatives as regards not only their objectives and programmes but also their political and organizational strategies, identifying the protagonists of their projects and the frontiers between friend and foe that define the collectivity that will give birth to a new nation. The radical Aymaran ethnic nationalism of the MIP has given rise to a strategy based on antagonism, on the postulation of internal, racially defined frontiers, and on a severely limited group of legitimated protagonists - a strategy that has led to electoral defeat and deepening isolation. The pluralist Bolivian nationalism of the MAS has facilitated its formation and intellectual, moral and organizational leadership of a new bloc that congregates socially diverse groups in a new national project for Bolivia. In consequence, the MAS is faced with the indisputably thorny challenge of reconciling a set of very diverse interests and preferences – notably the opposing interests of east and west regions of the country – without relinquishing its initial *raison d'être*: satisfaction of the demands of the original indigenous peoples.

## TABLE 1. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF INTERPRETIVE FRAMEWORKS

| **MAS:** ***TO RE-FOUND BOLIVIA*** | **MIP:** *THE TWO BOLIVIAS* |
|---|---|
| **PROBLEM** | **PROBLEM** |
| Bolivia: sold, split, subjected | *Destruction of the original Indian national heritage* |
| Destruction of the Bolivian State | Domination and exploitation by the *q'ara* |
| Extermination of original peoples | White culture |
| Exclusion of the indigenous population in the founding of Bolivia in 1825 | Colonialism, capitalism |
| Spoliation of natural resources | Denaturalization of the indigenous nation |
| Colonization | Loss of ancestral culture |
| Discrimination, hatred, disdain | |
| Subjection to imperialism | |
| **DIAGNOSIS: CAUSES** | **DIAGNOSIS: CAUSES** |
| 500 years of plunder and extermination | *Bolivianization of the Aymaran nation* |
| Neoliberalism, the New Economic Policy | The capitalist, colonialist, racist and imperialist system |
| Imperialism | The arrival of the Spaniards |
| The neocolonialist State, internal colonialism | Contamination by Western ideology |
| Total dependence, direction from without, foreign impositions | Spoliation of indigenous assets and heritage |
| A fractionated, auctioned, transnationalized country | "What they call 'Bolivia'" |
| Privatization of basic services (water, fuel) | The fact that Bolivia is not a nation |
| The imposition of a Western industrialist model | The republicanization of the country |
| US foreign policy: zero coca, the *Plan Dignidad* | Neoliberalism |
| Corruption, "partiocracy", favours | The influence of drug traffickers in Bolivian politics |
| Imported Western democracy | Liberal representative democracy |
| Centralism | |
| Racism, discrimination | |
| Unemployment, emigration | |

| DIAGNOSIS: ANTAGONISTS | DIAGNOSIS: ANTAGONISTS |
|---|---|
| External agents and their local allies | The traitorous white man |
| Traitorous creoles (1781, 1821) | Gringos, whites, *q'ara*, westerners, foreigners, |
| Imperialism, the USA | "tenants", the colonial minority, the dominant caste |
| Foreign governments | USA, imperialism |
| Multinational corporations | Borbons, Pizarro, Almagro, Bolívar, Sucre, |
| Local allies: García Meza, Sánchez Lozada | Banzer, Paz Zamora |
| Unpatriotic national oligarchy | Representatives of the USA: Goñi, Mesa |
| Traditional parties | Creole landowners |
| US armed forces in Bolivia | Left-wing parties, those who have veered to the right |
| Prefects, Governors | MAS, Evo Morales, "the antagonistic group" |
| | Socialdemocrats and reformists, Christian socialism |
| | Those aiming to patch up the system, opportu- |
| | nists, foul play, those forming part of the system |
| | García Linera ("white traitor") |
| | White and half-caste assessors |
| | Pettifogging, officialistic politicians |
| | "The mishmash that governs this country" |
| **PROGNOSIS: ALTERNATIVES** | **PROGNOSIS: ALTERNATIVES** |
| *A self-respecting, sovereign Bolivia with room for all* | The new Quyasuyan land |
| National sovereignty, economic sovereignty, | Recovery of the original Aymaran national |
| "food sovereignty" | heritage |
| Nationalization of natural resources | An Indian vision of the Nation |
| Renascence of the motherland | We the Tupakatarists |
| Refoundation of Bolivia | To sideline the *q'ara* system |
| A multinational State, a pluralist democratic republic | Political constitution of the Quyasuyan State |
| Dialogue between cultures | Tawantinsuyo: the Aymaran nation in its totality |
| "Union in diversity", unity and integrity | Revolutionary struggle |
| Rights of the peoples | Revolutionary sacred Pachakutism |
| Self-determination | A specifically Indian philosophy |
| The territorial principle (TCOs) | Resources owned by the community |
| Differentiated citizenship | To get rid of the colonial trash |

Autonomy with solidarity
Co-officiality of indigenous languages
Representative and participative (community) democracy
Social economy, Andean capitalism

The Indian productive system,
as opposed to capitalism
Communal forms of production (*ayni*, *mink'a*, *qamana*)
Communal socialist system
Ancestral production techniques
Communities, *ayllus*, *tawantinsuyo*
Reconstruction of the communal *ayllu*
An *ayllu* of *ayllus*
Self-determination
"Self-government in accordance with our customs"
Participative community democracy,
as against representative liberal democracy
Democratic communalism

**PROGNOSIS: PROTAGONISTS**

Together we shall change history
Precursors: T. Amaru, T. Katari, B. Sisa, Zárate Willka, Bolívar, Guevara
A. Tumpa, A. Ibáñez, M. Quiroga, L. Espinal
The indigenous Bolivian people, majority sectors
The indigenous and peasant movement
Indians, peasants, workers, outcasts
Professionals, intellectuals, the middle class
The national business class
Álvaro García de Linera
All Bolivians
Bolivian women: our women are dynamite
A government with *ponchos* and neck-ties
Andean and Amazonian culture

