

Indigenous peoples of the Andean countries: cultural and political aspects

Dan Rosengren
Gothenburg, April 2002

A study commissioned by Sida

Indigenous peoples of the Andean countries: cultural and political aspects

Dan Rosengren

1. Introduction

The question as to how many indigenous peoples that live in South America today is a political one. There are no objective criteria for defining what is or is not indigenous, rather it is a matter of ascription by oneself and by others.¹ Most indigenous peoples of the Americas no longer wear their national costumes except for ceremonial occasions, spatial organizations of communities have changed and languages have been lost in favour of the European languages that were brought by the conquerors. In spite of this, distinctively indigenous (or non-European) notions of, for instance, livelihood systems, kinship structures, worldviews and political power are resilient. Identities of indigenusness are, as a consequence, strong and during the last decades it has grown even stronger as an ethno-political consciousness is spreading in growing circles over the continent.

Feelings of difference in relation to the ruling elite and of sameness in relation to fellow indigenous peoples are important aspects of the current ethnic consciousness. The experience of colonial subjugation that indigenous peoples share should, however, not conceal that there also are important social and cultural differences among them. The indigenous movement, stresses, accordingly, that since they constitute a number of distinct peoples they cannot be uniformly treated as if they were an undifferentiated category of 'people' or 'population.' The cultural and ethnic aspects of indigenusness are, hence, taken as the point of departure for this paper. Although indigenous peoples as a rule belong to the poorest sections of the national populations, this condition follows primarily from being colonized which is a political cause rather than an economic.

The study is divided into two principal parts. In the first part a general sketch of ecological, social and cultural conditions and the historical development till the present is outlined. The second part describes the development of the indigenous movement and its organisations. This part also contains an account of indigenous peoples' relations to the State as regards legislation and "development projects." Since focus is on Bolivia, the cases of Peru, Ecuador and Colombia are treated only summarily.

¹ How to define what should be meant by the concept 'indigenous people' is accordingly difficult and there are a number of definitions that currently are used by different actors. One definition which presently is acquiring growing acceptance was proposed by Mr Jorge Martínez Cobo, Special Rapporteur of the Working Group on the Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples of the Commission for Human Rights, who in his *Study of the Problem of Discrimination Against Indigenous Populations* (EC/CN.4/Sub.2/1986/7 and Add. 1-4) defined indigenous peoples as:

those which, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that develop on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing in those territories, or parts of them. They form at present non-dominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve, develop and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories, and their ethnic identity, as the basis of their continued existence as peoples, in accordance with their own cultural pattern, social institutions and legal systems.

2. Nature and Society: a general background

Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador and Colombia belong to the ethnically most diversified countries in South America.² Besides the indigenous population there are also substantial numbers of peoples who descend from European, African and Asian ancestors who arrived to the South American continent during different periods of the colonial history. In regard to the indigenous population a rough distinction can be made between highland and lowland peoples, that is, between peoples who culturally belong to the Andean highland area and peoples who culturally belong to the lowland areas on both sides of the Andes. The qualification of ‘cultural belonging’ is necessary since today many of those who culturally belong to the Andean area live in the lowlands.

The character of the indigenous societies is in part formed by natural conditions, in part by social and cultural processes, that is, by history. The ethnographic “map” over the Andean countries is, as a consequence, complex and characterized by considerable variations though there are also social and cultural traits that are shared to a greater or lesser extent by the societies in the area.

2.1 Natural conditions

The Andean countries are in the minds of many dominated by the Andean mountain chain which, undeniably, is prominent though it covers less than half of the countries’ surface. Territorially the area of the four Andean countries covered by this study is dominated by lowlands: the humid tropical rain forest regions of the Amazon plain and the Chocó-area on the Pacific side of the mountain chain in Colombia and Ecuador, and the drier savannah-like areas of the Bolivian *Chaco* and the Colombian *llanos*. The prominence of the Andes in public consciousness owes rather to the areas’ historical and demographical conditions which, within all the concerned nations, have given it an economic and political importance that surpasses most other regions of the countries.

Within the general Andean highland area there are a number of important differences that locally influence the human condition. A first distinction to be made is that between the northern part, called ‘the equatorial Andes,’ that dominates Colombia and Ecuador, and the southern part, known as ‘the tropical Andes’ of which the Peruvian and Bolivian highlands form part. These two Andean regions differ in a number of respects, the tropical Andes are, for instance, higher, more wide-ranging and drier than the equatorial Andes.

The two parts of the Andes mountains are not uniform in themselves but consist of a number of different ecological zones. As the ecological zones largely are distributed on a vertical axis it is possible to pass between tropical and arctic environments in but a few hours time as one move up and down a mountain slope. Local communities generally have access to and make use of a number of these zones since the differentiation of their production facilitates their subsistence in times of crop failure or other naturally produced misfortunes. Thus, the multiplicity of ecological zones signifies that a number of adaptive strategies are found in Andean local societies.

² A list of the indigenous peoples with an estimation of their numbers in the four countries is presented in Appendix 1.

Associated with the ecological differences between the two parts of the Andes mountains are differences in the ethnic composition. In the equatorial Andes, the ethnic map is complex and consists of a number of culturally and linguistically distinct peoples that are found on various altitudes and specialising in varying forms of livelihood. In the tropical Andes, the cultural and linguistic picture is more homogenous as the Quechua and Aymara peoples dominate completely. Differences are here internalised in the social structure and serve as complementary and diversifying aspects of these peoples' livelihood rather than as ethnically distinguishing marks.

People of the tropical Andes distinguish between a number of ecological zones that influence their mode of livelihood.³ The *janca* zone constitute the part of the mountains that stretches from the permanently snow and ice covered peaks to the barren parts just below. This zone is economically without interest though religiously it is of utmost importance as it is the abode of gods and spirits. Below the *janca* is the *puna* where people live from herding alpaca and sheep and the cultivation of cold hardy varieties of potato and other tubers. The *suní* zone is found on the plateaus on the same altitude as the *puna* where conditions are less harsh. The most well-known *suní* area is the high plateau around Lake Titicaca. In comparison to other Andean areas the shores of Lake Titicaca is densely settled which is possible because of the fertile shores of the lake. Since the extension of fertile lands is limited the rural structure is dominated by what is known as the *minifundio* system characterized by family owned farms with small landholdings that only exceptionally amount to acreages of one hectare. The economically most important ecological zone is that which is known as the *keshwa*, or *quechua*, and Andean peasant culture is closely associated with it. The Spanish conquerors mistakenly believed that the people living here was named Quechua, an error that still is the common usage. The *keshwa* has a relatively high population density. Cultivation is intensive and frequently based on techniques of irrigation and to some extent also on terracing. Below the *keshwa* zone extends the *yunga* which on the Amazon side is given the further specification of *chaupiyunga*. The Pacific *yunga* is characteristically dry with large extensions of deserts. The *chaupiyunga* is a completely different world. Temperature and humidity are high and the vegetation is dense and in many respects similar to the tropical rain forest. In general, highland people, both Andean and European, have kept away from this area since it is associated with wild animals and dangerous diseases. There have, however, always existed "islands" in which mainly coca and fruit have been cultivated.

Below the *chaupiyunga* is the proper tropical rain forest area which, commonly, is known by its Spanish name, *selva*. This is the habitat where most of the lowland groups live. Subsistence is usually based on a combination of swidden agriculture and hunting, fishing and foraging. The fertility of the lands are as a rule limited and swidden agriculture with long periods of fallowing is usually required. As a consequence, the peoples of the *selva* are commonly thinly dispersed over wide areas. The degree to which these peoples are integrated into the national economies varies from peoples that are fully part of the market economy to groups that voluntarily maintain isolation.⁴ During the last three to four decades an increasing number of highland peasants have moved down into the *chaupiyunga* and *selva* where they grow coffee, cacao, coca and other commercial crops. Coca is often illicitly grown and destined for the lucrative but illegal drug market.

³ The ecological zonation of the equatorial Andes is different and since focus is upon Bolivia, a relation of this zonation is left out.

⁴ These groups often are referred to as 'uncontacted' which is an euphemism that hides the condition that these peoples usually have chosen isolation after gruesome contact experiences with the national society.

