

**The Principles and Values of Taiaiake Alfred's *Peace, Power, Righteousness*  
as a Global Model:  
Bolivia and Other Worlds**

by

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## Introduction

Ever since the arrival of Europeans on Turtle Island, the indigenous peoples that have inhabited the land here for thousands of years have been subjected to a systematized process of colonial rule. Turtle Island is a name used by several indigenous nations to refer to what is now known as the continent of North America; it is a mythic reference drawn from the cosmology of indigenous cultures.<sup>2</sup> Turtle Island is both a mythological world and the world in which indigenous peoples have inhabited for thousands of years. The arrival of Europeans to this land has led to the degradation of nature along with the indigenous way of life. The Europeans brought with them other worlds alien to indigenous tradition. Joyce Green refers to this phenomenon by describing the palimpsest, defined as a place or experience in which something new is superimposed over traces of something preceding it.<sup>3</sup>

Long before the era of colonization, indigenous peoples in Native America lived in relative harmony, were economically self-sufficient, and independent peoples. Upon the “discovery” of the new world, the Europeans brought with them disease and genocide and have been systematically attempting to assimilate the indigenous peoples within a hitherto alien framework of governance, the nation-state. In the colonized countries, settler populations were manipulated into thinking that non-European peoples were inferior, therefore legitimizing the actions of the state. It is within this context that Taiaiake Alfred has written his *Indigenous Manifesto*.

Taiaiake Alfred is a Kanien'kehaka (Mohawk) scholar and activist of the Rotinohshonni (Six Nations Confederacy). His book, *Peace, Power, Righteousness: An Indigenous Manifesto* is a challenge and a call for action and is directed towards the oppressed indigenous peoples of Turtle Island. But it is also a message for the indigenous and non-indigenous peoples of this world. Alfred pleads: “We cannot preserve our nations unless we take action to restore pride in our traditions, achieve, economic self-sufficiency, develop independence of mind, and display courage in defence of our lands and rights.”<sup>4</sup> Alfred recognizes the necessity of breaking free from the oppression of colonialism and achieving emancipation through the principles and values of indigenous governance which he illustrates as respect, balance, and harmony;

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2 Joyce Green, "From Oppression, Towards, Liberation." *Canadian Dimension* 37, no. 6 (Nov-Dec 2003): 30(3).

3 Ibid.

4 Taiaiake Alfred, *Peace, Power, Righteousness: An Indigenous Manifesto* (Oxford University Press, 1999), xii.

whether or not emancipation is conceivable in the context of Turtle Island remains to be seen.

However, in the Republic of Bolivia, it would appear that the indigenous peoples have indeed attempted to free themselves from the colonial oppression that Alfred speaks of. Bolivia becomes an interesting case, and possibly a new palimpsest, to examine the applicability and relevance of the principles and values of indigenous governance as the majority indigenous population has assumed power in recent elections. In this paper, I propose to utilize the principles and values of indigenous governance as articulated by Taiaiake Alfred and apply them to the new indigenous government in Bolivia to test whether the inherent principles found within *Peace, Power, Righteousness*, are also applicable at the interstate level. By attempting to demonstrate whether or not Alfred's principles may apply to the international indigenous movement, and examining Bolivia as a case and a potential model, an effort can be made at determining whether other worlds are possible within the framework of the neoliberal economic order of global governance. However, due to the rare circumstances surrounding the demographic makeup of Bolivia as having a majority indigenous population, highlighting the profound limitations of this as a case study, it is important not to assume that this scenario is immediately applicable elsewhere.

In developing this essay, I first propose to use the values of respect, balance, and harmony as articulated by Alfred in his work as a framework in which to discuss the important aspects of indigenous governance that I will then attempt to apply to the Bolivian case. The most important factor in the realization of respect, harmony, and balance is the notion of leadership. Alfred devotes much of his text to discussing leadership and he argues that strong leadership based on traditional indigenous values and principles is the key to survival and emancipation.<sup>5</sup> Quality leaders are responsible for the integration of indigenous philosophy, tradition, and culture into the structures of governance in order to determine its success. Within the realm of leadership, important issues arise; Alfred alludes to the role of women in indigenous governance as well as to the role that the state plays in relation to the land and to capital. By examining these issues as articulated by Alfred, this paper will then test their relevance and the validity of Alfred's work as a whole at the international level and then attempt to relate the ideas to the reforms in Bolivia.

This paper will attempt to open up Alfred's work to the reality of Bolivia. The new indigenous government led by Morales has implemented numerous reforms that this essay will attempt to relate to

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5 Ibid., xv.

Alfred's principles and values of indigenous governance. This paper will briefly look at the history of anti-colonial struggle in Bolivia and then discuss the indigenous reforms implemented at the state level. Although the traditional sovereign state is antithetical to Alfred's principles of governance, the entity has been used to create a degree of respect, balance, and harmony through various reforms. Included are the nationalization of the country's resources, land reform, the legalization of the coca leaf, and the new role women will play in the government. This paper will not form any definitive conclusions; however, it will seek to open up questions concerning the possibility of other worlds<sup>6</sup> within the framework of the values and principles of indigenous governance.<sup>7</sup>

### **Peace, Power, Righteousness**

"Only by heeding the voices of our ancestors can we restore our nations and put peace, power, and righteousness back into the hearts and minds of our people."<sup>8</sup>

Taiaiake Alfred's principles and values of indigenous governance as outlined in the *Peace, Power, Righteousness: An Indigenous Manifesto* are invoked through custom and ritual. Alfred establishes his text by employing an ancient and sacred Rotinohshonni custom, the Condolence ritual.<sup>9</sup> The Condolence ritual is a tool of healing that provides strength. It is used to celebrate survival in the face of mourning and loss and the celebration of survival is a theme that resonates throughout the text. He chooses this metaphorical framework as an appropriate means of articulating what he perceives as the crucial role that the principles and values of indigenous traditions can play in the emancipation of his peoples from an incessant greed and determination of the descendants of Europeans in maintaining control. The spirit of condolence is an attempt to invoke the power of reason and a universal rationality and is present throughout the themes of the book

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6 When referring to the concept of 'other worlds' in this paper, I am referring to alternatives other than those offered by contemporary civil society in the normative processes of globalization. The motive of civil society, represented by the state, the market, or the civil movement, is that of civilization through globalization. Within this normative framework, where is the voice of the marginalized and oppressed, what Jai Sen calls the 'incivil'? He proposes that those who are rendered incivil also create powerful forms of other worlds and other globalizations, by alternative means. It is within this context that this paper explores the plight of the indigenous movement, arguably one of the most marginalized groups in the world. See "Other Worlds, Other Globalisations," Course Description at <http://critical-courses.cacim.net/twiki/tiki-index.php?page=OWOGdescription>.

