



82/2022

16/12/2022

Federico Aznar Fernández-Montesinos

Ethnic movements in Latin America

Ethnic movements in Latin America

Abstract:

The recent rejection of the draft constitution in Chile has shed light on the problems inherent to movements such as indigenism and Indianism. Indigenism is an approach that emphasises indigenous people and their culture as key to national identity, incorporating them as full citizens and encouraging their assimilation. In the 21st century, Indianness, which we can define as the particularity of those who consider themselves and are considered indigenous and claim self-management, replaced indigenism, making the Indian a political subject rather than an object. Although not without contradictions, this has an overall positive balance because it has improved the quality of life of Indians and widened the democratic base of Ibero American nations.

Key words:

Indigenism, Indianism, populism, Spain, mixed-race, Mexico, Bolivia.

***NOTE:** The ideas contained in the *Analysis Papers* are the responsibility of their authors. They do not necessarily reflect the thinking of the IEEE or the Ministry of Defence.

Los movimientos étnicos en América Latina

Resumen:

El reciente rechazo al proyecto de Constitución en Chile ha puesto luz sobre la problemática de movimientos como el indigenismo y el indianismo. El indigenismo es una propuesta que enfatiza al indígena y su cultura como claves de la identidad nacional incorporándolos como ciudadanos plenos y propiciando su asimilación. En el siglo XXI, la indianidad, a la que podemos definir como la particularidad de quienes se consideran y son considerados indígenas y reclaman la autogestión, ha substituido al indigenismo y hecho del indio sujeto político en vez de objeto. Esto, no exento de contradicciones, cuenta con un balance global positivo pues ha mejorado la calidad de vida de los indios y ensanchado la base democrática de las naciones latinoamericanas.

Palabras clave:

Indigenismo, indianismo, populismo, España, mestizaje, México, Bolivia.

How to cite this document:

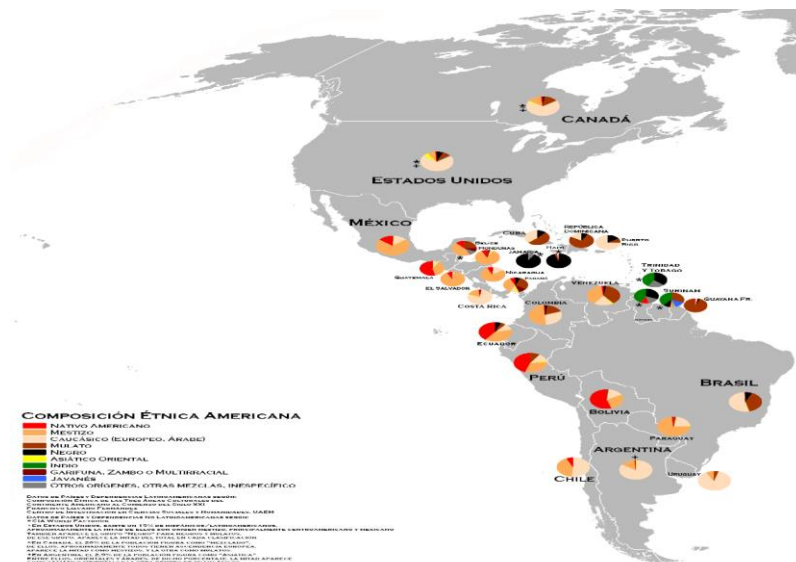
AZNAR FERNANDEZ-MONTESINOS, Federico. *Ethnic movements in Latin America*. IEEE Analysis Paper 82/2022.

https://www.ieee.es/Galerias/fichero/docs_analisis/2022/DIEEEA82_2022_FEDAZN_Movimientos_ENG.pdf and/or [bie³ link](#) (accessed on day/month/year)

The Spanish empire was what Gustavo Bueno called a generative empire because it promoted the human and spiritual development of its members. In fact, in his famous civilizational classification, Huntington states that Ibero America does not belong to the West because it "incorporates indigenous cultures that did not exist in Europe and were effectively annihilated in North America"¹.

Depending on the criterion adopted, in Ibero America there are between 700 and 2,000 indigenous peoples with more than 500 languages. In 2021, this represented a population of between 30 and 50 million Indians, or 6-10% of a total population of 667 million people. Eighty-seven percent of this group reside in Mexico, Bolivia, Guatemala, Peru and Colombia. To these figures should be added an African population (blacks and mulattos) of around 120 million, some 30% of the total.

Indigenous groups account for 14% of the poor and 17% of the extremely poor in Ibero America.² This is the outcome of the sum of two distinct fault lines, the region having particularly extreme levels of inequality, which are in fact the highest in the world.



