

BolivianExpress

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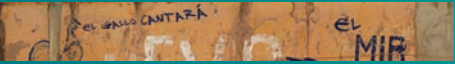


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As Bolivia kicks into election season high gear with the vote for president just weeks away, the Bolivian Express writers chose to explore campaigns for this month's issue.

Many facets of a political campaign go far beyond promises and policy. For example, we absorb everything from catchy promotional songs with lyrics that embed themselves in our brains to the very clothes candidates choose to wear. Consider a few of this year's hopefuls: President Evo Morales in a polished, but not western, suit jacket; Samuel Doria Medina in a blue every-man hoodie looking ready to head out for a jog; and Fernando Vargas, an indigenous leader from the country's lowlands, sporting his signature leather sombrero.

Focusing on campaigns and elections in Bolivia, we must of course take a long look at President Morales, who now stands for a third term as president while running far ahead of his opponents in polls. Not everyone agrees that a third term is the right direction for Bolivia, though the constitutional tribunal endorsed the President's right to run again last year.

Then there is social media, a tool which every year reaches more Bolivians as internet and computer access expand. Social media promises to bring the average voter into a sort of direct - albeit electronic - contact with candidates. The way candidates of all stripes wage campaigns on Twitter, Facebook and beyond is an ever-evolving art. In the physical world, political allegiances and slogans are declared on the limited real estate of rural and urban walls, where graffiti ranging from the basic to the ornate forms a constantly changing, silent debate.

Also closely tied to the elections is a campaign known as 'Machistas Fuera de la Lista,' formed by feminist groups to demand that candidates who express chauvinistic beliefs withdraw from whatever political race they are involved in, be it local or national.

Of course not all campaigns directly relate to this year's elections. The Morales government has long cultivated associations between the president and indigenous leader Tupac Katari, who was killed by the Spanish in 1781 while leading a revolt against the colonial power. On a literary note, a project to select the greatest Bolivian books of all-time could be interpreted as a campaign to develop and solidify the nation's identity.

Moving beyond this month's articles, it's important to note that the 2014 elections occur just 32 years after Bolivia's return to democracy, which followed 18 years of military rule, dictatorship, or short-lived and unstable governments. It's a reminder that the ability to campaign for public office, or anything else for that matter, is a right that cannot be taken for granted.

N.B. Several Spanish and Aymara words are marked in **bold** throughout this issue. Their meanings can be found in our glossary.

By Sara Shahriari

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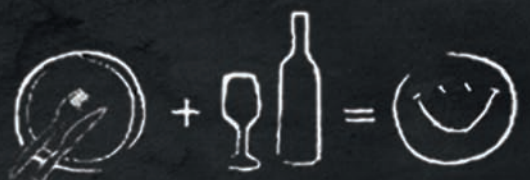
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#MACHISTAS FUERA DE LAS LISTAS
TEXT: VALERIA WILDE

Chauvinistic acts have recently made headlines across Bolivia. This is true across all sectors of society: from insecurity on the streets running to the very highest of political spheres. From sexist rhymes and songs to threats, groping and violent crimes including rape, domestic abuse and femicide, women find themselves at the centre of these attacks, but fewer are prepared to keep quiet any longer.

Being a woman in Bolivia is a challenge. Chauvinism is so deeply ingrained in society that it can be hard for people to even recognize actions and words that imply violence, aggression and deep disdain towards women. Nonetheless, there are more and more women, men and organizations that want to draw attention to this situation.

One recent, prominent case is the murder and rape of Sophia Calvo, a young woman who was allegedly attacked by the security guard of the car park near her office. Beyond high and endemic levels of violence across society, the public has increasingly shifted its attention to the political sphere.

The campaign "Machistas fuera de las listas" - organised by a group of feminists - aims to denounce the multiple acts of sexism, misogyny and sexual violence which arise across the political spectrum. The movement's goal is to expose and remove all candidates involved in such incidents from the official lists for the upcoming elections.

The issue of sexism and gender-based violence

is certainly not new in the political sphere. Last year activists sought justice for a civil servant allegedly raped by ex-assembly member Domingo Alcibia. He was later sentenced to a mere 14 months for inappropriate use of state resources.

Before the movement acquired a common identity, disturbing images were also caught on tape featuring Percy Fernandez, the mayor of Santa Cruz, groping women on several occasions.

Machistas fuera de las listas was finally formed following comments from candidate for senator **Ciro Zabala**, who insinuated that women should behave themselves and dress appropriately to avoid being raped. Later, Presidential candidate **Samuel Doria Medina** was criticized after a recording exposed him threatening one of his employees who had been the victim of domestic violence at the hands of her former partner - now an ex-candidate for congress from Medina's own party. The campaign also went on to protest against President **Evo Morales's** sexist comments and jokes in public.

Far from isolated, these events are symptomatic of much larger and worryingly recurring trends.

Most recently a 17-year-old girl was raped and murdered. Two sergeants from the military training school stand accused of the crimes. And so these cases continue in discourse and practice.

All of these instances of violence against

women are truly alarming and difficult to ignore. As a result, various demonstrations and protests have arisen in an attempt to put a stop to this pattern of injustice, violence and chauvinism. These events have also triggered a political feeding frenzy, as different parties and groups seek to use candidates' sexist comments to further their own causes.

Jenny Ybarnegaray, a member of the "**Machistas fuera de las listas**" movement, states that this campaign reflects the constant, long-term struggle of women.

In Ybarnegaray's own words:

'This is a systemic problem that has cultural, social, economical and political roots that aren't going to be resolved overnight with a campaign. However, at least our initiative has stirred the waters.'

It's worrying to think that so many sexist and violent acts are taking place in our country and, most of all, that some of those responsible are both political candidates and those who either run the country, or are running for office. However, at the same time, by being in the public eye, these events are generating a widespread feeling of indignation and disgust in society. They are making us open our eyes and be more aware of what is happening in order to take action. They are making us continue to fight for the ability to live in a democracy with respect, equality, and the freedom for citizens to exercise their fundamental rights. ✕

A SONG FOR A VOTE

FROM THEME TUNES TO ADVERTISEMENTS, MUSIC PLAYS AN INTEGRAL PART IN THE MEDIA, BUT WHAT ROLE DOES IT HAVE IN POLITICAL ELECTION CAMPAIGNS?

TEXT: CHRISTY CALLAWAY-GALE
PHOTO: VALERIA WILDE



If you want to get a message stuck in people's heads, a song is a great way to go about it. From major political campaigns to launches of projects like the **teleférico**, a catchy tune is often part of the publicity package.

'Do you want a man as president who sees it through and through? Cast a vote for Kennedy for a change that's overdue. It's up to you.'

That's from John F. Kennedy's 1960 election campaign ditty, and here's a snippet from DJ Black's 'Los Locos Somos Mas' that became the campaign song for Pa-

namanian President Ricardo Martinelli, earning the singer the post of minister of culture:

'Si tu tas cansao de la misma pendeja lo que el pueblo quiere es un cambio ya.'
(If you're tired of the same fools, what the people want is a change now.)

An anthem that plays every time a leader walks on to the stage and up to the lectern to give a moving speech is something people identify with, and can't stop humming to, until long after the election ballots have been counted and the deal has been done.