7 As a graduate student, I acknowledge the limitations of my knowledge and experience when speaking about indigenous cultures. When attempting to articulate alternatives, I am aware of the indigenous cosmology of other worlds and the importance of cosmology in imagining and creating other worlds, but the limitations imposed by this paper result in the discussion being focused on the creation of other worlds within the manifestation of the nation-state. For this, I am deeply indebted to Taiaiake Alfred's work, as although his words may not be accepted by the vast majority, I believe that they offer inspiration in realizing alternatives. As well, the job undertaken by Evo Morales is admirable and although he faces extreme challenges in the days ahead, his fight for indigenous rights is one to be admired in the face of adversity.

8 Ibid., xii.

9 Ibid., xix-xiii.

which are grouped into the three sections of ‘Peace’, ‘Power’, and ‘Righteousness’.

The three sections ‘Peace’, ‘Power’, and ‘Righteousness’ broadly represent indigenous peoples’ lament and strength, political culture, and existing challenges respectively. Within these sections, the principle indigenous values of respect, harmony, and balance can be found throughout the text. Alfred posits that in order for governance to be successful, it should reflect the traditional indigenous principles of respect and harmonious coexistence.<sup>10</sup> The principle of respect is a pivotal indigenous necessity in governance which includes respect for each other and respect for the earth. Likewise, the harmonious coexistence of equals will bear the fruit of justice that can only be achieved with a proper balance. “In the Rotinohshonni tradition, the natural order accepts and celebrates the coexistence of opposites; human purpose consists in the perpetual quest for balance and harmony; and peace is achieved by extending the respect, rights, and responsibilities of family relations to other peoples.”<sup>11</sup> Alfred is adamant in articulating that traditional philosophy is relevant to the present indigenous situation and I propose to take this one step further in articulating its relevance in opening up other worlds. The key to unlocking other worlds may be held in the realm of leadership.

The central argument outlined in Alfred’s work is that sound leadership is the key to quality change. Alfred attempts to articulate the necessary qualities of leadership through the *requickening*<sup>12</sup> process of the Condolence ritual. As if speaking directly to a future leader he proclaims:

*You have to commit to acting for the betterment of your nation. You have to free your mind from all harmful influences and negative things that are going on in your life and in your society. You have to have a clear mind to think for yourself and to do the best for your people. You have to work towards unity—you’re not a divisive person, you don’t try to create factions, you don’t focus on personal or divisive issues. Your imperative is to unify the people and work cooperatively. At the same time you have to be aware of what the ritual calls ‘lurking dangers’ ...<sup>13</sup>*

The lurking dangers are what Alfred refers to as cooptation, a phenomenon that has plagued the indigenous peoples of Canada as leaders have effectively become arms of the colonial machine, through positions occupied in band councils, et cetera.

Therefore, the problems of the indigenous peoples can only be solved through effective leadership that is based on traditional principles and values. For Alfred, it is an effective leader’s duty to invoke the

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10 Ibid, xiv.

11 Ibid, xiv.

12 Ibid., xx. *Requickening* is referred to as ‘bringing something back to life’.

13 Ibid., xxi-xxii.

power of reason, and that harmony can be achieved among human beings by developing the notions of pacification and persuasion.<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, good leaders must ensure that indigenous cultural values are rooted in governance; the intellectual, political, and economic dominance of Western traditions will remain unless there is a return to indigenous political philosophy based on the collective values of respect, harmony, and balance.<sup>15</sup> Within the notion of indigenous leadership, the argument can be expanded to include women, who have a very important role to play within the arrangement of governance. Alfred posits that women have a fundamental role to play as they once did in the politics of the first peoples.

In the traditional Rotinohshonni system, women played a vital role. The women selected the chiefs of the community and held them accountable. Accountability to women is a focal point within the Condolence ritual and is a “fundamental requirement of government.”<sup>16</sup> Sadly, the environment has changed in Native American society as the imposition of colonialism has created the conditions in which women are treated as second-class citizens, much as is the same throughout the globe. In an interview with Alfred, a Kwa’kwala’wakw woman living in Victoria describes how there is widespread disrespect for women and that they are treated as possessions.<sup>17</sup> Alfred also alludes to the fact that domestic violence in indigenous communities may be universal, pointing to a film about spousal abuse among Maori of New Zealand.<sup>18</sup> This phenomenon is a fundamental contradiction to the role that women played in traditional indigenous societies before the Europeans graced them with their presence. Indigenous culture traditionally regarded women as equals as well as an integral part of the political process; overcoming the shackles of colonialism will surely aid in breaking the chains of gender inequality.

Beyond the violence and inequality that exists throughout all human societies, indigenous women of Native America still play an integral role. In Rotinohshonni tradition, the women would raise a man to become a leader based on the moral principles of patience, courage, fairness, and generosity. If the women determined that the leader did not conduct himself according to these characteristics, then he was removed from the

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14 Ibid., xix.

15 Ibid., 23.

16 Ibid., 91.

17 Ibid., 14-18.

18 Ibid., 35.

position of leadership.<sup>19</sup> This model of accountability based on the collective good is one to be emulated. Although this model has been supplanted by the oppressive patriarchal model imposed by the West, women still have high political status vis-à-vis men within indigenous communities. As Alfred articulates, only with a return to traditional principles and values will the respect that has been integral to indigenous culture be reinstated.<sup>20</sup>

The traditional values and principles that define women's role in society also raise questions concerning the state, land, and capital. As Alfred depicts, "Nowhere is the contrast between indigenous and (dominant) Western traditions sharper than in their philosophical approaches to the fundamental issues of power and nature."<sup>21</sup> Western philosophical notions of power are based on coercion while in indigenous political traditions, power flows from the respect of nature. Indigenous philosophical tradition stems from the notion that humans have no right to 'possess' the earth or dispose of it as they see fit, making the realities of capitalism problematic.<sup>22</sup> Possessive materialism is rejected by indigenous tradition and is in direct contradiction to the values of respect, balance, and harmony. Alfred further describes the aspirations of the indigenous peoples in relation to the economy and they revolve around sustaining the planet and ensuring the health and well-being of the people.<sup>23</sup> Anything otherwise, would be upsetting the balance.

The principle of balance becomes problematic within the context of the European sovereign state. Western individualism is embedded within the entity of the state in which possessive materialism becomes the norm. Alfred rejects the notion of the state which defends private property and capital and represents power and coercion. Alfred is adamantly opposed to working within the confines of the nation-state in the liberation of indigenous peoples from colonial struggles:

In the indigenous tradition, the idea of self-determination truly starts with the self; political identity—with its inherent freedoms, powers, and responsibilities—is not surrendered to any external entity. Individuals alone determine their interests and destinies. There is no coercion: only the compelling force of conscience based on those inherited and collectively refined principles that structure the society.<sup>24</sup>

He continues to describe the state as,

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19 Ibid., 90.

