REPRESENTATIONS IN CODES AND GEOPOLITICAL MODELS OF THE PLURINATIONAL STATE OF BOLIVIA REGARDING DEFENSE AND SECURITY

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Abstract. *The governments of the Movement Towards Socialism implemented profound structural reforms in the Bolivian State, encompassing legal and regulatory aspects and citizen relations, as well as the symbolic production of the State. The creation of the Plurinational State implied reforms in the legal, normative and doctrinal frameworks, based on an institutionalized collective imaginary. This ideological-political construct, known as "national popular" (Cf. Infra), became state policies under the Suma Qamaña model. This doctrine, which emerged from the interpretations, discourses and representations of the various trade union strata of the Movement Towards Socialism, guided the restructuring of the formal spheres of the Bolivian State.*

The study of how the Plurinational State constructed, signified and operationalized the concept of "security" revealed the social relations underlying the political processes and some consequences of its implementation at the societal level. This includes the process of normalization and internalization of a political-citizen habitus, which develops mainly in the informal sphere of social relations, in clear contradiction with the limits and objectives established by the formal sphere. Such habitus not only permeates civil society interactions, but also has a profound impact on the governance and management of state and public policies, as well as on their scope, effectiveness and relevance in relation to the civil society to which they are beholden. This highlights the contradictions between the State, its organs and institutions, and the corporate and union interests that make up the political hegemony of the MAS.

Keywords: *Bolivia, geopolitical models, Plurinational State, security.*

Introduction

This article is an advance of doctoral research, specifically a hypothesis-generating exploratory case study. Its objective is to provide working elements to guide and contribute to the subsequent deepening of the object of study. Specifically, it seeks to answer the question: What representations were present in the geopolitical codes and models referring to security, produced and institutionalized by the Movimiento al Socialismo during the administration of Evo Morales Ayma (2006 - 2019)?

To this end, a chronological systematization of the political field of the Bolivian State during the periods of government of the M.A.S. is recovered from a previous publication [AGUILERA: 2020]. Framed in this chronological

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systematization, the specific objectives of the exploratory case study can be summarized as:

1) Explore the agencies related to the security of the Plurinational State, identifying agents and agencies, for subsequent in-depth investigation.

2) To identify and describe the reforms introduced by the government of the movement towards socialism regarding the conception and meaning of the term "security" by the Plurinational State of Bolivia, based on the comparison of the existing narratives between the Political Constitution of the Republic of Bolivia (2004) and the Political Constitution of the Plurinational State of Bolivia (2009) by applying the specialized software Atlas Ti.

3) Describe codes and models institutionalized by the Movement Towards Socialism in the main Bolivian State bodies related to security (Armed Forces and National Police) during the administration of Evo Morales Ayma (2006 - 2019).

4) Formulate working hypotheses to be tested in the course of the doctoral research.

At the same time, a transversal objective of the study is to identify and record the different components of the categories and hermeneutic units proposed by the model of critical analysis of geopolitical discourse presented by MÜLLER [2010], in order to subsequently apply them through the operationalization of the model in the Atlas ti software.

The case study, qualitative in nature, adopts an interpretative-explanatory approach. In addition to the corresponding literature review, it is based on both a hemerographic exploration and the processing of six semi-structured interviews with key informants or experts, systematized by means of narrative analysis in Atlas ti. The sources used depend on the specific objective.

The main difficulty encountered in the research process was the lack of access to primary sources during the data collection phase, i.e., official documents and interviews with police officials. This was especially noticeable in relation to the comprehensive planning models and security agendas introduced until 2019 by the different administrations led by Morales Ayma. It is necessary to point out this aspect in order to explain the limited availability of information from primary sources, especially regarding the Bolivian Police and, to a lesser extent, the Armed Forces. The sections corresponding to these institutions were written based on data obtained from secondary sources - bibliographic and newspaper reviews; in addition, interviews were conducted with experts and key informants - officers and administrative officials in the case of the Armed Forces and civilian specialists in the case of the National Police - maintaining the anonymity of all interviewees, in order to comply with the ethical protocols of informed consent.

Referential framework. Popular geopolitics, practical geopolitics and formal geopolitics: geopolitical codes, models and representations.

Geopolitics, in theory, language and practice, classifies large tracts of territory and masses of people [FLINT: 2017]. As several authors repeat [FLINT: 2017, CAIRÓ: 1993], all countries, even the smallest, have geopolitical codes and geopolitical models. This can be assumed in several ways, but since the literature review is not of interest at this point, geopolitical codes should be understood as the way a country and its political leaders represent the world and their interaction with it;

in other words, geopolitics as a discursive practice [O'TUATHAIL: 1989]. On the other hand, geopolitical models are the way in which the academic tradition of a state conceives its geopolitics, that is, a formal geopolitics [FLINT: 2017, DALBY: 1996, O'TUATHAIL: 1989].

In this sense, representations are the basic level of imaginaries [MOSOCVICI: 1979, FLINT: 2017], fundamental elements that construct both formal geopolitics and practice, and can be understood both as a self-conception, and as an alter- conception. In the first case:

Geopolitics is a word that evokes images, creates different representations of the geographical entities that are the scenarios of geopolitical action. The construction of representations is an essential part of geopolitics. (...) [A] work to create and maintain an image of the country (...) representation dominates the way [a country] justifies or represents its geopolitical actions. [FLINT, 2017: 65]

On the contrary, geopolitical representations can also be classified as an alter-conception.

The other side of the representation coin is the way countries represent other countries, through two competing representations. (...) reaching an agreement [with a country] requires portraying it as normal diplomacy with a reliable country. (...) acts of hostility and violence require a negative representation of a geopolitical adversary [FLINT, 2017: 65-66].

Geopolitics, in its classical approach, is usually related to the competition between hegemonic powers [CAIRÓ: 2003]; however, here we propose to understand it from the perspective of a hegemonic political project, which deploys a set of geopolitical codes and models oriented on behalf of a strategic (and developmentalist) re-conception of a State -in this case, the Bolivian one; and which, at the same time, orients the production of meaning and governmental management, in order to achieve and perpetuate a hegemony in its respective political field.

This was reflected not only in the introduction of doctrines in state agencies and institutions, but also in the creation of new institutions aimed at the production of specific geopolitical codes, in line with the ideological-discursive reorientation proposed as conceptualization and justification of a set of state policies and new institutional approaches (Cf. Infra).

Initial considerations: geopolitics and security in the south american region

It is necessary to review the state of the art on the meaning of the term security from the tradition of the field of geopolitical studies in the South American region, in order not only to contextualize the writing of the article, but also to show historical aspects that influence the conception of security by the different political projects in the region and how the ideological affinity between them safeguarded, more than once, the legality and legitimacy in the exercise of state power by various governments.