But not every election anthem is custom-made for a candidate—some are seized from a nation's canon of rock, sometimes to the artist's deep disdain. For example, Tom Petty threatened to sue George W. Bush for using his 1989 single 'I Won't Back Down' during Bush's successful 2000 election campaign.

Bolivia is no stranger to campaign and publicity songs either. The Zebra road safety song is a more recent addition to the repertoire. Morales's party, MAS, has also indulged in some party tunes. 'Somos MAS' (We Are More) sticks in the mind, featuring the play on words 'MAS, MAS,



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MAS' in the chorus, which means 'more, more, more' in English. Even for one-off political events, like the handing over of Quipus laptops to students, MAS decided that music should be an integral part of creating the atmosphere of change.

Surprise, surprise, MAS chose the medium of rap to engage the stadium full of

'Mi general...el pueblo te eligió de corazón.' **(My general...the people chose you with their hearts.)**

teenagers and made the original choice to open with a parody of the genre's stereotypical intro:

'Levantense las manos si les gusta Qui-puuuuuus.'
(Put your hands in the air if you like Quipus.)

However, it's not just modern campaign songs that are remembered today. Some Bolivians would still be able to give you a rendition of the songs used in Bolivia's electoral campaigns during the 90s. Take the former Bolivian dictator and later president Hugo Banzer's patriotic-sounding 'Mi General' from his 1993 campaign, for example:

'Mi general...el pueblo te eligió de corazón.'
(My general...the people chose you with their hearts.)

Although we might mock the often forced lyrics of campaign songs, Jose Miguel Liendo Claure, who was part of the group behind the creation of the 'Somos MAS' campaign song, underlines the importance of the words in portraying a strong message:

'The language, words and the ideological stance that they express is important. For example, in Spain in the 60s, singing the song *Al Vent* (*Al Viento*), written by Ramón Pelegro Sanchis, was a rebellion of the youth who no longer wanted to live under Franco's regime. The lyrics were written in Catalan.'

Here Liendo alludes to the potent symbol

the Catalan language had become in Francoist Spain. Wanting to unify the country, Franco had repressed Catalan nationalism, the most obvious manifestation of which was, of course, their own language.

Nearly a decade after Sanchis's song had been added to the oppressed voice of the Spanish, a musical movement known as

Nueva Canción strummed and plucked its way into the pit of Latin America's social upheavals. Combining traditional Latin American folk music with potent lyrics calling for social change and an end to US intervention, the artists often faced brutal consequences as a result.

Victor Jara's 'Preguntas por Puerto Montt' denounced the 1968 military attack on farmers near Puerto Montt, Chile:

'Voy a preguntar por ti que quedaste solo, por aquel que murió sin saber.'
(I'm going to ask about you who ended up alone, about him that died without knowing why.)

'The job of a campaign song is to tie a political stance to the image of the leader using music', says Liendo

He was later murdered in the coup of 1973.

The 'Vote No' campaign that supported ending Pinochet's dictatorship in Chile's 1988 plebiscite also used a song to encourage reluctant, persecuted citizens to vote against their brutal dictator. And it worked.

'You can't have a revolution without songs' is the motto that flies the flag for Nueva Canción. It was stamped on the banner framing Salvador Allende's election success in Chile, in 1970, when he became the first democratically elected socialist president of that country. The slogan sug-

gests that music not only has the ability to inspire a successful campaign, but that the pulse of a powerful movement which grows from the people, like a revolution, cannot begin to beat at all without it.

Liendo emphasises this point, sharing why music is so integral to inspiring support: 'Music, rhythm and harmony awaken varied emotions in us. In the case of political campaigns, music helps to emotionally connect you to a symbol, a flag and an ideological stance.'

So what is it that gives a campaign song that twinkling spark of success? What was so special about Will.i.am's Obama song 'Yes We Can', which went viral in 2008, and the Bolivian political party MIR's famous electoral hymn from the 90s?

'The most important thing for a politician is to construct a coherent, credible ideological stance. The job of a campaign song is to tie this stance to the image of the political leader using music', says Liendo.

A memorable campaign song must unite these factors together, then, in a compelling format. And let's not forget that Will.i.am's popularity probably had a hand in the success of his unofficial Obama campaign song. Perhaps it was also precisely because the song was not com-

missioned by Obama himself that the public adopted it rather than ridiculed it. Liendo affirms that, usually, 'A song and its various interpretations are exposed to criticism from one side or another because a political campaign song is also a criticism, a complaint or a proposal.'

However, despite the critique campaign songs are often subject to, they continue to project their political melodies out into the masses. Still considered an integral part of inspiring support, yet not necessarily the first thing that comes to mind when one thinks of an election, campaign songs appear to be the politician's unsung hero. ✕

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DEMOCRACY BOLIVIAN STYLE

MORALES GOES FOR HIS THIRD ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN BUT IS IT LEGITIMATE?

TEXT: CHRISTY CALLAWAY-GALE

How do you go about defining democracy? If you're about to host a dinner party, look away now. Some might say it's government by the people, a free electoral system, equality of rights, or a mish-mash of all of these things. Sitting amid the passing cries of the *voceadores*, who hang out the side of the minibuses here in La Paz

dissect even one of the most controversial topics in current Bolivian politics: Morales's desire to stay in power.

For some (or indeed many) of you, finding out that Morales is running for President again might not be alarming. Perhaps you don't know that the Bolivian Constitution allows only one re-election per President,

situation had called for).

'There would have been a legitimate way to run for a third term, a referendum, but he went via another route.' (Molina)

'A referendum is only obligatory when you are reforming the constitution. In this case a referendum was not obligatory.' (Canelas)

MANUEL CANELAS: 'THE ONLY THING THE TRIBUNAL HAS MADE POSSIBLE IS THAT THE PEOPLE GET TO DECIDE AGAIN. NOTHING MORE.'

advertising destinations, I wonder what relevance this word has in Bolivia today and whether Morales's run for a third term in office undermines democracy in the country.

'It's legal but it's not legitimate, in the sense that Morales promised he wasn't going to do this...It's dangerous. El caudillismo will grow even more and the problems that have already started to appear with this government will grow deeper.' (Fernando Molina, Bolivian journalist and writer)

'Constitutionally, this will be his first re-election, that is to say only his second mandate. When the constitution allows a President to run for election he doesn't become President automatically. The only thing the tribunal has made possible is that the people get to decide again. Nothing more.' (Manuel Canelas, politician for MAS, Morales's party)

Ah, there it is, we found it. Democracy gives us the ability to discuss, debate, and

for a total of two consecutive terms in office. Would this be Morales's second or third term as President? Was his first term technically a full one? These are the questions that drive the ongoing debate about democracy in Bolivia in the context of the upcoming Presidential elections.

'You have to respect the final judgment of the institutions, whether you like the final judgment or not.' (Canelas)

The Plurinational Constitutional Tribunal, which adjudicates government power here in Bolivia, was the body that approved Morales's right to run in the October elections. As long as we don't believe that the tribunal lives in the government's pocket—and Canelas assures that the last two judgments haven't gone in the government's favour—the system of checks and balances seems to have deliberated on the matter. Sure, Morales's candidacy was not sanctioned in a national referendum (as the oppo-

Is Morales creating the atmosphere for a repeat of the "Manuel Zelaya incident"? Zelaya was a Honduran President who was deposed by a military coup after he tried to end presidential term limits so he could run again in an election.