20 Ibid., 90-95.

21 Ibid., 60.

22 Ibid., 60-61.

23 Ibid., 62.

24 Ibid., 25

...an abstract authority structure serving the interests of an economic and political elite. It is an affront to justice that individuals are stripped of their power of self-determination and forced to comply with the decisions of a system based on the consciousness and interests of others.<sup>25</sup>

The outright rejection of the state by Alfred appears to be warranted when measuring the suffering of the indigenous peoples on a global scale at the hands of the state. However, as it appears that this viewpoint will become problematic when this paper examines the case of Bolivia in further pages, upon further examination, it can be shown that Alfred recognizes that the state can be used for alternative purposes, thus perhaps enabling the realization of other worlds: “Indigenous peoples do not seek to destroy the state, but to make it more just and to improve their relations with the mainstream society.”<sup>26</sup> Alfred also hints toward the importance of the concept of federalism, and that “indigenous empowerment involves achieving a relationship between peoples founded on the principles of autonomy and interdependence.”<sup>27</sup> As will be examined in further pages, it can be argued that what Alfred thinks of as a theoretical necessity, Evo Morales has actually achieved in practice.

### **Peace, Power, Righteousness into Practice?**

While an indigenous leader has indeed assumed power, have traditional indigenous values been incorporated into the new system of governance in Bolivia? Has Alfred alluded to the principles that he speaks of being applied beyond the borders of Turtle Island? How interrelated are the principles of Native American society and those of indigenous peoples in the southern continent? Is Alfred’s *Manifesto* applicable at the interstate level?

In order to attempt to answer these questions, the applicability of Alfred’s traditional indigenous principles of respect, balance, and harmony in relation to the international indigenous community will be further validated in the next section. However, this paper will first delve deep into the pages of *Peace, Power, Righteousness* in order to see whether or not Alfred hints that this could be a model for the indigenous peoples that reside outside of Turtle Island. Early on, Alfred describes the principles and values promoted by Native Americans before the arrival of the Europeans:

Pre-contact indigenous societies developed regimes of conscience and justice that promoted

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25 Ibid., 26

26 Ibid., 53.

27 Ibid., 53

the harmonious co-existence of humans and nature for hundreds of generations. As we move into a post-imperial age, the values central to those traditional cultures are the indigenous contribution to the reconstruction of a just and harmonious world.<sup>28</sup>

Alfred's language here may suggest that the values of respect, balance, and harmony are applicable beyond the scope of his work in creating another visionary world beyond the geographical boundaries of Turtle Island. At the same time, Alfred admits that these values may not be uniform among Native peoples, and furthermore, may not be a universal objective.<sup>29</sup>

Alfred recognizes that there is substantial diversity amongst the indigenous peoples of Turtle Island. However, he also acknowledges that a "Native American political tradition" exists among the hundreds of indigenous groups in Canada and the United States. Alfred identifies a common bond, the *Kaienerekowa* ('the great law of peace') as follows: "commitment to a profoundly respectful way of governing, based on a worldview that balances respect for autonomy with recognition of a universal interdependency, and promotes peaceful coexistence among all elements of creation."<sup>30</sup>

The fundamental values of respect, harmony, and balance as articulated by Alfred are compelling when contemplating their relevance in relation to other worlds. The outline drawn thus far suggests that these principles are antithetical to the individualism and coercive violence inherent in the colonial nation-state. In this context, it can be hypothesized that the principles of indigenous governance may provide an alternative to the existing ruling order. On Turtle Island where Alfred resides, the realization of this supposition becoming a reality does not seem feasible given the present circumstances where the indigenous peoples constitute only a small minority. However, further south in Bolivia where indigenous peoples are more prevalent and constitute the majority, the achievement of other worlds may become possible. Alfred concludes his manifesto by proclaiming, "Don't preserve tradition, live it!"<sup>31</sup> The following pages will be dedicated towards the examination of the indigenous movement in Bolivia in implementing other worlds.

### **Authenticating the Text**

Before the case study can be fully embraced, it is important to attempt to validate Alfred's work as a piece of scholarship. The very fact that Alfred has included multiple interviews with various indigenous peoples from

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28 Ibid., 6.

29 Ibid., 6.

30 Ibid., xvi

31 Ibid., 145.

different backgrounds within the text itself grants the piece a measure of validity. To further authenticate his work, although not all encompassing nor exhaustive, I will look towards book reviews conducted by other indigenous peoples to determine whether his manifesto is accepted throughout the indigenous community.

However, book reviews can only reveal so much and this paper is interested in measuring Alfred's principles beyond the territorial boundaries of Turtle Island. In the hope of providing further authentication, this text will therefore also look further south on the continent to the Zapatista movement. The EZLN (Zapatista Army of National Liberation) based in southern Mexico has gained international stature in the last twelve years. The Zapatista principles of harmony, respect, leadership, accountability, and education are echoed in Alfred's text and can provide a basis for the correlative realization at the international level for the acceptance of Alfred's principles.

Finally, and in attempting to further validate and determine whether the values of respect, balance, and harmony are applicable at the international level, this paper will also look at a variety of declarations and communiqués that have been produced by various international institutions and provide a brief evaluation of whether or not a correlation exists. Only after doing this will the case of Bolivia be scrutinized and the traditional principles of indigenous governance as articulated by Alfred be applied.

The indigenous book reviews<sup>32</sup> may lend validity to Alfred's work as a piece of scholarship within their analyses. Peter Jull emphasizes that current reforms offered by the state merely perpetuate the situation and stresses how Alfred's manifesto may also be applicable to the indigenous peoples in Australia.<sup>33</sup> As well, Cathy Wheaton comments on how Alfred's dialogue with other indigenous contributors markedly expands the breadth of the discourse, while acknowledging that Alfred demonstrates how the combination of Western ideas can be skillfully integrated with indigenous ones, as this paper will later illustrate with the case of Bolivia.<sup>34</sup>

Furthermore, Kristina Fagan suggests that his work is going beyond the cultural aspects inherent in

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32 Kristina Fagan, "Tewatatha:wi. Aboriginal Nationalism in Taiaiake Alfred's Peace, Power, Righteousness: An Indigenous Manifesto," *American Indian Quarterly* 28, no. 1 & 2 (2004); Peter Jull, "Book Review - Indigenous Political Renewal: Taiaiake Alfred's Peace, Power, Righteousness: An Indigenous Manifesto," *Indigenous Law Bulletin* (2000); Cathy Wheaton, "Book Review of Taiaiake Alfred's Peace, Power, Righteousness: An Indigenous Manifesto," *Native Studies Review* 13, no. 2 (2000):113-117.

