

# UC San Diego

## UC San Diego Electronic Theses and Dissertations

### Title

Popular Politics of Social Emancipation in Bolivia from the 1930s to the Present: Indigeneity, Revolution and the State

### Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/74h4w90n>

### Author

Kim, Younghyun

### Publication Date

2018

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA SAN DIEGO

Popular Politics of Social Emancipation in Bolivia from the 1930s to the Present: Indigeneity,  
Revolution and the State

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the  
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in

History

by

Younghyun Kim

Committee in Charge:

Professor Christine Hunefeldt, Chair  
Professor Misha Kokotovic  
Professor Dana Velasco Murillo  
Professor Nancy Postero  
Professor Eric Van Young

2018

Copyright

Younghyun Kim, 2018

All rights reserved.

The Dissertation of Younghyun Kim is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically:

---

---

---

---

---

Chair

University of California San Diego

2018

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Signature Page.....	iii
Table of Contents.....	iv
List of Illustrations.....	vi
List of Tables.....	viii
Acknowledgments.....	ix
Vita.....	xii
Abstract.....	xv
Introduction.....	1
Chapter 1 – Rural Unrest in the 1930s-1940s: Toward Emancipation and Destabilization.....	27
1.1 – Chaco War.....	31
1.2 – Hacienda: A System of Opression.....	34
1.3 – Indigenous Education.....	38
1.4 – Sit-down Strikes (1939-1943).....	55
1.5 – National Indigenous Congress.....	64
1.6 – Rural Unrest, 1946-1947.....	66
1.7 – The Force of Destabilization.....	73
Chapter 2 – The National Revolution: Permanent Disorder and the Revolutionary Establishment.....	78
2.1 – Militant Miners.....	82
2.2 – Peasant-State Alliance, 1953-1970.....	100
2.3 – Conclusion: A Permanent Disorder.....	117
Chapter 3 – Indianism and Katarism: Aymara-Quechua Radicalism.....	121
3.1 – Cracks in State Control in the Countryside.....	126
3.2 – Fausto Reinaga’s Indianism.....	130
3.3 – Katarist Challenge to the Military-Peasant Pact.....	142
3.4 – Tiwanaku Manifesto of 1973.....	148
3.5 – Struggle against Persistent Marginalization.....	151
3.6 – Indianism, Katarism, and Mestizaje.....	157
Chapter 4 – City of Migrants: El Alto’s Rise in National Imaginary.....	170
4.1 – El Alto: A Space of Marginality.....	174
4.2 – El Alto: A Space of Struggle.....	195
4.3 – State in El Alto.....	208

Chapter 5 – The Massacre of September-October, 2003: A Rupture.....	215
5.1 – Popular Challenges to the Neoliberal State (1985-2002).....	219
5.2 – Black February in El Alto-La Paz, 2003.....	229
5.3 – Gas Export and “Maya y Paya”.....	233
5.4 – Memory of September-October, 2003.....	238
5.5 – Massacres.....	250
5.6 – Popular Responses to the Massacre.....	254
5.7 – Epilogue: Victims Demanding Justice.....	260
Conclusion.....	265
Bibliography.....	271

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

<Illustration 1.1> The nine Departments of Bolivia.....	76
<Illustration 1.2> Department of La Paz with twenty Provinces.....	77
<Illustration 2.1> The pueblo shouts against its enemies.....	83
<Illustration 2.2> Dead miners testify to the state violence and the wounds inflicted upon the collective body of the pueblo.....	84
<Illustration 2.3> Miners applaud the proposition of armed struggle.....	96
<Illustration 3.1> The ex-comunario stares at his pasts with the Andean landscape in the background.....	160
<Illustration 3.2> The ex-comunario has fallen down on the verge of dying from his performance of the <i>Danzanti</i> .....	162
<Illustration 3.3> The reborn comunario looks at the funeral of his past that has been embraced by the community.....	163
<Illustration 4.1> The administrative division of El Alto according to the 1992 census.....	179
<Illustration 4.2> Expansion of El Alto from the year of first documented settlement of migrants until 2001.....	180
<Illustration 4.3> Urban expansion of El Alto from 1912 to 2012.....	181
<Illustration 4.4> A typical cityscape of Ceja in El Alto.....	184
<Illustration 4.5> Convergence of pedestrians, street vendors, and vehicles in an intersection of alleys in Ceja.....	186
<Illustration 4.6> El Alto at the beginning of the twentieth century.....	187
<Illustration 4.7> Dolls hanged to evince the seriousness of public insecurity to which El Alto's barrios have responded in their own ways.....	193
<Illustration 4.8> The singing cat stands in front of the paintings, showing his encounter with the mysterious beautiful lady.....	206
<Illustration 4.9> The cholet in El Alto signals the economic power of qamiris in Bolivian society.....	210

<Illustration 5.1> <i>El Alteño</i> shows the last moment of Luis Villca Gavincha begging for medical attention.....	246
<Illustration 5.2> The front page of <i>Semanario Pulso</i> demanding the resignation of Sánchez de Lozada. The so-called <i>Ninja Alteño</i> (Ninja of El Alto) has become an emblematic image of El Alto's rebellion against Sánchez de Lozada in October 2003.....	256



## LIST OF TABLES

<Table. 5.1> The new taxation rates proposed by Sánchez de Lozada in February 2003.....	231
---	-----

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Everybody in this game should acknowledge that intellectual works are products of a collective process of mutual support, feedbacks, and dialogues between the author(s) and various actors. I would like to acknowledge Professors Christine Hunefeldt, Dana Velasco Murillo, Eric Van Young, Misha Kokotovic, and Nancy Postero for their support and guidance of my research. I am especially grateful for Professor Hunefeldt's guidance and support as the chair of my committee. Through multiple drafts, her guidance has proved to be invaluable.

I would like to acknowledge my colleagues, comrades, friends and brothers and sisters in and from the University of California, San Diego (UCSD) for their comradeship and friendship that have sustained my critical spirit to confront various issues. I particularly express my gratitude to Crystal Pérez, Mohammed Abumaye, Gerardo Ríos, Jael Vizcarra, Troy Araiza Kokinis, James Deavenport, Jonathan Abreu, Jorge Ramírez, and Manuel Morales Fontanilla. Luis Sánchez López, Ruben Silverman, and Stephanie Fairchild read drafts of my dissertation and gave me invaluable comments. I express my sincere gratitude to Luis, Ruben, and Stephanie. I would like to express my special thanks to Patric Kearney for giving me electronic copies of dozens of Fausto Reinaga's books during my first year in UCSD, which were my first introduction to Indianism.

My research would have been impossible without support of my friends, brothers and sisters in Bolivia. I deeply appreciate the kindness that the family of Braulio Rojas Choque has shown me. I thank Susan Elison for introducing me to this lovely family, and my UCSD colleague Amy Kennemore for introducing me to Susan. My *jilatas* and *kullakas* in El Alto and La Paz have provided me with invaluable emotional and intellectual support. I particularly express my gratitude to Alejandro Mérida Luján, Isabel Brisseida Nina Quispe, Jesús Humérez Oscori,

Edwards Mamani Alvarado, Felipe Callisaya, Franklin Calani Yenz, Issac Rivera, Iván Apaza Calle, Jaime Amaru Flores, José Luis Sajama Tapia, Nelson Cussi, Roberto Pacosillo Hilari, and Roger Adán Chambi Mayta. I deeply appreciate the generosity and kindness of Abraham Delgado Mancilla, Carlos Macusaya Cruz, Carlos Mamani Condori, Denise Arnold, Juan de Dios Yapita, Franklin Calani (the father of my friend Franklin Calani Yenz), Kawi Jaime Kastaya Quispe, Pablo Mamani Ramírez, Pablo Velásquez Mamani, Pachakuti Aqarapi Wanka, Patricio Mamani Chipana, Pedro Portugal Mollinedo, Rosalia Del Villar, and Rodolfo Quisbert to respond to my questions and provide me with indispensable insights. Jaime Amaru Flores and Pablo Velásquez also kindly invited me to the commemoration of the Gas War in Sorata in 2016, which was crucial for the development of my thinking on that war. I express my gratitude to members of the *Fundación Wayna Tambo*, particularly Gonzalo Choquehuanca Quispe, Negrita Gabby, Nina Uma, and Pablo Beque Arias, for always welcoming me with kindness and warmth. I thank members of *La Asociación de las Víctimas de la Masacre de Septiembre-Octubre, 2003* for sharing their stories that stemmed from the tragic events in September-October, 2003. I also deeply thank Jaime Amaru Flores for putting me in contact with *La Asociación*. I sincerely appreciate the generosity of Edwin Mamani Luna, journalist of *El Alteño*, to permit me to access his private notes on the Gas War.

There are three *bolivianas especiales*, to whom I would like to express my gratitude. They were the first Bolivians, whom I personally got to know during my first visit to the country in 2013. In retrospect, my interactions with them have been crucially related to my relationships with many other people in Bolivia. I especially thank two of them for providing me with emotional support in different moments of my stay in the country. I sincerely thank one of them for naming me “Inti” in Quechua.

I sincerely thank my family for giving me the opportunity to study abroad and find my way in Bolivia and the U.S. My father Seung Jae Kim, mother Jeom Ok Oh (1950-2009), and sisters Sun Gyeong Kim and Seo Ran Kim have been invaluable supportive of this youngest member of the family. Hopefully I am not that bad for them.

Finally, I would like to express my profound gratitude to all the spiritual forces that have accompanied me throughout my life. They have not always been kind to me since they were frequently tormenting to me and sometimes threw me into the deepest part of the abyss. But, my being would have been impossible without them, and they have been sources of my inspiration for looking at the world in my distinct ways.

This research was mostly funded by UCSD Summer Graduate Research Grants. A small portion of it was funded by Tinker Field Research Travel Grant.

## VITA

### Education

- 2018            University of California San Diego  
                  History Department  
                  Ph. D. History
- 2009            State University of New York at Albany  
                  Latin American Caribbean, and U.S Latino Studies (LACS) Department  
                  M.A. LACS
- M.A. project: *Uncoordinated Radicalisms: Nation, Mestizaje, Citizenship  
                  and Leftist Politics in Bolivia, 1952-1971*  
                  Project Director: Susan M. Gauss  
                  Second Reader: Fernando I. Leiva
- 2006            State University of New York at Albany  
                  B.A., *magna cum laude* in History

### Award

#### UCSD

- UCSD Summer Graduate Research Grant (2013)  
Tinker Field Research Travel Grant (2014)  
UCSD Summer Graduate Research Grant (2015)  
UCSD Summer Graduate Research Grant (2016)  
UCSD Summer Graduate Research Grant (2017)

### Presentation

“A Boy Who Leaps through Time: An Archival Life in Cochabamba, Bolivia.” Presented at CILAS Graduate Symposium hosted by The Center for Iberian and Latin American Studies of the University of California San Diego (UCSD), February, 2015

“En el cuento: significados de relatar una historia de rebeliones indígenas.” Presented at the International Congress of the Association of Bolivian Studies (AEB) organized by the AEB in Sucre, Bolivia, July, 2015

“History and Plurinationalism in the Bolivian Andes.” Presented at the ERIP Conference hosted by the Latin American Studies Association (LASA) in the Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), October, 2015

“Creating Cracks on Colonialism in the Andes.” Presented at the Discussion Forum hosted by the Angela Davis History Collective, and the Diversity Program of the History Department at University of California San Diego (UCSD), January, 2016

“Between *lo comunitario-popular* and *lo nacional-popular*: Indigeneity in Liberal Bolivia.” Presented at Left Spaces in Latin America: UC San Diego & Cornell University Symposium sponsored by Division of Arts & Humanities, Center for Humanities, Office of the Vice Chancellor for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, Center for Iberian and Latin American Studies, Graduate Student Associations, Departments of History and Sociology at University of California San Diego, April, 2016

“Creating Communitarian Spaces of Revolution: A Case of El Alto/La Paz.” Presented at the 2017 Congress of the Latin American Studies Association (LASA) in Lima, Peru, April 29-May 1, 2017

“Corea del Sur-Bolivia: una analogía de colonialismo.” Round Table Conversation organized by the Students Center of the Department of Sociology at the Public University of El Alto (UPEA) in El Alto, Bolivia, July, 2017

“La memoria viva: a 14 años de la Guerra del Gas.” Presented at the International Congress of the Association of Bolivian Studies (AEB) organized by the AEB in Sucre, Bolivia, July, 2017

## Teaching

UCSD History Department

### Reader:

HILA 131: A History of Mexico  
HILA 132: Contemporary Mexico  
HIUS 133: The Golden Age of Piracy

### Teaching Assistant:

HILA 100: Conquest and Empire: the Americas  
HILA 101: Latin America: The Construction of Independence, 1810-1898  
HILD 7A: Race and Ethnicity in the United States  
HILD 7C: Race and Ethnicity in the United States  
HILD 10: East Asia: The Great Tradition  
HILD 11: East Asia and the West, 1279-1911  
HILD 12: Twentieth-Century East Asia: A Transnational Perspective  
HILD 14: Latin American History through Film  
HILD 30: History of Public Health

UCSD Laws and Society Program

Teaching Assistant:

LAWS 101: Contemporary Legal Issues

UCSD Studies of Religion

Teaching Assistant

RELI 1: Introduction to Religion

UCSD Literature Department

Teaching Assistant:

LTKO 2B: Intermediate Korean

Areas of Research

Andean Cosmology, Aymara Nationalism, Collective Memory, Colonialism, Decolonization, Ethnicity, Indigeneity, Popular Rebellions, Race, Revolutions, and Subalternity

Professional Memberships

Association of Bolivian Studies

Latin American Studies Association

Languages

Korean (native)

Spanish (fluent)

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Popular Politics of Social Emancipation in Bolivia  
from the 1930s to the Present:  
Indigeneity, Revolution and the State

by

Younghyun Kim

Doctor of Philosophy in History

University of California San Diego, 2018

Professor Christine Hunefeldt, Chair

This dissertation looks at how state-society relationship in Bolivia has evolved from the 1930s to the present. It explores contradictions embedded in different projects of nation making and social change in the country. It centers popular actors, including *comunarios* (members of



indigenous communities), *colonos* (indians subjected to hacendados), miners, indigenous residents of poor barrios, Aymara and Quechua intellectuals and peasants. It examines select moments in Bolivian history that challenge the presumed linear, chronological progression of national history. In other words, the five moments, analyzed herein, represent histories that do not fit into the History (master-narrative) of Bolivia's national development—they are different facets of popular experiences in the country's history. By critically using archival documents, newspapers, films, images, literature, and oral testimonies, it shows a long-term process of popular mobilization that has raised a possibility of social emancipation in Bolivia.

## Introduction

A chapter from *Los ríos profundos* (*Deep Rivers*) by José María Arguedas describes an uprising of *chicheras* (female vendors of *chicha*, a type of corn beer) in the provincial town of Abancay in the Peruvian sierra. Their vehement militancy moves the novel's protagonist, Ernesto, the fourteen-year-old son of an *hacendado* (holder of landed estates). Observing the women's march to Abancay's central plaza, Ernesto sympathizes with the *chicheras* and finds himself "desiring to fight and go against someone" [*Sentía deseos de pelear, de avanzar contra alguien*]. The leader of the uprising, Doña Felipa, stands in front of other *chicheras* and begins to speak in Quechua:

*¡Mánan! ¡Kunankamallam suark'aku...! (¡No! ¡Sólo hasta hoy robaron la sal! Hoy vamos a expulsar de Abancay a todos los ladrones. ¡Gritad, mujeres; gritad fuerte; que lo oiga el mundo entero! ¡Morirán los ladrones!)* [They have stolen salt until today! Today we're gonna expel all these thieves from Abancay. Shout sisters! Shout loudly! Let the entire world hear it! Death to the thieves!]<sup>1</sup>

The *chicheras* shout in response, "Today the thieves are gonna die!" [*¡Kunami suakuna wañunk'aku! (¡Hoy van a morir los ladrones!)*] Ernesto deeply sympathizes with the rebellious *chicheras*. His friend Antero (alias Markas'ka) asks him, "What's the matter with you? Whom do you hate?" [*¿qué te pasa? ¿A quién odias?*] One of the *chicheras* responds to that question, "The salt thieves" [*A los salineros ladrones*]. The multitude of the *chicheras*, like a huge wave, arrives at the place where Ernesto and Antero are standing. Father Augusto Linares, a respected local priest and the director of the school attended by Ernesto, tries to stop the *chicheras*. He says to Doña Felipa, "No, daughter. Don't offend God. It's not the authorities' fault. I'm telling you in the name of God" [*No, hija. No ofendas a Dios. Las autoridades no tienen la culpa. Yo te lo digo en nombre de Dios*]. She disputes his statement, "Who sold the salt for the cows on the

---

<sup>1</sup> José María Arguedas, *Los ríos profundos* (Catedra, 1995 [1959]), 271-272.

haciendas? Are cows more important than people Father Linares?” [*Y quién ha vendido la sal para las vacas de las haciendas? ¿Las vacas son antes que la gente, Padrecito Linares?*]<sup>2</sup> The situation becomes increasingly uncontrollable. The chicheras continue their march to Abancay’s salt storehouse. Ernesto follows them. He sees how the chicheras take over the storehouse and distribute salt to the indigenous community of Patibamba. He is deeply inspired by the strong leadership of Doña Felipa, who flees the town when the civil guards arrive and recuperate the salt from the chicheras. She remains, however, in Ernesto’s memory, and he occasionally hears about civil guards pursuing her in the sierra. Even though he is worried about her fate, he learns that the guards have not been able to arrest her; she shrewdly and valiantly fights back, frustrating their effort. Over time, she becomes a heroic feminine figure for Ernesto, who yearns for her return.

*“Tú eres como el río, señora,” dije, pensando en la cabecilla y mirando a lo lejos la corriente que se perdía en una curva violenta, entre flores de retama. “No te alcanzarán. ¡Jajayllas! Y volverás. Miraré tu rostro, que es poderoso como el sol de mediodía ¡Quemaremos, incendiaremos! [You are like river, Señora,” I said, thinking of the woman leader and staring at the roaring current of the river that disappeared in a violent curve far away, in the middle of flowers. “They won’t catch you. Hooray! You’ll return. I’ll see your face, which is powerful like the midday sun. We’ll set fire, we will burn them down!”]*<sup>3</sup>

The Andean rebel, personified by Doña Felipa, symbolizes a powerful force, a heroic symbol of the invincible force of resistance against the system that benefits only the dominant caste represented by hacendados and the priest. She is like the deep river, the natural force of the Andes that has remained vibrant despite European colonization and exploitation by hacendados. While Father Linares criticizes the rebellious chicheras during his sermon, Ernesto monologues:

*Un soldado ha dicho que te mataron, ¡pero no es cierto! ¡Qué soldadito ha de matarte! Con tu ojo, mirando desde lejos, desde la otra banda del río, tú puedes*

---

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 272-273.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, 353.