According to RIVERA [2012], thinking about South America´s security and stability in classical or traditional -Westfallian (sic.)- terms, could be considered a deceptively peaceful region; however, crime and violence rates reflect structural contradictions of a socio-political nature, inherited from colonial times. These inequalities delineated a series of social agendas that have inevitably impacted the

debate and political course of South American states, making political stability one of the main strategic objectives in the medium and long term.

MALDONADO [2016] and FERRATTO [2015] agree that historical and geographical particularities have influenced South American security agendas over time. These agendas, although based on the European and U.S. tradition, present specific strategic objectives derived from the colonial era, such as: economic development, reduction of inequality and social inclusion and, especially, the continuing problem of indigenous peoples and territory. These concerns have conditioned strategic thinking in South America by linking the conception of security - understood as the stability of governments and political processes - with economic development and social inclusion, often without considering the character and legitimacy of the regimes.

In other words, political and economic stability depends on the fulfillment and satisfaction of various social needs and demands. These include, mainly, access to territory and economic inclusion, the provision of basic services, education, health, and road and productive infrastructure. However, it is necessary to point out that, more often than not, these aspects are conditioned by the corporate interests of associations and power groups represented by the political parties that interact in the webs of power differentials that make up the political fields -always circumstantial- of the different South American states [AGUILERA: 2020].

On the other hand, the 21st century presents new specificities that constitute challenges for the public and political management of South American states. These specificities broaden the concept of security by encompassing dimensions such as food and energy security, as well as the political participation of agencies and agendas emerging from social movements, such as: landless movements, growing migratory flows [CAIRÓ: 2003], informal economies and their relationship with illicit economies -almost normalized- as well as gender agendas -always challenging the traditional conservatism of Latin American societies. Resuming, the exercise of socio-political rights that have become new prerogatives conditioning political stability.

On the other hand, the concentration and availability of strategic *preciosities[1]* and *commodities* in the South American region [BULK: 2012] -starting with the most precious commodity of humanity: water, together with a wide range of environmental services, such as territories suitable for agro-industry and genetic reserves- make it necessary for strategic planning to contemplate contingencies and conflicts regarding the administration, sustainability and territorial use (as formal and informal administrative units) of the Natural Resources present in the different South American regions.

In conclusion, to understand the complexity of security in South America, it is essential to consider political stability as a horizon, its historical, geographical and socio-political contexts. This allows to adequately address current and future challenges in the region, highlighting the importance of understanding the influence of historical and geographical particularities, as well as social demands and contemporary challenges. Contextual framework. Production of geopolitical meaning: the structural

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[1] Understood as strategic natural resources, i.e., of high demand due to their use value and consequent exchange value [WALLERSTEIN: 1974].

reforms of the movement towards socialism, hegemonic agent of the bolivian political field between 2006 and 2019.

The three terms of Evo Morales Ayma's government have meant a profound change in the geopolitical representations of the Bolivian State. This is mainly evidenced in the structural transformations -from being a republic (1825 - 2009) to a Plurinational State (> 2009)- consolidated through the promulgation of a new Political Constitution of the State (CPE) in April 2009. In this sense, these reforms formalized departmental autonomies -in exercise since 2004- and included municipal autonomies and indigenous-origin autonomies in the constitutional text, thus inaugurating the vertical distribution of power [MAYORGA: 2018]. Likewise, a fourth power of the State was inaugurated by raising the then National Electoral Court to the rank of Plurinational Electoral Body and constitutionalizing a second round in case there was no simple majority (50%+1) in the general elections.

The 2009 constitution was based, in turn, on what at the time was called a "new civilizing proposal" called *Suma Qamaña*, which encompasses a series of codes and models from the organizational culture and narratives of the components of the Movement Towards Socialism (MAS); that is, from the meanings that the historical memory of the unions and social movements that make up MAS produced and signified as the ideological *corpus of* its political project.

Consequently, the codes and models that make the geopolitical agency of the Plurinational State of Bolivia [Cf. Infra] can be understood as an institutionalization[2] of the social representations present in the narratives of social movements and trade unions that constitute the Movement Towards Socialism [SPRINGEROVÁ & VALISHCKOVÁ: 2018].

This institutionalization was consolidated through a constituent assembly and the subsequent promulgation of the aforementioned Political Constitution of the State in April 2009, which, in turn, gave genesis to a series of geopolitical models produced by State intellectuals who proclaim the existence of a "sovereign geopolitical strategy" [PAZ: 2019] and refer to the Bolivian State as an indissoluble unit, or "a single mountain" [AMOREBIETA: 2019]. These codes attribute the role of antagonistic alterity -the *no self*- at the global level to the United States [QUINTANA: 2019; PAZ: 2019] and at the regional level to the Chilean State [MANZANO: 2021, LOIS: 2022, ESTREMADOIRO: 2017]; although these points will be developed with greater attention a few pages later.

Complementing what PAZ [2019] points out, the "sovereign geopolitical strategy" is based on: (a) the *Sumaq Qamaña* or living well as a civilizing horizon, (b) plural democracy[3], (c) autonomy[4], (d) the communitarian economic model, nationalization and control of "strategic natural resources" as well as "strategic sectors of the economy", (e) the "Peoples' Diplomacy", together with democratization and

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[2] Review the STAGGENBORG: 2013 conceptualization.

[3] It recognizes, in turn, three types of political process: representative democracy, exercised through the election of representatives; direct democracy, exercised through mechanisms such as referendums and town councils; and finally, community democracy, exercised through customs and traditions.

[4] Which, in turn, inaugurated the horizontal distribution of power, by electing regional governors - previously appointed by the president [Mayorga: 2016].

access to the diplomatic exercise by intellectuals of the "indigenous" population, (f) gea-politics, or geo-harmony [BORJA: 2014] -a pacifist version of geopolitics for development and integration, g) community security, such as the security model implemented by the Bolivian Police. Meanwhile, the construction of formal geopolitical representations was made around the compilation of Bolivian academic production -with the creation and compilation of the Bicentennial Library, promoted by the Vice-Presidency of the Plurinational State-, taking as a historical reference the work of Jaime Mendoza [AMOREBIETA: 2019].

The referred models and codes were progressively included in the legal structure of the Plurinational State, in the form of laws and doctrines. For example, Law 026, of Plural Democracy, Law 1096 of Political Organizations; Law 031 of Autonomies; Law 699 of International Relations from the Autonomous Territorial Entities[5]; Law 733 of the Integral Planning System of the State (S.P.I.E.), etc.