33 Jull, "Book Review."

34 Wheaton, Book Review."

Canadian and indigenous society and literature to focus on the arguably more important political aspects.<sup>35</sup> She focuses the discussion on indigenous nationalism in her review and suggests that the ‘mainstream’ promotes indigenous culture over nationalism as a way of depoliticizing the issues and creating a distraction from the realization of nationhood. As well, Fagan points out that although there has been a strong tradition in indigenous literature that focuses on tribal nationalism, there has been an extensive tendency on the part of the mainstream to focus exclusively on “literary” genres – novels, poetry, dramas. By prioritizing the latter, political and collective-based literature is devalued and subordinated in place of material that is individualistic and cultural.<sup>36</sup> Therefore, the very fact that Alfred’s manifesto attempts to promote indigenous politics and nationalism and bring them into the spotlight suggests that his work can be taken seriously and should be used as a model for indigenous activism. However, this is not to say that Alfred’s work is flawless; those who commend him are also quick to acknowledge his shortcomings.

Alfred’s work has been criticized for being over-simplistic. By emphasizing philosophy over action, his critics question how principles are supposed to translate into action without further instruction to his readers. Fagan has noted that by placing traditional nationalists on one end of the spectrum and assimilationist “sellouts” on the other, Alfred in effect paints a black and white portrait that should ultimately be comprised of various shades of gray.<sup>37</sup> In Alfred’s defense, he does acknowledge that differences exist in histories, cultures, interests, and goals of indigenous peoples, suggesting that his principles may be harder to apply at the international level due to the vast diversities that exist.<sup>38</sup> This may raise theoretical problems if substantial differences exist between perceptions among nations within Canada, as it will surely be difficult to export these values. However, nationalist distinctions are less relevant to this analysis in comparison to the traditional indigenous values of governance that are developed by Alfred. When drawing the focus to the struggle in Mexico, it can be seen that the Zapatista movement largely shares the same principles and values as articulated by Alfred.

The 6<sup>th</sup> Declaration of the Selva Lacandona – the EZLN recent communiqué issued in the summer of

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35 This is articulated by Fagan in her review.

36 Fagan, “Tewatatha:wi,” 17.

37 Ibid, 25.

38 Alfred, *Peace, Power, Righteousness*, 88.

2005 calls for a new international encounter.<sup>39</sup> The Zapatista struggle carries with it many similar characteristics found in Alfred's *Indigenous Manifesto*. The Zapatistas emphasize the principles and values of respect, harmony, leadership, the celebration of survival, the role of women, and the education of youth. Although the EZLN recognizes that their struggle is wider than Mexico, by no means do the Zapatistas speak for all indigenous struggles on a global level. However, their struggle has been heard by the international community and there has been an international response in support of the EZLN, although much of this support has been non-indigenous. However, they have united with other indigenous groups throughout Mexico and are attempting to forge an alliance with like-minded workers, *campesinos*, students, and teachers.<sup>40</sup>

A similar alliance between the indigenous movement and the left has been achieved in Bolivia which suggests that the indigenous peoples of Bolivia have adapted the same principles as the Zapatistas. In trying to forge a link between principles, values, and movements, it can be made evident that there are many similarities between the principles and values inherent in the EZLN ideology and practice and those detailed in Alfred's book. Therefore, it can be suggested that a link can be constructed between the principles of the indigenous peoples in the North and of those in their struggle in the South.

Furthermore, can this link be carried one step further to strengthen the correlation between Alfred's indigenous values and those of the international indigenous community as a whole? To further carry this brief analysis beyond the invisible boundaries of the hemisphere, it would better serve the purpose and validity of this discourse to measure, compare, and interconnect the principles, values, and ideologies of the indigenous peoples in the Western Hemisphere with those of the global indigenous movement as a whole. The movement has gained prominence in recent decades and has carried the voice of indigenous struggles to the international political sphere. Indigenous peoples have been working through the international institutions of global governance and have produced declarations and communiqués that have served in advancing their cause. Prominent examples include the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples<sup>41</sup>,

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39 EZLN Communiqué – “6th Declaration of the Selva Lacandona,” *Anarkismo.net*, 1 July 2005, <[http://www.anarkismo.net/newswire.php?story\\_id=805](http://www.anarkismo.net/newswire.php?story_id=805)> (12 September 2006).

40 Michelle Akane Storey, “Sexta Report Back,” *Colectivos de Apoyo, Solidaridad y Accion*, 9 September 2005, <<http://www.chiapaspeacehouse.org/node/74218>> (30 November 2006).

41 United Nations General Assembly: Human Rights Council 1st Session, *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, 19-30 June 2006, <<http://www.iwgia.org/graphics/Synkron-Library/Documents/InternationalProcesses/HR%20Council/HRCouncil1streport2006.pdf>> (2 November 2006), 58-73.

drafted in 1988 and adopted by the Human Rights Council on June 29, 2006;<sup>42</sup> the General Assembly will vote on the Declaration later on in the year. Other notable Declarations include The International Cancun Declaration of Indigenous Peoples<sup>43</sup> and the Beijing Declaration of Indigenous Women.<sup>44</sup> For example, the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples recognizes that indigenous peoples have the right to determine their relationships with States in a “spirit of coexistence, mutual benefit, and full respect.”<sup>45</sup> Therefore, it can be demonstrated that elements in the text of these documents mirror the principles and values of Alfred and the Zapatistas and gives indigenous peoples a voice at the international level.

International declarations and vast support for indigenous rights at the global level stems from the fact that for the most part, indigenous peoples do not have a voice in the internal politics of the nation-state. A globalizing world has enabled the possibility of an indigenous voice that can be heard in the international and at the global level. It has become the only avenue of indigenous expression therefore rendering international forums significant in advancing indigenous rights. Is there a correlation between the principles and values inherent in Alfred’s work, the Zapatista’s ideology, numerous international declarations and recent manifestations in Bolivia?

### **History of Indigenous Struggle in Bolivia**

“Indigenous people in Latin America, as in the world generally, are frequently the poorest people with the least access to education and condemned to the worst living standards. They are usually marginalized and excluded from government and social participation.”<sup>46</sup>

Within the context of the above passage, indigenous peoples had not always lived in extreme poverty and under the authority of colonial rule. The Aymara and Quechua indigenous peoples of the Andean region, among some fifty different Native groups within Bolivia, have managed to hold to their distinct traditions

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42 “Human Rights Council Adopts the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,” *International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs*, 29 June 2006, <<http://www.iwgia.org/graphics/Synkron-Library/Documents/Noticeboard/News/International/DDadopted.htm>> (2 November 2006). The Declaration was adopted by a recorded vote of 30 votes to 2 with 12 abstentions. Canada and the Russian Federation were the lone countries that cast a “no” vote.

43 “The International Cancun Declaration of Indigenous Peoples,” *5th WTO Ministerial Conference, Cancun, Quintana Roo, Mexico*, 12 September 2003, <[www.tebtebba.org/tebtebba\\_files/finance/cancunipdec.rtf](http://www.tebtebba.org/tebtebba_files/finance/cancunipdec.rtf)> (2 November 2006).