The *chaco* in Bolivia and the *llanos* in Colombia constitute the other lowland zones to the east of the Andes. The *chaco* in the Bolivian Oriente is partly covered by tropical dry forest, partly it is, like the Colombian *llanos*, an open savannah-like landscape. These areas are inhabited by groups of indigenous peoples who used to live on hunting, fishing and foraging. Many of these peoples have been forced away from their territories by encroaching immigrants coming to the areas for agriculture (maize, rice, cotton, etc) and extensive cattle ranching.

Peoples of the tropical Andes often make use of several ecological zones and their productive systems have been described as “vertical economies.” A few different types of verticality can be noted, the most common varieties are the “archipelago type” and the “compressed type.” In the “archipelago” kind the society is divided into various local groups; while the main village is situated in the *keshwa* zone, more or less permanent “annexes” are maintained in *puna* and *chaupiyunga* districts situated two to three days walking-distance away. The productive units in the outlying villages are commonly formed by junior members of families that remain in the *keshwa* zone. The “compressed” type functions according to the same basic principles but the different zones exploited are found within a more limited area. As distances are not as long as in the “archipelago” type only those who take care of the cattle grassed on the *puna* do not return home at the end of the working day.

2.2 Indigenous society and culture

To sketch the principal features of the societies and cultures of the indigenous peoples in the Andean countries covered by this study is fraught with difficulties. The large number of different peoples spread throughout the regions (see Appendix 1), each with distinct cultures and social formations create a complex patchwork. Any social and cultural uniformity within the regions and/or the language groups is neither to be expected. Nevertheless, there are common features that are shared by all or that characterize regional conditions. Accordingly, the fundamental basis of any indigenous society, irrespective of the region, is the community, variously known as *comunidad indígena*, *comunidad campesina*, *comunidad nativa* and, in Colombia, as *resguardo*. Many of the factors that define the community among the different peoples have ideological expressions that contribute to the formation and maintenance of the identity of the people concerned.

2.2.1 The Andean region

When the Spanish conquered the Inka state, the Andean indigenous social and cultural organization found its articulation principally in the family and community organization. Still a substantial portion of indigenous Andeans live in socially closed communities organized according to communitarian principles. The typical Andean indigenous village consists of dispersed groups of single-family houses surrounded by animal corrals and cultivated fields. Until recently people married preferably within the village with the effect that the community’s land was kept together and control was intact. The basic social unit is the extended family and the *ayllu*. The *ayllu*, is based principally on kin relations but contains elements of residence as well. The *ayllu* structure is relative and, depending on the context, it can refer to various organizational levels, from the kin group through a number of increasingly inclusive groups to the region.

Even though growing sections of the indigenous highland population have been forced to migrate from their communities, the links home are important and maintained as long as possible, often several generations. An important reason for these bonds’ constancy is that

food produced on the lands of the home community constitutes a crucial link to the ancestors and the maintenance of this link is considered as vital also for the physical survival. With food produced on the lands of the home community spiritual powers are transferred that fortifies the eating descendants. To maintain the links with the home communities those who have migrated retain a parcel of land which is cultivated by someone from the community who, in compensation, sends locally produced food to the absent owners. Those who leave the home community for shorter periods of time commonly bring an amulet made from stone taken from a nearby mountain. Symbolically, the stone of the amulet relates to the mountain in the same way the bearer of the amulet relates to his or her home community, that is, as a part of a greater whole or a collective. The amulets form part of the spiritual knowledge and if this knowledge no longer is taken seriously the spiritual bonds and personal humility are lost. Many observers have noted that Andean peoples are characteristically meek and withdrawn which some have taken as an indication upon their lack of initiative and intellectual alertness. To be humble and respectful is, however, a valued characteristic since it is associated with a moral life where the collective is stressed rather than the self.

Another fundamental principle in Andean cultures is that of *duality*. The principle of dualism permeates the lives of indigenous Andeans; it is a world view according to which people, society, the cosmos and other aspects of life are divided into complementary parts. The harmony of the universe depends on the controlled inter-relationship between the halves. Socially, this duality is articulated in the *ayllu* organisation, each *ayllu* is always defined in relation to an opposing *ayllu*. The dual principle is socially important as it regulates many aspects of life, such as marriage, election to local political offices, composition of work parties, distribution and access to water for irrigation, etc. It also links humans and their environment with the spiritual world.

The relationship between the parts in the Andean dual organisation is characterized by a tense dynamic and harmony is therefore crucial to keep together the opposed parts. Harmony is generated in different ways, either through exchange between the parties or through the intervention of a third and superior part to which the two opposed parties are subjected. Such notions of harmony and opposition are important in order to understand indigenous responses to both historical and present forms of colonialism. When the social and cultural order is disrupted a common reaction is the appearance of movements that seek to restore harmony by finding a unitary principle that can re-establish the cosmic and/or social balance through a radical transformation of society, a change known as *pachaqutec*. Among the processes that threaten Andean indigenous cultures is the growing importance of both individual ownership of land and the nuclear family. Both these factors challenge the social and cultural significance of community and dualism alike, with the effect that old patterns of solidarity within the extended family and the community are disintegrated.

2.2.2 *The Lowland regions*

The lowlands present a sociologically more intricate patchwork than the Andean highlands, partly because the number of different societies and cultures is greater, partly because the natural conditions are not as uniform, consisting both of tropical rain forest areas (the Amazon and the Chocó) and drier savannah-like areas (the Chaco and the Llanos).

In terms of production and settlement there is a marked contrast between highland and lowland peoples. Highland peoples live on community sites where they have been settled for hundreds of years while local communities in the lowlands are more mobile. Swidden

agriculture is found throughout the humid areas. It is an agricultural regime that is well adapted to the area's commonly poor soils which requires many years of soil regeneration and dispersed and mobile populations. In the drier areas the mobility is principally generated by the importance of hunting and foraging which, in order to be sustainable over time, requires small mobile groups. The mobility of the peoples concerned are, however, commonly within a limited territorial 'catchment' area. Consequently, the territory is the important unity to lowland peoples rather than the community.

The community structure of the lowland peoples differs widely: some peoples live in communities of several hundred inhabitants, others live in dispersed settlements of single or extended family households. Community relations are defined by gender, age and common residence, and articulated through socially recognized relationships, like kin and membership of clans, lineages or moieties. Marriage is often fundamental because it frequently binds the community into series of exchange relationships which stretch far beyond the spouses.

As in the Andean area, nature is imbued by spiritual forces that immediately affect the daily life of people. The maintenance of contact with the spiritual dimension of the world is therefore of prime importance and though it is the principal task of shamans all community members are responsible for behaving properly so as not to offend the spirits.

The political dimension of these societies are usually characterised by a degree of egalitarianism where adults only are responsible to themselves. Political leadership is seldom institutionalised and it is often weak; frequently leadership positions are based on charisma and confidence in the competence of prominent men. Local leaders have rarely any authority to give people orders and governance is rather based on the good example that the leaders themselves set. When people lose trust in their leaders they are abandoned and disregarded. Local communities often maintain a high degree of political independence in relation to other local communities. Interconnections are usually based on exchange relations that not only are of an economic nature but also include, for instance, marriage and ritual. Attempts from national governments to introduce community management systems based on principles of representative democracy have at times been wrought with problems as the underlying principles are in opposition to indigenous notions of leadership and power.

Among the factors that threaten the indigenous cultures of the lowland areas, the loss of control over their territory is probably the most serious. The problem is complex and relates to both the control of surface and of subterranean resources. Environmental problems, such as, for instance, deforestation and pollution, and the spread of disease are in different parts also severe problems that threaten the physical as well as cultural survival of these peoples.

3. Indigenous peoples and the Nation-State

3.1 Colonial society⁵

When the Spanish landed on the coast of Peru in 1532 they came to a land that was torn by internal strife. The small Spanish troops were initially accepted as allies in the internecine war between the troops of the two half-brothers Atahualpa and Huascar contending for supreme

⁵ It should be noted that from an indigenous perspective, present political regimes are still colonial.

power over the Inka empire. Soon, however, the Spanish came to usurp political dominance and the Inka nobility was assimilated in the dominant hierarchy.

The ease with which the relatively small troops of Spanish soldiers managed to subjugate imperial armies lay not as much in military expertise as in the appalling toll in indigenous lives charged by diseases brought from Europe. We can only speculate about the extent of the dramatic decline of the indigenous population at the time of the invasion, it has, however, been estimated that the population of the Andean area declined from approximately 9 million people in 1532 to a mere 700.000, including all non-indigenous people, in 1625. Albeit many diseases are harmless to Europeans, they continue to be major killers of indigenous people in South America till this day.