-Figure 1: Ibero American ethnic composition³ -

¹ HUNTINGTON, Samuel P., (1997), The clash of civilisations and the remaking of world order, Paidós, Barcelona, p. 51

²WORLD BANK. "Indigenous Latin America in the 21st century" <https://www.bancomundial.org/es/region/lac/brief/indigenous-latin-america-in-the-twenty-first-century-brief-report-page>

³ Wikipedia. https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Archivo:Composici3n_3tnica_de_Am3rica.png

Their historical social marginalisation has prevented their differentiated and group recognition. Consequently, indigenous peoples, together with Afro-Latino and Afro-Caribbean populations, have the worst economic and social indicators, little cultural recognition and poor access to decision making.

This is compounded by the fact that their integration into other national identities has been forced to the detriment of their own. The nineteenth-century nation-states sought to overcome colonial structures through homogenisation. The "criollo" was emulatively identified with the European or North American, and the Indian and the "mestizo", those of mixed race and especially of indigenous descent, were disowned; the national *ethos* was defined on the basis of this ideal type.⁴

The mixed-race population accounts for 24% to 32% of the total. Furthermore, the mestizos have suffered discrimination by both the Indians when they are in the majority, who have integrated them with the whites, and by the whites, who have integrated them with the Indians. And there have even been thinkers who, repudiating the inferiority of the Indian, considered the opposite, that all mixing is a degeneration and that the mestizo is the prototype of all wrongdoing. This also served as a way of rejecting the caste system that had prevailed during the viceroyalty and following independence.

At the other extreme, there has also been a redemptorism which, especially after the Second World War when matters of racial purity were so strongly emphasised, made the mestizo the key. To this effect, for Franz Tamayo, the white Creole had degenerated, while the Indian was pure will, morality and strength, but lacked sufficient intelligence. Consequently, it was the mestizo who was destined to be the synthesis of the future Bolivian nationality.⁵ It was, however, a new mestizo, an ideal and balanced being who would eradicate all that was bad in whites, Indians and cholos or ladinos (the ethnic Indians or those assimilated into European culture, in their Peruvian and Guatemalan denominations, respectively), while preserving the positive of their own race.⁶

⁴ HOPENHAYN, Martín; Bello, Alvaro. Ethnic-racial discrimination and xenophobia in Latin America and the Caribbean. ECLAC, Santiago de Chile, 2001.

⁵ RODRÍGUEZ GARCÍA, Huascar Mestizaje y conflictos sociales. "The case of Bolivian nation building". *Cuadernos Inter.c.a.mbio* Year 8, n. 9 (2011), 145-182.

⁶ Ibid.

This stance is in line with the 1925 work of the Mexican José Vasconcelos, who in his book *La Raza Cósmica* said that a new race would emerge in Latin America made up of all the previous ones, a "cosmic" and plural race destined to improve society. This racial theory prevailed in Mexico until the 1990s and was taken up in Brazil by Gilberto Freyre with his *metarraza*.⁷

In Peru, other thinkers such as the Marxist Juan Carlos Mariátegui, developed similar concepts. His ideal was an integral Peru, neither colonial nor Inca, which is why he defends the working class, irrespective of race or ethnicity. Moreover, his conception of what an indigenous person is was broad. Along similar lines, Brazil's national ideology extols the mix of three races. Ibero America is both culturally and racially mixed.

Consequently, the region faces a dual movement of contradictory components. First, the constitutionally sanctioned revalorisation of identities that materialises in multi-ethnic and multicultural states. And second, the persistence of discrimination on ethnic, racial or national grounds.⁸

The same can be found in the 2022 rejection of the Chilean constituent proposal, with an Indianist bias. In this country, where 12.8% of the population identifies itself as indigenous, the constitutional proposal defined the state as "plurinational, intercultural, regional and ecological", although it did not allow for secession and did not undermine the indivisible nature of the state.

INDIGENISM

Indigenism has its antecedents shortly after the conquest of America started and at the hand of Queen Isabella the Catholic. This paternalistic sentiment would lead to Fray Antonio de Montesinos's sermon in Santo Domingo in 1511, directed against the abuses of the Spaniards and whose reverberations in Spain would bring about the so-called *Laws of Burgos* in 1513.

Another Dominican, Bartolomé de las Casas, the first "Defender of the Indians", followed in his footsteps. Emperor Charles convened the Council of the Indies through the Junta

⁷ MUÑOZ BERNARD, Carmen. "Indigenismo" in BARAÑANO CID, Ascensión; GARCÍA, José Luis; DEVILLARD, Marie J. *Diccionario de relaciones interculturales*. Editorial complutense, 2007, pp. 185-190.