44 “Beijing Declaration of Indigenous Women,” *Indigenous Peoples Council on Biocolonialism: NGO Forum, UN Fourth World Conference on Women, Huairou, Beijing, PRC*, 9 September 1995, <[http://www.ipcb.org/resolutions/htmls/dec\\_beijing.html](http://www.ipcb.org/resolutions/htmls/dec_beijing.html)> (2 November 2006).

45 “UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.”

46 Tamara Pearson, “Indigenous America: 'A New Era Has Begun',” *Green Left Online*, 4 November 2006 <<http://www.greenleft.org.au/2006/689/35789>> (9 November 2006).

and are the majority among indigenous groups in the region. They have always resisted subjugation and assimilation to foreign rule. As Harold Osborne explains, the Natives withdrew from the white invader and were allowed to live as a separate people while avoiding contact. Outside of the cities, indigenous peoples maintained their own systems of government and administration and were able to retain their traditional way of life.<sup>47</sup> Osborne maintains that “it is only because this cultural independence was possible over wide areas of country little penetrated by the whites that the survival of the two races was possible.”<sup>48</sup> This may partially explain why the indigenous peoples in Bolivia have managed to preserve their distinct cultures and also maintain their majority populations in comparison to the non-indigenous inhabitants.

Bolivia has a long history of anti-colonial struggle. The indigenous peoples of Bolivia led an insurrection against the Spanish ruling elite as early as 1780. The Aymara indigenous leaders Tupaj Katari and Bartolina Sisa laid siege to the city of La Paz from their encampment in El Alto for five months. With the Aymara unable to take control over the entire city due to a lack of urban allies, the Spanish colonial authorities were able to quash the insurrection and maintained control over La Paz until they were overthrown by royalist forces and rebel armies in 1825 in which Bolivia gained its independence.<sup>49</sup>

The struggles that followed independence were led by national-popular movements but were also comprised of indigenous elements. Beyond the insurrection of 1780-1781, examples of this joint struggle can be seen in the insurgent federalist movement led by Pablo Zarate Villca in 1899, the regional revolutionary movement in 1927 led by Manuel Michel, the revolt that began in Ayopaya in 1946.<sup>50</sup> Apart from these incidences, the second great revolution occurred in Bolivia in 1952 which was the first national-popular revolution in Latin America. The middle-class National Revolutionary Movement (MNR) were backed by Trotskyist tin-miner militias, students, and factory workers who brought about the destruction of the landlord class, the nationalization of mines, and an end to oligarchic rule.<sup>51</sup> In the following decades, relations between the indigenous peoples and the members of the national-popular fronts were not without difficulties. Forest

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47 Harold Osborne, *Indians of the Andes: Aymaras and Quechuas* (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, Inc., 1973), 178.

48 Ibid.

49 Forrest Hylton and Sinclair Thomson, “The Chequered Rainbow,” *New Left Review* 25, (Sept/Oct 2005), 41-42, and Forrest Hylton and Sinclair Thomson, “The Roots of Rebellion: Insurgent Bolivia,” *North American Congress on Latin America* 38, no. 3, (November/December 2004), <[http://www.nacla.org/art\\_display.php?art=2496](http://www.nacla.org/art_display.php?art=2496)> (9 November 2006).

50 Hylton, and Thomson, “The Roots of Rebellion.”

51 Hylton and Thomson, “The Chequered Rainbow,” 42.

Hylton and Sinclair Thomson articulate how the relationship between the two groups has been historically characterized by mutual suspicion, misunderstanding, and racism.<sup>52</sup> The national-popular movement that gained prominence in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century held class consciousness in high esteem over cultural identity and indigenous participation suffered as a result. However with the onset of neoliberalism in the 1980s, this view began to change.

The imposition of neoliberal governance onto the Bolivian economy in the mid 1980s and the incorporation of the MNR into its governing structure would bring with it devastating effects for the nation's poor. Neoliberal reforms imposed on the country included monetary adjustment, fiscal reform, closure of the state mines, the mass layoff of workers, market-opening and trade liberalization, the free hiring/firing of labour, and the privatization of the six largest public companies.<sup>53</sup> Although Bolivia is the most impoverished nation in South America, proponents of neoliberal globalization argued that unprecedented opportunities lay ahead for indigenous peoples to benefit from modern capitalist democracy.<sup>54</sup> Hylton and Thomson articulate how Bolivia became a “shining star”, a model of reform and democratization for other Latin American countries and that militant popular movements had been defeated.<sup>55</sup> However, the reality of the situation tells a different story. Foreign control of resources, corruption, and vast inequality characterized the situation in Bolivia and a new movement and the 3<sup>rd</sup> great insurrection would develop to propose an alternative order under indigenous leadership.

In 1996, Bolivian President Sanchez de Lozada drafted the Hydrocarbons Law as part of a wave of privatizations. The law would dismantle the state energy firm Yacimientos Petrolíferos Fiscales Bolivianos (YPFB) and transnational corporations would have a free hand in taking control over the natural gas and oil-rich country. Further reforms under the corrupt Banzer regime at the turn of the century, which included the privatization of water, opened up the floodgates for another revolution.<sup>56</sup> Far from decapitating the militant popular movements, the beginning of neoliberal reforms in the 1980s had the effect of reconfiguring Bolivia's revolutionary past. Although indigenous neo-radicalism grew out of a long and bloody history, “its

52 Hylton and Thomson, “The Roots of Rebellion.”

53 International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, “Indigenous World 2006,” (Copenhagen: 2006), 183.

54 Hylton and Thomson, “The Roots of Rebellion.”

55 Ibid.

56 Hylton and Thomson, “The Chequered Rainbow,” 48.

irradiating effects since 2000 have reanimated aspirations for social and political change, harkening back to earlier moments of interethnic, interregional and cross-class alliance.”<sup>57</sup> The indigenous movement would rise and form an alliance with other social forces to overthrow the corrupt and repressive regimes that operated under the flag of neoliberalism and institute a new alternative government. The 3<sup>rd</sup> great insurrection led by the indigenous movement would offer hope for change in the region, and the potential opening of other worlds.

The Aymara indigenous people under Evo Morales and his *Movimiento al Socialismo* – Movement towards Socialism (MAS) – would lead the revolt and revive Bolivia’s revolutionary tradition. The movement was an alliance of other indigenous movements including the Quechua indigenous peoples and the other leftist movements. The energy of the revolution stemmed from the Aymara heartland of Omasuyos, followed later by the Aymara city of El Alto. However, in the following weeks, indigenous and national-popular forces would converge. Hylton and Thomson explain how the *wiphala*, the chequered-rainbow banner of indigenous self-determination flew beside the tri-coloured Bolivian flag in La Paz’s Plaza San Francisco.<sup>58</sup> The unification of these groups became a powerful political force and eventually toppled the Mesa government, which came into power with promises of progressive reform but was a guise of support for the multinationals. In mid 2005, the insurrection escalated and the Aymara leader Evo Morales won 53.7% of the popular vote in the December 2005 election, making him the first indigenous President in Bolivian colonial history.<sup>59</sup> The majority vote was representative of a long tradition of struggle against Western hegemony, the neoliberal model of governance, and the traditional racist colonial oligarchy.<sup>60</sup>

## Leadership

“...those who find sincerity and comfort in the oppressor, who bind themselves to recent promises, must yield to the assimilationist demands of the mainstream and abandon any meaningful attachment to an indigenous cultural and political reality.”<sup>61</sup>

Alfred abhors the tendencies of indigenous leaders to be co-opted within the context of Native

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57 Hylton and Thomson, “The Roots of Rebellion.”

