



## De héroe americano a enemigo de la República.: Sobre el golpe de Estado de Mariano Melgarejo y la revolución que lo derrocó (Bolivia, 1864-1871)

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text (article)

Analítica

Through a historiographic revision of controversial Bolivian president Mariano Melgarejo's government, this paper delves into the protocols and underlying meaning of revolutionary movements in a dynamic, contextual and historical manner to shed light on the articulation of their civil and military components and the complex relationship between politics, violence and legislation. Not only are revolutionary movements explored in two of their potential modalities -the coup d'état and partisan insurgency-, but the provisional authoritarian or dictatorial government that might precede them is also interpreted as a means to consolidate revolutionary achievements. From this critical perspective, the stigmatizing view of 20th-21st century coup d'états and dictatorships is put into question, with a new interpretation being offered for comparable events in the 19th century. The text is divided into three parts. The first one, focused on the Melgarejista coup d'état, shows both its initial public support and acceptance and the unconstitutionality of the first opposition uprisings. The second part briefly describes the internal organization, mobilizing strategies, leaderships, main actors and rebel partisan rivalries, underlying how the successive insurrections from 1865 up to the campaigns of 1870-1871 were all parts of a single six-year revolutionary process period. Finally, the third part revolves around the rhetorical transmutation of Melgarejo from "American hero" dictator to tyrant so as to reflect, via the construction of the adversary's otherness, on the discursive fixation of the legal and legitimate dimensions in the exercise of governmental authority. The three components underline the public appreciation of republican institutions and the importance of making them known through the armed defense of the Constitution. To support this, various sources were consulted, such as press clippings, popular acts, proclamations, government messages, leaflets, memoirs, judicial

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