There was also formal geopolitical production, i.e., codes produced in formal and specialized academic contexts. On the one hand, from institutionalized intellectuals[6], standing out the intellectual and ideological production of characters who held important political positions; that is, decision makers, such as:

• Álvaro García Linera. Vice President during Morales Ayma's administration [2006 - 2019] and main ideologist of the political party, with narratives strongly influenced by the Grasmcian concepts of hegemony and the *Katarista* indigenist movements[7] of the late twentieth century. Among his main ones can be found: "*La potencia plebeya: acción colectiva e identidades indígenas, obreras y populares en Bolivia*" [2012]; "*Las tensiones creativas de la revolución*: The fifth phase of the Process of Change" [2012]; "Geopolitics of the Amazon, hacendal [sic.]- patrimonial power and capitalist accumulation" [2015].

• Juan Ramón Quintana. Considered Morales Ayma's strong man, he held several positions related to security, defense and territory; in addition to publishing a series of academic research-reflections. Highlights: "Police and democracy in Bolivia: a pending institutional policy" [2005]; "Police in Bolivia: unofficial history (1826-1982)" [2012]; "Soldiers and citizens: a critical study on military service in Bolivia" [2016 2nd Ed.].

There is also evidence of the foundation of centers for training and elaboration of their own geopolitical models, as well as institutions aimed not only at academic

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[5] That is, from sub-national levels of government: governors' offices, mayors' offices and indigenous-original governments.

[6] In this case, it is necessary to distinguish between the institutionalized intellectual -that which is part of the state apparatus- and the organic intellectual -that which is part of the political party or social movements.

[7] The Bolivian "katarista" movement is a social and political movement that defends the rights and autonomy of indigenous peoples in Bolivia. It is based on the struggle against oppression and racial and social discrimination, as well as the search for social justice and respect for cultural diversity. They demand the recovery of natural resources and indigenous territories, and promote the economic and social development of indigenous communities. They have been influential in the promulgation of the 2009 Political Constitution of the State, which recognizes indigenous rights and establishes the plurinational character of Bolivia.

production and training of specialized cadres, but also at the political incidence of the same -i.e., formal geopolitics. Some of these institutions are:

- the Vice-Presidency of the Plurinational State [8]
- the Agency for the Development of Macro-regions and Frontiers (ADEMAF)
- the Anti-Imperialist School of the Armed Forces
- and, mainly, the Plurinational School of Government and Public Management (EGyGP) with its Geopolitics Observatory.

Figure 1. Production of geopolitical meaning in the plurinational state of Bolivia
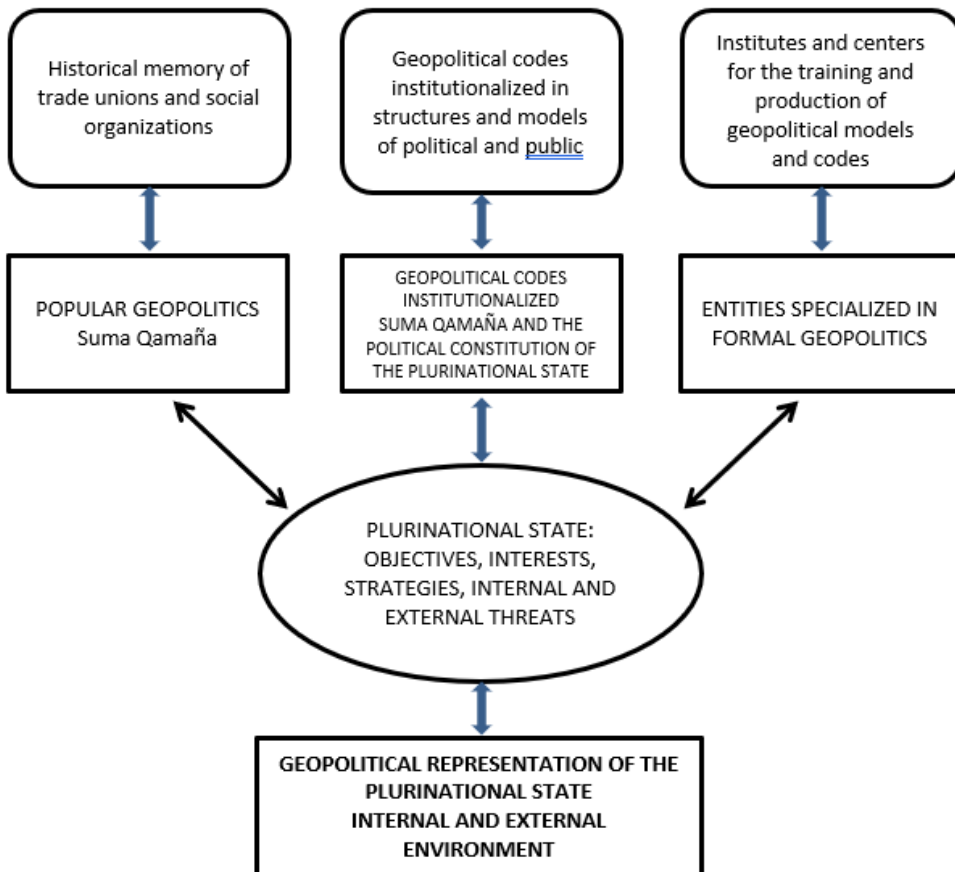
Source: Own elaboration based on Cabrera's model [2019].

The structural reforms and the production/signification of their meanings, also implied a change in the strategic alignment of the Bolivian State; since they not only implied a break with the US continental hegemony, as evidenced by the expulsion of

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[8] Although this instance was not founded with the Plurinational State, the then Vice President García Linera, exercised the condition of institutionalized intellectual from the same; through the Center for Social Research of the Vice Presidency and giving rise to a master's degree in Geopolitics of development and integration in 2016.

the US diplomatic mission [9], the DEA [10] and USAID [11], but also entailed the implementation of its own model to fight drug trafficking [CONALTID: 2011] whose approach prioritizes "social control" exercised by coca leaf producer unions over repressive eradication policies and their high social cost, promoted by administrations aligned with the U.S. counter-narcotics model.

On the other hand, the strategic realignment led to the establishment of diplomatic relations, military and technical cooperation with the governments of China, Iran, Russia and, to a lesser extent, India. These relations would have been considered unlikely a few years ago.

Synthesizing the working hypothesis, we have that the Bolivian State was the object of a profound structural, ideological and programmatic reordering; whose significance followed a process that can be traced to the symbolic tradition of social movements - indigenous and trade union agencies; and whose interests are reflected in the same construction of meanings regarding security policies.