58 Hylton and Thomson, “The Chequered Rainbow,” 43.

59 “Indigenous World 2006,” 182.

60 Ibid.

61 Alfred, *Peace, Power, Righteousness*, xi.

American political governance.<sup>62</sup> He has continually expressed throughout the indigenous manifesto that leaders on band councils and other integrationist constructs of the state only serve to further legitimize the oppression in a post-colonial context. Alfred has argued that this phenomenon has been a major failure and constraint on the true aspirations of indigenous peoples. It is important to relate to the Bolivian situation within the same framework. It will be the ultimate test of time to determine whether or not Evo Morales will continue to defy the multi-national corporations of the West or if he will eventually find “comfort in the oppressor” and yield to their demands.

Almost a year has passed since the December elections in 2005 brought the indigenous government into power in Bolivia. This short period of time is not sufficient in composing a complete and extensive analysis in terms of measuring the success that the reforms of this government have promised. An adequate amount of time is required to properly evaluate whether or not governance in Bolivia reflects the indigenous values respect, balance, and harmony. In the investigation of the opening of other worlds, and in the Bolivian case the role that the Fourth World plays in exposing other globalizations, this is a case that will require further study and evaluation as time passes. For now, we can look at the progress that the Morales’ government has made thus far. We can look towards his aspirations and the reforms that have been implemented. The means to achieving the indigenous values as articulated by Alfred that are necessary in realizing other worlds can be found through the phenomenon of leadership. While keeping the constraints in mind that were listed above, the remainder of this paper will scrutinize the new indigenous leadership in Bolivia while using this as a banner in which to further examine nationalization, land reform, the controversial issue of the coca leaf, and the role of women in governance. Furthermore, can the Morales’ government survive the external pressure determined in modifying the Andean region into one based on a model of neoliberal governance? Will Morales survive the onslaught and become a model for the international indigenous community and the world in general? From within the landlocked impoverished nation in South America, are other worlds possible?

Other worlds are being revealed in Bolivia and one man has been a key architect in the struggle. As the newly elected indigenous leader of Bolivia, Morales still lives in the poor rural Aymara community of

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62 The majority of contemporary indigenous leaders have elected to work within the structure of the state; therefore, to the degree that Alfred’s principles can be articulated as valid, his philosophy is one that rests on the margins of the mainstream.

Isallavi where he was born in 1959. A *campesino* (peasant) and *cocalaros* (coca farmer), Morales came into power with almost 54% of the vote in the December 2005 elections. Morales has worked to create drastic transformational change within the country that has an estimated 60-70% indigenous majority.<sup>63</sup> The past 500 years of colonial rule has been devastating for the impoverished indigenous communities and Morales has become a powerful voice in speaking out against historical injustices. When dissecting his speech, one can hear the connotations of other worlds.

Morales first addressed the international community at the United Nations General Assembly 61<sup>st</sup> Session on 19 September 2006. He criticized the neoliberal model that has had a stranglehold over Bolivia for the past 20 years and proclaimed that his new government was committed to repairing 500 years of damage. He echoed Alfred's principle of *respect* when he spoke of life and humanity and that the privatization of basic services was the greatest violation of human rights. Morales called on the UN to engage in the peaceful, democratic, and radical change that the indigenous peoples of Bolivia had themselves embarked on. He resonated Alfred's principle of *balance* when calling for a model of commerce at the localized level with micro and small producers, cooperatives, and collective companies. He echoed Alfred's principle of *harmony* when he called for the right to self-determination, the right to live in community, in collectivity, in solidarity, reciprocity, and the right to live in brotherhood. Morales proclaimed that indigenous peoples live in *harmony* with Mother Earth, not only in reciprocity and solidarity with human beings; as well, humanistic rivalry is destroying the planet. He called for a culture of life, not a culture of war. He pleaded that the new millennium must be dedicated to defending life, saving humanity, and saving the planet earth; it must be dedicated to equality, to life not war, and to people, not imperialism. Morales ends his speech by stating that this event should be historical in changing economic models, interventionist policies, and changing the world.<sup>64</sup>

Outside of the UN General Assembly speech, Morales frequently speaks of other worlds and how his country will be transformed within the context of other worlds:

“The indigenous communities have historically lived in community, in collectivity, in harmony not only with each other as human beings but with mother earth and nature and we have to recover that. If we think about life as equality and justice, if we think of humanity, the model of the West, industrialization and neo-liberalism is destroying the planet earth, which for me is the great Pachamama (the supreme goddess of Aymara/Quechua who are the largest

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63 Ibid, 182. In the 2001 Census, 62% of people aged 15 or over identified themselves as indigenous.

64 UN General Assembly 61st Session, *Words of the President of the Republica, Evo Morales, in his Speech Before the United Nations*, (19 September 2006).

groups of indigenous peoples here). The model that concentrates capital in the hands of the few, this neo-liberal model, this capitalist model is destroying the planet earth. And it's heading towards destroying humanity. It really can do that. And from Bolivia we can make a modest contribution to defend life, to save humanity. That's our responsibility."<sup>65</sup>

The principles and values outlined in this quote as well as other speeches are very similar to those pronounced by Alfred.

### **Reforms – A Government of the Poor, for the Poor**

The indigenous values of respect, balance, and harmony as articulated by Alfred become more exposed when further examining Morales' words, aspirations, and work. According to Morales, indigenous peoples are not only the "moral reserve" of Latin America, but of all humanity.<sup>66</sup> As the "moral reserve" now has a significant political voice in Bolivia, the government can start putting indigenous principles/values into practice in the opening of other worlds. Morales proclaims that indigenous peoples act according to universal law which consists of three basic principles: do not steal, do not lie, and do not be idle;<sup>67</sup> consequently, this trilogy will be the basis of the new constitution. According to Morales, the new republic will be based on diversity, equal rights, and respect for all and while dialogue is the basis of indigenous culture, it will be intertwined with the other fundamental principles and values in the operation of the government.<sup>68</sup>

Within the government, great changes are developing. The ones that will be examined in brief here include the nationalization of resources, agrarian reform, the legalization of the coca leaf, and gender equality. The institutionalization of these changes based on the values and principles of indigenous governance combined with the leadership of Morales are fundamental in opening other worlds.