*agarrarle la mano, quizás su corazón también. El Pachachaca, el Apu está, pues, contigo, ¡jajayllas!* [A soldier said that they killed you, Doña Felipa. But it's not true! What a poor, little soldier can kill you! With your eye, watching from afar, from the other side of the river, you can grab their hand, maybe their heart too. The Pachachaca, the *Apu* is with you, hooray!]<sup>4</sup>

Ernesto believes that the Andean deities (Apu and Pachachaca), combined with the power of Doña Felipa, will defeat the oppressive system represented by the persecuting soldiers.

Coming from the dominant world of hacendados, Ernesto becomes aware of the cultural and social forces that have sustained the indigenous Andean world despite the longstanding oppression by the conquistadores and their descendants. He feels sympathetic with the indigenous world in a society that upholds the colonial divide between Indians and European descendants; he transgresses a social norm by identifying with the people, with whom he is not supposed to identify. Nevertheless, his relationship with Indians is not free from the colonial divide that has been an integral part of cultural, economic, political, and social formations in the so-called “Andean region” since the European colonization. In “a rigid world” divided along ethnic lines, “one is born an Indian or a *misti*” (“*misti*” meaning white in Quechua; a term used to refer to European descendants in the Peruvian Andes); a *misti* “cannot become” Indian “by will or choice.”<sup>5</sup> *Los ríos profundos* illustrates the coming-of-age of a *misti* who develops a critical consciousness of this colonial divide. He rejects this divide because he knows that it perpetuates Indians’ subordination to European descendants, a social injustice, which he confronts. It also negates an important social reality that *mistis* are culturally and socially connected with Indians. Ernesto was “raised by Indians” [*Me criaron los indios*]. Many *mistis* are

---

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, 362.

<sup>5</sup> Alberto Flores Galindo, *In Search of an Inca: Identity and Utopia in the Andes* tran. Hiatt Willie, Charles F. Walker, and Carlos Aguirre (Cambridge University Press, 2010 [1988] [1986]), 202.

fluent Quechua speakers and enamored of indigenous folklores and *huayno* (Andean folkloric music with preconquest origins).<sup>6</sup> In the Andean world delineated by Arguedas, *mistis* refuse to admit their cultural and social connection with indians. Exploitation and oppression, instead of cross-cultural interaction, define their relationship with indians.

### ***Paradox of Republican Citizenship***

Even though *criollo* (the term denoting European descendants born in Spanish America) leaders of “Independence” from Spain called for the equality between all citizens of their republics, the vast indigenous majority in the Andes was excluded from citizenship. The republican system of governance and political representation perpetuated the colonial separation of indians from “civilized” segments of European descendants. Even though early leaders of the Andean republics in the 1820s decreed laws to eliminate colonial vestiges, such as *caciques* (community representatives before the colonial administration), indian tribute, and unpaid services by indians to hacendados and other local power-holders, these republican reforms were soon reversed.<sup>7</sup> Indigenous communities continued to be represented by their *caciques* in their relationship with local state authorities, such as *corregidores* and *subprefectos* (provincial governors). Indians were still obliged to provide free labor for local strongmen and pay the indian tribute (head tax) to meet states’ fiscal needs. Tribute was a daunting issue for the

---

<sup>6</sup> Arguedas, *Los ríos profundos*, 454.

<sup>7</sup> Laura Gotkowitz, *A Revolution for Our Rights: Indigenous Struggles for Land and Justice in Bolivia, 1880-1952* (Duke University Press, 2007), 17-18; Forrest Hylton and Sinclair Thomson, *Revolutionary Horizons: Past and Present in Bolivian Politics* (Verso, 2007), 47; Brooke Larson, *Trials of Nation Making: Liberalism, Race, and Ethnicity in the Andes, 1810-1910* (Cambridge University Press, 2004), 40-45; Tristan Platt, “The Andean Experience of Bolivian Liberalism, 1825-1900: Roots of Rebellion in 19th-Century Chayanta (Potosí),” in Steve J. Stern, *Resistance, Rebellion, and Consciousness in the Andean Peasant World, 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries* (The University of Wisconsin Press, 1987), 285.

republics' leaders not only because it accounted for the largest portion of state revenue before the export booms in the mid-nineteenth century but also because many indigenous communities wanted to retain their *tributario* (tribute-payer) status. Based on that status, the Spanish Crown legally protected the communities as corporate entities. Tributes, mostly paid in the form of grain, herds and surplus labor, guaranteed the communities rights to communal lands and local self-rule.<sup>8</sup>

The republics' leaders, on the other hand, saw the abolition of the indian tribute as a necessary step to free indians from colonial bondage and transform them into propertied, tax-paying subjects of the patria. Liberal reforms, implemented in the Andean republics from the mid- to the late nineteenth century, abolished the indian tribute and broke up communal land holdings. For criollo politicians, indians represented a national problem that had to be solved. Physical extermination of indians and whitening (*blanqueamiento*) by European migration were not realistic options for criollo leaders because of the immense demographic weight of the indigenous populations, especially in Bolivia, Ecuador, and Peru. Regardless of its failure, or success in “de-indianizing” (*desindianizar*) Andean nations, liberalism sought to create a free market for land and labor to eliminate communal landholdings without guaranteeing cultural, political and social rights to indigenous populations.<sup>9</sup> Colonial rights and protections were eliminated without granting citizenship rights to indians, despite the progressive rhetoric of liberal nation making. Criollo leaders believed that indians were incapable of participating in “civilized” political processes of decision-making and elections. Excluding indians from citizenship was, therefore, a reasonable and beneficial decision for the nation as far as criollo

---

<sup>8</sup> Tristan Platt, *Estado boliviano y ayllu andino: tierra y tributo en el norte de Potosí* (Institutos de Estudios Peruanos, 1982), 30; “The Andean Experience of Bolivian Liberalism,” 285-286.

<sup>9</sup> Larson, *Trials of Nation Making*, 45-52.

citizens were concerned. With reference to the Bolivian case, Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui argues that the “liberal cycle,” initiated in the mid-nineteenth century, added a fundamental historical layer of structural violence against indians as their ethnicity and communal landholdings were stigmatized as signs of “racial inferiority.”<sup>10</sup> This liberal mode of exclusion structured “internal colonialism” in the Andes, which has remained a central component of the relationship between indigenous groups and the state in the region.<sup>11</sup>

This dissertation looks at how this relationship has evolved in Bolivia from the 1930s to the present. It explores contradictions embedded in different projects of nation making and social change in the country. It centers popular actors, including *comunarios* (members of indigenous communities), *colonos* (indians subjected to hacendados), miners, indigenous residents of poor barrios, Aymara and Quechua intellectuals and peasants. It examines select moments in Bolivian history that challenge the presumed linear, chronological progression of national history. In other words, the five moments, analyzed herein, represent histories that do not fit into the History (master-narrative) of Bolivia’s national development—they are different facets of popular experiences in the country’s history. In this sense, each chapter shows different histories, constituting a space for counter-histories. To be sure, the dissertation does not ignore causal and chronological links between the events discussed in the different chapters. However, causality is not its main objective. It is more concerned with a long-term process of popular mobilization that has raised a possibility of social emancipation in Bolivia.

---

<sup>10</sup> Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, “Violencias Encubiertas en Bolivia,” (originally published in 1993) in Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, *Violencias (re) encubiertas en Bolivia* (La Mirada Salvaje, 2010), 39-40.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

### *Tensions in Intercultural Relations*

Intercultural relations between diverse ethnic groups became a central topic of intellectual discussion on national identity in the Andean region during the 1980s. The discussion began to include the Amazon as a part of a multicultural and pluri-ethnic national identity.<sup>12</sup> The notion of *mestizaje* (socio-ethnic mixture) had not disappeared from public discourse but the dream of a homogeneous national identity had vanished by then.<sup>13</sup> Indigenous migrants had poured into the cities from the mid-twentieth century onwards. They established settlements on the urban margins, expanding their demographic and social presence. They created their own informal exchange networks, economic production, and social relations, which intersected with the official systems of administration and the economy. Lima has become one of the biggest metropolises in the Americas as a result of the “invasion” by Andean migrants.<sup>14</sup> Similarly, the city of El Alto, originally a section of La Paz, has grown from a small settlement to the second

---

<sup>12</sup> Xavier Albó and Amalia Anaya, *Niños alrgres, libres, expresivos: la audacia de la educación intercultural bilingüe en Bolivia* (Centro de Investigación y Promoción del Campesinado; United Nations Children’s Fund, 2003); Centro de Investigación y Promoción del Campesinado (Hereafter, CIPCA), *Por una Bolivia diferente. Aportes para un proyecto histórico popular* (Centro de Investigación y Promoción del Campesinado, 1991); Javier Medina, *Mirar con los dos ojos* (La Mirada Salvaje, 2010); Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, *Ch’ixinakax utxiwa. Una reflexión sobre prácticas y discursos descolonizadores* (Tinta Limón, 2010).

<sup>13</sup> Álvaro García Linera, *Identidad Boliviana. Nación, mestizaje y plurinacionalidad* (Vicepresidencia del Estado Plurinacional; Presidencia de la Asamblea Legislativa Plurinacional, 2014); Carlos D. Mesa Gisbert, *La sirena y el charango. Ensayo sobre el Mestizaje* (Editorial Gisbert y Cia. S.A., 2013).

<sup>14</sup> Jürgen Golte and Norma Adams, *Los caballos de troya de los invasores. Estrategias campesinas en la conquista de la Gran Lima* (Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1987); José Matos Mar, *Desborde popular y crisis del Estado. El Nuevo rostro del Perú en la década de 1980* (Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1986 [1985] [1984]); *Perú. Estado desbordado y sociedad nacional emergente* (Universidad Ricardo Palma; Editorial Universitaria, 2012); Rodrigo Montoya Rojas, *Porvenir de la cultura quechua en Perú. Desde Lima, Villa El Salvador y Puquio* (Coordinadora Andina de Organizaciones Indígenas; Confederación Nacional de Comunidades del Perú Afectadas por la Minería; Programa Democracia y Transformación Global; Fondo Editorial de la Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, 2010).



largest city in Bolivia, with about 900,000 inhabitants, the majority of whom have migrated from the countryside.<sup>15</sup>

All these changes have reshaped the face of national society in the Andean-Amazonian countries, making diverse indigenous heritages a central component of nationhood (*lo nacional*), a new national landscape that has also raised a series of new questions. How do different ethnic groups relate to each other? How do they constitute a national society despite their cultural differences? What should be the terms of cultural and social commonality that brings them together as part of the same nation? How do their different historical experiences shape their relationships with each other? “Interculturality” soon emerged as a concept meant to promote social harmony between different ethnic groups.<sup>16</sup> Intercultural relations are a tension-laden cross-cultural dialogue because of the power imbalance between the groups participating in that dialogue. Similar to the relationship between Ernesto and the chicheras in *Los ríos profundos*, intercultural relations take place in an unequal society divided along ethnic lines. Interculturality, therefore, should not be construed as a social harmony between different cultures that are

---

<sup>15</sup> Xavier Albó, Tomás Greaves and Godofredo Sandoval, *Chukiyawu: la cara aymara de La Paz. I. El paso a la ciudad* (Cuadernos de Investigación; Centro de Investigación y Promoción de Campesino en Bolivia, 1981); *Chukiyawu: la cara aymara de La Paz. II. Una odisea, buscar pega* (Cuadernos de Investigación; Centro de Investigación y Promoción de Campesino en Bolivia, 1982); *Chukiyawu: la cara aymara de La Paz. III. Cabalgando entre dos mundos* (Cuadernos de Investigación, 1983); Sandra Garfias and Hubert Mazurek, *El Alto desde una perspectiva poblacional* (Consejo de Población para el Desarrollo Sostenible; Institut de recherche pour le dÈveloppement, 2005); Godofredo Sandoval, Xavier Albó, and Tomás Greaves, *Chukiyawu: la cara aymara de La Paz. IV. Nuevos lazos con el campo* (Centro de Investigación y Promoción de Campesino en Bolivia, 1987); Godofredo Sandoval Z. and Fernanda M. Sostres, *La ciudad prometida. Pobladores y organizaciones sociales en El Alto* (Editorial Sistema; Instituto Latinoamericano de Investigaciones Sociales, 1989).

<sup>16</sup> Xavier Albó and J. Fernando Galindo, *Interculturalidad en el desarrollo rural sostenible. El caso de Bolivia* (Centro de Investigación y Promoción del Campesinado, 2012); Rodrigo Montoya Rojas, *Multiculturalidad y Política. Derechos Indígenas, Ciudadanos y Humanos* (SUR Casa de Estudios del Socialismo, 1998).

identified as standardized artifacts, such as “literature, theater, film, painting, classic music, museums, [and] gastronomy.”<sup>17</sup> Making “indigenous culture” central to “national culture” does not transform power relations between different groups. Critical studies of race and ethnicity need to challenge the dominant tendency of cultural impositions upon indigenous pueblos essentialized as timeless and suitable only for aesthetic consumption via popular culture. The third and fourth chapters of this dissertation revolve around the questions of ethnicity, race and indigeneity (*lo indígena*). They show divergent outcomes of intercultural relations in Bolivia that resulted from responses of Aymara and Quechua intellectuals and urban residents to revolutionary change since the National Revolution of 1952. In doing so, they illustrate how indigenous actors responded to state policies pertaining to *lo indígena* to shape national politics of ethnicity and race.

### ***Historiography***

Bolivian intellectuals have intensively discussed *lo nacional* and *lo indígena*. Revolutionary Nationalist intellectuals from the 1940s to the 1960s argued that the dominant antinational minority (*antinación*) had oppressed the national majority (*nación*). According to Carlos Montenegro, a main architect of Revolutionary Nationalism, antinational dominance over the nation had made *lo nacional* trapped in the “historic stage of comedy,” where the nation remained under the yoke of colonial domination (*colonaje*) perpetuated by corrupt politicians, hacendados, large mine owners and political parties that represented antinational interests.<sup>18</sup> In his fictional and historical writings, Augusto Céspedes illustrates specific cases of antinational

---

<sup>17</sup> Montoya, *Porvenir de la cultura quechua en Perú*, 545.

<sup>18</sup> Carlos Montenegro, *Nacionalismo y colonaje* (Librería Editorial “Juventud,” 2003 [1943]), 239-241.

domination in Bolivia and the nation's struggle against that domination. His works center on specific individuals, including Simón Ignacio Patiño (the biggest mine owner in Bolivia before 1952) and Presidents Germán Busch (1937-1939) and Gualberto Villarroel (1943-1946), and a particular historic incident, Chaco War (1932-1935), which Bolivian intellectuals mostly consider to be the moment of the birth of the Bolivian national consciousness. Céspedes acutely criticizes mining oligarchy (known as *La Rosca*), represented by mine owners, such as Patiño and his allies in the government since the 1920s.<sup>19</sup> Céspedes' *Sangre de Mestizos* describes Chaco War as a site, where Bolivia develops its consciousness as a nation oppressed by the oligarchy.<sup>20</sup> He analyzes Bolivian politics from the so-called "Federal Revolution of 1899" to the deaths of Busch and Villarroel, the two military-nationalist presidents. In Revolutionary Nationalist historiography, Busch committed suicide out of his frustration with *La Rosca* that hampered his effort to liberate the nation from the antinación, whereas Villarroel was killed by the oligarchy in the middle of his struggle for the nation; hence, their historic role as martyrs for national vindication.<sup>21</sup> The MNR (*Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario*), founded in 1941, was based on the Revolutionary Nationalism articulated by Céspedes and Montenegro, and seized power in April 1952 under the banner of national revolution.

The National Revolution attracted a number of U.S. intellectuals who sympathized with the Bolivian people's struggle for national liberation from the mining oligarchy and hacendados. Mostly economists and political scientists, funded by USAID, U.S. State Department and other

---

<sup>19</sup> Augusto Céspedes, *Metal del Diablo. La vida del Rey del Estaño* (Librería Editorial "Juventud," 1998 [1946]).

<sup>20</sup> Augusto Céspedes, *Sangre de Mestizos. Relatos de la guerra del Chaco* (Editorial Capibara, 2004 [1965] [1936]).

<sup>21</sup> Augusto Céspedes, *El Dictador Suicida* (Librería y Editorial "Juventud," 1968 [1956]); *El presidente colgado* (Editorial Jorge Álvarez S.A., 1966).

government agencies, these intellectuals conducted researches on Bolivian economy and politics on the basis of modernization theory that was in vogue in the North American intellectual circles concerned with “underdevelopment” in the so-called “Third World.” Researchers, such as Cornelius Zondag and Robert J. Alexander, published studies on the progress that had been made after the MNR implemented universal suffrage (1952), the nationalization of the mines (1952), and the Agrarian Reform (1953). After the John F. Kennedy administration (1960-1963) launched the Alliance for Progress in Latin America, these studies became closely linked with the U.S. Cold War strategy to promote development modeled upon the U.S. as opposed to the USSR.<sup>22</sup>

Bolivian Marxists were main opponents of Revolutionary Nationalism and the foreign scholarship that, from their viewpoints, were part of U.S. imperialism. In his works in the 1920s and 1930s, Gustavo Adolfo, alias Tristán Marof, critically analyzed Bolivian mining industry and hacienda regime in the countryside, exposing large mine owners’ monopolistic control of the industry, their alliance with politicians, low productivity in haciendas, and hacendados’ violence against indians.<sup>23</sup> His Marxism was akin to that of José Carlos Mariátegui who called for a socialist revolution with indigenous peasants being the revolutionary mass; like Mariátegui, he understood that racial domination by criollos of indians was a central component of the system of oppression in his country and that the proletarian revolution led by a small vanguard of industrial workers was not viable, if not impossible, under the economic and political conditions

---

<sup>22</sup> Robert J. Alexander, *Bolivian National Revolution* (Greenwood Press, 1958); Cornelius Zondag, *The Bolivian Economy, 1952-1965: The Revolution and Its Aftermath* (Praeger, 1966).