⁸ HOPENHAYN, Martín; Bello, Alvaro. *Ethnic-racial discrimination and xenophobia in Latin America and the Caribbean*. ECLAC, Santiago de Chile, 2001.

of Valladolid. This would give rise to the so-called *New Laws* (1542), which prohibited the enslavement of the Indians, while at the same time trying to organise the exploitation of the new territories.

The same year, and addressed to the future Philip II, who was then in charge of Indian affairs, De las Casas finished his famous *Brevísima relación de la destrucción de las Indias*, published without censorship in 1552. The important point is that his work, which testified to the freedom of intellectual and political debate at the Carolingian court, was instrumentalised by Protestant propaganda. It is a fundamental element of what Julián Juderías around 1914 would call *the Black Legend*. Between 1550 and 1551, De las Casas took part in the *Valladolid Controversy*, a famous dispute with Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda about the legitimacy of the conquest and the human condition of the Indians.

In the viceroyalty period, miscegenation would gradually become consolidated and more accentuated. Moreover, the social base of the viceregal era was one of castes, of which 32 were admitted, establishing a de facto system of social progress based on "whitening" or "racial improvement". Any Indian who rose from his inferior position entered the intermediate category of "cholo", "mestizo" or "ladino". Echoes of this system of socio-racial stratification are still recognisable in many pictorial works.

However, this process has not been without conflict. The most important rebellion was the one led by the Quechua José Gabriel Condorcanqui (Tupac Amaru) and Micaela Bastidas in Peru in 1780, and continued in the period 1781-1782 by the Aymara Julián Apaza Nina (Tupac Katari) and Bartolina Sisa in Bolivia. These uprisings, which encircled large cities and mobilised thousands of indigenous people in protest against increased tax payments and constant exploitation and exclusion, will remain in the collective memory to the extent that, even in the 20th century, revolutionary groups would claim them for their own.

After independence, these phenomena would be reproduced. To this effect, in the Yucatan area of Mexico there was a conflict known as the *Caste War* between the Mayans of the region and the Creole and mestizo population, which lasted from 1847 to 1901 and resulted in around a quarter of a million deaths.

And so, after the independence processes, the European was assimilated to the civilised and the indigenous consigned to barbarism, wrongdoing and primitivism, all in the context of a typical vision in relation to orientalism.

This, together with nineteenth-century liberal policy, even opened the way for various extermination campaigns against some of the continent's Indian populations, or justified the transfer of others to forced labour for so-called "rehabilitation".

With the introduction of private property, it also led to the progressive loss of their lands, breaking the model of collectivist agricultural production that had prevailed during the viceroyalty while facilitating the acquisition of land for cash, thereby marginalising these collectives from social advances, which remained concentrated in the cities. To this end, the Indians had to work in subhuman conditions amidst malnutrition and alcoholism, on haciendas that had been expropriated from them by illegal and even violent means.

During the Porfiriato in Mexico (1876-1911), the foundations of what would become indigenism started to be laid by the empowerment of education as a tool for progress and national construction. In Brazil, at the beginning of the 20th century, the movement was led by a mestizo military officer, Marshal Cândido Mariano de Silva Rondón, who tried to protect the Indians by isolating them from the surroundings and generating a kind of indigenism with its own characteristics.

The crisis of the late 19th and early 20th centuries would facilitate the continent's intellectual emergence, presenting a worldview opposed to positivism and materialism, and thus to the Anglo-Saxon world⁹.

This explains the cultural phenomenon of Ibero American avant-gardism to which renowned artists such as Diego Ribera and Frida Kahlo are heirs. Indigenism, *stricto sensu*, is in fact a linguistic, intellectual, artistic and political movement that revalues ethnicity. It is a conception that contrasts with Darwinist and supremacist movements which justified colonialism.

Twentieth century indigenist thinkers would tap into the deep discursive vein that associates nationality and the Indianness characteristic of nineteenth-century thought. Consequently, during the first decades of this century there was a movement led by reformist, populist and revolutionary groups to defend identity. It was initially associated with Latin culture - Arielism, which opposed Anglo-Saxon utilitarianism with the idealism of Hispanic culture - moving on to certain indigenous groups, including peasants and Afro-

⁹CASAÚS ARZÚ, Marta Elena "La creación de nuevos espacios públicos a principios del siglo XX: La influencia de redes intelectuales teosóficas en la opinión pública centroamericana (1920-1930)" in CASAÚS ARZÚ, Marta Elena; GARCÍA GIRALDÉZ, Teresa. *Central American intellectual networks: a century of national imaginaries (1820-1920)*. F&G Editores, Guatemala, 2005, pp. 71-123.