Without getting into a 'shoulda, woulda, coulda' situation and end up making a political cover of Beverley Knight's successful single, let's discuss what Morales's probable third term actually means to the people.

FERNANDO MOLINA: 'IT'S LEGAL BUT IT'S NOT LEGITIMATE.'

After all, 8/10 Bolivians today, according to a non-governmental survey, approve of the way the country is being run and Morales is leading heavily in the polls. Do Bolivians really think that Morales running for a third mandate is a bad thing?

I spend the afternoon in Plaza San Fran-

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cisco, where the mini bus lines create a La Paz/ El Alto melting pot, asking people what they think.

'He seems to be just another corrupt politician.' (Fernando, who preferred not to give his surname)

In my opinion, it's fine for Morales to run again. If the people want him as President,

ANONYMOUS BOLIVIAN MALE: 'IN MY OPINION, IT'S FINE FOR MORALES TO RUN AGAIN. IF THE PEOPLE WANT HIM AS PRESIDENT, WHY PREVENT HIM?'

why prevent him?' (Young man who wished to remain anonymous)

Even if you concur with this sentiment in principle, surely you would agree that democracy shouldn't be an infinitely flexible system, especially since Bolivia only returned to a democracy some thirty-two years ago. One of the ladies I spoke to in Plaza

annoyed. We would have found ourselves in an unstable political climate.' (Canelas)

There is an element of Bolivian pragmatism in this whole debate. As you may remember, in the last issue of this magazine, we discussed what the new child labour law in the country would mean for Bolivian society. Initially, we screamed "no", almost

Francisco voiced this concern:

It's a problem. Morales wrote the constitution with one hand and rubbed it out with his elbow at the same time.'

Moreover, according to Molina, the consequences of Morales's third term in office could be serious:

It's exactly what happened when democracy was first introduced: It can

be manipulated until it loses its essence and the capacity for government to ever change.'

But what if Morales had not been allowed to run again?

If the President hadn't been allowed to run again I think a lot of people would have been

by instinct, against the lowering of the legal working age. But by the end of our reporting, our news team was torn between the ideals we cherish and the pragmatic concerns of average Bolivians.

Something similar is going on here. Instinctively, it would seem that Morales is bending the rules to his favour. Then again, one could ask if there is any harm in what he's doing. Are there no alternative candidates within Morales's party? What about outside of it?

'Without Evo Morales MAS wouldn't exist; the government wouldn't exist. It would be a disaster. Everything depends on him and this is grave because it makes democracy and the whole country reliant on him.' (Molina)

I don't think there is anyone viable from another party and this is bad news for the country because it's necessary to have opposition..It's very difficult because of this current, exceptional political period to think that there can be other leaders of the same standard. The ideal would be to produce an alternative (candidate) from within MAS, or at least a form of collective leadership.' (Canelas)

No matter which side of the Morales-shaped fence you stand on, there seems to be a unanimous opinion that he is not politically replaceable at this point in time. As a foreigner, I am left worrying not about the legitimacy of Morales's likely third term in office, but about who will be on the voting card when it's time for his fourth. Really, anything could happen.*



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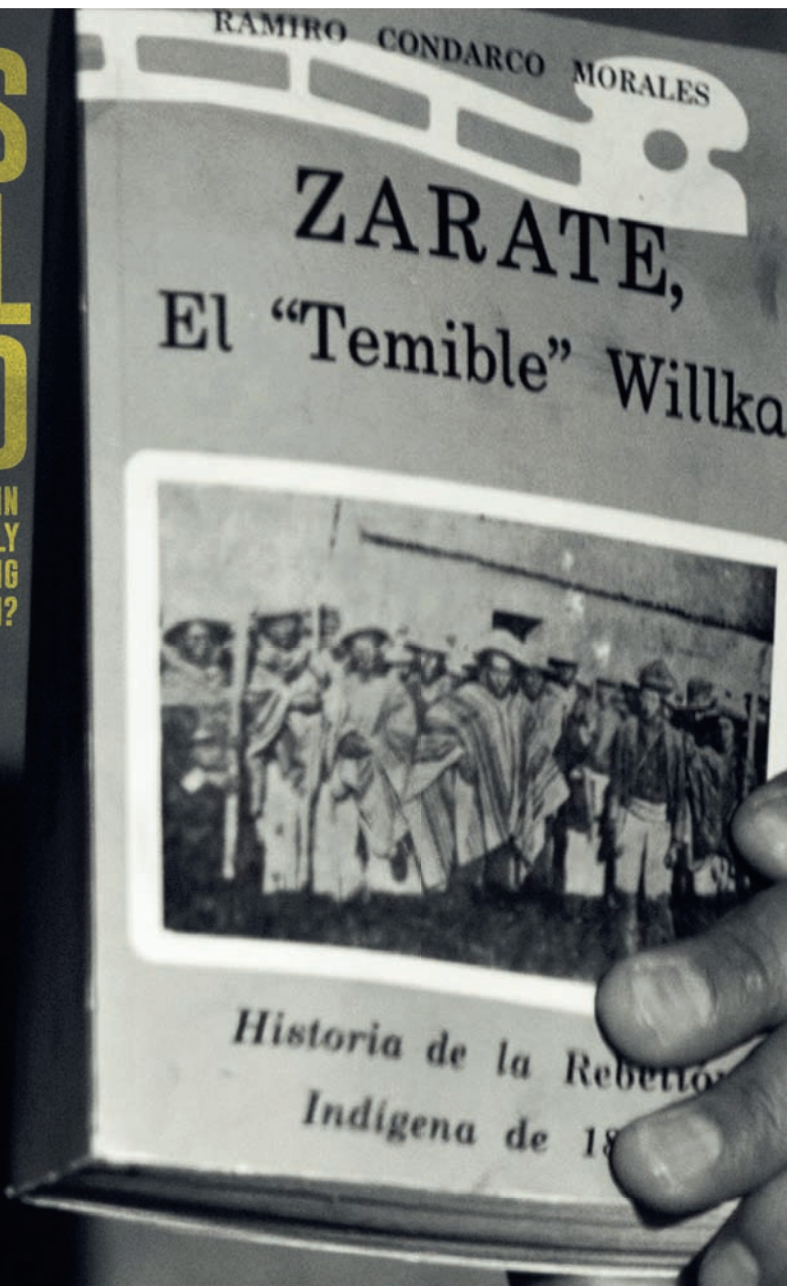
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BOLIVIA'S BIBLIOTECA DEL BICENTENARIO

BOLIVIA CELEBRATES 200 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE IN LITERARY STYLE. BUT IS THE GOVERNMENT SIMPLY CHOOSING A SELECTION OF GREATEST WORKS OR FORMING A CAMPAIGN TO SHAPE A NATION?

TEXT: CHRISTY CALLAWAY-GALE

PHOTO: SPOT EXPECTATIVA DE BIBLIOTECA DEL BICENTENARIO DE BOLIVIA



A book that Arze earmarked as being a must-read for Bolivians and one that would make his own personal list of two hundred, no questions asked, is *Historia General de Bolivia* by Herbert Klein. Following is a snippet from chapter one:

'To be able to understand the historic evolution of Bolivia, without first understanding the context in which it has been created, would be very difficult. It could be said that the first aspect in its development was its unique geography that kept a well-defined altiplano with dense, advanced populations from Peru. Despite the given limitations of poor soil and both cold and dry climates these areas were able to establish themselves as important regions for livestock...Their inaccessibility and varying seasons meant that these lowland areas were not explored or exploited until very recently.'