The principal interest of the Spanish in the Andean area was the accumulation of gold and silver bullion. Rather than enslave the indigenous peoples, the Spanish conquerors introduced a system of forced labour, “Indian” tax and the settling of communities in huge strategic villages called *reducciones*. Spanish authority was enforced through the *encomienda* system that may be described as a system to reward the conquerors, delegating to them rights to exact compulsory labour and tribute from the indigenous peoples that were gathered within a given area in *reducción*. The system was at the same time designed to indoctrinate the subjugated indigenous peoples in Christianity and integrate them into the colonial social and cultural structures.

During the last decades of the 16th century lands held in *encomienda* could be transformed into private property. Thus, the estates were turned into *latifundios* and the indigenous cultivators were transformed into propertyless agricultural labourers that were dependent upon the *hacendado* for their physical survival as their labour on the estate were compensated for by a right to land tenancy. Other lands, *resguardos*, which remained Crown property, were set aside for the subsistence of the indigenous peoples. In these *resguardos* and in inaccessible parts of the highlands to which small groups of indigenous cultivators escaped, independent communities were established that subsequently were accepted as *comunidades indígenas*.

By 1750 practically the entire continent was under the control of the Spanish and the Portuguese, though some areas were removed from European influence. In Peru large parts of the central *selva* remained outside Spanish control because of several successful resistance movements. Also indigenous Andeans were active in resisting the Spanish dominion at this time. Tupac Amaru in Cusco and Tupac Katari in Puno fiercely resisted the forced sale of indigenous merchandise and the use of forced labour on the large *latifundios*. These indigenous movements contained messianic elements. The names ‘Amaru’ and ‘Katari’ refer in Quechua and Aymara respectively to the Inka who was driven underground and who will rise one day to re-establish harmony and free the Andes from colonial oppression (*pachaqutec*). Both uprisings were put down and their leaders executed but they have since then served as inspirations to indigenous Andeans who seek an end to injustices inflicted by the colonial regime.

The growth of an American bourgeois class influenced by libertarian ideals provided ripe conditions for a struggle to throw off the subordination to the Spanish Crown. The independence movement was, in accordance, principally formed by the so called Creoles, that is, white American-born people. By 1825 most of Spanish South America was freed from the colonial dominance of Spain. The liberation did not offer any emancipation for the indigenous peoples as the structure of the colonial society remained. Following the ideals of political

liberalism, Simon Bolívar, leader of the liberation struggle, decreed in 1824 that any member of an Andean community could sell his share of communal land holdings. The decree contributed largely to the appearance of numerous huge Creole-owned highland estates (*haciendas*) as many indigenous Andeans were dispossessed from their territories. The hacienda system was modelled on the colonial *encomienda* practising a labour regime that in many respects reminded about feudal serfdom. The acreage of the haciendas was usually in great excess of what the landlords were interested in cultivating for their own part. This excess land was crucial to the functioning of the system as it was the principal means whereby labour access was assured. The peasants leased the land upon which they survived against working for a certain number of days per week for the landlord.

The Andean peasants who had lost their lands and who could not find employment on the haciendas had to seek alternative means of survival and an increasing number started to migrate either to urban centres or to the Amazon lowlands. The process of migration that was initiated in this manner continues till this day. The demographic restructuring of the population has created a number of problems that still requires a solution.

During the latter part of the 19th century the indigenous peoples of the Upper Amazon regions of Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia faced devastation with the infamous rubber boom. The development of vulcanisation in the 1870s gave rise to an international demand for rubber, causing its price to rise rapidly. The boom lasted until 1914 during which period the indigenous lowland peoples were enslaved and killed in thousands by rubber companies. The depopulation of the rubber areas had, in some instances, reached 95% by 1920.

In the Andean rural areas a decreasing number of owners controlled increasingly larger acreages while an increasing number of owners controlled a decreasing acreage. In Bolivia, 6% of the landowners held 92% of the land in 1952 while there remained only a reduced number of free communities, many of which were overpopulated in relation to the land they controlled. The unequal rural structure led to frequent outbreaks of social unrest. Surfing on the wave of popular protest the Bolivian *Movimiento Nacional Revolucionario* (MNR) managed to canalise popular support for a land reform program which brought them into power by the nationalist revolution in 1952. In 1953 an Agrarian Reform was initiated that prohibited unremunerated labour services (*pongeaje*), it broke up the haciendas and distributed their lands among the families that had been working on them, providing them with individually held legal titles. During the ten years between 1955 and 1965, 6 million has. were distributed among 170.000 families. From the perspective of the indigenous movement the distribution of individual titles to land signified a problem as it broke up many highland communities.

The Bolivian land reform was the first attempt in South America to redress the agrarian imbalance and one or two decades later it was followed in other countries. The *Instituto Colombiano de Reforma Agraria* (INCORA) was set up in 1961 with the responsibility to create reserve lands for indigenous groups. In 1960 the Colombian State officially recognised 600.000 has of indigenous property while it presently recognises more than 30 million has. as reserves and *resguardos*. It should, however, be noted that virtually all of the land that has been recognised during this time was already in the hands of indigenous peoples. Of the 30 million has. that now is recognized as indigenously controlled land, less than 200.000 has. have been recovered from non-indigenous landowners. Thus, in 95% of the cases, property claims have been accepted as long as the State considered the land to be “vacant.” In cases

with competing claims, land has been returned to indigenous groups in only 20% of the cases considered by INCORA.

In Peru a first land reform was initiated in 1964 which principally was intended to avoid the development of a situation similar to that in neighbouring Bolivia. The land reform was, as a consequence, generally experienced as toothless by peasants and in 1968 a mere 9.000 families had benefited from the redistribution of lands. The radical military government of General Velasco Alvarado who seized power in 1968 implemented the same year a radical and wide-ranging agrarian reform for the highlands which was designed to maintain the communal structure of the Andean peasant communities. By breaking down the hacienda system, establishing co-operatives and limiting private holdings to 35 has. the peasant community became the basic politico-economic unit in the highlands. Though the intention of the reform program was ambitious, it was not backed up with infrastructural support. Moreover, it did not take into account the complex situation in Andean communities with people working and living in outlying villages in other ecological zones and some of the community members were therefore excluded from membership in the co-operatives which gave rise to the appearance of a new rural poverty group.

The pro-indigenous policy of the Velasco government was, however, ambiguous since the general political position was basically assimilationist in the name of progress according to a Western cultural model. Although the land of former haciendas was not distributed in individually owned parcels, it was reorganized in agrarian cooperatives with a production strategy that was geared to meet the demands of the market economy which in many respects is opposed to the cultural ideals of the highland cultivators. The process of “peasantification” was, accordingly, as strongly promoted as ever and symbolically represented by the change of designation of, for instance, *Comunidades Indígenas*⁶ to *Comunidades Campesinas* and the holiday *Día del Indio* to *Día del Campesino*.

The global economic crisis and the heavy indebtedness in which the South American countries fell during the last decades of the 20th century, generated strict demands on the balancing of the national economies from international development agencies. After a time of comparatively positive attitudes towards indigenous peoples, national governments were placed under economic pressure, particularly from the IMF and the World Bank, which paved the way for neo-liberal strategies which as a rule were applied without much social consideration. In only a short time many of the political gains won by the indigenous movement in previous years were lost with the consequence that new modes of organisation and mobilisation were sought for by growing sectors of the movement.

3.2 The indigenous movement

At the turn of the 19th and 20th century indigenous society began to be held forth as a social and cultural ideal, particularly among left-wing intellectuals. This current is commonly but confusingly referred to as the ‘indigenist movement.’ A cultural movement was promoted and although it contained certain revivalist tendencies its nature was basically patriarchal and ethnocentric as it tended to reduce indigenous cultures either to folkloristics or to instances reflecting European political theory. The proper organisation and policy formulation (which may be referred to as ‘indianism’) of indigenous peoples started later, at various points of time, and other organisational models and political ideals were followed. Two phases in the

⁶ In Peru the concept *Comunidad Indígena* refers only to Andean peasant communities while the Amazon lowland communities are designated as *Comunidades Nativas*.

development of the “modern” indianist movement can be discerned: an early stage which is heavily influenced by the labour union movement from which political theory and rhetoric are borrowed, and a later stage that seems to have developed first in the lowland regions in which and proper social and cultural values and forms of organisation are emphasised together with demands on self-determination. Self-determination is an open concept which in a narrow sense signifies secession from a constituted state. Among indigenous peoples in South America the notion refers, however, to the right to determine one’s life within the boundaries of the nation-state. In this context, self-determination refers both to “external” relations (basically negotiations on an equal basis with the state administration, to have a say in processes and projects that affect the indigenous community) and to “internal” relations (the right to organize economically and politically within the ethnic territory according to proper models and values).