The production of geopolitical meanings can be summarized in the following graph:

The movement for socialism (mas) as a hegemonic agent in the bolivian political field

In order to understand the representations that shape the geopolitical codes and models of the Plurinational State of Bolivia, it is essential to examine both the organic structure of the political party that maintained hegemony in the Bolivian State for 13 years, and the historical processes characteristic of the Bolivian political field during that period. As previously mentioned, for this purpose we will proceed to recover and summarize the systematizations of a previous article AGUILERA [2020]. In this sense, it is necessary to distinguish three temporal periods: the first involves the rise and consolidation of the M.A.S. in power (2006-2009), the second refers to the beginning and zenith of its hegemonic condition (2009-2014), while the third period comprises the decline of the hegemony of Morales' charismatic leadership and his subsequent resignation (2015-2019).

Features of the organizational culture of the movement to socialism

The founders, the core and 'hard vote' of the Movement Towards Socialism - Political Instrument for the Sovereignty of the Peoples (M.A.S. - IPSP), are the agrarian unions that represent historically disadvantaged sectors of Bolivian society [WALSH: 2008] and whose economic activity often borders on the informal and illegitimate: the Single Confederation of Peasant Workers of Bolivia (C.S.U. - T.C.B.), the Six Federations of Coca Producers of the Tropic of Cochabamba and the Confederation of Peasant Women Bartolina Sisa - the latter two of which bring together, in a single union, the Six Federations of Coca Producers of the Tropic of Cochabamba [WALSH: 2008].T.C.B.), the Six Federations of Coca Producers of the

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[9] September 9, 2008
[10] November 1, 2008
[11] May 1, 2013

Tropic of Cochabamba[12] and the Confederation of Peasant Women Bartolina Sisa -the latter two trade union organizations predominantly bring together peasants of Quechua ethno-linguistic origin, settled in the two main protected areas[13] -forest reserves- of the inter-Andean valleys of the Bolivian territory, specifically in the department of Cochabamba:

Figure 2. Coca cultivation in the department of cochabamba
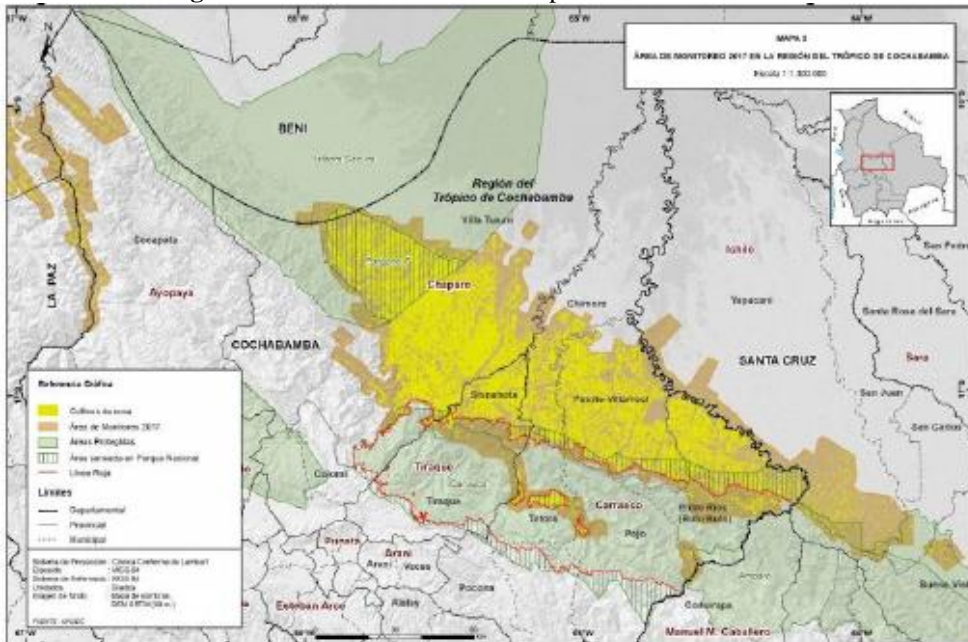
Source: UNDIOC [2018]

In 2009, the Central Obrera Boliviana (C.O.B.), the Federación Nacional de Cooperativas Mineras (FENDECOMIN), the Central Obrera Regional de la ciudad de El Alto (C.O.R. El Alto) and the Consejo Nacional de Ayllus y Marcas del Qollasuyo (CONAMAQ) -an entity that brings together the indigenous communities of Aymara ethnicity of the Andean region of Bolivia- joined the political party.

According to Mayorga [2018], one of the main characteristics of the political party in question, is the caudillismo typical of the "national-popular"[14]; that is, the

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[12] The Confederation of Coca Producers of Chapare is composed of 965 unions and 50 thousand affiliated families, with a total of approximately 200 thousand producers [BOLPRESS: Union genealogy of the peasant coca leaf. February 17, 2018]. It covers almost all the municipalities of this province. This is reflected in the composition of political power, as the M.A.S. party occupies local government positions and can easily mobilize resources, counting on the logistical backing of the state apparatus and the representation and legitimacy granted by the unions as social organizations.

[13] To the north, bordering the department of Beni, the Isiboro Sécure Indigenous Territory. To the southeast, the Carrasco National Park. In both forest reserves, coca leaf cultivation and gold extraction by mining cooperatives.

[14] This concept of René Zavaleta Mercado refers to the Bolivian political culture, specifically to the leadership of the mining union as a historical actor in the Bolivian social formation, and

organization around the "charismatic leader", in this case -until 2019- Evo Morales Ayma, who deployed a situational charisma, based on his indigenous status and humble origin, showing him as a benefactor who promoted and executed the redistribution of wealth for historically unprotected and excluded majorities. This combination allowed the exercise of representation both in the unions and in the political party, a combination of overwhelming power differentials in the Bolivian political and electoral field.

Another characteristic pointed out by MAYORGA [2018] about Morales Ayma's political style is his confrontationist rhetoric, but his "conciliatory" approach with transnational capitals.

The bolivian political field: three moments in the bolivian historical and political process

The events that took place in the Bolivian political arena during the period between 2006 and 2009 meant a great change in the course of the historical and political processes of the Bolivian State, allowing the consolidation of the M.A.S. as the hegemonic party during the second administration. Three events marked this administration: first, the 2005 election in which the political party in question won the elections with 53.6% of the votes, allowing an unprecedented political majority in Bolivian history; second, the constituent process called by the M.A.S. -which although it had a majority of representatives related to that political party, had to conciliate with the opposition political parties, within the Plurinational Legislative Assembly, to make the new text feasible in legal areas still in force at that time[15]. A third moment, important for the present analysis, was the conflict with the regional political parties and the civic movements of the department of Santa Cruz in 2009, in which the support and the consequent legitimacy granted by the then prosperous UNASUR allowed, after a referendum, the promulgation of the new Political Constitution of the State and the subsequent political hegemony of the M.A.S. thanks to the 2009 elections.