Americans. Social improvements for these groups, their literacy, greater access to health care, and the construction of communication routes between peripheral communities were also promoted, along with cultural reaffirmation.¹⁰

In fact, we were facing a trend towards indigenous peasantisation that emerged from the convergence of socialism and agrarianism and materialised in redistributive and integration policies: the agrarian reforms. These reforms were class-based rather than ethnic, thus contributing to their invisibilisation by confusing the two terms, favouring miscegenation.

Agrarianism and indigenism were interrelated in some countries, in a movement of which Mexico, with its Revolution, is a forerunner and leading exponent, opening the way for new indigenous-oriented policies aimed at their assimilation. This contributed to the peasantisation of the Indian problem by addressing the Indians as peasants, i.e., by relegating the ethnic dimension of their identity to the back burner.¹¹

At the same time, the American John Collier changed his country's Indian policy, before becoming the head of the *Bureau of Indian Affairs* and leader of Franklin D. Roosevelt's *Indian New Deal* in 1933. In Mexico in 1939, the *National Institute of Anthropology and History (Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia)* was created as a basic means of understanding the indigenous world.

In 1940, the first *Inter-American Indigenist Congress* took place in Pátzcuaro, which saw the birth of the *Inter-American Indigenist Institute*, which was to be directed by Manuel Gamio, a disciple of Franz Boas, who made the Indian the root of national liberation. He was also the founder of indigenist anthropology, pursuing the restoration of the social and cultural structure of these communities. However, mestizaje, not indigenous roots, was the key to modern Mexico.¹²

The Mexican Revolution promotes indigenism to the core of national thought and policy. According to Estelle Tarica, there are three characteristics that distinguish Mexican indigenism from other models. First, its character as a central pillar of state policy and an instrument for the profound transformation of its society through socio-economic modernisation and the construction of a national identity. This is an integrationist,

¹⁰MUÑOZ BERNARD, Carmen. *Op. Cit.*

¹¹MAIZ SUAREZ, Ramón. "Political indigenism in Latin America. *Revista de estudios políticos*, nº 123, 2004 pp. 129-174.

¹²MUÑOZ BERNARD, Carmen. *Op. Cit.*

assimilationist and developmentalist state effort. Second, the role of anthropology in the endeavour, serving to highlight not only pre-Columbian ancestors but also contemporary indigenous people. Indigenist anthropologists, however backward they may have judged the Indians to be, made them a source of national pride and vitality, redefining both national aesthetics and identity by transferring political action to the arts.¹³

And third, they subordinated their indigenist approach to mestizaje, which was a cultural and political rather than a biological process. The idea was to find a unifying principle to promote a single national culture, both modern and distinct from the rest, and especially from the American one. This explains why revolutionary nationalists turned to the mestizo and elevated his figure to iconic status, since he harmoniously combined modern and indigenous cultural traditions, making possible a unique Mexican modernity. And so Mexican anthropology forged a concept of citizenship by both indigenising modernity and modernising the Indians, thereby merging all Mexicans into a mestizo community.¹⁴

In Bolivia, indigenism paved the way for the 1952 Revolution, which introduced it into the national socio-economic debate. In Peru, Luis Valcárcel advocated improving the living conditions of the indigenous people rather than modernising them. And the Marxist José Carlos Martiategui who, although rejecting ethnic considerations for ideological reasons, supported the indigenous as a defining element of Peruvian national identity.

Indigenism is enshrined internationally in Convention 107 on Indigenous, Tribal and Semi-Tribal Populations, drawn up by the *International Labour Organisation* (ILO) in 1957. This convention sets out the rights of these populations and the obligations of the ratifying states, albeit with assimilationist criteria.¹⁵ This was replaced in 1989 by the politically more advanced Convention 169, which presupposes the right of indigenous peoples to maintain their identity, culture and institutions. International aid and the recognition of multiculturalism have accompanied this discourse, reinforced in 2007 by the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* issued by the *United Nations General Assembly*¹⁶.

¹³ TARICA, Estelle. "Indigenism" *Oxford Research Encyclopedies*. 03.03.2016
<https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780199366439.013.68>

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ GAETE URIBE, Lucía A. The 169th Convention. An analysis of its problematic categories in the light of its normative history. *Journal Ius et Praxis* vol.18 nº. 2 Talca 2012, pp. 77 – 124.

¹⁶ Ibid.