It's not only Bolivia but also Mexico and Uruguay who have experienced a similar "light bulb" moment and have decided to re-publish their great literary works to commemorate the anniversaries of their independence.

In Bolivia's case, this is also a work of decolonization. The library project's website declares: 'We want to decolonise. These works are a demonstration of our very essence.'

The project has an even more ambitious goal then:

'It's part of the conception of a nation,' Querejazu states from behind his wooden desk--He is sitting in his office lined with art history books, some of which I know he authored. Arze, almost as if he were responding to Querejazu's comment, broadens this concept: 'I think every country wants to accentuate its personality and we want this in Bolivia too.'

Cultural identity is generally a hot topic in Bolivia, and no less so for this project. Querejazu tells me that 'it's not just about choosing the books, but about how to get them out to the general public.' Let's remember this is a public that Morales only announced 'illiteracy free' in 2008 after a 2001 census revealed nearly 14% of Bolivians were illiterate. 'There needs to be a mechanism in place,' Querejazu advises, 'so that Bolivian people can absorb and incorporate these books into the process of learning what it is to be Bolivian.'

Pride and Prejudice, Jane Eyre and Mill on the Floss: Three undeniable classics from the English literary canon. But how do you choose a classic and form a must-read list? That's what Bolivia's trying to find out today.

By 2025, two hundred books - 30% human and social sciences, 30% history, 30% literature and 10% miscellaneous - written by Bolivians or about Bolivia, will be selected to form the country's canon. That's one book for each year of the country's independence. "But that's over ten years away," you might say, and start to think that this article is more than a little premature. However, the tough decision-making is

already well under way.

Thirty-five hand-picked academics, organized by specialization, gender, race, and everything else under the Bolivian sun, have the challenge of electing the golden two hundred classics: No wonder the debates are already flowing.

But how do you go about choosing a timeless work? I talk to José Roberto Arze, head of the editorial committee and a bibliographer in his own right, to get the inside scoop on the private meetings of the editorial committee. To paint the picture a bit more, Arze is seventy-two years old. Legend has it, he is able to pick up any book and reel off from memory its exact

library reference number.

'How do we choose two hundred books out of the one hundred thousand that have been published in Bolivia? It's very difficult,' Arze admits. 'The selection has to be broad in terms of era and must include all the regions, different genres and different ideological attitudes.'

Pedro Querejazu, another member of the editorial committee, highlights a further difficulty with the project: 'By definition, it excludes everything that's not in written form,' he says, 'including the oral tradition.'

And what about books that in their time were influential and paint a picture of his-

toric attitudes, but now seem a horrible anachronism? The iconic yet controversial book *Pueblo Enfermo*, written by Alcides Arguedas in 1909, is one such example. Here's what the book has to say about the so-called "mestizo race," for example, to give you a taste of what I'm talking about:

'From the sexual activity between the white, dominant race and the Indians, the *mestizo* is born. By inheritance he brings with him characteristics of both races. From the Iberian, he brings aggressiveness, conceit, pride and vanity, his distinctive self-interest and pompous rhetoric. From the Indian, he brings his submissiveness to those with strength and power, his lack of initiative, passivity in the face of unhappy

circumstances, his inclination to lie, trick and practise hypocrisy, his gregariousness and his immense disloyalty.'

So, should a blatantly racist work form part of the spread of Bolivian classics?

'Only one person (in the committee) had their doubts about books that provoke heated debates, such as this one' says Arze, as he leans back into his plush, blue-cushioned armchair and folds his hands in contemplation. 'But yes,' he concludes, 'it should be included because it's one of the facets of Bolivian thinking.' As Querejazu later adds in our interview, the committee has 'not defined a criteria for restricting ideology.'

TUPAC KATARI

HE HAS RETURNED AS MILLIONS

TEXT: MALHAR MAHURKAR

PHOTO: Creative Commons Tupac Katari by Guache <https://www.flickr.com/photos/proun/> is licensed under CC BY 2.0 / Edited From Original

You probably never read about Tupac Katari at school or saw his story in an elaborate cinema production, but he's a hero in Bolivia. Who he was and what he represents to Bolivians tells much about Bolivia's past and about the nation as it is today.

In 1781, as the bitter chill of the Andean wind swept through the valley of La Paz, a 40,000-strong indigenous force waged a brutal anti-colonial siege on the city, which lasted for 184 days. The forces were led by Julián Apasa, a member of the Aymara people, better known as Tupac Katari. But the effort was in vain—the rebellion was suppressed by the Spanish and Katari was captured and horrifically executed: Each of his arms and legs were tied to four horses, which then were provoked into running in opposite directions, tearing his body apart. His limbs were then displayed in various provincial capitals as a warning against insurrection. Before his savage quartering, however, and undoubtedly aware of the terrible fate he was about to suffer, Katari uttered his defiant last words: 'I die as one but will return as millions', and hence passed into Bolivian folklore as a timeless hero, a campaigner against injustice and a para-

gon of resistance to imperialism. His wife also has a similar legacy: Bartolina Sissa continued the campaign after Katari's death until she was also captured and suffered a similarly gruesome fate. But, like her husband Katari, her life and death inspired several movements, these focusing on the emancipation of indigenous women.

Katari's influence as a political and cultural symbol is clearly evident on the patchwork tapestry that is modern Bolivia—from the respected tome *Historia de la Rebelión de Tupac Katari* (nominated to be included in an upcoming government-sponsored celebration of Bolivian literature) to Bolivia's first satellite (named the Tupac Katari 1) and the naming of various rivers and parks, Katari is a modern presence. Political movements of various stripes also pay homage, such as the the Katarista political movement, one of the first to explicitly self-identify as expressing the political power of the previously marginalised indigenous and *mestizo* populations, and the more extreme Tupac Katari Gue-

rilla Army (of which current Vice President Alvaro García Linera was a member). Even President Morales has mentioned Katari's name in many of his speeches, and landless peasant movements proudly march under banners of Katari's likeness.

Clearly, Katari cannot be said to represent a single struggle or cause, or any one specific group of Bolivians. He has become a symbol travelling through time and space that has been used and continues to be used by disparate groups in various campaigns. To gain a better understanding of this and what Katari represents in Bolivia today, I interviewed Bolivian historian Roberto Choque. Can we pin down a single defining characteristic uniting the various movements that evoke Katari's legend?

Choque says that there are few parallels that can be drawn between Katari's struggle and

the position of Evo Morales, Bolivia's first indigenous president: 'He did not have any official political power', Choque says of Katari. 'His power was limited because it was inside a colonial power system', in contrast to Morales, who is the head of a sovereign state. Unlike his fellow revolutionary Tupac Amaru II (an indigenous aristocrat who worked for the Spanish governor in Peru before rebelling), Katari held no power prior to the start of his uprising. In a broad sense, Katari is identified with the powerless.