<sup>23</sup> Tristán Marof, *La Justicia del Inca* (La Edición Latino Americana, 1926); *La Tragedia del Altiplano* (Editorial Claridad, 1935).

in Bolivia in the 1920s-1930s.<sup>24</sup> As Bolivian Marxists from the 1940s mostly espoused a worker-centered orthodoxy, ethnic and racial questions became subordinated to class-centered analysis of Bolivia's mining oligarchy and hacienda regime. Even though the PIR (*Partido de Izquierda Revolucionaria*), the most powerful Communist party in Bolivia in the 1940s, promoted agrarian reform to incorporate the country's indigenous majority into socialist process, the more orthodox POR (*Partido Obrero Revolucionario*) ultimately prevailed in Bolivian Marxism.<sup>25</sup> Marxist scholarship afterwards focused largely on miners' struggle, labor unions, foreign control of mining industry, and U.S. imperialism.<sup>26</sup>

After the mid-1960s, many leftist and nationalist Bolivian intellectuals were disillusioned with the National Revolution that had resulted in an authoritarian military regime in November 1964.<sup>27</sup> Nationalist intellectuals, such as René Zavaleta Mercado, delved into Marxist theory of "dual power," analyzing contradiction between the petty bourgeois state of the MNR and

---

<sup>24</sup> José Carlos Mariátegui, *Siete ensayos de interpretación de la realidad peruana* (Biblioteca Era, 2007 [2002] [1979] [1928]).

<sup>25</sup> "Programa del Partido de la Izquierda Revolucionaria" (originally published in 1941) included in Alberto Cornejo S., *Programas políticos de Bolivia* (Imprenta Universitaria, Cochabamba-Bolivia, 1949), 188-220; "Tesis de Pulacayo," (Tesis Central de la Federación Sindical de Trabajadores Mineros de Bolivia) November 8, 1946, accessed via *Marxists Internet Archive* <https://www.marxists.org/espanol/lora/1946/nov08.htm>.

<sup>26</sup> Sergio Almaraz Paz, *Petróleo en Bolivia* (Editorial Juventud, 1957); *Requiem para una república* (Ediciones "Los Amigos del Libro", 1980 [1969]); Magdalena Cajías de la Vega, *El poder de la memoria. La mina de Huanuni en las luchas sindicales y políticas del movimiento minero boliviano: 1900-2010* (Plural Editores; Departamento de Investigación Postgrado e Interacción Social; Instituto de Estudios Bolivianos, 2013); Guillermo Lora, "La clase obrera después de 1952," in René Zavaleta Mercado, *Bolivia, hoy* (Siglo Veintiuno Editores, 1983); *Escritos escogidos sobre el problema campesino y nacional* ed. Masas (Ediciones Masas, 2016).

<sup>27</sup> Almaraz, *Requiem para una república*; Amado Canelas O., *Mito y realidad de la reforma agraria* (Editorial "Los Amigos del Libro," 1966); Liborio Justo, *Bolivia. La revolución derrotada* (Juárez Editor S.A., 1971 [1967]); René Zavaleta Mercado, *La caída del MNR y la conjuración de noviembre: historia del golpe militar del 4 de noviembre de 1964* (Los Amigos del Libro, 1995 [1964]).

workers' power expressed by the miners.<sup>28</sup> Several Aymara and Quechua intellectuals parted with Revolutionary Nationalism, and launched their own project of "Indian Revolution" that would liberate Indians from the colonial domination by European descendants.<sup>29</sup> Historians and political scientists analyzed clientelism and corruption, which were deeply entrenched in Bolivian party politics since its emergence from the late nineteenth century.<sup>30</sup> Some of their studies highlight the weakness of the Bolivian state vis-à-vis divergent local groups, which makes Bolivian politics lack a central power to build a stable system of governance. In these studies, popular mobilization indicates the failure of the state to build strong institutions through which local groups are incorporated into a national system of governance.<sup>31</sup>

From the early 1970s, anthropologists, historians and sociologists began to look into how comunarios in the highlands (*altiplano*) and peasants in the Cochabamba Valley responded to political and social change after 1952. Throughout the next two decades, many ethnographic and historical studies shed light on comunarios' and peasants' relationship with the state, rural migration to the city, and changes within the communities after the Agrarian Reform.<sup>32</sup> Some of

---

<sup>28</sup> René Zavaleta Mercado, *El poder dual en América Latina. Estudio de los casos de Bolivia y Chile* (Siglo Veintiuno Editores, 1974).

<sup>29</sup> Fausto Reinaga, *La Revolución India* (Ediciones Fundación Amaútica "Fausto Reinaga," 2001 [1970]).

<sup>30</sup> Herbert Klein, *Parties and Political Change in Bolivia, 1880-1952* (Cambridge University Press, 1969); Christopher Mitchell, *The Legacy of Populism in Bolivia: From the MNR to Military Rule* (Praeger, 1977).

<sup>31</sup> James M. Malloy, *Bolivia: The Uncompleted Revolution* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 1970); James M. Malloy and Eduardo Gamarra, *Revolution and Reaction: Bolivia, 1964-1985* (Transaction Books, 1988).

<sup>32</sup> Xaiver Albó, *Achacachi, medio siglo de lucha* (Centro de Investigación y Promoción del Campesinado, 1979); *Desafíos de la solidaridad aymara* (La Mirada Salvaje, 2010 [1985]); Xavier Albó, and Josep M. Barnadas, *La cara campesina de nuestra historia* (Unión Nacional de Instituciones para el Trabajo de Acción Social, 1985 [1984]; Albó, Greaves, and Sandoval, *Chukiyawu: la cara aymara de La Paz. I; Chukiyawu: la cara aymara de La Paz. II; Chukiyawu: la cara aymara de La Paz. III*; Fernando Calderón and Jorge Dandler, *Bolivia: La fuerza histórica del campesinado. Movimientos campesinos y etnicidad* (United Nations Research

these studies analyze colonos' and comunarios' rebellions against hacendados and abusive state authorities in the early and mid-twentieth century. Historians highlighted the central role that the rural masses played in dismantling hacienda regime, bringing about Agrarian Reform, and shaping "postrevolutionary" rural politics in the 1950s-1960s.<sup>33</sup> Some argued that rural struggle in the twentieth century was continuation of long-term anticolonial struggle of Aymaras and Quechuas from the sixteenth century against European colonizers and their descendants.<sup>34</sup> Scholarly interest in long-term Aymara and Quechua struggle against colonial domination in the 1970s-1980s was not separate from the Aymara and Quechua movements that denounced internal colonialism, criticized limits and contradictions of the National Revolution and called for the "genuine" emancipation of colonized Andean pueblos. These movements, inspired by Indianism and Katarism of the 1960s-1970s, manifested a great political force, and several scholars traced its historic origins to past indigenous rebellions, such as those led by Tomás

---

Institute for Social Development; Centro de Estudios de la Realidad Económica y Social, 1984); Olivia Harris and Xavier Albó, *Monteras y guardatojos. Campesinos y mineros en el Norte de Potosí en 1974* (Centro de Investigación y Promoción del Campesinado, 1986); Brooke Larson, *Cochabamba, 1550-1900: Colonialism and Agrarian Transformation in Bolivia* (Duke University Press, 1998 [1988]); Uri Mendelberg, "The Impact of the Bolivian Agrarian Reform on Class Formation," *Latin American Perspectives* 12, 3 (1985); Sandoval, Albó, and Greaves, *Chukiyawu: la cara aymara de La Paz. IV*.

<sup>33</sup> Luis E. Antezana, *La revolución campesina en Bolivia* (Empresa Editora "Siglo Ltda", 1982); Luis Antezana Ergueta and Hugo Romero Bedregal, *Historia de los sindicatos campesinos: Un Proceso de Integración Nacional en Bolivia* (Consejo Nacional de Reforma Agraria, 1973); Ramiro Condarco Morales, *Zárate El "temible" Willka. Historia de la rebelión indígena de 1899* (Editorial El País, 2011 [1983] [1966]); Jorge Dandler, *El sindicalismo campesino de Bolivia. Los cambios estructurales en Ucureña* (Instituto Indigenista Interamericano, 1969); James V. Kohl, "Peasant and Revolution in Bolivia, April 9, 1952-August 2, 1953," *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, 58, 2 (1978); "The Cliza and Ucureña War: Syndical Violence and National Revolution in Bolivia," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 62, 4 (1982).

<sup>34</sup> Roberto Choque Canqui, *La masacre de Jesús de Machaca* (Ediciones Chitakkolla, 1986); Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, *Oprimidos pero no vencidos: luchas del campesinado aymara y qhechwa, 1900-1980* (La Mirada Salvaje, 2010 [1986] [1984]).

Katari, José Gabriel Túpaq Amaru and Julián Apaza Túpaq Katari in 1780-1781, and that by Pablo Zárate Willka in 1898-1899.<sup>35</sup>

Scholarly works on indigenous and rural groups in the 1970s-1980s made *lo indígena* beoame a main category of cultural, political and social analysis in Bolivia. Even though class analysis from Marxist perspectives and nationalist frameworks informed by Revolutionary Nationalism had not disappeared, anthropologists and sociologists after the 1980s delved into cultural dimensions of “indigenous” workers and Bolivians.<sup>36</sup> A group of mostly Aymara intellectuals in La Paz founded the THOA (*Taller de Historia Oral Andina*) in 1983, and conducted a number of oral history researches in altiplano communities, the city of La Paz and the Department of Chuquisaca in the 1980s and 1990s. These researches aimed at recuperating histories of Aymara anarchists, indigenous community leaders, urban masons, spiritualist movements and Aymara and Quechua women, which according to the THOA, were silenced by Marxist and Revolutionary Nationalist historiographies.<sup>37</sup> The THOA questioned these

---

<sup>35</sup> Javier Hurtado, *El Katarismo* (Instituto de Historia Social Boliviana, 1986); Perdo Portugal Mollinedo and Carlos Macusaya Cruz, *El indianismo katarista. Un análisis crítico* (Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, 2016); Reinaga, *La Revolución India*; Esteban Ticona Alejo, *El indianismo de Fausto Reinaga. Orígenes, desarrollo y experiencia en Qullasuyu-Bolivia* (Producciones CIMA Editores, 2015).

<sup>36</sup> Pascale Absi, *Los ministros del diablo. El trabajo y sus representaciones en las minas de Potosí* (Fundación para la Investigación Estratégica en Bolivia; Instituto de Investigación para el Desarrollo; Instituto Francés de Estudios Andinos; Embajada de Francia en Bolivia, 2005); James Dunkerley, *Rebellion in the Veins: Political Struggle in Bolivia, 1952-1982* (Verso, 1984); June Nash, *We Eat the Mines and the Mines Eat Us: Dependency and Exploitation in Bolivian Tin Mines* (Columbia University Press, 1993 [1979]); René Zavaleta Mercado, *Bolivia, hoy; Lo nacional-popular en Bolivia* (Siglo XXI Editores, 1986).

<sup>37</sup> Juan Félix Arias, *Historia de una esperanza: los apoderados espiritualistas de Chuquisaca 1936-1964. Un estudio sobre milenarismo, rebelión, resistencia y conciencia campesino-indígena* (Aruwiyiri, 1994); Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui and Zulema Lehm Ardaya, *Lxs artesanxs libertarixs: y la ética del trabajo* (Tinta Limón; Madreselva, 2013 [1988]); Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, Filomena Nina Huaracacho, Franklin Maquera Céspedes and Ruth Flores Pinaya, *La Mujer Andina en la Historia* (Taller de Historia Oral Andina, 1990); Taller de Historia Oral Andina (hereafter, THOA), *Mujer y resistencia comunaria. Historia y memoria* (Instituto de



historiographies that prioritized industrial workers and leaders of the National Revolution, and invited scholars to look at diverse historical experiences that had been subsumed to “grand narratives” of National and Socialist Revolutions.<sup>38</sup>

The gigantic indigenous-popular mobilizations in Bolivia in 2000-2003 and the election of Evo Morales Ayma as the country’s first indigenous president in 2005 have renewed the scholarly interest in tracing historic origins of Aymara and Quechua militancy to 1780-1781. In his study of the Túpaq Katari rebellion, Sinclair Thomson looks into “a vision of Aymara emancipation, self-determination, and hegemony” articulated with Aymara anticolonial “insurrectionary action.” He argues “that the Aymara political vitality so striking in contemporary ethnic organization and mobilization has a history reaching back over two

---

Historia Social Boliviana, 1986); Universidad Mayor de San Andrés (Hereafter, UMSA) and THOA, *El Indio Santos Marka T’ula: cacique principal de los ayllus de Qallapa y apoderado general de las comunidades originarias de la República* (Ediciones del THOA, 1988 [1984]).<sup>38</sup> Waskar Ari, *Earth Politics: Religion, Decolonization, and Bolivia’s Indigenous Intellectuals* (Duke University Press, 2014); Rossana Barragán, *Espacio urbano y dinámica étnica. La Paz en el Siglo XIX* (Instituto de Historia Social Boliviana, 1990); Evgenia Bridikhina, *El 12 de Octubre revisado y revisitado* (Universidad Mayor de San Andrés; Facultad de Humanidades y Ciencias de la Educación; Carrera de Historia; Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas; Instituto de Estudios Bolivianos, 2017); Beatriz Chambilla Mamani, *Percepciones de los “SIN VOZ.” Acerca del Proceso de Cambio* (Taller de Historia Oral Andina; diakonia, 2012); Roberto Choque Canqui, *El indigenismo y los movimientos indígenas en Bolivia* (Unidad de Investigaciones Históricas, 2014); Roberto Choque Canqui and Cristina Quisbert Quispe, *Educación indigenal en Bolivia. Un siglo de ensayos educativos y resistencias patronales* (Unidad de Investigaciones Históricas, 2006); Carlos Crespo, *Anarquismo en Bolivia, ayer y hoy* (Centro de Estudios Superiores Universitarios, Universidad Mayor de San Simón, 2016); Gotkowitz, *A Revolution for Our Rights*; E. Gabrielle Kuenzli, *Acting Inca: National Belonging in Early Twentieth-Century Bolivia* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2013); Carlos B. Mamani Condori, *Taraq, 1866-1935. Masacre, guerra y “Renovación” en la biografía de Eduardo L. Nina Qhispi* (Ediciones Aruwiwiri, 1991); *Los aymaras frente a la historia: Dos ensayos metodológicos* (Ediciones Aruwiwiri, 1992); Pilar Mendieta, *Entre la alianza y la confrontación: Pablo Zárate Willka y la rebelión indígena de 1899 en Bolivia* (Instituto Francés de Estudios Andinos; Plural Editores; Agencia Sueca de Cooperación para el Desarrollo Internacional; Instituto de Estudios Bolivianos, 2010); Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, *Bircholas. Trabajo de mujeres: explotación capitalista y opresión colonil entre las migrantes aymaras de La Paz y El Alto* (Editorial Mama Huaco, 2002 [1996]).

centuries.”<sup>39</sup> Several other historians and sociologists look at community rebellions in places, such as Sica Sica (1771), and Chayanta (1927), which were supposedly part of a larger anticolonial struggle dating back to the eighteenth century. The indigenous-popular mobilizations in Cochabamba, El Alto, La Paz and altiplano communities between 2000 and 2003 are also included in the narrative of long-term anticolonial struggle.<sup>40</sup>

This narrative is Andean-centric and does not include histories of indigenous groups in the Amazonian lowlands. Several historians look into colonization of the Bolivian and Peruvian Amazons from the nineteenth century to the 1930s-1940s, showing how Catholic missions, established to “civilize” indians, were displaced by hacendados with secular interests by the 1930s.<sup>41</sup> Anthropologists have conducted researches on lowland groups’ relationship with the state, extractivist industry and migrants from the altiplano and the Cochabamba Valley.<sup>42</sup> Recent studies argue that despite the Morales’s government’s discourse of decolonization, lowland indigenous groups remain marginalized and that their communities are subject to political

---

<sup>39</sup> Sinclair Thomson, *We Alone Will Rule: Native Andean Politics in the Age of Insurgency* (The University of Wisconsin Press, 2002), 14, 231, 279.

<sup>40</sup> Nelson Aguilar L. and Alison Spedding P., *Historia de la rebeldía yungueña, 1771-2003* (Editorial Mama Huaco, 2005); James Dunkerley, “Evo Morales, the ‘Two Bolivias’ and the Third Bolivian Revolution,” *Journal of Latin American Studies* 39, 1 (2007); Hylton and Thomson, *Revolutionary Horizons*; Forrest Hylton, Felix Patzi, Sergio Serulnikov, and Sinclair Thomson, *Ya es otro tiempo el presente: Cuatro momentos de insurgencia indígena* (Muela del Diablo Editores, 2005 [2003]); Félix Patzi Paco, *Insurgencia y sumisión: movimientos sociales e indígenas* (Ediciones Yachaywasi, 2007 [1998]).

<sup>41</sup> Pilar García Jordán, *Cruz y arado, fusiles y discursos. La construcción de los orientes en el Perú y Bolivia, 1820-1940* (Institut Français d’Études Andines, 2001); Erick D. Langer, *Expecting Pears from an Elm Tree: Franciscan Missions on the Chiriguano Frontier in the Heart of South America, 1830-1949* (Duke University Press, 2009).

<sup>42</sup> John-Andrew McNeish, “Extraction, Protest and Indigeneity in Bolivia: The TIPNIS Effect,” *Latin American and Caribbean Ethnic Studies* 8, 2 (2013); Nancy Postero, *Now We Are Citizens: Indigenous Politics in Post-Multicultural Bolivia* (Stanford University Press, 2007); Jeffrey Webber, “Revolution against ‘Progress’: The TIPNIS Struggle and Class Contradictions in Bolivia,” *International Socialism Quarterly Journal* 133 (2012).

violence wielded by whites and mestizos in the lowlands, altiplano and Valley migrants, and the national state.<sup>43</sup> Other anthropologists show that the similar patterns of marginalization and social exclusion persist in urban barrios in the altiplano and the Cochabamba Valley, and that indigenous residents of those barrios have created their own forms of self-defense and neighborhood organization to claim their rights as citizens.<sup>44</sup>

Bolivian Vice President Álvaro García Linera (2005-present) has published various articles and books that uphold decolonization and “communitarian socialism” promoted by his government, the “Plurinational State of Bolivia.” He insists that the Plurinational State is a “government of social movements” fighting for the emancipation of “indigenous original peasant pueblos and nations”; therefore, opponents of the State are enemies of the national effort to decolonize the nation’s culture, economy, politics and people.<sup>45</sup> Many activists and intellectuals criticize the Plurinational State for monopolizing power and perpetuating vices of previous

---

<sup>43</sup> Lucas Bessire, “The Rise of Indigenous Hypermarginality: Native Culture as a Neoliberal Politics of Life,” *Current Anthropology* 55, 3 (2014); Pablo Mamani Ramírez, *El Estado neocolonial. Una mirada al proceso de la lucha por el poder y sus contradicciones en Bolivia* (Rincón Ediciones, 2017); José Núñez del Prado, *Proceso de Cambio. Estafa y despojo neopopulista para un capitalismo salvaje* (Autodeterminación, 2016); Nancy Postero, *The Indigenous State: Race, Politics, and Performance in Plurinational Bolivia* (University of California Press, 2017).