The early indigenism was mainly adhered to among urban intellectuals and its influence in the indigenous communities was limited. The national governments had, in contrast, a more immediate influence on the self-conception of Andean peoples with the assimilationist strategy they pursued towards them according to which they foremost were to be considered as peasants and nationals. Together with the promotion of individual ownership of land and the breaking up of indigenous social organisations in the name of development and modernisation this assimilation policy have been successful to the extent that many Andean cultivators still accept this image of themselves. Political movements among highland peoples have, as a consequence, commonly been organised as trade unions rather than as ethno-political movements. In the lowland areas the minority situation of the indigenous peoples is more clearly defined and indigenous political organizations there are pre-eminently of an ethno-political nature. Presently an ethno-political consciousness is, however, growing among Andean peoples, principally as a consequence of what is conceived of as the failure of the trade union political strategy to produce lasting solutions.

On the level of national politics it was again Bolivia that was the first country on the continent to bring two indigenous leaders to the national Parliament when Julio Tumorí and Constantino Lima from the organization *Movimiento Indio Tupaq Katari* (MITKA) gained seats in the election of 1980. Since then, indigenous leaders in all countries have been elected to seats in the national Parliaments. Non-ethnic parties have lately held forth the indigenous descent of prominent politicians, notably vice president Victor Hugo Cárdenas in Bolivia and president Alejandro Toledo in Peru, to rally support from indigenous voters which, however, does not necessarily mean that they promote indigenist programs.

Until the mid 90s the indigenous movement experienced an increased awareness and comprehension for their particular problems from respective national government administration. In all the four countries new Constitutions were adopted that established that the States were pluricultural and multi-ethnic nations.

With the onset of the international economic crises with growing debts and increasing deficits in the balance of payments, the positive attitude changed as neo-liberal politicians came into power. The fact that the security situation in Colombia have gone from bad to worse during this time also contributes to the deteriorating situation of the country’s indigenous peoples. The achievements that had been won by the indigenous movements are now attacked on many levels. A counter reform movement has set in which reverts legal changes obtained and promotes new rules directed towards recovering the preferential treatment of the former beneficiaries as well as to open up the countries for investments from multinational

corporations. Attempts of promoting privatisation and individual ownership that have been prominent in the politics against indigenous peoples have, however, generally had the opposite effect of strengthening ethnic sentiments, reviving organisations and encouraging meeting which are new for the movement. Since the struggle for the defence of earlier achievements during the time of political regression signified a need to better hone the arguments and strategies, civil organisations, including the indigenous organisations, are now frequently well prepared and skilled in legal matters.

Today the most pressing problems of the indigenous peoples in the four countries are the associated questions of land control and self-determination. Although there exists legislations that guarantee rights to land, it is generally felt within indigenous organisations that laws can be challenged at any moment. In the process of social change and development, indigenous peoples often experience that they have no voice in matters that affect them and their future. They therefore demand to participate in the decision-making process and the right to effectively veto any proposal that goes against indigenous interests.

3.3 Indigenous organisations

The situation of indigenous peoples differs within the region of Andean countries as well as within every particular country. In order to enable a coherent treatment of the complex situation, focus is on the Bolivian case while the Peruvian, Ecuadorian and Colombian cases are dealt with only summarily.

3.3.1 *The Colombian indigenous movement*

During the initial decades of the last century the first experiences of organising the struggle for indigenous rights were made in Colombia. Prominent in this early attempt was Quintin Lame of the Páez people who functioned as a catalyst, formulating a philosophy of resistance that still inspire indigenous peoples to challenge the dominant forces of the country.

The Colombian government's attempt to transform the country's indigenous peoples into peasants was principally realized through the *Asociación Nacional de Usuarios Campesinos* (ANUC). The Páez and Guambiano peoples in the coffee growing districts in the Cauca Valley protested against this development and in 1971 the *Consejo Regional Indígena del Cauca* (CRIC) was formed. The Páez and Guambiano were not alone to disapprove of the national authority's policy and the same year the *Unión de Indígenas del Chocó* (UNDICH) and the *Consejo Regional Indígena del Vaupés* (CRIVA) were formed and they were followed by the establishment of several other organisations in the years to come. The principal demand of all these organisations was the return and recognition of their indigenous territories, the *resguardos*. They did, however, also make an alternative population census to acquire a more precise picture of the number of indigenous persons and they successfully campaigned for the expulsion of the Summer Institute of Linguistics, a North American fundamentalist missionary organisation.

The establishment of proper organisations strengthened the indigenist movement but at the same time it also created a number of problems. A break with the peasant movement signified growing conflicts with the political Left. In spite of this development, the government used the struggle against the guerrilla as a pretext for acting against the indigenist movement. The intent to substitute *Ley 89* (from 1890) with a new legislation that aimed to break up the

indigenous social organisation and replace the collective property of the *resguardos* with individual ownership was part of this attack.

Since the intensification of the guerrilla war in the beginning of the 80s the situation has grown increasingly worse. One response to this development was to unite forces and in 1982 the first national indigenous congress was realised with 2.000 participants. At this event the umbrella organisation *Organización Nacional Indígena de Colombia* (ONIC) was formed which still constitutes the main force in indigenous politics. Another response, which in the context of the Andean countries is unique to Colombia, was the formation of the indigenous guerrilla movement *Quintín Lame* which acted as a defence force to protect *resguardos* under attack by the government, the para-military forces and the leftwing guerrillas. This guerrilla movement reintegrated however soon and it has not been active for several years.

3.3.2 *The Ecuadorian indigenous movement*

In the beginning of the 1960s, groups of the Shuar people found themselves encroached upon and outnumbered by highland colonists who rapidly were taking over large portions of their territory and threatening Shuar life with disintegration. In response, Shuar leaders formulated an “original self-solution” to the crisis. The key aspect was self-determination which required that their territorial base was retained and that they took up a dialogue with the national authorities. Thus, the *Federación de Centros Shuar* was created in 1964 as the first “modern” indigenous organisation in South America. The decision to employ a federative model of organisation turned out to be successful and the Shuar example has subsequently been followed by many other indigenous organisations. The federative form of organisation is congenial with indigenous notions of participative democracy as it is based on a structure starting from the local community which is the basic unit of membership. Representatives from local communities are elected to participate in larger assemblies which elects representatives for local federative organisations.

The defence of territorial rights through the legal land titling process was conceived of as most urgent. From the start the Federation opted for a system of community land titles rather than individual titles in their often problem filled dealings with the *Instituto Ecuatoriana de Reforma Agraria y Colonización* (IERAC), now *Instituto Nacional de Desarrollo Agrario* (INDA). The Federation has, however, also developed an educative system adapted to local needs and supportive of the Shuar mode of living in widely dispersed households. To minimize family disruption and to spread educational opportunities as widely as possible, a system of radio-broadcast bilingual education was initiated in 1972.

In contrast to the indigenous movement in the Amazon lowlands, the indigenous Quichua movement in the highlands was initially part of the peasant trade union movement. Since a majority of the peasants belong to the indigenous population some peasant trade union have lately been reorganised to include ethnic issues. Thus, the *Federación Nacional de Organizaciones Campesinas* (FENOC) was reorganized in 1998 to FENOCIN (*Federación Nacional de Organizaciones Campesinas, Indígenas y Negras del Ecuador*). Generally, however, the class struggle perspective remains strong in the Andean indigenous movement.

In the Amazon other lowland peoples followed the example of the Shuar and established their own organisations. A majority of these form today part of the regional umbrella organisation *Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas de la Amazonía Ecuatoriana* (CONFENIAE). A similar organisation, *Ecuadorunari*, was formed in the highlands but since there is a great

number of quichua-speaking peoples in the Amazon lowlands it was reorganised in 1998 into the *Confederación de los Pueblos de la Nacionalidad Quichua* in order to open up for lowland Quichua organisations. In Ecuador there is also a vital and viable national umbrella organisation, the *Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas de Ecuador* (CONAIE) which plays a role in national politics similar to that of ONIC in Colombia.