However, the set of issues of contemporary Indian groups - the defence of identity (language), the ecosystem (environment), religion (spirituality), sovereignty (territory, self-administration, respect for legal customs and practices) - were already present in the manifestos of indigenous peoples in the US in the 1970s.¹⁷

INDIANISM

In 1971, in Bolivia, the Katarista group emerged from within the peasant trade union movement, claiming for itself the name of the Indian chief Tupak Katari, who had unsuccessfully revolted against the Spaniards. In its founding act, the Tiahuanaco Manifesto (1973), Katarism makes its own the dual oppression of the indigenous peoples of Bolivia: class and national oppression. The contradictions inherent to this dual nature would lead to the emergence of different branches.

In 1977, the *Second Barbados Meeting* took place, a continuation of the one held in 1971, which served to reconfigure the Indian movements and set a precedent by indicating the rights to self-government, development and defence of indigenous people and insisting on pan-indigenous unity.¹⁸ At this meeting, strategies were also established to create a political organisation of their own and to elaborate a consistent ideology, as well as to "openly state the need for intellectual cadres capable of constructing a discourse from the Indians".¹⁹

Fausto Reinaga summarises criticism of this movement by stating that the indigenists were attempting to "assimilate" or "integrate" the Indian with civilising discourses that simply reproduced the situation. They were people who were addressing the Indian reality without being Indians, their actions merely a discourse of a clamatory nature, but not truly liberating. In contrast, it is the Indianists who were committed to their full liberation:

¹⁷LAVAUD, Jean-Pierre; LESTAGE Françoise. "El indianismo en la América hispánica. An equivocal political nebula". *Revista Política de la Universidad de Chile* Vol 47, 2006.

<https://revistapolitica.uchile.cl/index.php/RP/article/view/16986>

¹⁸ZAPATA, Claudia. "Michel Foucault, intellectuals and representation. A propósito de los intelectuales indígenas". *Cyber Humanitatis* N° 35 (Winter 2005)

https://web.uchile.cl/vignette/cyberhumanitatis/CDA/texto_sub_simple2/0,1257,PRID%253D16159%2526SCID%253D16162%2526SID%253D576,00.html

¹⁹ Ibid.

"Indianism is an Indian movement, a revolutionary Indian movement, which does not want to assimilate with anyone; its aim is to liberate itself".²⁰

This is a concept with an undercurrent of cultural resistance that makes the same critique of indigenism that the Palestinian Edward Said made in his great classic, *Orientalism* (1978): that it is an approach to the Indian world made from Western tenets. We are dealing with an intellectualism that involves the reaffirmation of the culture of the observer and "allows the political, economic, cultural and social domination of the West not only during the colonial era, but also in the present". This is the Gramscian idea of superstructure.

To this effect, in the mid-1960s, Indianism appeared as a claim to indigenous identity made by the indigenous people themselves and not linked to national institutions. It involves a process of cultural and identity re-appropriation that reaffirms ethnicity above all else.

The centrality of this recognition is relevant not only because this identity takes precedence over any demand or struggle, including the social one, but also because it involves the appropriation of a generalising racial category - that of Indians in which they were subsumed - denying them their pre-Columbian identity, such as Mapuche, Quechua, Aymara, Quiché, among many others. Indians' self-designation constitutes a political, ideological and, above all, historical action involving the evaluative inversion of this category with which the diverse was previously homogenised and deprived of its individual identity.²¹

In the words of Fausto Reinaga, "The Indian is not a social class. So what is it, then? The Indian is a race, a people, an oppressed nation. The Indian problem is not the "peasant" problem. The real peasant fights for wages. Its goal is social justice. The Indian does not fight for wages, which he has never known; nor for social justice, which he does not even envisage. The Indian fights for racial justice, for the freedom of his race; a race enslaved since the West put its foot on the lands of *Tawantinsuyu*".²²

²⁰GORDILLO, María José. "What is the difference between Indianism and indigenism?" Ibero American Chroniclers, 03.11.2021.

<https://cronistaslatinoamericanos.com/cual-es-la-diferencia-entre-indianismo-e-indigenismo/>

²¹OLIVA, María Elena. *Negritude, Indianism and its intellectuals: Aimé Césaire and Fausto Reinaga*. Universidad Tesis, Santiago de Chile, 2014, p.102

²²GORDILLO, María José. *Op. Cit.*

Their demands fit in with the political movement known as decolonisation. This movement, a critical theory of an ethnic nature that is very much implanted in Ibero America, considers that decolonisation did not eliminate "coloniality" but merely transformed its forms, allowing the continuation of the structures that had served it. We return again to Gramsci. One of the best-known authors of this trend is the Negroid psychiatrist and Dominican Frantz Fanon, author of *The Damned of the Earth*, whose echoes would influence ideologues such as Ali Shariati, who translated it into Persian, and the revolutionary Islam of Hassan Hanafi.