When Morales took office earlier this year, his government immediately introduced reforms that were reminiscent of other worlds. While speaking of the recovery of human values through reciprocity and redistribution through governance, the symbolization of these values was put into action when Morales first raised the minimum wage by 50%. He then cut his own salary and the salaries of all elected officials and

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65 Judy Rebick, "An Indigenous Revolution Brings Hope to Bolivia," *Seven Oaks Magazine*, 9 September 2006, <<http://www.sevenoaksmag.com/features/bolivia.html>> (9 November 2006).

66 Michael Bowman, "Bolivia's New President Inspires Region's Indigenous Leaders," *Voice of America*, 26 January 2006, <<http://www.voanews.com/english/archive/2006-01/2006-01-26-voa67.cfm?CFID=1360734&CFTOKEN=60709818>> (9 November 2006), and Der Spiegel and Evo Morales, "Capitalism Has Only Hurt Latin America," *ZNet*, 4 September 2006, <[http://www.zmag.org/content/print\\_article.cfm?itemID=10880&sectionID=15](http://www.zmag.org/content/print_article.cfm?itemID=10880&sectionID=15)> (10 November 2006).

67 Der Spiegel and Morales, "Capitalism."

68 Ibid.

state managers by 50%. The extra money was then used to hire 3,000 new teachers. Other notable initiatives that the Morales' government has implemented include a massive literacy campaign and free health care with the help of thousands of Cuban doctors.<sup>69</sup> These reforms are an example of how indigenous values can be instituted at the state level and intertwined within the structure of governance.

The state, however, as also articulated by Alfred, is a colonial construct, and renders the issue of the opening of other worlds at this level problematic. Within Alfred's framework, the state is outright rejected as an avenue for emancipation. Similarly, Morales calls for the end of the colonial state and the end of state capitalism but has to use the sovereign state to implement reforms and lasting change.<sup>70</sup> However historically oppressive the state has been, it will now function in promoting the collective, self-managed companies, and the struggle for self-determination. Within this programme, the neoliberal model will be abolished and the state will be restructured around the non-violent democracy of the indigenous cultural revolution.<sup>71</sup>

What would Alfred say about this new marriage of the state and the principles and values of indigenous governance? Are the two incompatible or can the sovereign state truly be used as an instrument of good? In order to attempt to determine this, this paper will look toward other reforms implemented this past year in Bolivia. Possibly the greatest reform – defying all historical norms – has been the nationalization of natural resources.

Bolivia has the second largest natural gas reserves in South America.<sup>72</sup> What has been widely acknowledged as the most radical reform implemented by the Morales government and subsequently has caused the most controversy has been the nationalization of Bolivia's hydrocarbon sector. As articulated by Gutierrez and Mokrani, Morales' 1 May 2006 *Supreme Decree # 28701* has reinforced the national state while strengthening and protecting national sovereignty as a reaction against previous years of subordination to

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69 Information from coca leaf issue derived from: Spiegel, "Capitalism"; Judy Rebick, "Peaceful Revolution is Taking Shape: A Rare Interview with Evo Morales as he Begins a Profound Transformation of his Country," *ZNet*, 9 September 2006, <[http://www.zmag.org/content/print\\_article.cfm?itemID=10915&sectionID=52](http://www.zmag.org/content/print_article.cfm?itemID=10915&sectionID=52)> (10 November 2006); Yvonne Zimmermann, "Interview with Evo Morales: Cocaleros in Parliament," *Platform Latijns-Amerika in Nederland*, 2006, <[http://www.nieuws.nl/global\\_eng\\_artikel.php?id=288](http://www.nieuws.nl/global_eng_artikel.php?id=288)> (9 November 2006); Haider Rivzi, "Bolivia: Morales Takes Coca Campaign to U.N.," *Inter Press Service News Agency*, 21 September 2006, <<http://www.ipsnews.net/print.asp?idnews=34821>> (10 November 2006); "Bolivian President Evo Morales on Latin America, U.S. Foreign Policy and the Role of the Indigenous People of Bolivia," *Democracy Now Website*, 22 September 2006, <<http://www.democracynow.org/article.pl?sid=06/09/22/1323211>> (10 November 2006).

70 Zimmermann, "Cocaleros," and Rebick, "An Indigenous Revolution."

71 Rebick, "An Indigenous Revolution."

72 Gretchen Gordon, "Waiting for Nationalization in Bolivia," *NACLA News*, 17 October 2006, <<http://news.nacla.org/2006/10/17/waiting-for-nationalization-in-bolivia/>> (10 November 2006).

outside interests and designs.<sup>73</sup> Previously, neoliberal reforms had transferred Bolivia's natural resources from the public to the private sector without any type of sale. The result was that 82% of profits went to the transnational corporations as only 18% tax was charged by the state.<sup>74</sup> The Supreme Decree gave foreign oil companies six months to accept new contracts. All ten foreign oil firms, who have \$3.5 billion invested in Bolivia, signed the contracts accepting the new conditions. The conditions include selling at least 51% of their holdings to the state, creating billions in revenue and bringing about the social reappropriation of public wealth.<sup>75</sup> While there has been widespread criticism for Morales' renationalization of the energy sector<sup>76</sup>, Stiglitz, Gutierrez and Mokrani proclaim that renationalization is not the appropriate term since the sale of gas to private interests was done illegally and done without the consent of the people or of the National Congress. Therefore, Stiglitz rightfully argues that as opposed to renationalization, it is merely the return of property.<sup>77</sup> Here, the state is being used to create a balance where the historical inhabitants of the land can benefit from the land, not to be rich as Morales has said, but only to "live well."<sup>78</sup>

Another "radical" reform being implemented as part of Morales' mandate is the Agrarian Revolution. The revolution transpired as a result of the adoption of historical indigenous values into the governing process. Indigenous peoples throughout the Americas have never conformed to the capitalist logic of private property and have always lived by the principles of communal property; the concept of the community takes priority over the individual in traditional indigenous culture. Therefore, within the context of 80% of Bolivia's rural population living in extreme poverty while 50,000 families own 90% of Bolivia's productive land, Morales is moving to redistribute 20 million hectares in the face of stiff opposition from the *Latifundia* (large landholders)<sup>79</sup> Further reforms include recovering unproductive private land that was illegally obtained while

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73 Raquel Gutierrez and Dunia Mokrani, "Bolivia Returns Hydrocarbons to the Public Sector: Nationalization without Expropriation?" *IRC Americas*, 12 June 2006, <[americas.irc-online.org](http://americas.irc-online.org)> (9 November 2006), 4.

74 *Ibid.*, 2-3.

75 *Ibid.*

76 Mark Engler, "Globalization's Watchdogs," *Foreign Policy in Focus*, 26 May 2006, <<http://www.fpif.org/fpiftxt/3284>> (9 November 2006).