The hegemonic period of the M.A.S. (2010-2015) involved the dissolution and fragmentation of the Bolivian political opposition into a set of regional political parties with no capacity for cohesion, articulation or national representation. During this period the main hegemonic strategy of the ruling party was to expand the consensus capacity it exercised through the realization of social summits that led to the expansion of the political pact, to include, paradoxically, antagonistic political sectors such as the agricultural entrepreneurship of eastern Bolivia -from the departments of Santa Cruz, Beni and Tarija- traditional bastion of Bolivian liberalism [MAYORGA: 2018].

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contemplates the presence of union leaders in areas of political representation (Parliament) as a mechanism for participation and channeling of social demands since the mid-twentieth century. The union is understood as a mediation mechanism between the State and society, transcending unionism into the political arena.

[15] According to BORT [2010], the conciliation referred to three points: the inclusion of the word "Republic" in the official designation of the country, the recognition of non-indigenous urban populations and, above all, to ensure the impossibility of a, at that time, hypothetical third re-postulation of Morales to the presidential elections. It should be noted that, in the course of history, none of the three points of the political agreement that made the new constitutional text feasible was fulfilled.

However, the first precedent of the hegemonic decline of the M.A.S. takes place during this period - in 2011 - when indigenous peoples of the Amazon region marched to prevent the construction of a road that cut in half the Isiboro Sécure Indigenous Park Territory (T.I.P.N.I.S.).

According to SPRINGEROVÁ and VALISHKOCVÁ [2018], such conflict revealed the existing contradictions between the pro-indigenist and environmentalist narratives of Morales Ayma's party with the extractivist policies of the Plurinational State. Evidencing contradictions between the narratives of indigenous nationalism and the prerogatives of the territorial development model, as well as the existing conflicts between the rights of indigenous peoples over their territories and the objectives of the peasant unions that make up the core of the M.A.S. - due to the progressive subjugation of lowland indigenous territories and the systematic occupation of forest reserves to expand coca cultivation areas (Cf. Supra). According to the aforementioned authors, the M.A.S. *framing process* identifies any opponent or critic of government policies as an ally of the conservative, right-wing, racist and, above all, coup-plotting political class. While resorting to union violence with the backing and endorsement of the Bolivian Police which acts, more often than not, as a repressive and protective force of the shock groups formed by mining and coca growers' unions.

The beginning of the hegemonic decline of the M.A.S. can be placed in the referendum of February 21, 2016, which inquired about the possibility of modifying the C.P.E. of 2009 to enable a third re-election of Morales Ayma. Faced with the defeat and the impossibility of a third re-postulation by constitutional means -and ignoring the binding nature of the referendum- the M.A.S. forced the re-postulation under a constitutional sentence that established, in an almost surrealistic way, that the indefinite reelection is a Human Right.

In this regard, MAYORGA [2018], establishes a consideration of interest for the understanding of the object of study: in the 2016 referendum Morales Ayma was competing with himself, making impossible the formation of an antagonistic otherness -as in the beginning had been the "North American imperialism", the "colony" and the "corbatudos" (sic.)- through which to operationalize a political identity. On the other hand, the inaction of the Plurinational Assembly -the Bolivian Congress- together with the permissibility and complicity of the Judicial Body evidenced the failure of both bodies as counter-majoritarian mechanisms, as well as the malleability of "Plural Democracy" [AGUILERA: 2020].

Already in 2019, the deteriorated image of the state institutionality, together with the constant and habitual cases of corruption, had ostensibly degraded the image of the "charismatic" and "indigenous leader" of Morales Ayma- called into question by his attitude and posture before the T.I.P.N.I.S. protests, eight years earlier. Even more, M.A.S. analysts and ideologues ignored, or pretended to ignore, the fact that the percentages of both the middle class and the urban population had grown considerably [CIUDADANÍA: 2018; BRÚJULA DIGITAL: 2018], rendering the ethno-centric narrative unviable as a cohesive factor around which to gestate a political identity and a political discourse [AGUILERA: 2020]. These elements became empty signifiers around which the set of urban movements -civic, in the jargon of the Bolivian political field- had built a chain of signifiers with which to build the narratives of their discourse.

Representations of defense, security and protection in the plurinational state: comparative analysis of the constitutional texts of 2004 and 2009

The comparison of constitutional texts is a specialized and particularly cumbersome task; it should be emphasized, therefore, that for this purpose an exploratory analysis of narratives is applied by means of the specialized software ATLAS ti 23, which contrasts three words in the constitutional texts: defense, security and protection.

A first approximation shows that, while in the 2004 constitution the main concept is Bolivia, the 2009 constitution has as its main concept the word State. Likewise, the map of concepts shows the absence of the word defense in the 2004 Constitution, while in the 2009 Constitution it is one of the most frequently used words. It also highlights the recurrence of the concept of Armed Forces in the 2004 constitution, in contrast to the 2009 constitutional text, which replaces it with the indigenous-origin concept.

The 2009 Constitution defines as central functions of the State, the control, security and defense of the State, creating the Attorney General's Office for this purpose, while delegating the defense of society to the Ombudsman's Office - something it has in common with the 2004 Constitution.

Perhaps the most noteworthy contribution of the 2009 constitutional text is the inclusion of food security as a state function, while recognizing the protection of genetic resources, ecosystems and territorial spaces of the Amazon basin. Similarly, the 2009 text contemplates the defense of human rights, natural resources, biological and genetic material as well as the indigenous-original-peasant nations and peoples (I.O.C.) and their territories along with their uses and customs. On the contrary, the 2004 text recognizes as central functions of the State the protection of private property, medium-sized property and agricultural enterprises.

Both constitutions agree that the task of the Bolivian National Police is "the defense of society, the preservation of public order and the enforcement of laws"; however, as will be seen below, the Plurinational State gave priority to the Police as a repressive force and instrumentalized access to judicial services for political purposes. It delegated to the Armed Forces border guard and anti-smuggling tasks.

In conclusion, the main difference between the two constitutional texts lies in the fact that the 2004 text has a normative character, and includes supreme and presidential decrees, legalizing them -especially as far as the Armed Forces are concerned.

In contrast, the 2009 constitutional text is an ideological corpus centered on the indigenous-original-peasant peoples, giving special attention to the defense of their rights. In addition, it stands out for making the environmental issue a central element in the construction of its narratives, recognizing "Mother Earth" - a euphemism for environment - as a subject of rights rather than simply a good.