Indigenous groups have in the political elections usually been represented by the Left and indigenous ethnic interests have accordingly been subordinated to these parties' class concepts. With the *Movimiento Unidad-Plurinacional Pachakutik-Nuevo País*, formed in 1996, the ethnic movement participated successfully in the national election of November 1997 gaining more than 10% of the seats in the Parliament. The indigenous representation was instrumental in including a recognition in the new national Constitution of 1998 of the pluricultural and multi-ethnic nature of the State, conferring on the various peoples the status of legal subjects with collective rights.

3.3.3 The Peruvian indigenous movement

The unequal distribution of land in the Andean region created during the 50s and 60s much social unrest. Locally formed peasant movements occupied and redistributed land of the large estates to redress the situation in many parts. Although the overwhelming majority of the participants culturally belonged to the indigenous peoples, the peasant movements formed as a rule part of the strong unionist tendency and it was long dominated by the *Confederación Campesina del Perú* (CCP).

When General Velasco Alvarado seized power in 1968 he declared that the political strategy that the new government was to follow was neither to be socialist nor capitalist, but Peruvian. An idealised model of Inka society served as a matrix for many of the reforms that were planned and initiated. Several persons with prominent positions within the government administration ascribed ideologically to indigenist ideals and the attitude towards indigenous demands was generally generous. General Velasco was forced to retire and he was substituted by General Morales Bermudez under whose government most of the pro-indigenous reforms were either annulled or diluted.

An effect of the government's changed attitude signified an impulse to strengthen the organisation among the indigenous peoples. In the Andean area the unionist tendency remained strong and Andean ethno-political organisations have neither on local nor on the national level had any particular impact on national politics. Of greater importance for the ethno-political development in the Peruvian Andes was the formation of the *Consejo Indio de Sud America* (CISA) which took place in the Peruvian highland town of Ollantaytambo in 1980. In spite of being a regional organisation, CISA was largely dominated by representatives of highland peoples. This dominance reflects the significance given to the philosophy of *Tawantinsuyo*, which is based on notions of the Inka socio-cosmological structure, which forms the ideological foundation of the council.

The drive towards ethno-political organization was in comparison stronger among lowland peoples among whom certain groups at that time already had some experience. Inspired by the formation of the Shuar Federation in Ecuador, the *Congreso Amuesha* (or Yanesha) was formed at the end of the 60s and both the *Consejo Aguaruna y Huambisa* and the *Frente de Defensa de las Comunidades Nativas* (Shipibo) were established in 1976. In 1979 these organisations formed a federation among themselves which in 1980 was reorganised as the

Asociación Interétnica de Desarrollo de la Selva Peruana (AIDSESEP) which since then has grown and today integrate 44 federations and regional organisations. In 1988 a competing umbrella organisation was established when the *Confederación de Nacionalidades de la Amazonía Peruana* (CONAP) was formed. One difference between the two organisations lies in their respective focus, AIDSESEP is often engaged in extensive projects while CONAP is more local in its engagements.

Between the organisations of the two regions there have been almost no links. With the establishment of the umbrella organisation *Conferencia Permanente de los Pueblos Indígenas del Perú* (COPPIP) in 1999 we may perhaps be seeing a new tendency that breaks with the former regional division although it has as yet not managed to acquire any major influence.

3.3.4 *The Bolivian indigenous movement*

The development of the indigenous movement in Bolivia follows its proper path. As in the other countries the colonial and republican history is replete with outbreaks of indigenous protest that normally were brutally suppressed. These early experiences commonly lacked stable organisation as they mainly were centred around charismatic leaders who managed to combine the forces of local groups of indigenous peoples in relation to specific situations. During the Chaco war (1932-35) indigenous peasants came in contact with workers and miners and learned about the force and efficiency of trade union organisations. Indigenous workers on haciendas were inspired by the miners' and industrial workers' experiences and in April 1936 the first indigenous union, the *Sindicato Agrario de "Huasacalle,"* was formed.

In considering the trade unions' relation to the indigenous movement, it should be noted that the unions' influence on the indigenous movement is weaker in Bolivia than in Peru and Ecuador. The Bolivian indigenous unions differ from those in the other countries as they from the very start were adapted to conform to the indigenous' organisation model. Thus, each "union" correspond to a community and affiliation is not voluntary but follows automatically from community membership. Official positions within the unions are appointed according to norms pertaining to notions of leadership that form part of Andean cultural values. In the Bolivian Andes ethnic identity has thus been central from early on in the development of the indigenous political movement. In the following, when I speak of unions of this kind I use the local designation '*sindicato*' in order to avoid confusion with common trade unions.

The redistribution of former hacienda lands in individually owned parcels as decreed by the 1952 Agrarian Reform accorded with the national strategy of assimilating the indigenous peoples and make peasants of them. The strategy was a central part of the agrarian policy during the mandate period of the MNR (1952-1964) and it was taken over by the subsequent military regimes in whose "*Pacto Militar Campesino*" assimilation constituted a prominent political goal. The attempts of "peasantification" were not challenged by the indigenous movement until the end of the 60s since, it is said,⁷ the highland indigenous peasants felt loyal with the various governments because it was the power in La Paz that had given them land. The turning point came during the presidency of General Barrientos who in 1968 tried to impose a taxation of lands (*Impuesto Único Agrario*) that had been distributed as a part of the agrarian reform. Since much of the production of the Andean small scale farms is geared towards the producers' own subsistence needs, such a tax would be onerous for the family economies. In response to the suggested tax, the *Bloque Campesino Independiente* (BCI) was

⁷ Cf. X.Albó (1991) "El retorno del indio," *Revista Andina*, 9(2): 311.

formed in order to gather peasants critical towards the central power in La Paz. Peasant loyalty with the government was still strong and BCI did not manage to mobilize much support, a first crack in the allegiance had, however, appeared and this grew rapidly into compact distrust.

In the beginning of the 70s the Aymara ethno-political theory called *katarismo* gained support in increasing circles after having been nurtured principally by urban Aymara intellectuals. *Katarismo* has been described as the recovery of a “distant memory” that has been obscured by the “close memory” of agrarian reform and the struggle of the *sindicatos*. In the light of the failure of both the agrarian reform and the *sindicatos* to achieve the ends aspired to by their followers, Tupac Katari, 18th century anti-colonial hero, steps forth and becomes a symbolic icon for the ethnic and cultural roots of the Aymara. *Katarismo* emphasises cultural values and expressions: language, music, dress, etc., serve not only as symbols but are recognised as having a value in themselves which appeal to the Aymara and boost ethnic self-confidence. Decisive in the development and diffusion of *katarismo* as a political ideology is the election in 1971 of the *katarist* Jenaro Flores as president of the *Confederación Nacional de Sindicatos Campesinos de Bolivia*.

The coup of Colonel Hugo Banzer in 1971 signified a blow to the entire popular movement. Banzer’s alliance with the former landowning elite meant also the definitive end to the *Pacto Militar Campesino*. During this time political repression was severe but because of cultural programmes diffused by various radio stations *katarismo* maintained its presence in the consciousness of the highland peasants. *Katarismo* regained prominence with its acceptance in the strategic program of the *Confederación Sindical Única de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia* (CSUTCB) formed in 1979. Despite the close links that CSUTCB at the time maintained to the national trade union confederation, *Central Obrera Boliviana* (COB), it was stressed that solutions to problems had to be sought from two perspectives: from the socio-economic perspective of the oppressed class and from the ethno-political perspective of the colonized indigenous people.

With the upcoming elections in 1978 various *katarista* tendencies formed political parties of which the two principal stressed the double perspective differently: the *Movimiento Revolucionario Tupaj Katari* (MRTK) followed most closely the CSUTCB line while the *Movimiento Indio Tupaj Katari* (MITKA) represented an outspoken indianist position stressing the ethno-political perspective. All *katarist* parties failed in these elections and they split and/or disintegrated. The two divergent lines represented by the MRTK and the MITKA have, however, characterised many of the subsequently formed *katarista* parties.

With the democratisation process that started in the beginning of the 80s a massive mobilisation in popular actions led to a number of reforms but the then government of president Hernán Siles Zuazo (1982-85) was too weak, particularly in the face of the economic crises of the period, to implement them. *Katarismo* lost, as a consequence, its wide political appeal mainly because of the failure to produce lasting results. In spite of its decline, *katarismo* made a lasting ideological contribution in the elaboration within CSUTCB of a proposition of a new agrarian legislation (*Ley Agraria Fundamental*) that was presented in 1984 to the president. Although the proposed law never has reached the Parliament it is still a central document of the CSUTCB and it has come to serve as a platform for the indigenous movement. The document gives salience to the community, to communal ownership and self-determination and the need for a culturally adapted education is stressed.