<sup>44</sup> Daniel M. Goldstein, *The Spectacular City: Violence and Performance in Urban Bolivia* (Duke University Press, 2004); *Outlawed: Between Security and Rights in a Bolivian City* (Duke University Press, 2012); Sian Lazar, *El Alto, Rebel City: Self and Citizenship in Andean Bolivia* (Duke University Press, 2008).

<sup>45</sup> Álvaro García Linera, “Indianismo y Marxismo: El desencuentro de dos razones revolucionarias,” *Revista Donataria* 2 (2005); *Las tensiones creativas de la revolución. La quinta fase del Proceso de Cambio* (Vicepresidencia del Estado Plurinacional; Presidencia de la Asamblea Legislativa Plurinacional, 2011); *El “Oenegismo”, enfermedad infantil del derechismo (O cómo la “reconducción” del Proceso de Cambio es la restauración neoliberal)* (Vicepresidencia del Estado Plurinacional; Presidencia de la Asamblea Legislativa Plurinacional, 2011); *Geopolítica de la Amazonía. Poder hacendal-patrimonial y acumulación capitalista* (Vicepresidencia del Estado Plurinacional; Presidencia de la Asamblea Legislativa Plurinacional, 2013); *Identidad Boliviana*.

governments, such as authoritarianism, clientelism, corruption, and extractivism.<sup>46</sup> The State, according to its critics, only rhetorically uses notions of decolonization and communitarian socialism to justify its monopoly of power that rests on “Pachamamism,” a romanticized idea of *lo indígena*, detached from actual realities lived by people of indigenous descent.<sup>47</sup> Fernando Untoja Choque refutes “communitarian socialism” because it misrepresents indigenous pueblos as “liv[ing] in harmony with nature” and antithetical to capitalist development.<sup>48</sup> He argues that *ayllu* (Andean community based on kinship affiliation) is sustained by logic of rivalry in economic competition over profits accrued from commercial activities, far from being communitarian socialist.<sup>49</sup> On the other hand, Feminists maintain that the Plurinational State has adopted an indigenous notion of gender complementarity (*chachawarmi* in Aymara) to delimit women’s role to domestic spheres and construct an indigenous femininity subjugated to masculine power. From their perspectives, *chachawarmi* perpetuates gender inequality in the guise of gender complementarity that keeps women under patriarchal control.<sup>50</sup>

---

<sup>46</sup> Tom Lewis, “The Politics of ‘Andean-Amazonian Capitalism’: State Ideology in the Bolivia of Evo Morales,” *International Socialist Review* 83 (2012); Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, *Mito y desarrollo en Bolivia. El giro colonial del gobierno del MAS* (Piedra Rota; Plural Editores, 2015).

<sup>47</sup> Pedro Portugal Mollinedo: “Visión posmoderna y vision andina del desarrollo” in Fernando Wanderley, *El desarrollo en cuestión: reflexiones desde América Latina* (Ciencias del Desarrollo-Universidad Mayor de San Andrés, 2011).

<sup>48</sup> José Luis Saavedra, “La Insurgencia del Poder Kolla. Una aproximación al pensamiento político de Fernando Untoja,” *Reflexión Política* 14, 27 (2012): 28.

<sup>49</sup> Fernando Untoja Choque, *Retorno al Ayllu. Una Mirada Aymara a la Globalización*, accessed via *Enciclopedia y Biblioteca Virtual de las Ciencias Sociales, Económicas y Jurídicas* <http://www.eumed.net/libros-gratis/2011d/1038/indice.htm>. The e-book version consulted here is the second edition published in 2001; “Economía de la Rivalidad y Poder Kolla,” *Ayra* 147 (2016).

<sup>50</sup> María Galindo, *No se puede descolonizar sin despatriarcalizar. Teoría y propuesta de la despatriarcalización* (Mujeres Creando, 2013).

Some critiques of the Plurinational State emphasize “autonomy” of civic organizations and social movements, which they believe should create emancipatory processes not regulated by the state. Inspired by John Holloway’s *Change the World without Taking Power: The Meaning of Revolution Today*, Raquel Gutiérrez Aguilar distinguishes “social emancipation” from revolution implemented by a State that imposes its discourses and rules about revolution upon “communitarian-popular” groups. From her perspective, social emancipation comes from “collective actions of insubordination [and] autonomy,” which generates a possibility of “self-governance” by the people in their struggle against capitalist state. The Plurinational State, according to her, exemplifies a revolutionary state that eliminates this possibility by subsuming civic organizations and social movements to its clientelistic system of governance monopolized by the governing party, the MAS (*Movimiento al Socialismo*).<sup>51</sup>

The dissertation builds upon Gutiérrez’s idea of social emancipation in order to analyze how popular actors in Bolivia from the 1930s to the present have created a possibility of their emancipation. Comunarios, colonos, miners, residents of poor barrios, Aymara and Quechua intellectuals and peasants mobilized and initiated processes that aimed at their emancipation: rural rebellions in the altiplano (1930s-1940s), miners’ movement (1940s-1970s), Aymara and Quechua insurrections (1960s-1970s), and uprisings in El Alto (2003). In these moments in Bolivia’s history, popular actors assaulted systems of oppression, such as hacienda regime, La Rosca, military dictatorship, internal colonialism and neoliberalism. Insurgent actions against those systems manifested political forces that were not subsumed to the revolutionary states headed by the MNR and the MAS. This does not mean that comunarios, colonos, miners,

---

<sup>51</sup> Raquel Gutiérrez Aguilar, *Los ritmos del Pachakuti. Movilización y levantamiento popular-indígena en Bolivia (2000-2005)* (Tinta Limón, 2008), 24, 48; John Holloway, *Change the World without Taking Power: The Meaning of Revolution Today* (Pluto Press, 2010 [2005] [2002]).

residents of poor barrios, Aymara and Quechua intellectuals and peasants rejected the state, or were not bounded by it. Their insurgency, however, gave rise to processes that were more than about political projects managed by the state. Contents, forms and meanings of these processes had to do with modes of insurgent action, which people in particular historical contexts adopted to confront system of oppression and which often clashed with the state, intent on incorporating people into its governing system. The dissertation argues that Bolivia's popular actors from the 1930s, with their projects of social emancipation, have exposed contradictions of state projects of economic development, nation making, and political and social changes, and that in the process, they brought down oppressive power represented by hacendados, La Rosca, military dictatorship, and neoliberal government.

The dissertation draws upon anthropological, historical and sociological works on *lo indígena*, rural rebellions, Indianism and Katarism. It utilizes those works to deepen scholarly understanding of ethnicity, race and internal colonialism in relation to state-society relations in Bolivia. It relates those works' findings to its research questions pertaining to: relations of indigenous education in the 1930s to the state project of incorporating the indigenous majority into national society; rural rebellions in the 1940s that created a more radical emancipatory process than what the state planned; relationship between the Revolutionary Nationalist state on the one hand, and miners and peasants on the other, after 1952; marginal incorporation of indians into national society, where Indianism and Katarism emerged; indigenous residents of urban barrios, who strive to access basic services and means for social mobility without a state effectively providing those services and means; and popular mobilizations that questioned legitimacy of a state.

### *Chapter Breakdown and General Themes*

The first chapter focuses on the countryside in the altiplano in the 1930s-1940s. It delves into indigenous education and rural uprisings between Chaco War and the National Revolution, and shows how colonos and comunarios mobilized against hacendados to shape the process of rural change in the 1930s-1940s. The second chapter looks at economic and political changes in the countryside and the mines after the Revolution. It examines the effects of the nationalization of the mines in 1952 and the Agrarian Reform of 1953, and illustrates how revolutionary state-making was subject to divergent popular pressures coming from the countryside and mining towns. The third chapter analyzes Indianism and Katarism that emerged as radical alternatives to the Revolution during the 1960s-1970s, paying close attention to how these movements became articulated with political projects of Indian, or Aymara-Quechua emancipation in the context shaped by the Revolution.

The fourth and fifth chapters focus on the city of El Alto built by mostly Aymara migrants from the countryside, the mines, and provincial towns. The fourth chapter utilizes migrants' testimonies that shed light on several facets of life in the city, illustrating how different migrants' experiences in the city constitute a social space of struggle on the margins of national society. The fifth chapter centers on the city's rebellion in September-October 2003 against the national government that brutally massacred hundreds of citizens. Testimonies of victims of the massacre reveal link between migrants's memory of their migration to and settlement in the city on the one hand, and their rebellion on the other. The two chapters show how the city has been made by migrants' economic, political and social struggles, and how its marginality is perpetuated despite its recent centrality to national commerce and politics.

An overarching theme running through the dissertation is the state-society relationship that has been expressed in a contentious mode of popular mobilization and contestation of the state's rules. This does not mean that the majority of miners, peasants, and indigenous masses in Bolivia have risen up to overthrow the governing authority. With a state that has been complicit with perpetuating marginalization and racialization of the indigenous majority, however, ordinary people in Bolivia have been incorporated mostly into the margins of national society. Marginal incorporation into national society has not enabled the poor majority to move up the social ladder as illustrated by chapter 4. Indianists and Katarists launched ideological projects that they believed would put an end to the subordination of Indians, or Aymaras and Quechuas to what they saw as the colonial structure of the Bolivian state. Popular actors in the countryside and the mines also created political crises that undermined state rule at the local level as examined by chapters 1 and 2, and sometimes violently clashed with the state as seen in chapters 2 and 5.

### ***Sources***

The dissertation uses archival documents, newspapers, films, images, literature, and oral testimonies. I have consulted the *Archivo de La Paz* (ALP), the *Archivo y Biblioteca Nacionales de Bolivia* (ABNB), the *Biblioteca y Archivo Histórico de la Asamblea Legislativa Plurinacional* (BAH-ALP), the *Biblioteca Municipal de La Paz* (BMLP), and the *Archivo Histórico del Municipio de Cochabamba* (AHMC). The ALP records include decrees, petitions, police reports, and correspondences between state authorities in the Department of La Paz from 1920 to 1950. I have read newspapers from 1930 to 1945 in the ABNB and the AHMC, focusing on articles that shed light on rural rebellions and policy debates on indigenous emancipation and have examined



newspapers from the BAH-ALP and the BMLP that focus on the 2003 El Alto rebellion. The dissertation also utilizes documents from digital archives, such as *Lexivox Portal Jurídico*, *Marxist Internet Archive*, and *Rebelión*, and Bolivian newspapers accessed via the Internet.

I interviewed sixty-five activists, intellectuals, musicians, students and residents in El Alto and La Paz. Among them are twenty-eight members of the Association of Victims of the Massacre in September-October 2003. I contacted the Association through Jaime Amaru Flores of the *Fundación Fausto Reinaga*. He and I were invited to the Association's meetings, and I obtained the victims' testimonies in one of those meetings, held three days prior to the thirteenth anniversary of the Massacre.

As for the use of oral testimonies, the dissertation builds upon works of the THOA. Historians and sociologists of the THOA have been "breaking the exclusivity of the letter" in historical research. According to Rodolfo Quisbert of the THOA, histories perpetuating "the exclusivity of the letter" are of "those who can read and write" in Spanish, the language imposed by the conquistadores and their descendants. Traces of other histories are located in memories through oral transmission. In the words of Quisbert, the THOA aims to "give voices to the voiceless people, to those who do not speak to the state" and other official authorities. These people remember histories in forms other than those preserved in archives but do not speak up because of "oppression and racism."<sup>52</sup> As Alison Spedding Pallet suggests, many oral histories subsume ordinary people's experiences to an ideological narrative, relating those experiences to political conceptions of power and resistance. She argues that such oral histories do not differ from the official history taught in schools controlled by the state, because they try to inculcate

---

<sup>52</sup> Interview with Rodolfo Quisbert, November 19, 2016.

ideological readings of the past.<sup>53</sup> The dissertation construes testimonies as modes of articulating “voiceless people’s voices” that reflect particular individual experiences in Bolivia.

The films and literature used in the dissertation pertain to miners’ movement, internal colonialism, and indigenous relations to criollos, mestizaje and the national state. The dissertation strategically utilizes images to visualize the popular experiences it analyzes. The second and third chapters include scenes from films, intent on conveying what David MacDougall calls “a complex expressive world” of historical moments.<sup>54</sup> The fourth and fifth chapters use photographs published in Bolivian newspapers to portray the everyday struggles of people in El Alto as they confront insecurity and the lack of basic services. The dissertation’s use of images does not imply what Rivera Cusicanqui calls “sociology of image” that studies “the totality of the visual world.”<sup>55</sup> Instead, it takes images as a means to show aspects of popular experiences that can be understood better by a combined use of visual and written representations.

### ***Terminology***

In a context in which ethnic identities are both fluid and politicized, defining the terms of self-representation and social categorization is important. As Andrew Canessa points out, the category “indian” evokes the violent history of racialization of ethnic groups colonized by the conquistadores. “Indigenous” denotes something that “belong[s] naturally to the region.” Its

---

<sup>53</sup> Alison Spedding Pallet, “Setenta años en la cosecha de coca: el testimonio de una yungueña legítima,” in Alison Spedding Pallet and Abraham Colque Jiménez, *Nosotros los yungueños. Nanakax yunkas tuqinkiripxtw. Testimonios de los yungueños del siglo XX* (Instituto-Editorial Mama Huaco; Fundación para la Investigación Estratégica en Bolivia, 2003), 4.

<sup>54</sup> David MacDougall, *Transcultural Cinema* (Princeton University Press, 1998), 268-269.

<sup>55</sup> Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, *Sociología de la imagen. Miradas ch’ixi desde la historia andina* (Tinta Limón, 2015), 21-22.

use as a generic category is relatively recent in history and less ideologically loaded than “indian.” However, it is criticized for pretending to be politically neutral and “obscur[ing] the neocolonial process” that perpetuates racialization of colonized ethnic groups.<sup>56</sup> Indianists argue that “Indians should liberate themselves as Indian” because they “have lived with that name” since European colonization.<sup>57</sup> The dissertation uses the three terms in different contexts: when it underscores the racialized status of Aymaras, Quechuas, and other colonized groups, it refers to them as indians; otherwise, “indigenous” is used. Following Canessa, I do not capitalize “i” in “indian” because the term “does not refer to national origin” but ethnic groups, such as black, mestizo, and mulatto.<sup>58</sup> Finally I use “Indian” when discussing Indianism that considers Indians to be a nation.

Moreover, the dissertation uses “peasant” when discussing people of indigenous descent, who live on small-scale agriculture. The term “peasant” is not only a class category in Bolivia, it carries ethnic connotations because of its association with indigenous populations in the altiplano. “Peasant” came to be used more widely after the National Revolution that aimed at converting indians into mestizo rural laborers.<sup>59</sup> Bolivian intellectuals and politicians in the twentieth century have often used “peasant,” “indian,” and “indigenous” interchangeably. After massive numbers of rural migrants have entered the city and become urban residents, the association between “indigenous” and “peasant” has been called into question. I make a clear distinction between indigenous peasants and other indigenous groups whose lives do not revolve around land and agricultural production.

---

<sup>56</sup> Andrew Canessa, *Natives Making Nation: Gender, Indigeneity, and the State in the Andes* (University of Arizona Press, 2005), 24-25.

<sup>57</sup> Reinaga, *La Revolución India*, 143.

<sup>58</sup> Canessa, *Natives Making Nation*, 25.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid, 12-18; Rivera Cusicanqui, “Violencias encubiertas en Bolivia,” 91-102.

## Chapter 1

### **Rural Unrest in the 1930s-1940s: Toward Emancipation and Destabilization**

The Police Inspector (*Intendente de la Policía de Seguridad*) of Caquiaviri in the Pacajes Province in the Department of La Paz and his four carabineers arrived at the community of Pujsani at 1:25 p.m. on March 22, 1949. The purpose of his visit was to investigate the conflict between comunarios of Pujsani and those of Achuma in Jesús de Machaca in the Ingavi Province over plots of land, to which both sides had claimed ownership for more than eighty years. While he and his carabineers approached Pujsani, a large number of comunarios were ferociously slinging little stones. The inspector raised a white handkerchief by the left hand, leading the carabineers to the scene of conflict and shouting at the comunarios to calm them down. He announced that he had come to settle the conflict. The comunarios, however, continued their fight, and verbally attacked the inspector and the carabineers. The inspector felt that his life was in danger. Yet, he did not stop his advance into the community. Remigio Ajahuanca, a principal leader of Achuma comunarios, hit him with a slingshot, making him “lose the control of his body” [*perder el control de mi actuación*]. He almost fell to the ground, and two Pujsani comunarios held him up. He barely maintained the posture. The fierce stubbornness of Achuma comunarios frustrated all his efforts to restore order. The immense number of Achuma comunarios recklessly slung stones to take twenty-three sacks of potatoes and innumerable amounts of barley, which belonged to the community of Pujsani. At 7:35 p.m., Achuma comunarios gradually retreated to the area over which they had established control. The inspector, his carabineers, and Pujsani comunarios had to remain vigilant as Achuma comunarios

recurrently blew *pututus* (Aymara wind instrument) to break the silence and haunt those in Pujani all night long.<sup>60</sup>

The inspector might have expected such a hostile reaction before arriving. The community had been “one of the centers, or nuclei” [*uno de los centros o nucleos*] of the rural rebellion in Pacajes two years earlier. On February 14, 1949, the Residents Council (*Junta de Vecinos*) of Caquiaviri expressed its concern with “a new indigenous commotion” [*una nueva conmocion indigena*] that would provoke wider scale conflicts in the region.<sup>61</sup> The inspector’s engagement with aggressive comunarios from Achuma confirmed the preconception about rebellious indians, which was embedded in the council’s portrayal of the Pujani conflict’s potential to set off a broader regional crisis.<sup>62</sup>

The second day of the inspector’s engagement with Achuma comunarios was not significantly different from the first one. At 7:25 a.m., the comunarios attempted to take potatoes from two fields. In response, the inspector sent two carabineers with his communiqué according to which they would “name their delegates” [*nombrarán sus delegados*] for negotiation over their rights to the disputed plots. Achuma comunarios dismissed the inspector’s suggestion for dialogue. When the comunarios were attacking the two carabineers, five carabineers dispatched by the mayor (*alcalde*) of Caquiaviri, Rafael Humerez, arrived as reinforcement for the inspector, forcing Achuma comunarios to retreat. By this time, it became clear to the inspector that Remigio Ajahuanca and Yeulogio Pongo led these “unprecedentedly” rebellious comunarios. The two leaders received a new letter from the inspector, in which he repeated what he had stated in

---

<sup>60</sup> Archivo de La Paz-Prefectura-Correspondencias (Hereafter, ALP-P-CRE)-113-2, March 31, 1949.

<sup>61</sup> ALP-P-CRE-113-2, February 14, 1949.