This narrative took shape with the holding of the World People's Conference on Climate Change, held from April 19-22, 2010 in Cochabamba, whose product, the "Declaration of the World People's Conference on Climate Change and the Defense of Life"[16] , was included as a proposal in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Bonn, Germany the same year.

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[16] https://www.cancilleria.gob.bo/webmre/node/1112

Main codes and operations of the movement to socialism: building antagonistic otherness

The main security actions of the Bolivian State were directed towards those that the political project of the M.A.S. considered as threats both to its consolidation and to the interests of the unions that make up its central core. These actions played an important role in the construction of the party's political identity, by serving as elements in the chains of equivalence [LA CLAU: 2008, Müller: 2010] that shaped both the internal and external representations of the M.A.S.

As noted above, codes related to global, regional and local antagonisms can be identified. At the global level, the M.A.S. defined itself on multiple occasions as "anti-imperialist and revolutionary", basing its identity on the criticism of anti-drug operations carried out by governments allied to U.S. hegemony in the region, as well as on the opposition to "neoliberal" and "privatization" policies imposed by the structural reforms of the end of the last century in the American continent.

In this sense, the operations that began the process of Bolivia's strategic realignment stand out, leaving the U.S. orbit (Cf. Supra) to seek to initiate relations with China, concretized by obtaining credits and employing Chinese companies for the construction of road integration and productive infrastructure projects [AGRAMONT and BONIFAZ: 2018].

At the regional level, the M.A.S. instrumentalized the Bolivian historical memory by retaking the maritime issue as an element of identity cohesion. In 2014, the Bolivian state initiated a lawsuit before the International Court of The Hague with the aim of pressuring the Chilean state to enter into negotiations to achieve a sovereign outlet to the Pacific Ocean. In addition, it is worth mentioning the recurrent incidents on the border between both States, in which members of the Bolivian Armed Forces were captured by the Chilean National Police in 2013, 2017 and 2018, taken advantage of by the political leadership to create a referent of identity self-affirmation. These events led to the officers, non-commissioned officers and sergeants of the Armed Forces imprisoned in Chilean territory being considered "national heroes"[17].

At the local level, codes were produced that signified as antagonistic alterities the civic and citizen political movements -that is, not aligned with any political party- that at some point resisted the policies promoted by the M.A.S. or clashed with the interests of the unions that make up the M.A.S.. In this regard, some of these operations can be identified:

a) The civic movement of the then called "media luna", which brought together citizen representatives, mainly urban, from the departments of Tarija, Beni, Pando and, mainly, Santa Cruz. This conflict culminated in an operation on April 16, 2009, in the Hotel "Las Américas", which ended with the death of three European citizens, as well as the arrest of a European citizen and a Bolivian citizen. In this same conflict, the participation of UNASUR stands out as a legitimizing entity of the Morales government at the international level. The combination of both operations -one police and the other diplomatic- put an end to the civic resistance movement. At the same time, these urban and regional movements were characterized as mercenaries, separatists, imperialists and coup plotters [TOMICHA: 2021].

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[17] On February 14, 2013

b) The T.I.P.N.N.I.S. march, referred to above, demonstrated that even indigenous movements can be considered as "enemies of the process of change". However, among the narratives promoted by the then Vice-President of the State, those that acquired a geopolitical nuance stand out. One of the main justifications for the construction of the highway was the need to interconnect the departments of Beni and Cochabamba, which affected the road monopoly that Santa Cruz has, since the railroads and highways of Beni are only connected to Santa Cruz. In addition, it was argued that the construction of the road would promote regional development and bring basic services, health and education to the local indigenous population.

c) The elimination of the "mestizo" category in the 2012 census marked the imposition of a citizenship model based on ethnic self-identification and the defenestration of the previous citizenship model[18]. However, although the 2012 census was expected to ratify the victory of indigenous plurinationality, it turned out to be quite the opposite: there was a marked decline in the population that self-perceives itself as indigenous, representing only 40% of the total population. Before the census, the government took it upon itself to delegitimize the "mestizo" option, calling it a "racial, colonial, tributary category", among other terms. After the publication of the census results, the then vice-president reaffirmed this interpretation in his speech of August 6, 2013, as an opuscule of his essay on Bolivian identity: nation, mestizaje and plurinationality.

d) The 2016 referendum was a turning point for the Bolivian political arena. It not only demystified the figure of Morales as a charismatic leader, but also unveiled a series of events that delegitimized the hegemony of the M.A.S. in the Bolivian political field, mainly referring to the perks and corruption as a political *habitus*. Faced with the wave of criticism, the M.A.S. resorted to a repetitive narrative of interventionism from "the empire", alleging defamation and disinformation campaigns by "pro-imperialist" and "separatist" media, which were labeled as traitors and secessionists.

e) The 2019 elections marked a turning point in the historical process of the Bolivian political field. These elections were widely questioned due to serious irregularities that led the electoral observer missions of the Organization of American States and the European Union to qualify them as fraudulent, null and void and shameful. These elections reflected the frustration of the urban populations in the face of the excessive abuse of the unions and the contradictory discourses in relation to democracy and representativeness. For the M.A.S., they represented the emergence of a new antagonistic figure: the "pititas", who embodied the urban sectors with a

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[18] In the decades following the 1952 National Revolution, the idea of a mestizo nation was promoted in the governmental sphere as a signifier that homologated citizenship, replacing ethnic categories with notions of social class such as "peasant" or "worker". In the 1976 and 1992 censuses, during the Banzer dictatorship and the democratic government of Jaime Paz Zamora respectively, no information on ethnicity was recorded. However, starting with the 2001 census, the ethnic self-identification question was reintroduced as part of constitutional and legal reforms to affirm the "pluri-ethnic and multicultural" nature of the nation. The results of this census showed that 62% of the population identified themselves as indigenous, which had important political repercussions, since during his inauguration as President of the Republic, Evo Morales highlighted this census result above the electoral results, pointing out that indigenous peoples, who make up the majority of the Bolivian population, represent 62.2% of the total population.

predominantly western cultural consumption and whose identity resisted being classified as indigenous. The narrative of the then ruling party characterized these movements of the urban middle classes as "coup plotters" and "fascists" since, from their perspective, what happened was not an obvious fraud, but a conspiracy of foreign[19] and national interests to seize Bolivian lithium [TOMICHA, 2021]. It is curious to observe the speed with which the Argentine, Venezuelan, Cuban and Russian media reproduced and signified, often from a paternalistic approach towards the Bolivian community, the narratives used by the M.A.S. to justify the failed electoral process.