77 *Ibid.*

78 UNGA 61st Session, "Words of the President."

79 Pearson, "Indigenous America." Furthermore, the large landowners (based in Santa Cruz) have threatened to defend their estates with paramilitary self-defense groups.

distributing land to traditional communities as opposed to individuals.<sup>80</sup> Land reform, although under the operation of the state, is done so in a way that reflects traditional indigenous values of respect and balance within the community.

Morales has moved to further implement reforms around traditional indigenous culture. The coca leaf is directly related to the land and has played an important role in the spiritual and economic livelihood of indigenous peoples in the region since time immemorial. In this context, Morales has called the U.S. War on Drugs, which targets the plant in the Andean region, the neo-colonization of the Andean countries.<sup>81</sup> The coca leaf, which is used to make cocaine, is also used for religious and medical purposes and provides a livelihood for indigenous communities in the Andean Region. Morales explains that, “It is part of our national identity, it represents the community and its collectivity for the indigenous people.”<sup>82</sup> The widespread use of cocaine in the industrialized world has resulted in the international criminalization of the coca leaf, largely ignoring its importance in indigenous culture. Morales, a *cocalaros* himself, is putting indigenous culture above international legal norms and plans on commercializing, exporting, and industrializing the coca leaf. These actions are consistent with Alfred’s principles of respect, balance, and harmony. I believe that Alfred would be pleased with the strength in Morales’ leadership in defying the forces of colonialism, as opposed to being co-opted and assimilated within the normative framework.

### **Women’s New Role in the Government**

The above examples serve to exemplify the influence that the values and principles of indigenous tradition, culture, and leadership can exert at the state level. It has already been discussed how contradictions arise when exporting such principles to the level of the state, a historical colonial construct imposed upon indigenous peoples without their consent. However, the government in Bolivia has chosen to work within the parameters of the state to undo 500 years of historical injustices to indigenous peoples. Not even a year has passed since the new government came into power, thus a complete evaluation that measures success is not warranted. However, this paper will continue to look at the changes that have been implemented under the new leadership and how they relate to Alfred’s principles of respect, balance, and harmony.

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80 Rebeck, “Peaceful Resolution.”

81 UNGA 61st Session, “Words of the President.”

82 Rivzi, “Morales Takes Coca.”

This paper will now briefly scrutinize the structures of government in Bolivia and the role that women have to play. As articulated by Alfred, women have played a historical and fundamental role in traditional indigenous governance in holding leaders accountable. What role are women playing in Morales' Cabinet and in the new Constituent Assembly?

Bolivia's new 16-member "Cabinet of Change" is largely comprised of trade unionists, educators, indigenous peoples, and women. Women make up ¼ of the Cabinet occupying the positions of Minister of Justice, Ministry of Economic Development, the Health Ministry, and the Interior Ministry. The composition of the new Cabinet is a revolutionary departure from previous governments made up of light-skinned males.<sup>83</sup> The majority indigenous Cabinet has been heavily criticized for its radicalism and lack of experience but in what Morales calls the "nationalization of the government"<sup>84</sup> there is now hope for a more just and economic system that can incorporate traditional indigenous values into the model of governance. Although a vast improvement from previous compositions of the executive branch, there is more hope for gender equality in government within the Constituent Assembly.

Evo Morales promulgated the "Special Law to Convene the Constituent Assembly" on 6 March 2006 which will be comprised of 255 constituent deputies: 210 directly elected and 45 proportional representatives elected by relative majority.<sup>85</sup> Morales is speaking of other worlds when he describes the new found vision and purpose of the Constituent Assembly which he portrays as a "new social pact that will benefit those who have been historically marginalized and humiliated."<sup>86</sup> Morales speaks of the Constituent Assembly as not subordinating anyone, having more power than the President, the National Congress, and the judiciary in providing equality, dignity, and freedom for all Bolivians.<sup>87</sup> It is in the Assembly where women are closest to reaching political equality; 64% of MAS's 135 representatives are women.<sup>88</sup> Also, the President of the Constituent Assembly is a Quechua woman who called for the entire country to support the equality of

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83 Frank Chavez, "Bolivia: Indigenous Leaders, Women Head New Cabinet," *Inter Press Service News Agency*, 24 January 2006, <<http://ipsnews.net/print.asp?idnews=31895>> (9 November 2006).

84 Ibid.

85 Dunia Mokrani and Raquel Gutierrez, "The Hidden Politics of Bolivia's Constituent Assembly," *Americas Program Report*, 5 September 2006, <<http://americas.irc-online.org/am/3486>> (9 November 2006).

86 "Address by the President of the Republic of Bolivia at the Inaugural Session of the Constituent Assembly," 6 August 2006, <[http://www.evomorales.net/paginasEng/constituye\\_Eng\\_inaugu\\_evo.aspx](http://www.evomorales.net/paginasEng/constituye_Eng_inaugu_evo.aspx)> (19 November 2006).

87 Ibid.

88 Mokrani and Gutierrez, "The Hidden Politics."

women. The *campesino* National Women's Federation has demanded that 50% of all government positions be held by women.<sup>89</sup> The vision of the Constituent Assembly as invoked by Morales as possessing the majority of power in the country gives women the opportunity to be political equals and can serve as a forum where male leaders are held accountable in their actions.

The reforms institutionalized by the new indigenous government in Bolivia are revolutionary. Within the reforms, there are elements of the principles and values of respect, balance, and harmony. The very fact that the indigenous values of governance are being allocated to the state level speaks to other worlds.

## **Conclusion**

This paper has sought to examine whether the principles and values of indigenous governance as articulated by Taiaiake Alfred in *Peace, Power, Righteousness: An Indigenous Manifesto* are applicable at the international level. Due to the recent inauguration of the indigenous government, Bolivia has been used as a unique case study. By examining the indigenous leadership and the subsequent implementation of reforms, this paper has attempted to identify and unveil a correlation between Alfred's principles and values of indigenous governance within the Rotinohshonni tradition and at the international level. In the case of Bolivia, putting these principles into practice may be pivotal in opening other worlds.

This paper has also sought to open up Alfred's work to the reality of Bolivia and will conclude as it has begun, open-ended. In attempting to speak to other worlds, many questions have been raised in this discussion and in some cases, only touched on briefly. Other questions must also be formulated and included with existing questions in order to carry the discussion and analysis further. When we speak of an alternative order, can Alfred's work serve as an important link to the international indigenous movement in the realization of other worlds? Can the principles and values of indigenous governance be used as a model and as an alternative to the existing order? What are the implications for other countries in the region? What are the implications for other indigenous movements in the region? What are the implications for the indigenous movement at the international level who are trying to secure indigenous rights through international legal frameworks? What are the implications for all struggles including non-indigenous peoples who long for an alternative to the existing neoliberal global economic order? Most importantly, these questions can be condensed into one: if other worlds are indeed being created within the context of this discussion, are these

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<sup>89</sup> Rebrick, "An Indigenous Revolution."

other worlds opening other globalizations?

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