The *Tupac Katari Guerrilla Army*, a radical offshoot of Katariism, was founded in 1986 in a pact between Aymara and Quechua leaders, workers and middle-class youth educated in Marxism. Zapatismo can also be inscribed within this decolonial movement, although it has expressly renounced violence.

We can consider Indianism as a concept formally opposed to indigenism, although both converge in a common interest and recognise the plural nature of their object of study. This is not for finalist but for methodological reasons, since indigenist policies were policies elaborated by whites or mestizos for Indians, without their participation.

Indigenism goes one step further by opening up the political space, allowing indigenous people themselves to elaborate and formulate their own demands without any mediation, meaning that they go from being objects of the norm to being subjects of it.²³

The recovery of their history, read in their own terms, is a political imperative; and this now, when they consider colonial structures to still be in place. Indianism is based on the recognition of a historical situation of oppression which, in their view, began with the Discovery and continues to the present day. From this perspective, the revalorisation of Indian cultures is a moral imperative that contributes to their reappropriation, and thereby to the revalorisation of the Indians themselves. This serves pan-Indianism, and facilitates unity of action while also serving the reaffirmation of Indian nations.²⁴

Consequently, Indianism implies a significant advance in the recognition of rights. Effectively, what followed was the adjudication of collectively legalised land ownership to forest peoples and the self-administration of justice by indigenous communities.²⁵

²³GORDILLO, María José. *Op. Cit.*

²⁴OLIVA, Maria Elena. *Op. Cit.*

²⁵MAIZ SUAREZ, Ramón. *Op. Cit.*

This itself brought recognition of the multicultural nature of societies and the existence of indigenous peoples as collective subjects of rights; recognition of indigenous customary law and its normative validity; recognition of the right to collective ownership of land and its protection; recognition of the co-officiality of indigenous languages; and the right to bilingual education in indigenous communities.²⁶

But there are numerous contradictions. By way of example, articulation with national legal systems is problematic, since some penalties - such as corporal punishment (including whipping), forced labour, banishment, ostracism and even the death penalty - run counter to constitutional principles and the universality of human rights.²⁷ To this must be added the practical reality of the rights recognised in states with low institutional development and high levels of corruption.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF INDIANISM

The end of the Cold War relegated questions of ideology and reduced US presence in the political life of these countries, as the practical realisation of the ideological veto. The fact is that it is not the region where the major issues on the international agenda are settled, nor is it the epicentre of the struggle between the major geopolitical actors. This release of pressure brought progress in the quality of democracy in the region.

And it is where the global emergence of an identity movement took place. Indianism is part of this dynamic. This resurgence of particularisms is also the outcome of the process of globalisation which, if on the one hand and due to its homogenising nature brought about peasantry, unionisation and citizenship movements at the hemispheric level, on the other hand favours the coordinated action of movements of different signs.

To this effect, cross-cutting issues, such as ecology, are part of this wave. Likewise, the insertion of Zapatismo in the networks against "neoliberal globalisation" also serves to disseminate its demands, articulating a "dispersed virtual community".²⁸ However, the success of Indianism is not necessarily the result of a democratisation movement either, given that it appropriates very different political movements.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ LAVAUD, Jean-Pierre; LESTAGE Françoise. *Op. Cit.*

²⁸ MAIZ SUAREZ, Ramón. *Op. Cit.*

Meanwhile, and as antithetical as it may seem, Indianism is also a movement of refragmentation to which, in this case and as a response, the ebb and flow of globalisation also contributes. This generally stimulates the re-signification of particularist identities across the five continents, which in turn leads, in this case, to the re-evaluation of ethnicity and culture through the re-appropriation of the category of indigenous people, with the re-signification of their culture and history.

Globalisation thereby gives the Indianist movement a homogenous character and does so at both global and local levels. This movement takes place in the context of the ideological vacuum created by the delegitimisation of the class struggle at the end of the Cold War; and this without prejudice to the fact that it makes use of some of the concepts the struggle employs, although in many cases Indianism involves a spirituality that Marxism outrightly rejects.

To this effect, the ideological foundations of the Zapatista movement were Marxist and, after the 1994 uprising, they became Indianist, leaving aside the figure of Zapata. Furthermore, more than a few of the ideologues of these movements were members of these parties or took part in revolutionary movements.

The point is that because of their diverse and dispersed nature, these collectives have a limited capacity for cohesion. It is easier to prevent than to impose. Prevention may simply require non-action. Enforcement is an affirmative action that requires a cohesive will over time, and is therefore more demanding.