Construction of codes and representations in the tutelary organs of the plurinational state: armed forces of the plurinational state
The Armed Forces of the Plurinational State of Bolivia underwent profound reforms in terms of their doctrines. This was a reflection of a deep questioning of the status/role of the armed forces during the history of the Bolivian state; according to QUINTANA [2016 (2nd Ed.)], such questionings can be summarized as:

- Compulsory military service in Bolivia has historically been used as a tool of social and political control by governments.
- There is a significant gap between the official rhetoric of military service as citizenship training and the abuses and mistreatment that occur within the armed forces.
- The military recruitment and training system does not comply with international human rights standards and causes a series of psychological and emotional problems for recruits.
- Military service is perceived by many young Bolivians as a burden and an interruption in their education and personal development.
- Living and working conditions within military units are precarious and contribute to the perpetuation of abuses and violence.
- There are socioeconomic inequalities in the way military service is applied, as low-income youth have fewer options for evading it.
- Structural reforms are required in the military recruitment and training system to guarantee respect for human rights and promote effective citizen training.
- It is necessary to encourage citizen participation and dialogue to rethink the role of military service in Bolivian society and seek alternatives that are more inclusive and in line with individual rights.

One of the first measures adopted by Morales Ayma in relation to the Armed Forces was the inclusion of cadets of indigenous origin in the Military College - traditionally relegated to sergeants and non-commissioned officers. This change began in 2008 and resulted in the formation of several promotions that included indigenous officers at the time of graduation from the Army Military College.

This was also manifested in the symbolism of the Armed Forces, which incorporated the Cuban revolutionary phrase "Homeland or death - we will win"

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[19] According to TOMICHA [2021] the figures and interests that intervened, gestated and financed the "coup d'état" were: Elon Musk, Obama, Trump and the European Union - mainly Germany and the United Kingdom.

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together with the traditional harangue "Long live Bolivia - towards the sea". In addition, changes were made in the military symbols by including the wiphala[20] , an indigenous flag created by the *Katarista* movements, as a central element in both the insignia and the coat of arms of the Bolivian army:

Image 1. Coat of arms of the bolivian army

Source: Ministry of Defense of the Plurinational State of Bolivia.

On the other hand, thanks to the support and financing of the Venezuelan State at the time under the leadership of Hugo Chavez, improvements and renovations were implemented in the military infrastructure throughout the country. These policies contributed to improving the general standard of living of Bolivian soldiers and promoted respect for their human rights.

According to interviews with a senior officer, specifically a Lieutenant Colonel in favor of the "process of change", one of the main aspirations of senior officers at the beginning of Morales Ayma's mandate was to improve their income, as had happened in the case of the Venezuelan Armed Forces. In this sense, various bonuses granted to officers for training and rank were eliminated and incorporated into the salary scale.

Finally, as mentioned above, the role of the armed forces in state security underwent a change as they took on new specific responsibilities. Mainly, they focused on border control to combat smuggling, in addition to playing an active role in citizen security by taking over from the Bolivian Police during the mutiny of its cadres on June 23, 2012.

Construction of codes and representations in the tutelary organs of the plurinational state: the bolivian police and structural reforms.

Perhaps one of the most representative institutions of the contradictions that characterize the Bolivian State is the Bolivian Police. Covered by the Organic Law of

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[20] The *wiphala* is a flag of Andean origin that represents the indigenous peoples of the region. It became an emblem of the struggle for the rights of indigenous peoples and the vindication of their identity and culture. Thanks to the CPE of 2009, the *wiphala* has acquired a status of recognition and respect in the country, and has become a central element in various areas of Bolivian society, representing the cultural and ethnic diversity of the country.

the National Police No. 734, enacted on April 8, 1985 during the government of Dr. Siles Suazo, its functions were de-concentrated as of Law 264, of 2012. This law delegates to the Autonomous Territorial Entities competencies related to the provision of economic, infrastructure and logistical resources that, under the concept of citizen security, have the objective of achieving a decentralization of police units.

Juan Ramón Quintana summarizes the codes with which the police institution is understood in Bolivia. The book "*Policías y democracia: a pending institutional policy*" [2016] raises the need for a deep reform in this institution. Its main conclusions are:

- It highlights the existence of contradictions and challenges in the role of the Bolivian Police within the Bolivian State.
- It addresses the Organic Law of the National Police No. 734 of 1985 and Law 264 of 2012 as legislative milestones in the deconcentration of police functions and decentralization of police units.
- He criticizes the lack of reform in the doctrines of the institution, which continues to maintain a classic conception of security centered on security and criminal justice policies.
- It stresses the need for greater articulation between the police and democracy, and raises the importance of an institutional policy that promotes transparency, accountability and respect for human rights.
- The author stresses the importance of building a citizen police force, close to the community and committed to the protection of citizens' rights.
- It is concluded that there is a pending task in the construction of a true institutional policy that strengthens the relationship between the police and democracy in Bolivia.

With respect to Morales Ayma and his speeches, three moments were found in the representations regarding the Bolivian Police.

- On December 8, 2005, ten days before the general elections that led to his first term in office, when asked about the role of the Bolivian Police, Evo Morales Ayma said: "I prefer to give money to private security, they do patrol".
- Subsequently, during the 2012 riot, Morales Ayma said: "The previous commander has asked me for [resources] and has told me: 'give me brother president and I will put an end to crime', he has not complied".
- One of the most difficult moments Morales Ayma faced with the Bolivian Police was during the police mutiny of 2019, which resulted in his resignation. These events gave rise to the creation of the epithet "motines", used to refer to police personnel, their unionism and the politicization of their role by senior cadres and officialdom.

However, during the governments of Evo Morales Ayma in Bolivia, and unlike the Armed Forces, no significant reforms were carried out regarding the doctrines of the Bolivian Police. The institution maintained a traditional conception of security, focused on security and criminal justice policies. No profound changes were implemented in terms of community security approaches, human rights protection or structural reforms in the police. To this day, the institution continues to operate with a classic conception of security, which has led to an increase in penalties and types of crimes, generating a saturation in the legal and penitentiary system.

National police: security as a social field, the national police habitus

During the interview, the specialist in security and Bolivian Police reaches a relevant conclusion: the police institution shows resistance to structural reforms, mainly due to the normalization of corruption among its members. They have internalized practices of obtaining "informal and illegal rents", the result of extorting citizens and criminals, as well as obtaining resources for almost any activity of vehicle control or obtaining documents in which they are involved. Even worse, the continuous cases of police violence made this institution the main entity violating human rights in the country [UNITAS: 2022].[21]

Other issues identified through the interviews and the hemerographic review were as follows:

- The unionization of its cadres and their high level of corruption reflect the importance of informal settings and scenarios in the institution's decision-making process.