From the mid 80s and onwards neo-liberalism have become the leading political ideology of the national governments which has meant heavy attacks on the achievements gained during the Zuazo administration. For a while the changed politics seemed to paralyse the Andean indigenous movement. During the latter half of the 80s, indigenous organisation and mobilisation began, however, to achieve more enduring forms in the lowlands. The first steps were taken already in 1982 when the *Confederación de Indígenas del Oriente Boliviano* (CIDOB) was established inspired by the experience of AIDSESEP in Peru. With the appearance of the lowland peoples on the ethno-political scene a further concept was introduced, that of territory, that is, an area in which people enjoy a degree of self-determination in relation to the State. In 1988 a claim was made of the government that two territories should be recognised as belonging to indigenous peoples of the Oriente and that logging companies should immediately withdraw their operations from the area. In the absence of any official reaction from the government, 800 men, women and children belonging to ten different indigenous peoples from the area, started in August 1990 the “March for the Territory and the Dignity” (*Marcha por el Territorio y la Dignidad*) which during 34 days took them the 700 km to La Paz. At the entrance of the city, the marching group was greeted by a multitude of people among whom highland leaders were prominent. This meeting at the entrance of La Paz acquired an important symbolic value in that it underlined the shared interests and unity of highland and lowland indigenous peoples and still it serves as an important point of reference in the ethno-political rhetoric.

The new government that was installed after the elections in 1993 included Victor Hugo Cárdenas as vice-president. As Cárdenas was a member of the *Movimiento Revolucionario Tupaj Katari de Liberación* (MRTKL) expectations were high among indigenous peoples that their demands should be met with greater comprehension. During the mandate period of president Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada (1993-97) some important initiatives were taken that were deemed positive by indigenous representatives, such as the educational reform including intercultural and bilingual education, the introduction of conditions for timber concessions that should provide the indigenous communities with a measure of equality in relation to lumber companies, the continuation of the process of territorial recognition, and the initiation of a process of decentralization and promotion of popular participation. In spite of the altered attitude of the government in relation to the indigenous question, a certain dejection began after a while to spread in the indigenous files in face of the ambiguous position of the government as to the realization of these initiatives. As the experiences of the “March for the Territory and the Dignity” had been positive, it was decided in 1996 that a new march, this time with the slogan “Territory, land, political rights and development,” should be held to demand the acceptance of the agrarian law proposed by CSUTCB which would include reforms that created indigenous municipalities (*Municipales Indígenas*).

As the 1997 general elections were approaching, CIDOB resolved to participate hoping to be able to send their own representation to the Parliament. To enable this, an alliances with *Movimiento Bolivia Libre* (MBL) was established with the president of CIDOB, Marcial Fabricano, standing as candidate for the vice-presidency. The election was a great failure for MBL and only one indigenous Member of Parliament was elected – and he was elected through the MNR party. One reason that has been suggested to explain the lack of electoral success is the government’s failure to fulfil the agreements that had been signed in 1996 as a result of the new march. Faced with the lack of concrete results, confidence in the organisation dropped.

The return of Hugo Banzer to the presidency in 1997 meant the return of the policy he formerly had pursued, that is, promoting the interests of the elite and working against the popular movement. The radical neo-liberal policy during this time of Banzer's rule fomented by its insensibility towards popular needs and demands a sharp polarisation with a corresponding radicalisation of the indigenous movement, or, at least, substantial parts thereof. Thus, presently the *sindicato* organisation is in growing circles felt to be impotent and unable to respond to the new demands of the struggle. Even the executive committee of the CSUTCB has reached this conclusion and says:

In the Confederation and the federations, the struggle within the *sindicatos* has only served to co-exist within the republican system. We have not seen it as an end in itself, only as a form of struggle for the time being. In this sense, the struggle within the *sindicatos* is putting us asleep, as it wants to "civilize" us so that we are equal to the *q'aras* [i.e., White people]. In the service of the political parties of the right and the left, of nationalists, revolutionaries and reactionaries, the struggle within the *sindicatos* denies us what is our own. The struggle within the *sindicatos* makes us dependent on the government, it makes us dependent of the political parties which sink us to menial politicians (*pongos políticos*) and which restrict our autonomy; it makes it apolitical and "yellow" and we only serve our enemies; it makes us look for gifts from the powerful which fuels division and clientilism. Thus, we should not be content with petitioning the government, but should fight for land and territory, to enforce our ancient rights and our original authorities. This is not just to change name or dress like other pretend, neither is it to reform the *sindicato* and the community as the political parties suggest, but to regain our proper forms of living and of thinking of the Ayllu-Marka, in the Tenta-Tekoa, which were our forms of organisation in the Andes and the lowlands of the Oriente and in the Chaco.

This conceptualisation of the relationship with the national society and its different actors and the conditions of the political struggle has among the Andean indigenous peoples given rise to a form of organisation and leadership that promotes a radical indianist position. The CSUTCB has presently been able to mobilise much support because of its current charismatic executive secretary Felipe Quispe Huanca,⁸ commonly referred to as "el Mallku." The reappearance on centre stage of the indianist position has been facilitated by the insensitive actuation of the neo-liberal government under Banzer.

Since the year 2000 the tactic of setting up road blocks as a form of protest has become one of the more prominent forms of indigenous political performance. Although the method has been used from time to time during the last decades, Quispe explains in an interview made in 2001 that Tupak Katari's Aymara forces' siege of La Paz in 1781 constitutes the historical example that presently infuse this kind of action with additional symbolic force. Thus, it is presented as a proper indigenous form of protest and as an alternative to what is conceived of as the increasingly impotent *sindicatos*.

In parallel with the strengthening of the indianist position, a radicalisation of the syndicalist tendency is notable. The strong indigenist position of Felipe Quispe has been challenged by a fraction within the CSUTCB led by Ewo Morales, president of the *Confederación de Productores de Hoja de Coca*, leader of the political party *Movimiento al Socialismo* (MAS),

⁸ Felipe Quispe is also leader of the *Movimiento Indígena Pachakuti* (MIP).

and member of the Parliament from which he was suspended in January 2002. The relation between the two tendencies is presently much infected and there is little readiness to cooperate. The base for Morales is the coca growing Chapare peasants and the principal demand of the tendency has been the annulment of Law Decree 24615 which penalize the commercialisation of coca leaves produced in this province. The defence of the coca production has also aimed at throwing out the agents of the US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) who, in the rhetoric, are depicted as tools of the US colonial policy. Morales defence of the Chapare coca production has generated accusations of him being implicated in the illegal drug business which, together with his revolutionary rhetoric and militant actuation, led to his suspension from the Parliament.

Even though Quispe has protested against the recent treatment of Morales, it is no secret that the two leaders disagree in their respective views on how to pursue the indigenous cause. Besides his base among the Chapare coca growers, Morales has the support of vociferous and eloquent sectors in the trade unions and the political Left while, seemingly, it is Quispe who maintains the stronger position within the indigenous movement. Irrespectively of the discord between Quispe and Morales, CSUTCB remains today the principal organisation of the highland indigenous movement and should be the principal channel through which support to the region is canalised: as a confederation it has a comprehensive organisational structure with representatives from the local to the national level, moreover, the organisation as such is less implied in politicking than political parties commonly are.

In the lowlands CIDOB continues as strong as ever. CIDOB leadership and general policy has never been internally challenged in the same way as has happened within the highland movement where the tradition of syndicalism and indianism has led to a more fragmented and personalised leadership. For CIDOB participatory democracy and consultation is important and the *Grande Asamblea Nacional de los Pueblos Indígenas* is the highest governing body. In November 1998 a Great Assembly was convened with participation of 300 delegates from 34 different ethnic groups at which the movement's strategic lines were defined emphasising a) the need to fight for indigenously administered territories, that is, going beyond the achievement of legal land titles and stressing self-determination, and b) the need to seize control over the management of resources and their development within these territories.

4. The Recognition of Indigenous Peoples by Bolivian State

Since 1992 the multi-ethnic and pluricultural nature of the Bolivian State is established in the Constitution in which Article 171 specifically concerns the indigenous peoples. This article is important as it recognises a) the social, economic and cultural rights of the indigenous peoples; b) the indigenous and peasant communities, associations and *sindicatos* as juridical persons; and c) the leadership structure and the consuetudinary legal systems of the communities as long as they do not contravene the Constitution and the national legal system.