<sup>62</sup> ALP-P-CRE-113-2, March 31, 1949.

the previous communiqué. This time, however, his rhetoric was more aggressive. He said that it would be the comunarios' fault if the parties concerned failed to reach an agreement. He and his carabineers positioned themselves near a huge stone that was implicitly agreed to be the boundary between the two sides, and raised a white handkerchief in gesture of peace but to no avail. The comunarios continued their attack on him and the carabineers.<sup>63</sup>

The engagement between Achuma comunarios and the police force came to an end on the third day. The comunarios gathered at 7:00 a.m. to temporarily occupy a plot named Ventilla. The game changer in this conflict was the arrival of the police troops at 4:45 p.m., sent by Mayor Humerez. Discerning the coming of reinforcement for their enemies, the comunarios quickly dispersed and left Pujani. The inspector and his carabineers felt relieved.<sup>64</sup>

The conflict at Pujani, originating in an inter-community dispute over plots of land, did not imply a political question of power per se. The scene of conflict, however, acquired political contents of subversion when Achuma comunarios defied the rule of police authority that represented the Bolivian state. Their defiance prevented the official system of governance from normally functioning, and disclosed the contested nature of the formal link between indigenous communities and the state. It might be tempting to dismiss this subversion as parochial and lacking a concrete political plan framed in ideological terms of social change. As Benjamín Arditi underscores, however, “the absence of a plan for a future society” does not necessarily make a subversive act deficient in political forces. “[W]hat characterizes rebel activity” is principally about displacing existing systems, exposing the systems' incapacity to address injustices built into them, and opening “passageways between” them and “something other to

---

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

come.”<sup>65</sup> Based on Arditi’s theory of rebellion, one can comprehend political contents of Achumani comunarios’ rebellion against state rule in Pujsani. As the comunarios rebuffed the police inspector who struggled to impose law and order, they rendered his authority ineffective in resolving the conflict in the community. In this context, the rule of the state did not mean an effective governance that subsumed local populations to a national system. Their engagement with state authorities was a contested process in which local contestation of state rule produced a crisis stemming from comunarios’ disobedience to and subversion of an official authority. This effectively destabilized local conditions for conflict resolution, governance, and maintenance of law and order.

This chapter analyzes how altiplano comunarios and colonos in the 1930s and 1940s destabilized the hacienda regime, the system of oppression that exploited and marginalized them. It illustrates their relationships with the Bolivian state that wanted to incorporate the indigenous majority into national society. It looks into indigenous education in the Bolivian countryside, the National Indigenous Congress of 1945, and rural rebellions during the 1940s. It relates these three themes to the broader process of national politics of rural change pertaining to indigenous emancipation and the system of agrarian exploitation known as *pongueaje*. It focuses on colonos’ and comunarios’ role in undermining the hacienda regime. Their political actions of mobilization and sit-down strikes (*huelgas de brazos caídos*) destabilized a regime that was intent on perpetuating the oppression and racialization of colonos and comunarios as indian. The chapter illustrates how that destabilization created a crisis that compelled the governing caste in Bolivia to enact reforms to ameliorate the social conditions of the indigenous majority. These reforms

---

<sup>65</sup> Benjamín Arditi, “Insurgencies Don’t Have a Plan-They Are the Plan: Political Performatives and Vanishing Mediators,” in Carlos de la Torre, *The Promise and Perils of Populism: Global Perspectives* (University Press of Kentucky, 2015), 116, 136.

were central to the formation of the revolutionary state that would be instituted after the National Revolution. The chapter suggests that the Revolution was a product of the tension-laden relationship between popular groups, such as colonos and comunarios, and reformist sectors of the governing caste after Chaco War. Political interactions between the two sides revealed contradictions that were built into reformist programs of the military governments of David Toro (1936-1937), Germán Busch, and Gualberto Villarroel. At the same time, the political force unleashed by colonos and comunarios during this period demonstrated their capacity to determine the terms of their relationship with the state that sought to subordinate them to its system of governance. The chapter shows how their engagement with the state generated an autonomous space of politics for rural change, which was not subsumed to the official system of governance and carried the seeds of radical change in the countryside.

### ***Chaco War***

Even though Chaco War was a major turning point in Bolivian history, its effect on the political formation among popular groups, such as colonos and comunarios, was more complicated than suggested by the commonly accepted thesis that it was the moment of the birth of “the consciousness of the nation.”<sup>66</sup> As Rivera Cusicanqui comments, “the effects of the war on the collective perceptions of indians about the nation were ambiguous.”<sup>67</sup> Some colonos and comunarios felt proud of serving the nation against a foreign enemy whereas others resented the violation by state authorities of their communities during the war. Corrupt local authorities added to the resentment among colonos and comunarios regarding the war. Corregidores often forced

---

<sup>66</sup> Herbert Sanford Klein, “The Impact of the Chaco War on Bolivian Society” (PhD diss., The University of Chicago, 1963), 265-266.

<sup>67</sup> Rivera Cusicanqui, *Oprimidos pero no vencidos*, 111.



un-conscripted comunarios to pay money and other goods to economically support the campaigns in the Chaco, and collaborated with hacendados who did not want their labor forces to be sent to the Chaco.<sup>68</sup> Overall, the sense of pride and that of resentment coexisted in many colonos' and comunarios' memories of the war. Even if violence involved in conscription in the countryside provoked confrontations and tensions between the communities and the state, the military service in the Chaco enabled the veterans to claim their rights as citizens based on their service for the nation. Moreover, as René Danilo Arze Aguirre notes, the veterans from the communities underwent a significant transformation in their sense of belonging, which stemmed from their wartime experiences. The new sense of belonging originated in their contact with whites, mestizos, and colonos and comunarios from other parts of the country, which opened their eyes to a broader reality than that of their community. A national consciousness emerged also out of their common experience of being antagonized by Paraguayan soldiers who belonged to the other side of the conflict. The effect of that experience was especially strong among soldiers who were captured by Paraguayan soldiers and suffered as prisoners of war because of their belonging to the Bolivian side.<sup>69</sup>

Oral histories of the THOA indicate the multifaceted nature of Andean communities' wartime experiences. Celestino Vásquez of community Ilata in the Gualberto Villarroel Province of La Paz speaks rancorously against European descendants categorized as *q'ara*, who are naked, peeled, and "liv[ing] parasitically off of community labor and resources." Q'aras, according to Vásquez, never fought but instead forced indians to fight in the war. His resentment of this

---

<sup>68</sup> René Danilo Arze Aguirre, *Guerra y conflictos sociales. El caso rural boliviano durante la campaña del Chaco* (Centros de Estudios de la Realidad Económica y Social, 1987), 55-58, 63-71.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid, 80-81.

injustice is manifest in his grudging statement that “they captured [indians] to exterminate them” [los agarraban para exterminarlos].<sup>70</sup> While that statement expresses resentment against state violence wielded by q’aras who forced indians to fight in the Chaco, a sense of national belonging also informed comunarios’ response to the war. In 1935, a group of one hundred twenty comunarias (women members of the community) under the leadership of Santos Marka T’ula marched to the city of La Paz “to demand the return of their families and the cessation of the conflict”:

*Así fue que reunió a las mujeres, para reclamar de este modo: “Ya no más guerra, que pare esa guerra, que no exterminen más a mi gente”. Reclamando así, dice que Santos Marka T’ula había entrado a la ciudad con ciento veinte mujeres [The women gathered to demand this: “No more war, stop that war, no more extermination of my people.” Demanding that, Santos Marka T’ula had entered the city with one hundred twenty women].<sup>71</sup>*

Marka T’ula submitted a petition to the government, with the comunarias’ demand to annul the expropriation of communal lands. The comunarias presented their demand in terms of the contributions, which men of their community made to the nation during Chaco War. The community was entitled to land rights in the name of “our husbands, sons and nephews,” who sacrificed their lives in the Chaco.<sup>72</sup> The comunarias claimed their and their men’s rights as Bolivian citizens who sacrificed their lives and resources on behalf of the nation; indigenous men fighting for the nation were equal with white and mestizo Bolivians, whose rights as citizens were protected by the state. In this sense, they subverted a fundamental base of Bolivian society

---

<sup>70</sup> THOA, *Mujer y resistencia comunaria*, 34; As for the definition of the q’ara, see Thomson, *We Alone Will Rule*, 216, 219.

<sup>71</sup> Rivera Cusicanqui, Nina, Maquera, and Flores, *La Mujer Andina en la Historia*, 44; THOA, *Mujer y resistencia comunaria*, 35-36.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid, 37.

structured along the ethnic divide between an indigenous majority and a white minority. Another base of this society was the hacienda regime.

### ***Hacienda: A System of Oppression***

Pongueaje was a major theme of critical discussion among urban intellectuals and statesmen who became increasingly aware of the exploitative and unproductive nature of the hacienda system in the countryside. The exploitative aspect of that system had been widely publicized by the early 1930s in urban intellectual circles. Their critical discussions revolved around the negative effect of abuses and exploitation by hacendados on soul, mentality and body over the indigenous majority. The perpetual cultural, moral and social degradation of indians in haciendas was a product of pongueaje seen as a form of “slavery” that made colonos “human beast.” According to *El Imparcial*, a daily that officially launched a campaign against pongueaje in 1941, colonos were degraded to an animal-like state in which they had totally lost the capacity to address “the issues related to their social class and ethnic group” [*los asuntos relacionados a su clase social y a su grupo étnico*].<sup>73</sup> From the perspectives of Bolivian intellectuals and statesmen, who were disturbed by their country’s defeat in Chaco War, the negative effect of this slaver-like system on the rural masses was clear. Despite their desire to emulate the European modernity, they mostly recognized that their nation was heavily indigenous and the whitening of the masses was not a viable project. Bolivia’s impossibility of white European modernity explains the profound pessimism about the country as a “sick nation” (*Pueblo Enfermo*), which Alcides Arguedas expresses through his totalizing condemnation of Bolivian society. Arguedas

---

<sup>73</sup> *El Imparcial*, July 22, 1941; July 25, 1941 accessed via Archivo Histórico del Municipio de Cochabamba (Hereafter, AHMC)-5-1.

saw his country as composed of “the wretched [indian] race” [*la raza desgraciada*]. Indians’ mixture with whites created an additional problem for Arguedas because it polluted “the little European blood” [*la poca sangre europea*] left in Bolivia. It also created mestizos who “unfortunately” [*desgraciadamente*] used their “superior class” position [*la clase dominadora*] to exploit indians.<sup>74</sup> This racist conception of indianness (*lo indio*) remained predominant in Bolivian intellectual society in the 1930s. Yet, Bolivia’s humiliating defeat in the Chaco compelled Bolivian intellectuals and statesmen to reconsider the relationship between their nation and the indigenous majority. If the nation consisted of indigenous masses, they somehow had to be incorporated into national society and converted into productive elements that would make contributions to it. There was a disjunction between the national majority and those in power. When Bolivia entered the war with Paraguay, it was in a “state of error,” believing in a nationhood that represented only the ruling castes.<sup>75</sup> Bolivian intellectuals with a “progressive” mindset sought to rectify this error after the war, and identified pongueaje as a main obstacle to the transformation of indians into productive components of national society.

For those intellectuals, pongueaje was emblematic of the oppressive nature of rural servitude. Pongueaje was an unpaid personal service of colonos to their hacendados. Each colono family in a hacienda was obliged to gratuitously work in the house and fields of the hacendado for a period of around ten days per year. Hacendados usually did not supply their *pongos* (colonos performing pongueaje) with food, utensils, and other daily necessities. Pongos, therefore, had to bring those items when they performed pongueaje. This further burdened colonos who could not take care of their familial plots (*sayañas*) and other necessary tasks for

---

<sup>74</sup> Alcides Arguedas, *Pueblo Enfermo* (Ediciones Puerta del Sol, 1986 [1936] [1909]), 54, 61-62.

<sup>75</sup> Zavaleta, *Lo nacional-popular en Bolivia*, 254.

their families during the period of the fulfillment of pongueaje. Similar to *mita* imposed upon indigenous communities during the Spanish rule, the pongueaje obligation was rotated among the families that were subjected to the hacienda. In this sense, hacendados owned lands and colonos as if they were “inheritors of colonial privileges.”<sup>76</sup> Bolivian intellectuals, opposed to rural servitude, indeed associated pongueaje with *mita*. In September 1935 (three months after the end of Chaco War), for example, *El Imparcial* published a critical article on pongueaje, which the daily defined as “the typical derivation of the *mita* system” [*El pongo derivación típica del Mitayo*]. The struggle against pongueaje was “a sincere duty for the Bolivian nation” [*un deber de sincero bolivianismo*] because indians without “civil rights to be free and independent citizens” [*derechos civiles para ser ciudadano libre e independiente*] would not become part of “national society” [*la nacionalidad*]. The servitude in haciendas hampered the development of “intellectual capacities” [*las facultades intelectuales*] of the indigenous masses who remained subjugated to “the backward colonial regime” [*rezago del régimen colonial*]. The perpetuation of that regime seriously damaged Bolivia during Chaco War because rank-and-file soldiers of the Bolivian Army were mostly indians who were “eternally humiliated by the whip” [*humillados eternamente por el látigo*] of their hacendados. Exploitation by hacendados deprived them of the mental capacity to understand the notion of patria and the physical ability to effectively fight Paraguayans. The hacienda regime, therefore, was partly responsible for “the disasters” that were “caused to our Army” [*ocasionaron a nuestro Ejército*] in the Chaco, resulting in a humiliating military defeat for Bolivia.<sup>77</sup>

---

<sup>76</sup> Rivera Cusicanqui, *Oprimidos pero no vencidos*, 113.

<sup>77</sup> *El Imparcial*, September 10, 1935 accessed via AHMC-5-7.

The image of hacendados with a despotic control over their colonos only partially reflected the overall picture of the rural landscape in the Bolivian Andes during the 1930s-1940s. While colonos received sayañas from their hacendados, fulfilled their duty as pongos, and gratuitously worked the lands directly controlled by hacendados, their subordination to haciendas did not eliminate their productive activities in their communities and with their families. In forty-eight haciendas of the altiplano, which Celso Reyes studied during the 1940s, for example, only 10% of the lands under cultivation were under effective control of hacendados. Colonos and comunarios maintained their communitarian mode of labor rotation and access to lands in different ecological niches. Sayañas, rented from haciendas, were incorporated into this communitarian system of agrarian production.<sup>78</sup> Even so, haciendas represented the dominant system that aimed to displace indigenous communities. That dominance was a fact in the countryside of La Paz, where hacendados took over, according to Roberto Choque Canqui, “approximately 30% of communal lands” between 1881 and 1920.<sup>79</sup> Nonetheless, the persistence of the communities as units of production and social organization rendered the hacienda domination subject to contestation by colonos and comunarios, who were more than passive victims of hacendados’ violence. The image of indian victims in haciendas resonated with a significant part of Bolivia’s rural reality. When intellectuals and statesmen in the city reproduced that image, however, they projected their paternalistic preconception of indians as incapable of responding to oppression by hacendados and as being in need of guidance by an “enlightened” segment of progressive society. This paternalism assumed that structural change in agrarian relations should occur through vertical imposition of emancipatory decrees and laws upon the

---

<sup>78</sup> Rivera Cusicanqui, *Oprimidos pero no vencidos*, 133-135.

<sup>79</sup> Choque, *El indigenismo y los movimientos indígenas en Bolivia*, 119.

countryside. The role of colonos and comunarios in making that change would be secondary at best as long as the relationship between national society and indians was construed in hierarchical paternalistic terms. This paternalism would remain a main feature of later reformist policies implemented by different Bolivian governments from the late 1930s to the mid-1940s.

### ***Indigenous Education***

The incorporation of the indigenous majority into national society was a project not only of urban intellectuals and statesmen. Many community leaders of the altiplano and the Cochabamba Valley actively campaigned for an incorporation that would enable colonos and comunarios to claim their rights as citizens. A regional network of community leaders known as *caciques apoderados* persistently struggled for the defense of communal land rights since the 1910s. Their coordinated campaign emerged during the period of the expansion of haciendas after the “Federal Revolution of 1899.” That campaign was largely a peaceful movement that prioritized lawsuits and petitions to official authorities. Caciques apoderados utilized colonial land titles in order to legitimize communal land rights before the state.<sup>80</sup> Communities, with a title granted by the Spanish Crown, argued that their land rights should be protected from invasive haciendas. In their lawsuits and petitions, caciques apoderados combined communal claims to land with the language of civil rights to own property. Property here meant a communal landholding that should be guaranteed and protected by the state. This, according to Laura Gotkowitz, implied an alternative citizenship that promoted a communal identity and an equality between indigenous populations and white Bolivian citizens. While indigenous Bolivians maintained a different identity as an ethnic group, they should be “recipients of the same

---

<sup>80</sup> UMSA and THOA, *El Indio Santos Marka T’ula*.

protections and guarantees” as white citizens.<sup>81</sup> Incorporation into the state, therefore, did not necessarily mean a passive subordination to the official governance. Interactions between the state and indigenous leaders, such as caciques apoderados, created ample room for the latter to assert their voices in the courts and other institutions. The capacity of caciques apoderados to negotiate their relationship with the state was clearly limited. Colonial titles did not exist for the majority of colonos who had been incorporated into haciendas. The justice system of the republican state was structured in favor of those who were literate in Spanish and able to hire lawyers well-versed in jurisprudential language. For caciques apoderados disadvantaged by illiteracy in Spanish and the lack of resources to find trustworthy lawyers, legal battles could hardly be won. Yet, the persistence of legal defense by caciques apoderados throughout the 1910s-1920s generated a current of indigenous struggle, which aimed to win land rights recognized by the state. This current would be a central component of the indigenous relationship with the state during the 1930s-1940s. Caciques apoderados’ relationships with other indigenous leaders were not necessarily harmonious. Several of these leaders criticized caciques apoderados because they viewed the Bolivian Republic as a system of domination, which perpetuated the colonial relationship established by Spaniards. From their point of view, justice within that system was unattainable.

During the 1930s, some community leaders, such as Gregorio Titiriku (ayllu Janqulaime in La Paz) and Toribio Miranda (ayllus Llapallapani, Phuñaq, and Tinta Maria in Oruro), parted with Santos Marka T’ula, the most prominent cacique apoderado. Miranda and Titiriku formed a different network of community leaders known the *Alcaldes Mayores Particulares* (AMP) that called for the reconstitution of Qullasuyu founded upon the ancestral religion and cosmology of

---

<sup>81</sup> Gotkowitz, *A Revolution for Our Rights*, 90.