- There are no selection criteria for its cadres, a considerable percentage of its officers have disciplinary and criminal records [AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL: 2010; OPINION].[22]

- As a result of the 2019 conflicts, a political purge process has been initiated, favoring elements related to the governing party in terms of assignments and seniority, favoring political affinity over professional suitability.

- Social intervention models are unrealistic because they are based on biased diagnoses (repeating data, without objective or impact indicators as established by the S.P.I.E.), seeking to justify budgets and not contemplating social or institutional control of effectiveness and efficiency (audits).

- Along with the judicial system, the Bolivian Police is the most socially questioned body, with very low levels of trust [LAPOP: 2018].

- There is an overlapping of functions, as the Bolivian Police aspires to take on the role of the Armed Forces, emulating not only uniforms and regulations, but also training its cadres with military instruction.

With regard to the Bolivian Police, it can be concluded that, although the Morales Ayma government initiated a process of adaptation of the police institution, it is not effective, mainly due to a series of factors:

- The State administration prioritizes the political field in terms of the usefulness of its security forces. This is due to the fact that within the movement to socialism the image of political otherness has been created as an enemy to be eliminated: the ghost of the "pititas", as the political antagonist that defeated the charismatic leadership in November 2019.

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[21] The 2022 Situation Report shows and breaks down the violations of the freedoms of expression, association and peaceful assembly, democratic institutions and the right to defend political rights:

In quantitative terms, (...), the National Police accumulated 25% of the total number of violations recorded; this figure corresponds directly to its disproportionate intervention in social conflicts, particularly those involving protests questioning the national government (68% of the cases of its participation)."

[22] "13 cases that tarnished the police during the last decade" July 4, 2023

- There is no such thing as a social intervention model (integrated planning). The existing documents do not establish action protocols, nor indicators by objective or impact (the S.P.I.E. is not applied).
- As a result of the corporate (sectorial) interests that the socialist movement represents, the police do not have the capacity for real intervention in terms of macro security problems such as drug trafficking.
- The politicization of promotions in the Police and Armed Forces produces not only a drop in morale among officers, but also a profound questioning of institutionalism.
- Politicization has also favored the collusion of corruption networks both at the organizational level (the last 5 commanders of the Space Force for the Fight against Drug Trafficking are in jail) and at the inter-organizational level (cases of corruption networks among judges, prosecutors and police).

Conclusions

During the terms of Evo Morales Ayma in Bolivia, a structural and ideological reordering of the Bolivian State took place based on the demands and meanings generated by the social movements and trade unions that make up the Movement Towards Socialism (Movimiento al Socialismo). These reforms focused their narrative on ethnic representation as the main element of articulation in shaping their political identity and citizenship project. However, this had dire consequences for the concept of citizenship proper to liberal democracy - based on individualism, business and private property; since the current State protects and privileges corporate or unionized citizenship, i.e., that which can exercise power differentials through political representation or social pressure in the streets.

On the other hand, although the (M.A.S. - I.P.S.P.) managed to consolidate a political hegemony during two terms in office (2010 - 2019), based on a charismatic leadership and the representation of historically disadvantaged sectors of Bolivian society, such as agrarian unions and indigenous communities; such narratives were left aside at the time of promoting policies and projects that responded both to the political project itself, and to the economic interests of the various unions that make up that political party.

Geopolitical models in Bolivia have evolved, from the rise and consolidation of the M.A.S. to its hegemonic decline, demonstrating the ability of this party to include diverse agents and agencies in its political pact. However, the articulation of the elements and narratives that make up its discourses has not been able to overcome the structural contradictions of both the State and the [internal contradictions] of the party itself.

The 2009 constitution highlights the protection of indigenous rights, food security and environmental conservation, considering "Mother Earth" as a subject of rights. However, the conflicts of 2011 scuttled any environmental pretensions in the narratives that make up the discourses of the M.A.S. This can be corroborated by contrasting said discourse with the "General Coca Law", enacted on March 8, 2017, which benefits coca producers in the Chapare by establishing 22,000 hectares of coca,

legalizing in fact 7,700 hectares in the Tropic of Cochabamba[23] . Even more, a review of the coca growing areas of the coca growers' unions in the department of Cochabamba - Morales Ayma's social and political base - shows that such illicit activity[24] overlaps with protected areas, denying any environmental pretension of the same, demonstrating the prevalence of union interests and the extractivism they promote.

In addition to the contradictions between narratives, discourses and political operations, other factors contributed to the hegemonic decadence of the M.A.S.The progressive erosion of the charismatic leader's image due to the widespread corruption among its political members, as well as its contemptuous attitude towards the protests of the urban middle classes, degraded the party's image, facilitating the emergence of urban and political opposition movements and becoming nodal points that articulated the creation of an alternative identity and antagonistic political position, whose identity representations do not fit with the forced ethnic adscription that makes the core of the M.A.S. political identity and citizenship proposal.

The fact that the "mestizo" category was omitted in the 2012 census ballots demonstrates the inability to assimilate into an ethnocentric political identity sectors that do not identify with any "indigenous-originating-peasant" nation and whose cultural consumption is undeniably Western. The political leadership of the State has taken the path of denial and invisibilization of this population in the political citizenry, instead of the integration and assimilation of these urban sectors.

In this sense, it also resorted to the construction of an antagonistic otherness, through which the political party in question forged its political identity. This significance can be traced even before Morales Ayma assumed the presidency. From the so-called "*corbatudos*", which referred to the technocrats who held political representation during the neoliberal period, to the "separatists and fascists" during the conflicts of 2008 and 2009, to the "*pititas*" in the conflicts of 2019.

Paraphrasing Müller [2010], the function of geopolitical discourse is to establish hegemonic articulations that establish identity, by denying and annulling empty signifiers that may generate antagonistic chains of equivalence. In this sense, the M.A.S. has employed various strategies, including symbolic violence, especially in social networks[25] , to the denial and invisibilization of representations discordant with their narratives. It is paradoxical that they describe the political antagonist as fascist, given the recurrent use of unionized shock groups under the protection of state forces, particularly the Police a.

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[23] This law defunds Law 1,008 of the Coca and Controlled Substances Regime, which only allowed 12,000 hectares in the territory of La Paz and considered illegal production in Chapare because it was not ancestral. In other words, it legalizes coca cultivation in Cochabamba's Chapare. According to the agency, the majority of coca production in Los Yungas is commercialized in the legal market, while in the case of Chapare, a little less than 10% is destined for legal human consumption [UNDIOC: 2018].

[24] According to the UNDIOC report, 91% of coca leaf production in these regions is destined for the production of narcotics.

[25]   https://about.fb.com/ltam/news/2023/02/reporte-de-amenazas-adversarias-cuarto-trimestre-2022/

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