Indianism has been able to mobilise successfully at the global level against the V Centenary, but its capacity for affirmative action in global terms is required and has not yet been concertedly demonstrated.

To this effect, one of the original fears raised by indigenism was the one which, at the time, inspired José Vasconcelos himself: that it would be a handle with which the US, or any other actor with interests in the region, could shake up the hemisphere, promoting its balkanisation and inoperability, thus politically conditioning its actions.

However, one of the characteristics of the Indianist movements is the abandonment of arms and violence, which was anyway generally low-intensity and residual. In Ibero America - paradoxically, one of the most violent regions in the world - violence is of no

use for political mobilisation: from guerrilla warfare to "foquismo" to "Sendero Luminoso" (Shining Path).²⁹

Some authors even point to the post-modern character of military movements such as the Zapatista movement, which is neither homogenous nor monolithic, but multifaceted. It thereby accepts, at least theoretically, pluralism and deliberation; it has abandoned Leninist and Maoist and vanguard rhetoric; it has built a relatively horizontal organisational structure and introduced gender policies vis-à-vis indigenous practices. In fact, since the 1994 uprising, no military offensives have been developed and it has been intent on mobilising civil society politically, with the slogan of "weapons that aspire to be useless" and "the army that intends to stop being an army".³⁰

We are dealing with an armed movement that is now more accurately a political movement, although it cannot be said to be peaceful, even if it condemns violence and terrorism - making it non-violent - and whose strategies while debatable are far from those of an insurgency.

These movements in fact make use of alternative and populist methodologies, in the sense of prioritising communication and political marketing to tune in to international public opinion. These tactics have given them remarkable results in terms of dissemination and publicity.³¹

IMPLICATIONS FOR SPAIN

Spain deserves special mention. Both indigenism and Indianism are formally defined against Spain as part of their identity. To this effect, the events of the *V Centenary* (1992) served to activate the Indianist movements, skilfully using them to their advantage and obtaining in return great international visibility.

The *Five Hundred Years of Resistance* Campaign promoted the creation of *Resistance Commissions* in almost all Ibero American countries, which led to a vast political and intellectual movement against the Spanish presence and the silencing of the Indians in Latin America. All these activities coincided with the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to Rigoberta Menchú, an indigenous Guatemalan, also in 1992, giving the indigenist

²⁹ MAIZ SUAREZ, Ramón. *Op. Cit.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ *Ibid.*

movement an exceptional boost.³² This capacity to oppose does not have the same strength as constructiveness proves to have, although it is a first and very important stage of progress.

But history, as a social science, does not seek to judge or justify, but to understand and contextualise. Along these lines, Hegel already pointed out that it is not so much the judgement of God as the judgement of politics "set up as a court of history". Reason is what hallmarks judgement following each historical period or cycle. There are no timeless truths, but rather truths that are installed in each cycle and in their adaptation to it.

So, should we condemn the Spaniards of the time for the Discovery of America? Cro-Magnon man cannot be condemned as a cannibal. To this end, the same would have to be done with the Romans in Hispania, which is unwise because we are their descendants. And of course, we must praise Viriato and all those who followed him, which is not incompatible since we are also his descendants. People deserve to be reconciled with their own history.

However, this condemnation, aside from the justice of it, also visibilises the Indians, highlighting their historical situation of oppression and signalling the awakening of a community that recognises its past.

The Discovery was not of course genocide *stricto sensu*, because at no time did the Crown sponsor or allow the destruction of any ethnic group, even though there were excesses of all kinds and dimensions. Bartolomé de las Casas is Spanish for the greater glory of Spain. And it is even less genocide if we consider the conduct of the time and even the subsequent behaviour of other nations in supposedly more advanced civilisational periods, and this with a consistent readiness to lecture others on the way it ought to be.

America was part of an Empire not a colony which, recalling the Constitution of 1812, united Spaniards in two hemispheres. And let us not forget that in the wars that preceded the Independence Wars, the Indians were mostly on the Spanish side, with mestizo generals such as Agustín Agualongo, who was shot for his loyalty to the King of Spain, and in whose name property titles were issued and used today to endorse the rights of some indigenous communities that we Spaniards recognised at the time.

³² Ibid.

More radical is the Zapatista Army, which at some point came to uphold that "neither the Spanish state nor the Church must ask us for forgiveness for anything. We will not echo the phonies who ride on our blood and thus hide the fact that their hands are stained with it".³³

However, this populist discourse, which smoothly links the present with the Black Legend as part of its identity, helps to mobilise these groups and to access a well-disposed public such as the Anglo-Saxon one. We are faced with a mobilising rhetoric, something that history, as a science, is not there to be.