Aymaras, Quechuas, and Urus. The *Alcaldes* envisioned an Indian republic that would be separate from Bolivia. For this purpose, they referred to the colonial Laws of the Indies, which granted a protected status to indians in the Spanish Empire. Based on those laws, they formulated the “Indian Law” that justified indians’ rights to preserve communal lands and maintain a separate system of education, faith, justice and governance.<sup>82</sup> Their reinterpretation of the Spanish colonial laws generated an Indian nationalism that directly assaulted republican colonialism and that envisioned an independent nation, where “[w]e should pray with faith and devotion to our own ancestral gods of Achachilas and Pachamama” because “we are the blood of Qullasuyu.”<sup>83</sup>

Another influential indigenous leader in the 1930s was Eduardo Leandro Nina Quispe, the founder of the *Sociedad República del Qullasuyu*. Quispe’s project centered on indigenous education, which he saw as central to “the renovation of Bolivia.”<sup>84</sup> By “renovation,” Quispe meant an equalization between indians, mestizos and whites, which should precede the establishment of the Republic of Qullasuyu. This republic differed from what the *Alcaldes* proposed, because it sought to achieve the coexistence between indians, mestizos, and whites. The vitality of Quispe’s Republic of Qullasuyu would rest on “the force of the [indian] majority” who constituted “almost the totality of the Nation” [*la casi totalidad de la Nación*].<sup>85</sup> He believed that the empowerment of indians through education was a necessary precondition for the creation of an Indian Republic. The *Sociedad República* focused on alphabetization of indians in Spanish language, which he considered to be a means for their empowerment vis-à-vis mestizos and

---

<sup>82</sup> Ari, *Earth Politics*, 98-99.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid, 107.

<sup>84</sup> Choque and Quisbert, *Educación indigenal en Bolivia*, 77.

<sup>85</sup> Mamani, *Taraq, 1866-1935*, 152.

whites.<sup>86</sup> His project of Qullasuyu, therefore, did not reject the Spanish heritage of the Bolivian nation. He rather called for a radical restructuring of Bolivian society to dismantle the dominant position of white race. During the first three years of its activity (1928-1930), the *Sociedad* founded eight schools in provincial and rural towns, including Challana (Yungas), Kapiñata (Inquisivi Province), San Andrés de Machaqa (Pacajes), and Taraqu, Tiwanaku, Waqi and Wiayacha (Ingavi). In total, according to Roberto Choque and Cristina Quisbert Quispe, 1,241 students were enrolled in these schools during this period.<sup>87</sup>

The expansion of the *Sociedad*'s educative network provoked negative reactions from hacendados and their allies in the city, who accused Quispe and his affiliates of fomenting communism among indians. Many leftist organizers from the city indeed maintained contact with indigenous groups in the countryside, including caciques apoderados, and partook in rebellions against hacendados and state authorities. The biggest rebellion resulting from the cooperation between the left and indigenous groups occurred in Chayanta in the Department of Potosí in 1927. The large scale of this rebellion alarmed hacendados and state authorities about leftist-indian subversion.<sup>88</sup> Hacendados and local authorities often deployed a discourse of "communist indians with an extremist political ideology," when colonos and comunarios confronted them during conflicts over land and property. Many caciques apoderados, including Marka T'ula, were legally persecuted under the allegation of fomenting an extremist conspiracy to exterminate whites and mestizos, or spread the subversive ideology of communism.<sup>89</sup> Eduardo L. Nina

---

<sup>86</sup> Ari, *Earth Politics*, 83.

<sup>87</sup> Choque and Quisbert, *Educación indígena en Bolivia*, 78.

<sup>88</sup> Forrest Hylton, "Tierra común. Caciques, artesanos e intelectuales radicales y la rebelión de Chayanta," in Hylton, Patzi, Serulnikov, and Thomson, *Ya es otro tiempo el presente*.

<sup>89</sup> Archivo de La Paz-Prefectura-Expedientes (Hereafter, ALP-P-EP)-239, November 18, 1920; December 18, 1920; ALP-P-EP-245, March 12, 1921; March 22, 1921; April 9, 1921.

Quispe was subject to the same accusation, when his educative movement expanded. He authored numerous documents (*memoriales*) on behalf of colonos and comunarios, who claimed their right to land seized by hacendados. His educative campaign and his work on behalf of colonos and comunarios made him directly clash with hacendados, eventually leading to his imprisonment in 1933.<sup>90</sup>

Despite his imprisonment, the effect of the educative movement led by Quispe lingered. The indigenous education became a major topic of public discussion that shaped state policies and non-state educative projects in the countryside during the 1930s-1940s. The Ayllu-School of Warisata (*Escuela-Ayllu de Warisata*) emerged in this context of growing social awareness. Founded in 1931 in the village of Warisata in the Omasuyos Province in La Paz, the *Escuela-Ayllu* operated on the basis of cooperation between indigenous communities, school administrators, and teachers. The *Escuela* invited the communities to actively participate in creating a communitarian pedagogy that emphasized solidarity, reciprocity, and practical needs for agrarian production. In this way, the communities played a central role in educating their children. Avelino Siñani, a comunario of Llajma in Warisata, was one of the most influential actors in determining the educational principles of the *Escuela*. Siñani was a main source of knowledge on communitarian traditions, which Elizardo Pérez, the founder of the *Escuela*, wanted to infuse into indigenous education.<sup>91</sup>

The *Escuela* building has been preserved with frescoes that describe the educational process in Warisata during the 1930s. When Jaime Amaru Flores and I visited Warisata on October 5, 2016, we asked Benigno Ramos Pajarito, the director of the *Escuela-Ayllu Warisata*

---

<sup>90</sup> Mamani, *Taraqu*, 1866-1935, 135.

<sup>91</sup> Elizardo Pérez, *Warisata. La Escuela-Ayllu* (Ministerio de Educación 2015 [2013] [1992] [1962]), 76-77.

(Public School named after Elizardo Pérez's *Escuela-Ayllu*), to show us the interior of the old *Escuela*. As he guided us into the *Escuela*, Ramos reflected upon the historic significance of the educative project launched by Elizardo Pérez and Avelino Siñani. Ramos underscored the role of Warisata's comunarios as the protagonists of the "communitarian and participatory education" [*educación comunitaria, educación participativa*] created in the *Escuela*. "The memory" of the *Escuela*, Elizardo Pérez, and Avelino Siñani "remains alive" since it is a history of the communities that remember their role in creating a school built upon the principles of complementarity, reciprocity and solidarity.<sup>92</sup>

Even though comunarios of Warisata were initially suspicious of the real intent of Elizardo Pérez, "they gradually began to trust him" [*empezaron a cobrar confianza poco a poco*]. In order to prove his sincerity, he "lived with them," [*convivía con ellos*] eating the same food as them and "sleeping on a stone bench covered with an indigenous garment" [*dormía en un poyo cubierto con un jergón indígena*]. Siñani helped Pérez win their trust by visiting each house in Warisata to explain Pérez's sincerity. Pérez would be known as "the professor" (*el profesor*) in the village as the *Escuela* was consolidated as a center for rural education in the early and mid-1930s.<sup>93</sup> Local power-holders, such as hacendados and corregidores, considered the *Escuela* to be a threat to their interests. These "feudal reactionary" [*la reacción feudal*] groups, according to Pérez, did not accept "an institution like that," [*una institución aquella*] which would undermine "their privileges." Even before the construction of the *Escuela* started in September 1931, an hacendada (female landowner) of Achakachi (the capital of Omasuyos) wrote to Pérez to express her concern about "works on my land" [*trabajos en mi canchón*], which she characterized as

---

<sup>92</sup> Interview with Benigno Ramos Pajarito, October 5, 2016.

<sup>93</sup> Pérez, *Warisata*, 94.

“abuses” and agitation of “my indians.”<sup>94</sup> Pérez launched the *Escuela* without an official approval. The *Escuela*, therefore, “began on the margins of legality” [*comenzó al margen de la legalidad*]. Pérez believed that the precarious legal ground of his project was inevitable. “If we had waited until the legal transfer of lands, which the school needed,” or the delivery of “materials through usual bureaucratic channels,” the *Escuela* “would not have existed” [*Si hubiéramos esperado que nos entregaran legalmente las tierras que necesitaba la escuela, o que los materiales nos fueran entregados por las consabidas vías burocráticas, estoy cierto de que no hubiera existido Warisata*] because of the opposition from entrenched local interests.<sup>95</sup> Pérez and his companions quickly proceeded with the opening of the *Escuela* so that the school would start and make progress as fast as possible. Without state approval, the *Escuela* operated from 1931 to 1936. While the precarious legal position did not automatically make the *Escuela* illegal, it rendered the school vulnerable to hacendados’ accusations that vilified Pérez and his companions as communists and disrespectful of state authorities.

Pérez did not intend to create a school that would suffer from a lack of legality. He expected the Ministry of Public Education to support the *Escuela*. The Ministry, however, according to Pérez, did not send even “a penny for the school to use” [*sin disponer de un centavo*] during 1931. Until 1936, the government only occasionally sent small sums of money, which fell far short of the amount needed to meet the *Escuela*’s needs.<sup>96</sup> Even without the government’s support, the *Escuela* successfully amplified its size during the early and mid-1930s. After visiting the *Escuela* in May 1932, Vice President José Luis Tejada Sorzano “manifested his complete satisfaction” [*ha manifestado su completa satisfacción*] with the

---

<sup>94</sup> Ibid, 96, 172.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid, 95.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid, 90, 143.

progress of the school. Impressed by the *Escuela*'s educational program that involved comunarios' participation, Tejada himself collected donations that could contribute to "the expansion and development of new indigenous educational institutions in other populated areas of the Altiplano" [*incremento y desarrollo de nuevos planteles de instrucción indigenal en otros centros de población del Altiplano*].<sup>97</sup>

Rural education was an important theme of discussion in white Bolivian intellectual circles that centered on alphabetizing indigenous populations in Spanish and implanting European civilization ideas. In this discussion, *lo indio* was a problem that should be resolved for national progress.<sup>98</sup> In the 1910s, *indigenismo* had already emerged as a white and mestizo intellectual current of nation making that valorized indigenous culture and aimed at incorporating select elements of that culture into national society. Several Bolivian *indigenistas* forged a new "progressive" vision of indigeneity. The central element of this indigeneity was the Inka (*lo inkáiko*) as opposed to the Aymaraness (*lo aymara*). The Bolivian *indigenistas* embracing this indigeneity, according to E. Gabrielle Kuenzli, believed that *lo inkáiko* was a prequest civilization destroyed by the conquistadores, and that the Bolivian nation should incorporate this indigeneity as a national history. Such an indigeneity was more suitable to a nation making that needed to incorporate the indigenous majority into national society. *Lo aymara* represented an irreconcilable indigeneity because white intellectuals and statesmen identified it as the rebellious and dangerous indian.<sup>99</sup> Contrary to the *indigenistas* who privileged *lo inkáiko*, Franz Tamayo underscored *lo aymara* as "an enormous concentration of internal energies" [*una enorme*

---

<sup>97</sup> *El Imparcial*, June 3, 1932 accessed via AHMC-5-1.

<sup>98</sup> Choque, *El indigenismo y los movimientos indígenas en Bolivia*, 49-53; Choque and Quisbert, *Educación indigenal en Bolivia*, 51-64.

<sup>99</sup> Kuenzli, *Acting Inca*, 58-60, 64-66, 69-70.

*concentración de energías interiores*] of indian race “perfectly adapted to” the ecological and geographic environment of the Andes. Tamayo argued that the “persistence” and “resistance” of indian race over four centuries were defining features of “our national character.” He proposed a national pedagogy that would “awaken the numbed willpower and the latent energy” [*despertar la voluntad adormecida y la energía latente*] of *lo indio*.<sup>100</sup> For him, *lo indio* was not just a biological race but an internal force of the Andes, which had affected all human groups of the region, including whites and mestizos. In other words, *lo indio* existed as an element that had been infused into whites through mestizaje as an underlying racial force in the Andes.

The *Escuela* emerged out of this indigenista valorization of indigeneity. In his letter to the Minister of Public Education, which was published by the daily *La Razón* on May 29, 1932, Elizardo Pérez highlighted his school’s “educative action” to develop an “indigenous culture” that would enable children to develop their “own aptitudes” [*aptitudes peculiares*] for “the struggle for life.”<sup>101</sup> He believed that communitarian principles of reciprocity and solidarity were central to indigenous culture. Aymara intellectuals (*amautas*), such as Avelino Siñani, were important sources of knowledge for Pérez to theorize his pedagogy founded upon an indigenous culture. He applied this pedagogy to practical works pertaining to agrarian production in the communities in Warisata. Harvesting, livestock farming, seeding, and tilling constituted a fundamental component of education in the *Escuela* that defined the countryside as indigenous habitat. The *Escuela* aimed to create indigenous subjects who embodied the communitarian principle of collectivism, and infuse this principle into agrarian works and other labors, such as

---

<sup>100</sup> Franz Tamayo, *Creación de la pedagogía nacional* (Editorial América S.R.L. 1994 [1910]), 118-119, 123, 142.

<sup>101</sup> Pérez, *Warisata*, 155.

carpentry, construction, hat-making, and weaving.<sup>102</sup> The *Escuela*'s administration was designed in accordance with what Pérez saw as "democratic practices" of the community. Comunarios elected their representatives in the school administration. Pérez considered this mechanism of direct vote to be a "democratic tradition" of the community that had exercised its own democracy before the European colonization.<sup>103</sup> As the *Escuela* incorporated that tradition into its administration, it suggested that its educational project rested on an alternative form of democracy to what was nominally practiced in Bolivian high politics. Pérez recognized this political implication of the *Escuela*. While the Bolivian republic excluded the vast indigenous majority from the suffrage, all members of the communities in Warisata were able to elect their representatives to let their voices be heard in decision-makings in the school. Pérez, therefore, commented:

*se discutían nuestros puntos de vista en lo educacional, agrario, gubernamental, económico, etc., dándose aprobación, por mayoría de votos, a las diferentes iniciativas presentadas, las cuales pasaban a constituirse en leyes de la escuela. Así la colectividad quedó definitivamente incorporada a la vida escolar* [We discussed, from our points of view, on educational, agrarian, governmental, economic and other issues, approving, by majority votes, different initiatives presented. Laws of the school resulted from this process. Thus the collectivity was definitely incorporated into the school].<sup>104</sup>

This political content differentiated the *Escuela* from other indigenista projects centered on keeping indians as rural laborers. Indigenistas "recognized socio-cultural values" of the indigenous majority. They strived to create an education that would provide that majority with the necessary skills for agrarian production, hygienic knowledge, and basic Spanish. While Franz Tamayo argued for the vindication of *lo indio* as the core element of the nation, most policy-

---

<sup>102</sup> Ibid, 156-159.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid, 105.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid, 105.



makers informed by indigenismo did not want an indigenous education that would empower indians and enable them to challenge the domination by whites and mestizos. Educated indians, therefore, should “not leave their physical (and geographical) environment” in the countryside.<sup>105</sup> Hacendados, organized into the Rural Society of Bolivia (*Sociedad Rural de Bolivia*), strongly urged the government not to institute an indigenous education that would “disengage indians from agriculture and livestock farming.”<sup>106</sup> Hacendados in Achakachi frequently accused Elizardo Pérez of exploiting indians who, according to them, were forced to work for him. In these accusations, collective works were identical with a communist regime of labor control, which threatened existing agrarian relationships. Red hat worn by students of the *Escuela* was another target of hacendados’ charge of communism against the school.<sup>107</sup>

In no way did the *Escuela* represent a movement aiming at a communist revolution, or a separate indian republic. The *Escuela*’s ultimate goal was the incorporation of indigenous populations into the Bolivian nation by empowering them in their own way and following their cultural traditions. The *Escuela* proposed a radical project for Bolivia in the 1930s, a time when indians were seen as passive objects of “civilized” control by urban intellectuals and statesmen. At the time, a school with a significant indigenous presence in its administration was a notable educational experiment. For hacendados who largely saw indians as their personal lackeys, such an education center was by definition a threat to their interests. Still, the *Escuela* garnered support from urban intellectuals and statesmen, such as President Tejada Sorzano (1934-1936), who granted official recognition of the *Escuela*.<sup>108</sup> The official recognition of the *Escuela* also

---

<sup>105</sup> Choque and Quisbert, *Educación indigenal en Bolivia*, 63-64.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid*, 54.

<sup>107</sup> Archivo de La Paz-Prefectura de La Paz (Hereafter, ALP-P)-232-1, August 8, 1938.

<sup>108</sup> Pérez, *Warisata*, 186-189.

responded to the multiplication of rural schools following Chaco War. During 1936-1937, thirteen education centers (*núcleos escolares*) for indigenous students were founded with financial support from the national government. This was a significant change given the fact that until 1935, only three *núcleos escolares* (Ajawiri and Warisata in La Paz, and Caiza in Potosí) existed. By 1937, sixty three schools (*escuelas seccionales*) attached to the sixteen *núcleos escolares* functioned.<sup>109</sup>

The government of General Toro accelerated the expansion of indigenous schools, which was an integral component of his reformist policy. On August 19, 1936, three months after coming to power, he decreed a law that obliged hacendados and mine owners to institute a school for the children of their workers. The law required them to set up and maintain a school “on their own account” if their agrarian, mining, or other industrial properties included more than thirty children at school age. Of course, hacendados’ and mine owners’ strong opposition prevented the implementation of this law.<sup>110</sup>

Toro’s policy shift in favor of indigenous education represented a state attempt to impose its control over rural schools. All the *núcleos escolares* “promoted...the direct participation” of local communities in collective works and administration of the school. Even if rural schools were not founded upon leftist revolutionary currents, or an ideology of a separate indian republic, the government was wary of the conversion of those schools into dangerous sites of indigenous rebellion.<sup>111</sup> When hacendados accused the *Escuela* of being a site of communist agitation, they played upon the government’s concern over possible ideological radicalization of indigenous

---

<sup>109</sup> Choque and Quisbert, *Educación indigenal en Bolivia*, 117-118.

<sup>110</sup> Choque, *El indigenismo y los movimientos indígenas en Bolivia*, 73.

<sup>111</sup> Brooke Larson, “Capturing Indian Bodies, Hearths, and Minds: The Gendered Politics of Rural School Reform in Bolivia, 1920s-1940s,” in Canessa, *Natives Making Nation*, 45.

populations through education. The *Escuela* was hacendados' favorite target, partly because it was the most successful núcleo escolar upon which other rural schools were modeled.

Hacendados' attack was not just verbal. It involved physical aggressions on colonos and comunarios, who cooperated with and attended the schools. Hacendados justified those aggressions on the grounds that colonos and comunarios refused to fulfill their obligations to their patrons and that rural schools functioned as local centers of indigenous rebellion.