**PROGNOSIS: PROTAGONISTS**

We the communalists
Tupac Katari, Tupac Amaru, Zárate Willka
Aymaran Indians
The Indian nation, the Aymaran Nation
The indigenous movement
Indigenous pioneers
American Indianism
The *Movimiento Indígena Pachakuti*:
authentic Indian politics
A political agent with its own way of thinking
Mallku

"Actor político con pensamiento propio"
The Mallku of America

| MOBILIZATION REPERTOIRE | MOBILIZATION REPERTOIRE |
|---|---|
| *Changing Bolivia with votes, not bullets* | *The struggle between nations, the two Bolivias* |
| Pachakuti, Jach'a Uru | Original indigenous revolution |
| = Democratic national revolution | Antagonism between the two republics: |
| To make the Empire give way | the Indian and the *q'ara* |
| The power of conscience | Indian non-racism *vs.* white racism |
| Democratic cultural revolution | Imitation of the armed uprising of Zárate Willka |
| The vote: a conquest of the people in 1952 | To eradicate foreign ideology from the Indian's head |
| Social movements in town and country | A communal army |
| Unity, inclusivism | Communal modes of struggle and organization |
| The People's Political Instrument (MAS) | Laying siege to La Paz |
| Roadblocks | Mobilization, not negotiation; disobedience |
| The March for Sovereignty, the Ghost March, the March for Dignity | No respect for legalities |
| | No dialogue |
| The "500 Years of Resistance" campaign | Armed struggle, radical positions |
| Thoroughgoing, pacific transformation | Willingness to spill blood |
| Defence of national resources: oil and gas, water, land and territory | "Two arms, two ways" strategy: |
| | Armed struggle ("the arm beneath the *poncho*") |
| The sacred leaf: | Electoral competition |
| "Coca is not cocaine" | Refusal to resort to allies or means foreign to Indians |
| Coca = national sovereignty and dignity | Refusal to seek unity for the sake of unity |
| Patriotic symbols: the national flag and the wiphala | Opposition to Western representative democracy |
| America: *Abya Ayala* | Refusal to join in "the election game" |
| *Quyasuyo*, *Tawantinsuyo* | Refusal to participate in coalition governments |
| | Patience in awaiting future rebellions |
| | "*Pacha Mama, Coca Mama*" = the indigenous nation |
| | Sharp distinction between "them" and "us" |
| | Contraposition between the wiphala and the present national flag, a symbol of oppression |
| | Contraposition between Aymaran identity and the Bolivian national identity card |
| | Contraposition between the Presidency of the "Republic of Quyasuyo" and the Presidency of Bolivia |
| | Tawantinsuyo = Aymaran nation |

**FIGURE 1. THE DIMENSIONS OF THE DISCOURSE OF THE MAS**

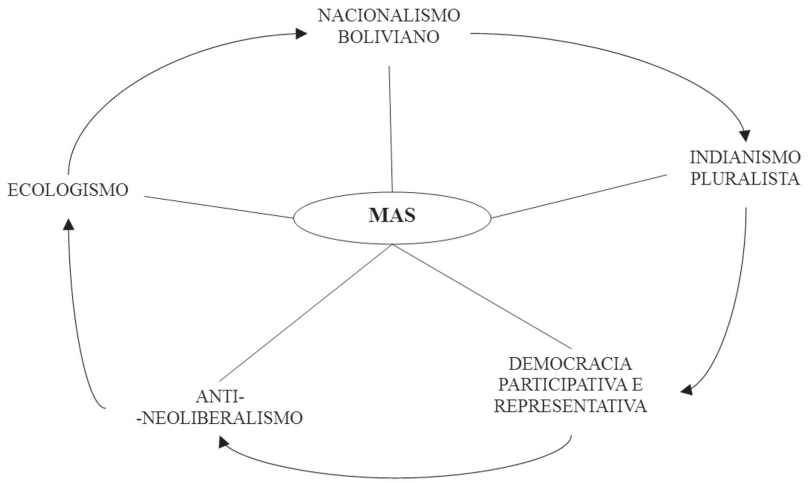
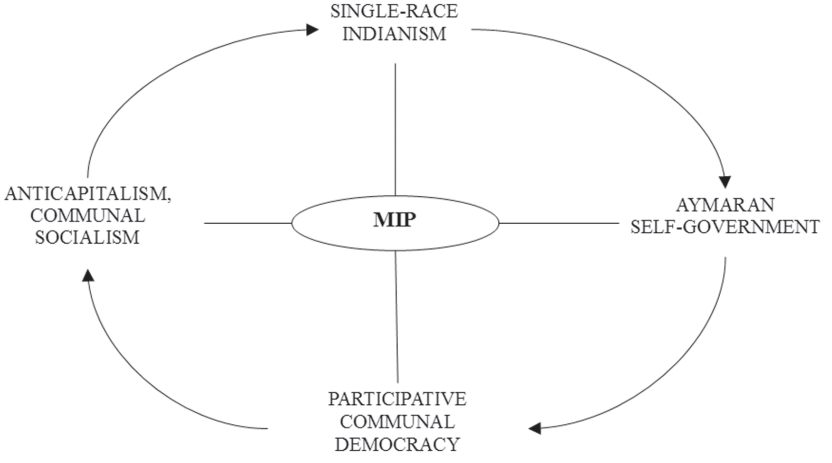



**FIGURE 2. THE DIMENSIONS OF THE DISCOURSE OF THE MIP**

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