Does Katari, an Aymara, perhaps belong to that specific group more than other indigenous groups in Bolivia? This sentiment is not borne out by the opinions of Bolivians today. As is evident from the many movements and projects that take his name, Katari's legacy clearly does not belong to the Aymara alone. Choque points out that as a university student in the days of the Banzer dictatorship (1971–78), he felt that it was he and his fellow students—not the ethnic Aymara during that era—who made an effort to recover the figure of Katari. Bolivians whom I interviewed on the street also echoed Choque's observation. Andrés Duarte and Andrés Peñaranda wholeheartedly rejected the idea that Katari belongs solely to a single group, and both put forward the idea that he belongs to the whole nation. But what does that mean? The idea of a Bolivian nation is a highly contested one, and Choque stressed that it wasn't really until the war with Paraguay in the 1930s that the notion of being

Bolivian even started to resonate amongst the Aymara, Quechua and other indigenous groups. Until then, Choque claims that 'it meant nothing to be Bolivian.' What all three of my interviewees stressed was the idea of Katari as a symbol of the struggle and the fight against oppression.

The accession of President Evo Morales and his political party, MAS, illustrates Katari's political and cultural legacy. MAS's rise, amongst other things, was predicated upon being the vanguard for the previously marginalised and subjugated indigenous populations of Bolivia. Morales skilfully used the imagery and symbolism of Katari in his election campaign. By evoking the myth of an Andean anti-colonial hero, Morales and MAS were able to present themselves as the embodiment of Katari in modern times, fighting for the indigenous people of Bolivia. Morales made speeches in 2006 that frequently referenced Katari, and at Katari's supposed burial site he proclaimed, 'We are here to liberate our country, and Katari is the principal reference point of the indigenous battles in Bolivia and a constant reminder of the obligation to decolonize Bolivia.'

However, MAS has now been in power for years, and there are various parts of the Katarista movement that resent this use of their hero's image. Through gaining and consolidating political power, MAS has slowly lost its lustre of revolution. The revolutionary symbol of Katari loses its resonance at the national level and in the rhetoric associated with statecraft, and he is not so frequently invoked

anymore by Morales.

Ultimately this is because Tupac Katari fought for a subjugated people, and while Morales emerged in a political climate of this context, as Choque says, the analogy is now limited because MAS and Morales have what Katari never did: the highest position of power in the land. So what Katari might mean in the future is therefore unclear. He has moved from a highland Andean symbol to one that is revered by many of Bolivia's indigenous, from the MST landless peasant movement, who cited him when describing their struggle against the racist attacks of violent right-wing youths in Santa Cruz, to the symbol of the party in power. However, as the indigenous communities of Bolivia have slowly begun to throw off the heel of racism and subjugation that has plagued them since the Spanish conquest, will Katari's symbolic resonance start to crumble over time?

I think not. Any economic system implemented by any government will create winners and losers, and the Morales administration is no exception. Many in the Katarista movement, as it exists today, criticise the government for continuing business and dialogue with corporations and multinationals which still put the weight of the world on the small *campesinos* of Bolivia. In any society there will always be those with power and those without it. And as long as power imbalances persist in Bolivia, then the symbol of Katari will continue to be used and reused. Perhaps, as the sting of racism diminishes, he will take on value as a symbol of a struggle against economic inequality. But as both Andrés Peñaranda, a working-class policeman, and Roberto Choque, the historian, concur, Katari will always represent the struggle of the disenfranchised against the oligarchy.*



#VIRTUAL CAMPAIGNING



TEXT: SHIRIN VETRY
IMAGE: GABRIEL GUTIERREZ

CAMPAIGNING IN BOLIVIA HAS NOW ENTERED A WHOLE NEW DIMENSION FOR POLITICAL ACTION AND ADVERTISING

The motacú plant fell on to the open field. Within moments, the men from the Miraflores community in Pando gathered around the fallen palm tree and began to harvest its leaves for shelter. I am in this small, 60-family community, to learn about how it exports hundreds of kilograms of fruit every year through the company Madre Tierra in Beni. The fruit leaves this town and reaches cities across Bolivia hundreds of kilometers away. My phone is out

of service, the wifi at my distant hotel is non-existent, and I wonder just how this community stays in touch with the rest of the country.

“Evo is coming in August,” says the man standing next to me, who claims to be a local officer of the Puerto Gonzalo Moreno district. With a presidential campaign just around the corner, the President must be coming to reach out to his rural supporters. I look out to the women peeling oranges on the field and

the men braiding leaves right beside them; how else would these citizens ever hear about the candidates?

While the people in Miraflores wait for the president’s visit, in urban Bolivia campaigning has taken on a whole new dimension: a virtual one. Social media has become the newest “herramienta” in Bolivian politics.

According to Ricardo Paz, who is the social media manager for Samuel Do-

ria Medina, “Every few years a new tool in campaigning emerges.” Looking back at his twenty years of experience, he explains, “First we had radio, then came the television, and now the newest tool is social media.”

“At the moment,” Paz continues, “Medina has an account on both facebook and twitter. He interacts everyday with his followers through these accounts and responds whenever possible.”

The limitations of this new “herramienta” seem clear, though, even to a foreign observer. Six out of ten Bolivians don’t have access to the internet. Inevitably, this means that a large part of the country, including the families in Miraflores, must rely on more conventional methods of campaigning in order to learn about the candidates.

That said, the millions of Bolivian internet users now form a sought-after constituency. They have unlocked a new virtual space for political action. The ongoing presidential campaign has already been shaped by this space. Doria Medina, who is Morales’ most serious rival, has become a household name in the country due to the on-line referencing of one of his campaign ads.

FIRST WE HAD RADIO, THEN CAME THE TELEVISION, AND NOW THE NEWEST TOOL IS SOCIAL MEDIA.” -RICARDO PAZ

Within weeks from the video’s first broadcast, Doria Medina found himself unintentionally in the virtual limelight. An ad that was meant merely to show just how “normal” the candidate is in person, turned into a meme and then a slogan. Its punch line, “Carajo no me puedo morir”, became a trending hashtag.

“All of this was unintentional,” says Ricardo Paz, who manages Medina’s social media. His campaign team was surprised by how quickly the younger generations appropriated and circled the ad on the internet.

How would things change in Miraflores if people had access to social media? As I watch these hardworking families go about their daily chores, I wonder what they expect from Evo’s visit. What if he didn’t come? Who would reach out to this distant constituency?

Sometimes the most primitive tools are the most effective. Back in Pando, even though the men have tools for chopping and building, they use their bare hands for weaving. Morales, who has every political tool at his disposal, often opts for the most basic: personal visits. Social media may be the most contemporary tool in Bolivian politics but in a country of contrasts like this one, politicians must also learn to travel the distance.*

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AGAINST THE EMPIRE

TEXT: MALHAR MAHURKAR
ILLUSTRATION: OSCAR ZALLES



Bolivian President Evo Morales has refused to toe the USA's line since he came into power, and has clashed with the 'land of the free' in several high-profile incidents, including expelling the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) and the US ambassador, Philip Goldberg, both in 2008. In the words of the US Department of State, 'Relations with the United States deteriorated as the Bolivian Government began to dismantle vital elements of the relationship.' This tone was set before Morales even came to power, when he accused the United States of state terrorism—clearly showing that Morales does not mince his words.