After visiting Warisata in early August 1938 in order to verify hacendados' charge of communist agitation in the *Escuela*, the district attorney (*fiscal*) of La Paz reported that hacendados' charge was unfounded and that hacendados were not adhering to the laws decreed by General Toro and during subsequent government of Colonel Busch. According to the report, a hacendado ordered his foremen (*mayordomos*) to beat up a comunario who consequently suffered from "a grave hemorrhage" [*una fuerte hemorragia*] on his nose. Another hacendado declared that a colono "refused to fulfill his services for months" [*se ha negado desde hace más algunos meses a prestarlo los servicios*]. Police arrested the colono, and detained him "two or three days." The hacendado deprived the colono of his sayaña and "evicted" [*desahucio*] him from the property. The district attorney pointed out that this prosecution was illegal because the article seven of former president Toro's Supreme Decree of February 27 of 1937 required a complete verification of the hacendado's assertion prior to the eviction from his property. In this report, hacendados were troublemakers who caused violence and defied the presidential decree. The district attorney suggested that local state authorities, including corregidores, collaborated with hacendados to hamper "the work of the Escuela." When he talked about corregidores' opposition to the *Escuela*, the district attorney went directly against the interests of local power-

holders. Corregidores opposed the *Escuela* because they believed that education “would make indigenous populations less exploitable” [*hará menos explotable al indígena*].<sup>112</sup>

This report supported the reformist stance toward indigenous education modelled upon the *Escuela*. At the same time, the report indicated that the state would not tolerate any deviance of rural schools from the proper direction of “Nationalism and Social Unity.” While the district attorney attributed the conflicts in Warisata largely to corregidores’ and hacendados’ disregard of the laws and abuse of colonos, he noted that “exhorting indigenous populations to fulfill their obligations” [*exhortar a los indígenas al cumplimiento de sus obligaciones*] was necessary to address “the complaints that exist[ed]” [*reclamaciones que existen*] in the locality.<sup>113</sup> This exhortation ran counter to the discourse of indian liberation from pongueaje, which the Toro and Busch administrations deployed. Nevertheless, both presidents issued several decrees that demonstrated their willingness to materialize that liberation. Toro’s decree of “obligatory unionization” empowered not only urban workers but also several peasant groups that had been organizing colonos in rural unions.<sup>114</sup> A few months after the promulgation of this decree, colonos in Cliza and Vaca in the Department of Cochabamba founded the first rural union in Bolivian history.<sup>115</sup> Busch went further after promulgating a new Constitution in October 1938. The 1938 Constitution marked the radicalization of his regime as it clearly articulated the concept of the State as the highest entity with the obligation and responsibility to guarantee the security, the well-being, “the health and the life of workers, employees and peasants” [*medidas protectoras de la salud y de la vida de los obreros, empleados y trabajadores campesinos*].

---

<sup>112</sup> ALP-P-232-1, August 8, 1938.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> Gotkowitz, *A Revolution for Our Rights*, 112-113.

<sup>115</sup> Antezana, *La revolución campesina en Bolivia*, 21-30; Antezana and Romero, *Historia de los sindicatos campesinos*, 2-67.

Article 165 “recognize[d] and guarantee[d] the legal existence of indigenous communities” [*reconoce y garantiza la existencia legal de las comunidades indígenas*], validating the communities as constitutionally legitimate social entities; Article 5 prohibited any form of unpaid personal services.<sup>116</sup> While this prohibition did not specifically mention pongueaje, it clearly alluded to it.

The progressive measures promulgated by the Toro and Busch governments were part of their attempt “to create a corporatist regime” modeled upon Mussolini’s Italy.<sup>117</sup> A vertical control of social change was central to establishing this regime, which Toro and Busch denominated “military-socialist.” The military-socialist state of Toro and Busch did not want colonos and other popular sectors to take the initiative in the political struggle for rural justice. This state-centered vision of rural change replicated the paternalistic conception of indians as passive victims of colonial violence, who should follow the civilized guidance of progressive statesmen to an orderly reform. Even if colonos’ overt disobedience to hacendados was a legitimate act of resistance, it was a problem for a state that considered it to be a disorderly form of indigenous rebellion. This explains why a state authority dispatched to Warisata discouraged colonos from neglecting their obligations to hacendados, quite in contradiction to the state’s discourse against unpaid personal services. However, the message plainly coincided with the state’s intention of imposing its means to incorporate indigenous populations into national society.

Thirty years after the foundation of the *Escuela*, Elizardo Pérez recalled that “from the beginning,” the school “situated itself against the existing order” [*se situó en contra del orden de*

---

<sup>116</sup> “Bolivia: Constitución política de 1938,” October 30, 1938, accessed via *Lexivox Portal Jurídico* <http://www.lexivox.org/norms/BO-CPE-19381020.xhtml>.

<sup>117</sup> Gotkowitz, *A Revolution for Our Rights*, 112.

*cosas existente*] ruled by hacendados and other local power-holders, whom he labeled “representative organisms of feudality” [*los organismos representativos de la feudalidad*].<sup>118</sup> This subversive aspect of the *Escuela* made Pérez’s project align with indigenous leaders, such as the Alcaldes Mayores Particulares and caciques apoderados. While those leaders were not affiliated with the *Escuela*, they supported it at the personal level. Despite their rejection of indian incorporation into Bolivia, many *Alcaldes* saw in its communitarian and participatory education a positive element that could “help our race flourish.”<sup>119</sup>

As the reactionary military regime (1939-1943) assumed power after Busch’s abrupt suicide on August 23, 1939, the official stance toward indigenous education shifted toward the persecution of teachers and principals of rural schools, including Raúl Pérez (Elizardo Pérez’s brother), after 1939. Without governmental support, the núcleos escolares became increasingly vulnerable to legal and physical attacks by hacendados, corregidores, and local judges who often were large landholders in their localities. When his brother was arrested under the false charge of violent aggression in May 1939, Elizardo Pérez asked President Busch for help, believing that “he was our only friend in the government” [*era nuestro único amigo en las esferas gubernamentales*]. For Pérez, when he and his companions were persecuted by local power-holders, a supportive president surely represented “the indian cause” [*la causa del indio*] that was promoted in rural schools.<sup>120</sup> The government of Carlos Quintanilla (1939-1940) repudiated Busch’s policies and closed the General Office of Indigenous Education (*Dirección General de Educación Indigenal*). The government created an Office of Intervention in Indigenous Education (*Intervención de Educación Indigenal*) to audit rural schools’ activities. Prosecution

---

<sup>118</sup> Pérez, *Warisata*, 96.

<sup>119</sup> Ari, *Earth Politics*, 106.

<sup>120</sup> Pérez, *Warisata*, 316-317.

directed by the Investigation Court (*Tribunal Investigador*) accompanied the suppression of núcleos escolares.<sup>121</sup> Rural education did not disappear, however. State interventions during 1939-1943 consciously removed “subversive” political contents from education, such as communitarianism, collective labor, community participation in school administration, and the language of indigenous empowerment. The focus of education shifted to agricultural techniques for men and hygiene for women, which would produce productive male farmers and better female caretakers.<sup>122</sup>

Núcleos escolares had been conceived as an autonomous indigenous education that should be recognized by the state. Recognition meant material support to the schools, which implied a dependent relationship to the state. This did not necessarily subjugate them to the state. Once they aligned with the military-socialist state, however, their fate was tied to the political fortunes of that state. The rise and downfall of núcleos escolares showed that indigenous emancipation was not just about winning a formal recognition. Recognition helped to expand núcleos escolares after 1936, but their emancipatory potential stemmed mainly from collectivism and communitarian administration, that is, the self-governance of the educational process. Self-governance did not mean the rejection of the state but was aimed at establishing a community-state relationship that would guarantee the community’s self-development through education.

Gregorio Titiriku, one of the most prominent Alcaldes Mayores Particulares, compared the state takeover of rural education after 1939 to “the colonial Spanish who came to rob our lands and nation.” The loss of educational self-governance was the same as colonialism. From Titiriku’s and other *Alcaldes*’ perspectives, the end of núcleos escolares confirmed their belief

---

<sup>121</sup> Ibid, 378-383.

<sup>122</sup> Larson, “Capturing Indians Bodies, Hearths, and Minds,” 48-49.

that public education, subordinated to the Bolivian state, perpetuated the colonial domination over Qullasuyu. They advocated “a segregationist system of autonomous indigenous schools” that would promote ancestral and cosmological knowledge of Qullasuyu. In consequence, they had instituted *escuelas particulares* in 489 communities in the countryside of the altiplano, Chuquisaca, and Cochabamba by 1944.<sup>123</sup> Even as indigenous groups negotiated with the state to obtain better terms of inclusion in the Bolivian nation, distrust did not disappear from their relationship with the state. Their different interests and views of rural change vis-à-vis those in governmental offices shaped their engagement with the state as they became plainly visible in the rural unrest in the 1940.

### ***Sit-down Strikes (1939-1943)***

On September 30, 1942, the daily *Ultima Hora* published a letter from Tupaj Yupanqui, a colono from Carahuara in the Carangas Province in the Department of Oruro, to a senator who was leading a legislative campaign to abolish pongueaje. He doubted that the senator’s legislative proposition would put an end to rural servitude. This, according to Yupanqui, was not the first time, when such a legal measure was proposed at the national level. Legally indians had been “free and independent” since 1826, according to a presidential decree that was never implemented. Their servitude, therefore, had continued. Yupanqui alluded to the meaninglessness of legal measures to make indians free and independent given their continued servitude, and questioned the significance of the senator’s legislative campaign against pongueaje (*antiponguismo*). The *antiponguista* decrees and legislation during previous

---

<sup>123</sup> Ari, *Earth Politics*, 106-108.



governments had not led to indians' emancipation from servitude either. Why should indians believe that the legislation this time would result in a different outcome?<sup>124</sup>

Yupanqui suggested that the senator's antiponguista campaign did not address the structural nature of colonos' miseries. The proposed legislation focused on pongueaje, only a part of a larger system of oppression. Tackling only one part of the system would not change the system as a whole. According to Yupanqui:

*El pongueaje, H. Senador, es apenas un eslabón de la cadena de nuestra esclavitud, y vuestra LEY abolicionista, circunscribiendo sus alcances al estrecho marco de las ciudades y los pueblos, no pasa de ser una ridícula simulación de justicia social. En verdad, para nosotros, personajes de esta comedia, solo tiene los alcances de un sarcasmo. Ella es a nuestra triste condición lo que para Cristo fué la corona de espinas* [Pongueaje, Honorable Senator, is just a link in the chain of our enslavement, and your abolitionist law, circumscribing its reach to narrow confines of the cities and the countryside, is nothing but a ridiculous simulation of social justice. In fact, for us, characters in this comedy, it can only be considered sarcasm. It is to our sad condition what the crown of thorns was for Christ].<sup>125</sup>

Yupanqui drew the senator's attention to other forms of exploitation, mechanisms beyond pongueaje, which placed unjust burdens on colonos. First, colonos produced all agrarian and livestock products with their labor and at their expenses with their own tools. Hacendados took those products. Second, colonos were obliged "to provide firewood and other fuel for...their patron both in haciendas and his urban dwellings" [*proveer de leña u otro combustible a la cocina del patrón, tanto en la hacienda como en la ciudad*]. Third, they had to sell "eggs, chickens, fish, and so forth" to hacendados "at a discounted price" [*por un precio de privilegio*]. Fourth, they had to bear great risks when "transporting the harvests to commercial centers" [*Transportar toda la cosecha hasta los centros comerciales*]. Fifth, they were directly

---

<sup>124</sup> *Ultima Hora*, September 30, 1942, accessed via Archivo y Biblioteca Nacionales de Bolivia-PB (Hereafter, ABNB-PB) 262<sup>a</sup>.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

responsible for pasturing livestock in haciendas, and taking care of it. Sixth, they had “to milk thousands of sheep and produce cheese all at their expense” [*Ordeñar miles de ovejas y fabricar el queso, todo a nuestras expensas*]. Seventh, they had “to make chuño and tunta in the same form and condition as cheese and milk at their cost” [*Elaborar el chuño y la tunta, en la misma forma y condición que el queso y ordeñe, a nuestro costo*].<sup>126</sup>

Yupanqui questioned the usefulness of state politics for indigenous emancipation when he asked, “Do you think we INDIANS should trust the legal texts dictated by you legislators?” [*¿estima Ud. que nosotros, los INDIOS, debemos fiarnos del texto de las leyes que dictáis vosotros los legisladores?*]<sup>127</sup> The supposedly civilized process of parliamentary politics, monopolized by possibly enlightened statesmen, never enabled indians to emancipate themselves from hacendados and become citizens with equal rights to education, land, and vote. In light of the practical failure of the decrees and laws, which were designed to incorporate indians into the nation, antiponguismo of “progressive” intellectuals and politicians was no different from the similar policies implemented by previous governments that only made rhetorical gestures toward indians while leaving the oppressive hacienda system virtually intact. If colonos and comunarios did not trust legislative measures dictated by legislators, which were their alternatives?

As Yupanqui criticized antiponguismo for failing to understand that pongueaje was only a part of the large oppressive system, he questioned and denied the alleged cultural superiority of those who belonged to the higher strata of the social hierarchy. From the perspective of those who experienced oppression in haciendas on a daily basis, and were keenly aware of the systemic nature of this oppression, such a lack of understanding of the daily reality in the

---

<sup>126</sup> Ibid. Chuño and tunta are types of the dried potatoes processed in the Andes.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid.

countryside was equivalent to a failure of grasping what was obvious. From this viewpoint, antiponguista legislative campaign, proposed by statesmen, revealed their ignorance of a basic rural reality. Their stance toward indians was, therefore, “a ridiculous simulation of social justice” played as a “comedy.”<sup>128</sup> Yupanqui signaled this contradiction to the senator, to whom he addressed his letter. His didactic stance toward the senator placed him in the superior position, and rendered the senator ignorant in the context of indian-senator dialogue. This did not just challenge the colonial discourse of ignorant and powerless indians but also symbolically inverted power relations that rested with the cultural and social superiority of the white urban populations. While urban intellectuals and statesmen pretended to be culturally superior and civilized, they failed to comprehend the systemic nature of oppression in haciendas, rendering their claim to civilization and cultural superiority questionable. That failure prevented them from materializing meaningful social change in the countryside. In this sense, the real obstacle to national progress was not the “socially degenerate indian” race as they assumed, but white statesmen’s incapacity to recognize the larger picture of the oppressive nature of the hacienda regime.

Yupanqui wrote his letter during the rural unrest in Cochabamba and Oruro, which lasted from 1939 to 1943. A trigger of this cycle of rural uprisings was the 1938 Constitution. For the indigenous groups that mobilized against hacendados during this period, the constitutional guarantee of their freedom from unpaid services and of the legality of their community was a useful discursive weapon for challenging the illegitimacy and injustice of the hacienda regime. As Gotkowitz argues, the constitutional guarantee acquired concrete meanings as colonos and comunarios used them to justify their rebellious actions against rural injustice perpetrated by hacendados. Those actions, however, clashed with the rule of the state, which sought for an

---

<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

orderly change in the countryside. Colonos' and comunarios' subversive use of the Constitution signified a politics of rural change that disrupted public order. They invoked an apparently emancipatory constitutional language in ways that rendered their rebellious actions legitimate in their own terms.<sup>129</sup> Appropriating the Constitution in ways that fomented subversive actions, colonos and comunarios took the initiative to attack the hacienda regime and set in motion their own process for rural change.

A major tactic at this time was sit-down strike that had emerged as "a new form of peasant struggle" in the Bolivian Andes.<sup>130</sup> Dozens of haciendas in the Departments of Cochabamba, La Paz, and Oruro witnessed sit-down strikes by colonos and comunarios between 1939 and 1943. Two major issues in these strikes were the abolition of pongueaje and the land disputes between communities and haciendas.<sup>131</sup> Sit-down strikes did not take a monolithic form. In some cases, colonos "collect[ed] the hacienda harvest" and "ke[pt] it for themselves." In others, they neglected their duty to hacendados and only worked their own plots. Land occupation was another form of sit-down strike, which entailed a physical takeover by colonos and/or comunarios of hacienda lands. Finally, colonos "refuse[d] to fulfill" pongueaje, and "to transport...goods to the market," which were produced in haciendas.<sup>132</sup>

The disruption of the existing order in the countryside carried the explosive potential of unleashing a wide-scale uprising that would undermine hacendados' dominance and the state's

---

<sup>129</sup> Gotkowitz, *A Revolution for Our Rights*, 146-159.

<sup>130</sup> Rivera Cusicanqui, *Oprimidos pero no vencidos*, 116.

<sup>131</sup> ALP-P-CRE-42-1, October 11, 1942; October 15, 1942; October 16, 1942; February 5, 1943; March 27, 1943; April 26, 1943; May 18, 1943; May 22, 1943; May 24, 1943; *El Imparcial*, July 16, 1941, and July 19, 1941, AHMC-5-1; Gotkowitz, *A Revolution for Our Rights*, 154-158; Rivera Cusicanqui, *Oprimidos pero no vencidos*, 117-118; *Ultima Hora*, August 3, 1942, and November 5, 1942, ABNB-PB 262<sup>a</sup>.

<sup>132</sup> Gotkowitz, *A Revolution for Our Rights*, 153-154.

authority. Based on the 1938 Constitution, leaders of colonos and their allies from the city often argued that pongueaje had already been abolished, hacendados' lands were theirs, and the national government supported their actions against haciendas. A leader in Anzaldo in Cochabamba reportedly carried "papers documenting [colonos'] property rights" that were traced back to Tawantinsuyu.<sup>133</sup> As colonos legitimized their rebellious actions by using the new constitutional legality, the state's reformist laws became potentially revolutionary laws that were implemented by non-state actors according to their own terms. Colonos' interpretations of the Constitution crossed the boundaries of the proper order set by the state that neither proclaimed a land distribution, nor supported indian rebellions against the hacienda regime.

A central question here was not of how state decrees and laws were locally appropriated. Colonos' and comunarios' politics of rural change generated its own dynamics of contestation, which could not be subsumed to the rule of the state. It was, according to the formal jurisdictional order, subordinate to the higher sphere of the state. Yet, once it was turned into a rebellious space through colonos' and comunarios' subversive actions, its autonomous forces defined its actual political meanings vis-à-vis the feudalistic rule of the hacienda regime and the governmental authority of the state. In this sense, colonos and comunarios incorporated the reformist language of the Constitution into their politics of social emancipation without subsuming themselves to a state authority that was intent on imposing its vertical control. Ultimately, a central issue was related to the contradiction and discrepancy between the centralizing desire of the state and the autonomous capacity of popular actors to disrupt the established order of which the state was part.

---

<sup>133</sup> Ibid, 157.