CONCLUSIONS

Complaints about the oppression of indigenous peoples and demands for a greater degree of autonomy have gained important momentum in the new millennium. But local ethnicisms would not exist without prior continental political, social and ideological developments. Indianism today calls for self-management, though indigenism, as a precursor, had previously shed light on this. We are in an evolutive process.

The ethnic movements in Ibero America are the manifestation of an evolution that began shortly after the Discovery. During the Empire, a caste regime based on miscegenation and social whitening was established. After Independence, liberal states launched genocidal war campaigns and, not infrequently, expropriated communal lands, imposing oppressive forced labour conditions on the Indians and, under the influence of scientific racism, advocating European immigration to "whiten" Ibero American populations.

Indigenism is an identity-based approach that emphasises indigenous people and their culture as elements of the nation's identity, which is why its creators, who are not indigenous, assume that these groups should be protected through state policies to assimilate them as full citizens. This is a broad, human rights-based discourse that is both nationalist and multiculturalist, however antithetical it may be. Indeed, leftist ideologies and Marxism serve to pad out the doctrinal corpus, with the political cost which, in the context of the Cold War, such ideological dependence involves. With indigenism, non-Indians pursue developmentalist and assimilationist policies for Indians.

³³ <https://elpais.com/chile/2022-08-31/la-plurinacionalidad-de-la-nueva-constitucion-no-genera-consenso-entre-los-chilenos.html>

Indianness, which we can define as the particularity of those who consider themselves and are considered indigenous, has replaced indigenism, providing a narrative around which indigenous peoples have been able to regroup, something that indigenism - because of its assimilation and nationalism - did not do. This has facilitated the creation of a movement wherein the diversity of its components does not prevent global results from being obtained through a populist discourse that links up with other equally global issues.³⁴

The word Indian is revalued, ceasing to be the object of any policy and becoming a subject and promoter. At the same time, the diversity of the collective is recognised and the "Indian" is distinguished from the "peasant" by stressing their differentiated categories, thereby separating the social from the ethnic, despite acknowledging the usual convergence of planes. Moreover, the first category, the social, is considered to have been intentionally abused in as far as it incorporates an assimilative role that subsumes and ignores the previous category, thus rendering it invisible.

Likewise, and according to this logic, the reappropriation of the past involves a revision of the region's history as narrated until now by the sectors in power, allowing a cultural reappropriation to take place by reaffirming an identity considered to have been denied. However, there are legal claims to territory and natural resources, for which the aim is to obtain legal recognition and promote their recovery by appealing to the historical rights to which they are entitled. In the political sphere, there are demands ranging from effective political participation to recognition of autonomy and rights as a collective.³⁵ This chapter on collective rights stands in contrast to Western culture and the progress made by then since they are based on the axis of the individual and not the community.

Both indigenism and Indianism are, of course, the result of a pan-Indian nationalism, an ideation that does not exist because of the plurality and diversity of the elements it encompasses, and which, as happened with the V Centenary of the Discovery, are susceptible to serving a joint mobilisation. Constructive and affirmative actions require even more concerted will and effort.

The demands for autonomy, on the other hand, have not generated independence movements, nor have they destabilised the region or brought more conflicts, even while

³⁴ LAVAUD, Jean-Pierre; LESTAGE Françoise. *Op. Cit.*

³⁵ OLIVA, Maria Elena. *Op. Cit.*

they are not free of contradictions and their communitarian character is opposed to Western individualism. And we must remember that these communities, whose members have low literacy rates, sometimes have rights to relevant resources and are often located in weak and corrupt states.

We can and must conclude with a very positive overall assessment first of the indigenist movements, and then of the Indianist movements, not least because they have overcome fears and reservations, contributing to the improvement of the living conditions of their populations. And this not only politically but also economically; from Mexican developmentalism to the economic and redistributive success of the government of Evo Morales and his Minister of Economy, and current president of the country, Luis Arce.

These movements have served to incorporate the demands of substantial parts of the population into the political agenda, thereby broadening the quality of democracies and including indigenous collectives and their interests in the life of the nations of which they are a part. Overall, this makes Ibero American democracies more perfect and more real.

Time will force countries to take the necessary next step: to come to terms with their own history. Quoting from the Book of Sirach: "Do not glory in the dishonour of your father; the dishonour of your father is no glory to you, for a man's glory comes from the glory of his father".

*Federico Aznar Fernández-
Montesinos**
faznfer@fn.mde.es