Growing up in Britain—where at least in the public sphere and in the absence of any serious political analysis, it is often thought that when the United States calls, Britain jumps—this gringo finds Morales's foreign policy truly mind-boggling, flabbergasting and dangerously impressive. Is this foreign policy expedient or foolish? It is undoubtedly brave—a small country in South America that dismisses US requests with such disdain. So why this stance? It is important to realize that it is not only Morales who endorses this anti-US policy, but also other key figures in his administration such as Vice President Álvaro García Linera and Minister of Foreign Affairs David Choquehuanca. Perhaps the best way of looking at this position is through the lens of imperialism—after all, Bolivia and Latin America's history is inseparable from its crushing yoke.

But first let us cast our minds back to the Morales administration's various clashes with Uncle Sam over the years. The expulsion of the DEA and American Ambassador Phillip Goldberg, whom Morales accused of collaborating with the political opposition to the government and fomenting violent dissent, both occurred in the tumultuous year of 2008. Ejecting the DEA is one thing, and narcotics have long been a sticking point in the US-Bolivia relationship, but expelling the US diplomatic representative is another thing entirely. It implies a total rejection of US diplomatic principles. Significantly, Morales said that he had no regret in taking this action and did so 'without fear of the [U.S.] Empire.'

Despite hopes for a rapprochement, once Obama came to power in 2009, US-Bolivian relations took a further tumble when

USAID (the United States Agency for International Development) was expelled with accusations of it funding organisations opposed to Bolivian government initiatives. And the latest in this long series of US-Bolivian clashes garnered the most international attention: the forced grounding of President Morales's state aircraft when it was rumoured that NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden was on board. This incident soured any possible reconciliation as Morales railed against what he saw as the insidious world influence of the United States and again framed the incident in terms of imperialism, saying, 'The Empire and its servants will never be able to intimidate and scare us.'

The Morales administration defines itself as anti-imperialist, but you can still easily see imperialism's scars in Bolivia today. I spoke to Reina Gonzales, an expert on US-Bolivian relations, to get an idea of how this ideology directs the Morales administration. She stressed that to just focus on Bolivia and Morales when considering the context of imperialism is a flawed view. She stressed Bolivia's history of exploitation and that of several other Latin American countries, such as Argentina, Brazil and Venezuela, all of which have faced imperialist threats from the United States. Gonzales says that Morales is part of a political system that has only been democratic for a short time, and so is responding to and directed by demands from citizens 'that have not been served for a long time'.

But imperialism in Bolivia did not start with the United States. The city of Potosí, for example, was once one of the richest cities on earth, due to the silver extracted from **Cerro Rico** with the toil, sweat and blood of indigenous workers and slaves. Their descendants still mine the deep shafts today, but the unimaginable wealth that was produced has largely been exported, funding first the Spanish crown and, these days, foreign mining companies. Potosí is just one small part of a raw, barely healed scab which leads to such a large suspicion of foreign influence.

The United States has also had its fingers in Bolivia for a long time. Its influence has not always led to positive results for the continent, and Bolivia's history provides ample proof. Beginning with the discovery of Bolivia's massive tin deposits in the early 20th century, there have been various cycles of spiraling debt to US creditors over the

decades. After World War II, relations were strained in the aftermath of the great revolution of 1952, and US offers of assistance often came with conditional requirements attached that seemed designed to take sovereignty out of Bolivia's hands.

The narcotics issue is key to understanding this volatile relationship, and when you take into consideration the United States' anti-coca position and the fact that Morales was a **cocalero** and still is the leader of the largest coca-grower union in Bolivia, the picture becomes clearer. Operation Blast Furnace in 1986 stands out as a sore case. The USA decided to directly tackle its domestic cocaine problem by attempting to destroy the drug's precursor at the source. Several Blackhawk helicopters and over a hundred US personnel were deployed to Bolivia to eradicate coca fields. Imagine foreign troops entering your country and destroying a crop that has been cultivated and used by your people for millennia. Imagine violent clashes with a foreign-funded anti-coca police force resulting in direct physical confrontation and oppression. It would fill anyone with burning anger, and of course this was the context in which Evo Morales emerged. According to Gonzales, 'He himself suffered torture and oppression', emerging as a political leader opposed to US influence and neoliberalism.

I'm not attempting to condemn the United States here, or endorse Morales's stance. Political expediency definitely enters the equation. Opposing the United States clearly has some politically advantageous effects. Although the Morales administration has tried to usher in an era of multiculturalism and inclusiveness, it is clear that many pre-MAS power structures and economic policies remain intact. Focusing anger on an external, malign force is certainly a tried and tested political tactic. In understanding the government's stance, then, this anti-US rhetoric can be understood as a combination of political opportunism and the bitter legacy of foreign imperialism. Morales has come to power on the back of a mass social movement that represents a previously marginalised people. Whether Morales has achieved and implemented all that he said he would is a different debate. But Morales and the once-marginalised now have power in their own land, when for centuries they have been denied it, and the last thing they want is for the long arm of any foreign power, in this case the US, to regain influence. Whether Morales' dramatic break with the US results in long-term benefit for Bolivia, however, remains to be seen. ✕

ELECTION CATWALK

THE RED CARPET IS OUT, THE SPOTLIGHTS ARE SET AND THE PLAYLIST, FEATURING THE TELEFÉRICO ANTHEM AND THE COMMISSIONED QUIPUS RAP, IS READY FOR THIS OCTOBER'S LONG-AWAITED ELECTION CATWALK. DRUMMED INTO US FROM AN EARLY AGE IS THE CONCEPT 'DON'T JUDGE A BOOK BY ITS COVER', BUT WE'RE GOING TO DO EXACTLY THAT BY EVALUATING THIS YEAR'S BOLIVIAN PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES ON THEIR APPEARANCES.

TEXT: CHRISTY CALLAWAY-GALE AND MALHAR MAHURKAR



JORGE QUIROGA RAMÍREZ (CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT PARTY)

REPRESENTING THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT PARTY, QUIROGA HAS IN FACT ALREADY SERVED AS PRESIDENT OF BOLIVIA, FROM 2001 TO 2002. IN TERMS OF TRYING TO DESCRIBE HIS APPEARANCE, PERHAPS IT'S BEST TO LET QUIROGA HIMSELF DO THE TALKING. HE PRESENTS A VERY WESTERN IMAGE; HE IS OF SPANISH DESCENT, APPEARING IN WELL-CUT AND TAILORED SUITS PRESENTING A DIGNIFIED IMAGE. HE STUDIED IN THE UNITED STATES AND WORKED FOR IBM IN TEXAS, DESCRIBING HIMSELF AS A 'CORPORATE YUPPIE'. UPON HIS RETURN TO BOLIVIA, QUIROGA CONTINUED TO WORK IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR AS A SPECIALIST IN A LARGE MINING COMPANY BEFORE ENTERING POLITICS. IT SEEMS HIS SELF-DESCRIPTION IS RATHER HONEST. MAYBE IT'S JUST ME, BUT HE RATHER REMINDS ME OF MITT ROMNEY. YOU CAN RELY ON QUIROGA TO ALWAYS BE DRESSED IN A GOOD SUIT, BUT WHEN HE'S FEELING PARTICULARLY WILD A PAIR OF SMART TROUSERS AND A SHIRT—WITHOUT A TIE.



