

The Bolivarian revolution

Wake up Bolivar: your time has come again!

Our father who art in the earth, in the water, in the air
of all our great and silent breadth,
all bears thy name, father, in our land:
thy name the sugar cane raises to the sweetness,
Bolivar tin has a Bolivar brilliance,
the Bolivar bird over the Bolivar volcano,
the potato, the saltpeter, the special shadows,
the currents, the veins of phosphoric stone,
all that is ours comes from thine extinguished life,
thy heritage was rivers, plains, bell towers,
thy heritage is this day our daily bread, father

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I met Bolivar one long morning,
in Madrid, at the entrance to the Fifth Regiment.
Father, I said to him: are you or are you not, or who are you?
And looking at the Mountain Barracks, he said:
'I awake every hundred years when the people awake.'

Pablo Neruda

It was during a memorable visit to Republican Spain that the Chilean poet, Pablo Neruda, composed this Song for Bolivar. Today, the election of Evo Morales as President of Bolivia, and the dramatic recent events in Venezuela, bring Pablo Neruda's prophetic words surging back into the collective memory.