Below follows a brief outline of the administrative structure to which indigenous affairs correspond and a few notes on parts of the national legislation that have interest in the context of indigenous peoples.

4.1 The national administration

The responsibility for indigenous affairs have been held by four different instances during the last 10 years. Until 1993 the *Instituto Indigenista Boliviano* (IIB) was charged with the administration. The IIB was an autonomous entity that was organisationally placed within the former *Ministerio de Asuntos Campesinos y Agropecuarios*. In the period between 1993 and 1997 indigenous affairs were administered by the *Subsecretaría de Asuntos Étnicos* (SAE), which was part of the *Secretaría Nacional de Asuntos Étnicos, de Genero y Generacionales* under the *Ministerio de Desarrollo Humano*.

When president Banzer assumed power in 1997 he discontinued the SAE and formed the *Viceministerio de Asuntos Indígenas y Pueblos Originarios* under the *Ministerio de Desarrollo Sostenible y Planificación*, allegedly to give indigenous issues a higher status (which largely was contradicted by the subsequent handling of such questions under his presidency). In the year 2000, the vice-ministry was promoted in the organisational structure into a ministry in its own right, the *Ministerio de Asuntos Campesinos, Pueblos Indígenas y Orginarios* (MACPIO). The Ministry is organisationally divided into two Vice-ministries, the *Viceministerio de Asuntos Indígenas y Originarios* and the *Viceministerio de Asuntos Campesinos Rurales*. In the official government program for 2001 the MACPIO was indicated as the main responsible for the land titling program and it was declared that the titling process ought to accelerate.

4.2 Legislation of significance for the indigenous peoples

Three international conventions of significance have been ratified:

- The ILO Convention 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries.
- The UN Convention constituting the Development Fund for the Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean (*Fondo Indígena*).
- The UN Convention on Biological Diversity.

A number of laws affecting the indigenous peoples of the country have also been introduced in the national legal system. The laws commonly deemed by indigenous peoples as of greatest overall importance are:

The *Ley de Participación Popular* which was promulgated in 1994. The express purpose of this Law is to achieve the consolidation of citizenship as a decisive contribution to the fulfilling of development objectives. The Law introduces substantial modifications to the democratic system such as the creation of new municipalities. As a consequence of pressures from the indigenous movement the Law includes the concept of “indigenous municipalities” which means that indigenous authorities are recognized and that the alien system of mayors are not imposed. Moreover, the previously existing jurisdiction and demarcation is recognised and the new municipalities that are created will coincide with indigenous social organisation.

The *Ley de Reforma Educativa* was also passed in 1994. This law established bilingual and intercultural programs of education in the national school system.

The *Ley Nacional de Tierra*, the so called INRA Law, was promulgated in 1996 and introduces the concept of *Tierras Comunitarias de Origen* (TCO). At a start the Law conceded titles of eight territories to indigenous groups that previously had been granted the

land but who lacked legal title to it. A further 16 territorial titles were to be conceded within the space of ten months but through the handling procedures employed by the agrarian reform authorities the process still awaits its conclusion. The methodological guide and the model for calculation of needs have been particularly questioned by indigenous organisations. In some cases where the communities have not been able to follow-up the process with proper expertise the outcome have been disastrous. Most critical is the situation for the Weenhayek people, for whom the requested territory of 194.000 has. was reduced to a mere 13.000 has. A new *Ley Forestal* was also promulgated in 1996. This law attempts to introduce a modern and sustainable approach to forest exploitations. Moreover, it defines among other things specific mechanisms with which indigenous peoples are able to obtain commercial benefit from forest resources, for instance, the exclusive right to forest exploitation in the *Tierras de Comunidades Originarias* (TCO).

In 2000 the *Ley de los Idiomas Oficiales* recognised Spanish, Quechua, Aymara and Tupi-Guarani as the official languages of the country.

In addition to these laws, other laws and regulations that affect the indigenous peoples have been introduced. These are: *Ley del Medio Ambiente*, *Ley de Hidrocarburos*, *Código de Minería*, *Reglamento de Acceso a los Recursos Genéticos* and *Regulamientos de Areas Protegidas*.

The government of President Banzer was, as could be expected from his general attitude towards the indigenous peoples, little interested in these legal reforms and, for instance, the new municipalities are presently faced with problems in their consolidation. The replacement of the SAE with the VAIPO also meant that the implementation of the pro-indigenous legislation has been given little priority. The creation of MACPIO seems, though, to signal a change in attention (if not in interest) to indigenous issues. However, the new president, Jorge Quiroga Ramirez who assumed the presidency in August 2001 upon the resignation of Banzer, belongs to the same party (*Acción Democrática Nacionalista* (ADN)) as his predecessor which means that a more radical change in the attitude towards indigenous issues is not to be expected.

5. Bolivian Indigenous Peoples and the International Community

The support of the bilateral and multinational organisations that are engaged in Bolivia is rarely based on ethnic considerations but takes as its starting point the notion that there can be no development in conditions of extreme poverty. The condition that a high proportion of the poor are indigenous is, accordingly, seen principally from an economic perspective.

International support to indigenous peoples in Bolivia is frequently channelled through multilateral organisations and, increasingly, through the Development Fund for the Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean (in short *Fondo Indígena*, FI). Few governmental development cooperation agencies seems to have sector programmes focusing specifically on indigenous peoples, a notable exception is Denmark's Danida (the activities of which are briefly described below). Swedish support directed towards indigenous peoples has hitherto been channelled principally through UNDP and Non-Governmental Organisations.

Fondo Indígena

The establishment of the *Fondo Indígena* was decided in 1992. It was ratified by Bolivia in 1993 and its head office is located to La Paz. An express objective of the Fund is to promote closer cooperation between indigenous peoples' organisations and the governments of the member States. The General Assembly of the Fund as well as its Executive Council are constituted in equal parts by representatives from the indigenous peoples' movements and the governments of the member States.

The core funding of the FI is provided by the member States while projects are financed through the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), the International Labour Organisation (ILO), and the governments of Germany, Belgium, Spain, France and Norway.

The principal activity of the FI in relation to project activities is to help with project design and the identification of potential donors. Priority is given to projects focusing on:

- sustainable self-development
- indigenous rights
- capacitating for management and participation
- identity and culture

All together the FI channels support to almost 50 different projects in Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador, Peru and Mexico. In Bolivia projects in the Chaco-region are presently supported. Integrated and participative community development projects have been given priority as they have shown that the promotion of sustainable socio-economic development and the strengthening of cultural identities are mutually reinforcing with positive effects for the aspired project objectives. It has been noted that when development efforts are based on local values, culture becomes a positive force instead of an impediment. Former Bolivian Vice-president Victor Hugo Cárdenas' expression "development with identity" (*desarrollo con identidad*) has been taken up as a guiding idea.

Danida

Danish development cooperation with Bolivia focuses on three sector programmes of which one concerns indigenous peoples, popular participation and decentralisation. Support to indigenous peoples has principally been concentrated to three areas:

- The establishment of better conditions for involving indigenous peoples in the national political and economic development through promoting the decentralisation process of the civil service.
- Support of the national government authority in charge of the administration of indigenous affairs.
- Support to the legal processes of land rights recognition and to promoting bilingual education.

6. Suggestions concerning the character and focus of Swedish support

In accordance with the position of the indigenous movement, it is the opinion of the author that even though the material standard of indigenous peoples may be low and even wanting in comparison to Western standards, to view the indigenous question in primarily economic terms is to make violence on the cultural premises that define the issue as indigenous, disregarding the right to cultural distinctiveness and enforcing Western cultural ideals and standards. In approaching poverty alleviation and sustainable socio-economic development in indigenous societies it is therefore important to take a holistic perspective recognizing target groups' cultures as important assets. This culture aware approach requires that the experts who partake in the project design process are familiarized with the cultural conditions that influence the target groups' vision of themselves and their future.

The identification of needs and modes of solution must, in accordance, be elaborated in close cooperation with the indigenous peoples concerned, who can be reached through the structures of CIDOB in the lowlands and CSUTCB in the highlands. It is therefore only possible to identify areas of relevance in the most general terms; besides the land titling issue, bilingual and bicultural education, health and the defence of intellectual property rights are fields of concern often mentioned by indigenous peoples.