EVO MORALES (MAS)

MORALES LEAPT TO FAME IN 2006 AS A POLITICAL FASHION ICON, OR SO I'M TOLD—I WOULD NOT CONSIDER MYSELF A SARTORIAL EXPERT. HE WAS A HIT AS HE SPORTED HIS TRADEMARK STRIPED JUMPER, AN INDIGENOUS BOLIVIAN 'EVERYMAN' IN CONTRAST TO THE SUITED AND BOOTED POLITICAL CLASS. HE ALSO BECAME PRESIDENT. FAST-FORWARD EIGHT YEARS AND IT SEEMS THAT MORALES HAS BECOME ACCUSTOMED TO POWER AND IS CULTIVATING A DIFFERENT IMAGE AS THE INCUMBENT PRESIDENT SEEKING (A CONTROVERSIAL) RE-ELECTION. THAT'S NO FLAW AS TIMES AND CIRCUMSTANCES CHANGE, BUT HE HARDLY APPEARS OR ATTEMPTS TO BE THE GUY NEXT DOOR ANYMORE. HE IS NOW UNDOUBTEDLY A STATESMAN, AND THIS IS THE IMAGE HE IS GOING FOR. HE MOVES AROUND IN A PRIVATE JET AND A BULLETPROOF CAR AND WEARS FINE SUITS, ALTHOUGH THE JACKETS OFTEN HAVE A STYLISH BOLIVIAN TWIST. HE JUST DOESN'T SEEM QUITE AS DOWN TO EARTH AS THE MORALES OF 2006. BUT MAYBE THE FASHION CHANGE HAS COME FOR REASONS UNKNOWN. MAYBE HE'S JUST LOST HIS SPECIAL JUMPER AND CAN'T BEAR TO REPLACE IT—WHO KNOWS?



SAMUEL JORGE DORIA MEDINA (DEMOCRATIC UNION)

IS HE TRYING TO PULL OFF THE 'EVERYMAN' LOOK? OFTEN APPEARING AS IF ABOUT TO GO ON A RUN IN A GOOD-OLD HOODY, DORIA MEDINA IS TAKING OVER THE LEGACY OF MORALES'S SWEATER PHASE THAT SHOWED HE TOO WAS ONE OF THE PEOPLE. A PROMINENT PUBLIC FIGURE BOTH WITHIN INDUSTRY AND THE POLITICAL SPHERE, WHERE HE BOLDLY ALLUDES TO THE 'CORRUPTION OF THE GOVERNMENT' ON HIS WEBPAGE, THIS FAST-FOOD ENTREPRENEUR IS THE HEAD OF BURGER KING AND SUBWAY FRANCHISES IN BOLIVIA. HE'S ALSO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF THE GLOBAL CEMENT COMPANY SOBOCE.



FERNANDO VARGAS (GREEN PARTY)

VARGAS IS AN INDIGENOUS LEADER WHO ROSE TO NATIONAL PROMINENCE AS A LEADER OF THE TIPNIS MARCH, WHICH SAW HUNDREDS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLE MARCH FOR WEEKS IN PROTEST OF A GOVERNMENT-BACKED HIGHWAY THROUGH THEIR LAND. HIS TRADEMARK IS HIS BROWN, LEATHER SOMBRERO, WHICH GOES WHEREVER HE DOES. VARGAS DOESN'T DRESS UP AND HE DOESN'T DRESS DOWN. HIS JEANS AND COTTON SHIRTS ARE READY FOR WHATEVER THE DAY DEMANDS.



JUAN DEL GRANADO (MSM)

GRANADO SPORTS THE NON-IMAGE IMAGE. HIS PARTY IS MUCH LOVED DUE TO GRANADO'S FORMER POST AS MAYOR OF LA PAZ, BUT HE HAS NO REAL CULTIVATED PRESENCE—SURPRISING FOR SOMEONE WHO HAS THE BOLD NICKNAME 'JUAN SIN MIEDO' (JUAN WHO HAS NO FEAR). AT THE VERY BEST, HE HAS TRIED TO ADOPT A SLEEVELESS SWEATER AND COLLARED SHIRT COMBO AS A DRESS CODE. NO MORE.



PHOTOS: MALHAR MAHURKAR



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GLOSSARY

CAMPESINO	Peasant
CERRO RICO	Rich hill
COCALERO	Coca farmer
MEDIA LUNA	The lowlands of eastern Bolivia, so called because of the region's half-moon shape
TELEFÉRICO	La Paz's new cable-car mass transit system
MACHISTAS FUERA DE LAS LISTAS	Get chauvinist candidates out of the elections
MESTIZO	Mixed race



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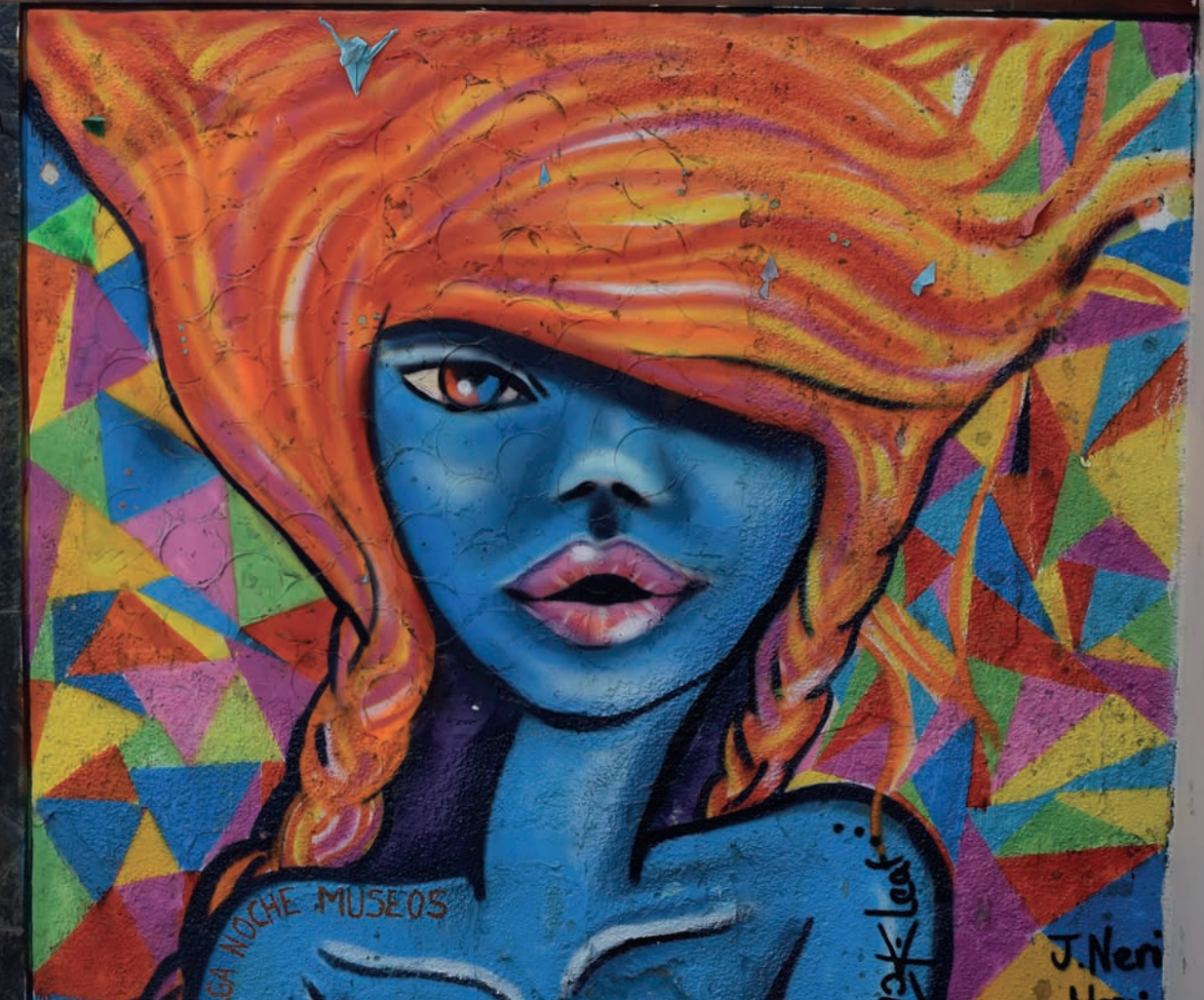
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PHOTO: NIKOLA MAKSIMOVIC

THE STREET ART OF LA PAZ

THE ARTISTIC BATTLEGROUND FOR POLITICAL AND SOCIETAL EXPRESSION

TEXT AND PHOTOS: NIKOLA MAKSIMOVIC



Very few of La Paz's walls, doors and highways have escaped the touch of the spray can and brush; graffiti tags, murals and political slogans line almost every street. This phenomenon is not exclusive to Bolivia, though; it has become a distinctive trait of almost every Latin American city.

Graffiti historically belongs to under-

ground, anti-establishment movements, and its proliferation tends to increase at times of political instability, dissatisfaction and revolution. And Latin America is a geographic area where the struggle against poverty and the fight for human rights has a tortuous history. The long-standing desire for positive change and the street art it inspires can be seen in the domain of the people where they grow up, work, play and live: in the streets.

There is no better example of a graffiti campaign aiming to inspire change than the work of Mujeres Creando, a long-standing, well-organized feminist anarchist group whose clear messages are reflected in their recognizable graffiti style. Slogans such as "Mujer! No me gusta cuando callas" (Woman! I do not like it when you are quiet) are at once critical, funny, carefully considered and, above all, provocative. In areas where there is a con-

centration of a specific problem (sexual assault, domestic violence), a special effort is made to make a critical, cutting message heard; otherwise, political centres, schools and thoroughfares are targets.

change. For her and many others like her, 'Art is a weapon of future; art can help in the struggle. It is important; the struggle is the reality we are living in.'

On the eve of the presidential election,

be a horrible place without street art'. Indeed, he argues that since the graffiti of the Satucos is always positive in tone, never slanderous and, above all, creative in its use of puns and wordplay. Reflecting on whether their work can be considered art,



Mujeres Creando represent a vulnerable group in Bolivia, and they work hard to bring about a new, equitable society and unseat machismo and the patriarchy from their pedestals. It's an uphill battle, and it takes place not only within the walls of National Assembly, but in public spaces. While the aesthetic of Mujeres Creando's graffiti is important (the group's trademark firma and stylistics makes the art instantly recognizable), in the words of leading member Julieta Ojeda; 'It's not art just for the sake of art'. Their graffiti is a real, effective political weapon in their ongoing struggle.

For others, images speak louder than words. The street art of La Paz is varied, often political and always impressive. The street art collectives in La Paz are a far cry from the mindless taggers and handymen of rival gangs. They are a network of young, thoughtful and proactive men and women, who not only exercise their right to have their voices heard in the public sphere, but often seek to inspire ideas and positive change through their art itself. Thus, the bright, political murals of La Paz impress on two levels: in their messages and in their aesthetic power. One such artist, Knorke Leaf, was commissioned to create the #timetoact mural on the prominent Avenida Arce, which highlights the real and seldom-discussed issue of violence against women in Bolivia. Central to her philosophy is the belief in the power of art to inspire positive

political parties have realized the potential for self-promotion on the streets and have zealously taken to them armed with brushes and paint. Alongside the blatant electoral campaigns, there can be found the political slogans of Los Satucos, made distinctive by their signature devil-tailed sign-off. The Satucos, active since 2004, are a political action group, strongly allied with the governing MAS party, yet independently run by ex-Assembly member Gustavo Torrico and a group of activists.

Other street art collectives have spoken out against the Satucos, claiming that the group has nothing in common with the unfunded, spontaneous work of street artists and graffitiists such as Knorke Leaf, and that the Satucos' prolific and extensive presence on the city walls is an intrusion into what is rightfully a space reserved for the people's voices. The Satucos are seen by many as political propagandists, thinly veiling themselves as an underground movement in order to benefit from the exposure which the open stage of the streets offer. Yet, there appears to be a universal consensus that if you are creating debate and ideas with your work, making people think about what you have written, then this is a form of art and therefore its presence on the city walls is ultimately a force for good. I asked Torrico for his opinion on the various graffiti campaigns, and what emerged straight away was his genuine enthusiasm, support and utmost respect for the street art of La Paz; 'La Paz would

he believes that these slogans earn their place on the walls of La Paz because they stimulate debate and make people think. 'What makes us happy is that we have revolutionized, but above all, reclaimed the streets as a political mural', Torrico said, 'which can be opposed to or supportive of a political cause'.

It appears to me that all these various groups share two key beliefs: the superiority of creative expression for stimulating change, and people's right to have their voices heard on the streets of the city. What divides them is their definition of who the people of La Paz are. For Torrico, the streets are a manifestation of the right to freedom of speech, but for the street art collectives, for the independent graffiti artist and groups such as the Mujeres Creando, the political parties whose voices already permeate every nook and cranny of the country are invading the only platform open to those without the power and money to have their voices heard anywhere else. The streets are where democracy is at its purest.

The result is a city whose streets are resounding with silent shouting. In the Evo Morales era, there is an atmosphere of revolution: political revolution from the government and the anti-establishment groups, social and cultural revolution from the likes of the Mujeres Creando and the street artists. Scrawled all over El Alto is the phrase 'My city is changing.' Is it? ✕

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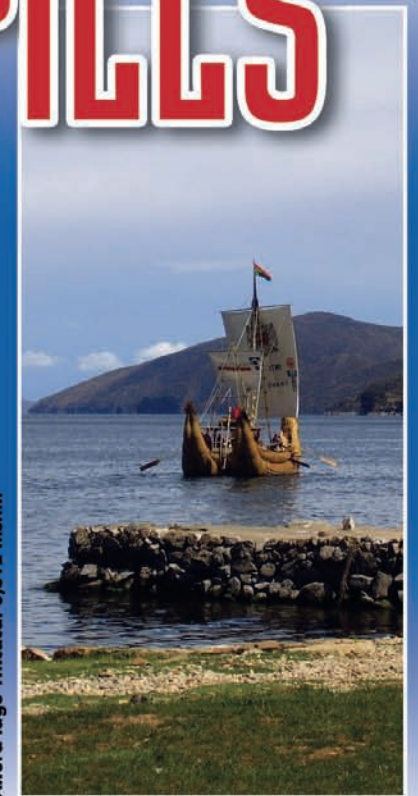
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