- The regulation of land and territory rights remain crucial as it is the base upon which indigenous society and culture relies and the territory is therefore much more than merely a space necessary for the physical survival of the local group.
- In Bolivia it is, moreover, urgent that truly alternative and viable means of subsistence are found for the coca-producing peasants of the Chapare province. As Chapare and other tropical lowland areas inhabited by indigenous peoples frequently are ecologically vulnerable the planning of development projects should take into consideration biological conservation strategies.
- A properly elaborated system of education that takes into concern and respects cultural specificities is important as a preparation for dealing with the requirements and expectations of the national society from a position of self-esteem. In the elaboration of educational programmes for indigenous peoples the language aspect is commonly given prominence and well provided for while the intimate link to schools as the physical site for teaching activities is uncritically accepted although such arrangements may have disruptive effects on the family structure. The Bilingual Education Project in Bolivia is of a "school-centred" type and it may therefore be of interest to inquire into the extent to which a radio-broadcasted system might be of utility to reach pupils without unwarranted social distress. Present bilingual education programmes, moreover, frequently concentrate and even limit their scope to primary education leaving secondary and higher education aside.
- Empowerment is important for achieving and maintaining lasting conditions for self-determination. One step towards acquiring a position of self-sufficiency is the promotion of higher education which allows for an active participation in the development process. To provide facilities for the study and research into the proper society and culture is another measure that contributes to the strengthening of cultural self-awareness.
- The access to and the quality of health services may be wanting in politically and economically marginal areas. In regard to indigenous peoples' health, programmes should for their design take into consideration traditional structures of curing and the existing pharmacological and somatic knowledge.
- The use and appropriation of knowledge and genetic resources without the consent or involvement of indigenous users in both research and commercial use, is a growing

concern among indigenous peoples. Knowledge of the use of plants for medical purposes is extensive, particularly in the Amazon regions, and indigenous peoples do not agree with foreign companies patenting of plants that they have employed for centuries. The establishment of a defence mechanism is needed.

- Danish support has been important and appreciated by indigenous peoples. A coordination with Danida is advisable in, for instance, the establishment of better conditions for involving indigenous peoples in the national political and economic development through promoting the decentralisation process of the civil service.

Appendix 1: Indigenous peoples of Bolivia, Peru, Colombia and Ecuador

BOLIVIA

Highland peoples:	Aymara	1.549.320
	Quechua (Runa)	2.298.000
	Uru-Chipaya	2.180
Lowland peoples:	Araona	97
	Ayoreo	3.100
	Baure	4.750
	Canichana	1.500
	Cavineño	2.850
	Cayubaba	4.500
	Chacobo	1.050
	Chimán	7.130
	Chiquitano	61.520
	Ese-Ejja	2.180
	Guaraní (Ava, Izoceño, Simba)	75.500
	Guarayo	9.520
	Itonama	5.240
	Joaquiniano	3.150
	Leco	2.700
	Machineri	195
	Moré	360
	Mosetén	3.280
	Movima	7.100
	Moxeño (Trinitario, Ignaciano)	38.500
	Nahua	n.d.
	Pacahuara	17
	Paiconeca	3.780
	Sirionó	830
	Tacana	8.380
	Tapiete	172
	Toromona	n.d.
	Weenhayek	2.440
	Yaminahua	390
	Yuqui	153
Yuracaré	3.440	
<i>Total:</i>	<i>4.135.026</i>	

PERU

Highland peoples:	Aymara	352.320
	Quechua (Runa)	4.250.265
Lowland peoples:	Achual	4.719
	Aguaruna	45.137
	Amahuaca	247
	Amaiweri-Kisamberi	37
	Arabela	302

	Arasairi	122
	Asháninka	48.638
	Ashéninka	3.823
	Bora	371
	Candoshi	1.916
	Capanahua	267
	Cashibo-Cacataibo	1.661
	Chamicuro	126
	Chayahuita	13.717
	Cocama-Cocamilla	10.705
	Ese'ejja	600
	Harakmbut (Amarakaeri)	1.000
	Huachipaeri	159
	Huambisa	5.545
	Jíbaro	52
	Kashinahua	909
	Kichwaruna (Santa Rosina)	254
	Kulina	300
	Lamas - Chachapoya	22.153
	Matsés (Mayoruna)	1.177
	Matsigenka	8.679
	Nahua	n.d.
	Nomatsigenka	5.531
	Ocaina	188
	Orejón	288
	Piro (Yine)	2.553
	Pukirieri	57
	Quechua del Napo, del Pastaza & del Tigre	10.553
	Secoya	678
	Sharanahua	438
	Shipibo-Conibo	20.178
	Ticuna	1.787
	Toyoeri	248
	Urarina	564
	Witoto Meneca	676
	Witoto Muinane	105
	Witoto Murui	1.136
	Yagua	3.487
	Yaminahua	324
	Yanesha (Amuesha)	6.980
	Ethnically not specified	10.927
	<i>Total:</i>	<i>4.841.899</i>

COLOMBIA

Highland peoples:	Awa	12.936
	Dujo	96
	Guambiano	20.782
	Guanaca	723
	Guane	210

	Inga	17.855
	Kamsá (Sibundoy)	4.022
	Kogi/Kággaba	9.765
	Kankuamo	~15.000
	Mokaná	n.d.
	Muisca	1.859
	Páez	118.845
	Pacabuy	n.d.
	Pastos	55.379
	Pijao	21.507
	Sánha	9.765
	Tama	210
	Totoroe	3.654
	Wiwa	1.850
	Yanacona	19.623
	Zenú	33.910
Lowland peoples:	Achagua	280
	Amorúa	165
	Andoque	518
	Arhuaco (Ijka)	14.301
	Bara	96
	Barasana	1.891
	Barí (Motilon)	n.d.
	Betoye	754
	Bora	646
	Cabiyarí	277
	Carapana	412
	Carijona	287
	Cocama	767
	Coconuco	6.141
	Coreguaje	2.106
	Cubeo	6.035
	Cuiba	2.274
	Curripaco	7.066
	Chimila	992
	Chiricoa	173
	Desano	2.136
	Emberá	71.412
	Guayabero	1.061
	Kofán	1.475
	Kuna/Tule	570
	Letuama	650
	Makaguaje	542
	Makú	1.163
	Makuna	992
	Masiguare	387
	Matapí	203
	Miraña	660
	Muinane	547
	Nonuya	199

	Ocaína	126
	Piapoco	4.466
	Piaroa	797
	Piratapuyo	630
	Pitsamira	54
	Puinave	5.381
	Sáliba	387
	Sikuani/Guahibo	20.544
	Siona	700
	Siriano	716
	Taibano	19
	Tanimuka	n.d.
	Tariano	323
	Tatuyo	294
	Tikuna	6.585
	Tukano	6.837
	Tuyuca	570
	U'wa/Tunebo	7.013
	Waunaan	280
	Wanano	1.172
	Wayuú	114.003
	Witoto/Huitoto	6.245
	Yagua	294
	Yukuna	597
	Yuko/Yukpa	3.529
	Yuri	200
	Yurutí	610
	<i>Total:</i>	<i>656.841</i>

ECUADOR

Highland peoples:	Quichua	3.000.000
Lowland peoples:	Achuar	500
	Awa-Kwaiker	1.600
	Chachi/Cayapa	4.000
	Cofán	800
	Huaorani	2.000
	Quichua	60.000
	Shuar	40.000
	Siona-Secoya	1.000
	Tsáchila/Colorado	2.000
	Zapara	200
	<i>Total:</i>	<i>3.112.100</i>

The numbers given for Bolivia are based on the national census made in 1998 and they are taken from República de Bolivia, *Desarrollo con Identidad. Política Nacional Indígena y Originaria*.

The data from Peru stems mainly from *Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática (INEI) Censos Nacionales, 1993*. The ethnic division that is presented by INEI is not comprehensive

and contains fewer peoples than similar divisions presented by others. The information regarding the numbers of the Peruvian highland peoples is supplied by the Summer Institute of Linguistics that have put together information from various parts which, however, may refer to different periods of time and should best be regarded as conservative estimations.

The data from Colombia stems from Enrique Sánchez and Raúl Arango *Los Pueblos Indígenas de Colombia 1997*.

The Ecuadorian demographical data is compiled by Abya-Yala and found at <http://abyayala.nativeweb.org/ecuador/pueblos.php>