The rural unrest in the late 1930s and the early 1940s was an alarming signal for Bolivian ruling groups. The government of Enrique Peñaranda (1940-1943) believed that the 1938 Constitution invited colonos and comunarios to rebel against hacendados. Given the intensity of rural unrest, however, the government could not entirely dismiss the laws promulgated by Busch and had to take measures to ameliorate the situations of colonos and comunarios. Under the pressure from the countryside and reformist urban political groups, Peñaranda implemented policies that aligned with his predecessor regarding haciendas and indians. Colonos demanded the abolition of pongueaje and right to unionization. Though the Peñaranda government did not accept these demands, it now established official institutional channels through which colonos and comunarios “could formulate their complaints against abuses and extortions” in haciendas. In a way, the creation of the Department of Indigenous Affairs (*Departamento de Asuntos Indígenas*) by Supreme Decree of May 10, 1941, and the Juridical Office of Free Defense of Indigenous Peasants (*Oficina Jurídica de Defensa Gratuita de Indígenas*) by Supreme Decree of April 7, 1943 were products of the state’s effort to co-opt indians into the national system. Nevertheless, it is important to recognize that those entities stemmed from persistent indigenous mobilizations that compelled the government to address issues pertaining to colonos’ and comunarios’ structural exploitation.<sup>134</sup>

Hacendados of the Rural Society of Bolivia responded to these changes, when they emphasized that colonos’ work was unproductive and geared only toward self-subsistence without making any positive contribution to national development. The Society also questioned colonos’ demand for social rights, such as entitlements to education and land, since they did not pay taxes. The Rural Society of Oruro sent a letter to the Agriculture and Interior Ministers on

---

<sup>134</sup> Choque, *El indigenismo y los movimientos indígenas en Bolivia*, 200-202.

July 31, 1942. In the letter, the Society asked, “Does the national production receive any contribution from indigenous communities?” [*Recibe la producción nacional algún aporte de las comunidades indígenas?*]<sup>135</sup> Colonos’ work was, according to hacendados, “so rudimentary that they cultivated land” without any possibility of materializing the agrarian potential of the nation.<sup>136</sup> In Oruro, 80% of the lands were subject to a “communal regime,” meaning that colonos actually worked the largest proportion of cultivable lands.<sup>137</sup> The predominance of a communal regime was a problem for hacendados, who deprecated colonos’ and comunarios’ agricultural work because of the supposed backwardness and inefficiency of indian labor.

For hacendados, the ideal colono was one who passively “received all the benefits” granted by landowners; colonos were not supposed to claim any right by themselves since they should obey their patrons and be only grateful for what the patrons provided for them.<sup>138</sup> Hacendados suggested that colonos and comunarios were useless for the development of the national economy. The Rural Society of Oruro asked the Agriculture and Interior Ministers, “What is their contribution to the National Treasury?” [*¿Cuál es la contribución de ellas al Erario Nacional?*]<sup>139</sup> If indians were to make economic and fiscal contributions to the nation, according to the Society, they had to remain subjected to the “civilizing” control of landowners. Only then would landowners be able to harness their colonos toward “the harmonic coexistence of property owners and colonos” [*la armónica convivencia de propietarios y colonos*], which they imagined in terms of their vested, taken-for-granted privileges to access indian labor.<sup>140</sup>

---

<sup>135</sup> *Ultima Hora*, August 3, 1942, ABNB-PB 262<sup>a</sup>.

<sup>136</sup> Choque, *El indigenismo y los movimientos indígenas en Bolivia*, 136.

<sup>137</sup> *Ultima Hora*, August 3, 1942, ABNB-PB 262<sup>a</sup>.

<sup>138</sup> Choque, *El indigenismo y los movimientos indígenas en Bolivia*, 135.

<sup>139</sup> *Ultima Hora*, August 3, 1942, ABNB-PB 262<sup>a</sup>.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*

They, therefore, considered themselves to be progressive patrons, whose economic and social dominance in the countryside was needed to convert indians into a productive labor force for agrarian development.

Hacendados, concerned with the sit-down strikes, urged the Interior Minister to “intervene with the swiftness that the case require[d] and put an end to a problem” [*intervenga con la celeridad que el caso requiere y ponga término a un problema*] that was creating a “state of anarchy” in the countryside.<sup>141</sup> The Rural Society of Oruro argued for the promulgation of “an Agrarian Law” that would “fulfill the desires of thousands of farmers” [*colmar los deseos de los miles de agricultores*] threatened by the rising problems of rural instability.<sup>142</sup> Many hacendados recognized that their colonos were not as controllable as they had hoped. In September 1942, the Rural Society of Oruro wrote to President Peñaranda to ask the government to immediately intervene in rural conflicts. The Society’s affiliates expressed their concern about “the spread of the communal control of land by Indian communities.” “[A]gitators among the Indians” were certainly a problem for hacendados. In February 1943, Peñaranda decreed that all types of organizing activities by unions be prohibited in the countryside. While a few additional presidential decrees sought to enforce this prohibition, rural strikes continued. The Rural Society warned the government that “the situation [would] get out of hand” unless the government imposed an effective control on the countryside.<sup>143</sup> The presidential decrees were hardly an effective means of establishing such a control. As long as the government prioritized hacendados’ demands for subduing colonos and comunarios, the fundamental structural problems of the hacienda regime and its exploitative nature remained unaddressed and unresolved.

---

<sup>141</sup> *Ultima Hora*, August 15, 1942, ABNB-PB 262<sup>a</sup>.

<sup>142</sup> *Ultima Hora*, August 20, 1942, ABNB-PB 262<sup>a</sup>.

<sup>143</sup> Gotkowitz, *A Revolution for Our Rights*, 131.



### *National Indigenous Congress*

The National Indigenous Congress organized under President Gualberto Villarroel in 1945 resulted from the growing rural indigenous mobilization that compelled the national government to address the grievances of colonos and comunarios about the hacienda regime. The MNR and the junior military officers grouped into the RADEPA (*Razón de Patria*) overthrew the government of Peñaranda on December 20, 1943, and established a nationalist government headed by Colonel Villarroel. The new government declared that it would reform the nation by reviving the struggle of the military-socialist state. While the Villarroel government envisioned a social change, it was very cautious about policies that could unleash indians' uncontrollable political force.<sup>144</sup> Imposition of a control over the process of rural change was a daunting task for the government. The Indigenous Congress of 1945 represented in part the government's attempt to address the indigenous demands about land and pongueaje within the boundaries of the rule of the state. Yet, it was doubtful that political processes emanating from the Congress would remain under state control.

The Indigenous Congress was inaugurated on May 10, 1945 with President Villarroel's opening speech to the hundreds of delegates from different communities. The delegates were assigned to four commissions to discuss indigenous education; organization of rural police; regulation of agrarian labor, fair wages, and the voluntary nature of indigenous labor in haciendas; and abolition of pongueaje. The commissions concluded with four decrees stipulating fair wages for agrarian laborers, the abolition of pongueaje, expansion of indigenous education,

---

<sup>144</sup> Kohl, "Peasant and Revolution in Bolivia, April 9, 1952-August 2, 1953, 242; Malloy, 121, 123-124.

and governmental support to improve the productivity in the countryside. None of the decrees touched upon land ownership because non-indigenous participants in the Congress feared reactions from hacendados.<sup>145</sup> Despite the absence of a decree to revert land to indigenous communities, the four decrees of the Congress, especially the one on the abolition of pongueaje, gave colonos and comunarios a legal ground to claim their freedom from pongueaje and the attached obligations they were subjected to.

The implementation of the decrees was, however, a complicated issue. First, they had to confront hacendados' opposition. Nicasio Cardozo, the President of the Rural Society of Bolivia, reacted by commenting, "The indian was born to serve the white."<sup>146</sup> Many local state authorities aligned with hacendados. What was more troublesome for the national government was the response of colonos and comunarios to the decrees. They interpreted the decrees in ways that legitimized their actions against haciendas and the local authorities that sided with hacendados. If their sit-down strikes and physical assaults on haciendas had been illegal, the decrees promulgated at the Congress legally validated their hitherto illegal actions against hacendados. As the Villarroel government attempted to incorporate indians into the process of rural change through the Indigenous Congress, it met with an indocile and uncontrollable force of colonos and comunarios, whose own interpretations of the reformist decrees carried potentially more radical meanings. As Gotkowitz asks, "who would determine the meaning of the law" proclaimed at the Indigenous Congress?<sup>147</sup> While the Villarroel government did not intend to instigate the rural mass against hacendados, the congressional decrees acquired a subversive meaning in many

---

<sup>145</sup> Choque, *El indigenismo y los movimientos indígenas en Bolivia*, 215.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid, 216.

<sup>147</sup> Gotkowitz, *A Revolution for Our Rights*, 266.

localities. Colonos and comunarios invoked those decrees to justify their actions against hacendados.

### ***Rural Unrest, 1946-1947***

Land invasions and sit-down strikes engulfed a number of haciendas after the Indigenous Congress. The intensity of rural rebellions in 1946-1947 alarmed hacendados and town residents (*vecinos*), who felt threatened by “barbaric” indians incited by the “demagogic” decrees of the Congress. Corregidor Juan Uriarte U. of Chapaca in the Larecaja Province of La Paz raised a charge of race war against comunarios around his canton on May 20, 1946. The corregidor reported to the Prefecture of the Department that “indian hordes” [*indiada*] instigated by “ex-corregidor José Poma Asquichu and others tried to exterminate white or mestizo race” [*el ex-Corregidor José Poma Asquichu y otros, con motivo de intentar exterminar a la raza blanca ó mestiza*]. The indians “ignored orders of the authorities of this Canton” [*desconociendo las órdenes de las autoridades de este Cantón*]. Blatantly defying governmental authorities, indians “held their assemblies and nocturne meetings” [*hacen sus juntas y reuniones nocturnas*], which made the canton a dangerous place.<sup>148</sup> The conflict between comunarios and vecinos of the canton had existed since 1944. Disobedience to governmental authorities and attacks on whites and mestizos of the canton were, therefore, not new.<sup>149</sup> The political context, however, was significantly different now because the Indigenous Congress confirmed the government’s support to colonos and comunarios.

---

<sup>148</sup> ALP-P-CRE-65-1, June 3, 1946.

<sup>149</sup> Gotkowitz, *A Revolution for Our Rights*, 249.

Another report on a race war emerged from Ilabaya in the same province of Larecaja. Addressed to the subprefecto of the province on January 17, 1946, the Neighborhood Council (*Junta de Vecinos*) of Ilabaya argued that they had lived for more than two years under constant threats from indigenous comunarios aspiring to restore Inka rule. Led by Gaitano Quispe, these comunarios killed a number of vecinos, set fire to their homes, took away their properties, and sought to “exterminate all whites of the Canton” [*exterminarnos a todos los blancos de este Cantón*]. The vecinos demanded that the subprefecto send soldiers to protect their interests and reestablish order.<sup>150</sup> The Junta de Vecinos expressed its concern about a large-scale regional insurrection of which the uprising in the canton was likely to be part. Ilabaya was a center of the regional rebellion that engulfed Quiabaya, Chuchulaya, Carazani, Combaya and Sorejaya in early 1945.<sup>151</sup> The Junta’s concern regarding a possible large-scale regional insurrection stemmed from the vecinos’ memory of the rebellion that had affected them less than a year before. From their viewpoint, the uprising at Ilabaya in 1946 was not an isolated incident but an indication of a broader regional phenomenon, a large-scale indian rebellion, with far-reaching regional consequences.

Conflicts in Chacapa and Ilabaya in 1946 were indeed not isolated occurrences, but part of a large-scale indigenous upsurge engulfing the Bolivian altiplano. Local state authorities and vecinos from many provinces in La Paz witnessed how colonos and comunarios in many places challenged the dominance of hacendados and the rule of the state.<sup>152</sup> Indigenous groups taking actions in the countryside were linked to urban political organizations, such as the FOL

---

<sup>150</sup> ALP-P-CRE-65-1, January 17, 1946.

<sup>151</sup> ALP-P-CRE-65-1, March 9, 1945; March 10, 1945; March 3, 1946; March 4, 1946; Choque *El indigenismo y los movimientos indígenas en Bolivia*, 209.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid*, 217-218.

(*Federación Obrera Local*). The FOL, an anarchist organization of artisans and workers of Aymara descent in the city of La Paz, maintained close contacts with altiplano colonos. The FOL's organizing activities and collaboration with colonos resulted in the creation of a number of rural unions in the Department of La Paz. The first rural unions affiliated with the FOL were founded in Guaqui (Ingavi), Q'achuma, and Topohoco (Pacajes) immediately after Villarroel was killed on July 21, 1946.<sup>153</sup> The FOL, according to Rivera Cusicanqui and Zulema Lehm Ardaya, "took advantage of the relative unionist liberty" brought about by the power vacuum after the death of Villarroel.<sup>154</sup>

In November 1946, the Farmworkers Union (*Unión Sindical de Labriegos*) was founded in Aygachi of the Los Andes Province in La Paz. Similar organizations appeared in Araca (Loayza Province), Cucuta, Laja (Los Andes), Guaqui (Ingavi), Caquiaviri, and Topohoco (Pacajes) in the same month. Rural unions affiliated with the FOL were coalesced into the FAD (*Federación Agraria Departamental*) on December 18. Four days later, the FAD entered a "pact of solidarity" with the FOL, which was strongly supported by colonos and comunarios from Los Andes and Pacajes, rural migrants to the city, teachers and "members of the former networks of caciques apoderados."<sup>155</sup> The alliance with urban groups increasingly enhanced the capacity of comunarios and colonos to politically organize themselves against hacendados and local state authorities. Colonos and comunarios soon launched sit-down strikes in various haciendas in La Paz during December 1946 and January 1947. Aigachi, Ayoayo, Corapata, Laja, Pucarani, Puerto Pérez, and Topohoco were the main sites of rural rebellion in these two months.<sup>156</sup>

---

<sup>153</sup> Gotkowitz, *A Revolution for Our Rights*, 249.

<sup>154</sup> Rivera Cusicanqui and Lehm, *Lxs artesanxs libertarixs: y la ética del trabajo*, 92.

<sup>155</sup> Gotkowitz, *A Revolution for Our Rights*, 249.

<sup>156</sup> Choque, *El indigenismo y los movimientos indígenas en Bolivia*, 220-222; Gotkowitz, *A Revolution for Our Rights*, 249.

To the eyes of hacendados and local state authorities, the expanding connections between urban and rural organizations, and the emergence of a network of colonos' unions signaled the existence of a sinister plan against "order and civilization." Hacendados clearly recognized that rural unions were not acting in isolation but had a regional coordination aimed at undermining the larger system of domination and power in the countryside. As Marcelo Maldonado Rocha comments, land invasion, sit-down strikes, or "any *direct form of struggle* against a hacendado" would antagonize not just the hacienda concerned but "the rest of hacendados and the Rural Society of Bolivia" as a whole.<sup>157</sup> The Rural Society insisted that the Villarroel regime and a few "agitators" from the city were responsible for instigating colonos and comunarios.<sup>158</sup>

A political ally to the Villarroel government, the MNR, affirmed its pro-indigenous position, opposing hacendados and aligning with colonos. Yet, the MNR denounced colonos' acts of rebellion against hacendados. In its communiqué (*comunicado*) published in February 1946, the MNR reiterated its solidarity with the "struggle for the liberation and dignification of the exploited classes of our Patria" [*lucha por la liberación y dignificación de las clases explotadas de nuestra Patria*], and defended "the incorporation of the indian into the Nation" [*la incorporación del indio a la Nación*] as the most salient social problem in Bolivia. While the MNR criticized its "political adversaries", such as hacendados and large mine owners, for refusing to accept the decrees of the Indigenous Congress, it would not tolerate "agitators who never hesitate to incite...the unarmed [rural] masses" [*los provocadores que no titubean en incitar...a las masas inermes*], because it believed that those agitators provoked "a racial

---

<sup>157</sup> Marcelo Maldonado Rocha, "'Katari irrumpiendo La Paz.' La Escuela de Quilluma el sueño catastrófico de la Federación Agraria Departamental (Huelgas de coerción anarquista y escuelas rurales)" in Crespo, *Anarquismo en Bolivia, ayer y hoy*, 63.

<sup>158</sup> Choque, *El indigenismo y los movimientos indígenas en Bolivia*, 221.

conflict” [*una lucha de razas*]. Any insurgent actions outside state control were, according to the MNR, equivalent to an extremist violence that negated the democratic disposition of “the nation, the State, and the security of urban populations” [*la nacionalidad...del Estado, y a la misma seguridad de las poblaciones urbanas*].<sup>159</sup> Democracy as defined herein meant a hegemonic capacity of the modern state to impose an orderly change in society. In this democracy, indians’ own actions to claim their rights to freedom and land were illegal and potentially barbarous acts that were opposed to social order. In this sense, the MNR shared an ontology of indian race with its political opponents. As much as with preceding governments, the MNR deprecated colonos’ and comunarios’ insurgent acts. It aligned itself with the maintenance of a hierarchical order based on the racial distinction between European descendants and indians, and between civilization and barbarism, along a continuum that went back to “the Spanish conquest.”

A political empowerment of indians meant the disempowerment of the civilized segments of society from hacendados’ and vecinos’ perspective. Discourse of race war was an expression of those “civilized” groups’ fear of the inversion of “the proper social order.” Charging indians for waging a race war against whites and mestizos was a way to stigmatize indigenous political actions as subversive insurrections that were part of a broader extremist conspiracy against the nation. In the Bolivian context of 1946-1947 when the decrees promulgated in the Indigenous Congress of 1945 caused alarms among hacendados and vecinos, any attempt to claim indigenous land and political rights could be seen as a step toward dismantling the established order in the countryside. From the perspectives of those who saw indigenous subordination as

---

<sup>159</sup> Archivo de La Paz-Corte Superior del Distrito (Henceforth, ALP-CSD)-2, “Comunicado No. I-26, Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario,” February 1, 1946.

normal and their dominance as taken-for-granted, any empowerment of the rural masses was at the same time a destructive war against civilization.

A notion of indian violence against civilization informed a significant part of hacendados' and state authorities' understandings of land invasions and sit-down strikes in the altiplano during 1946-1947. On December 16, 1946, colonos affiliated with the FAD and the FOL attacked the police troops in Topohoco, who were sent by the General Office of Police (*Dirección General de Policías*) to protect "private property." According to the police, property was threatened by "a large group of indians commanded by professional agitators of the previous regime" [*un gran número de indígenas aleccionados por agitadores profesionales del anterior régimen*]. The police defined the attack on troops as a "cowardly aggression." The confrontation between the colonos and the police left a carabineer dead and two injured whereas no official document indicated the number of casualties on the indians' side.<sup>160</sup> Over the following year, the unrest throughout the altiplano persisted. Colonos in Ayo Ayo and Topoco launched work stoppages. On January 11, 1947, about 4,000 colonos from Laja, Pucarani, and Puerto Pérez in Los Andes gathered around hacienda Carapata to demand the complete abolition of pongueaje, and unionization of rural workers.<sup>161</sup>

Hacendados, journalists, and the police often accused colonos of perpetrating violence. The FAD and the FOL responded to such an accusation by criticizing hacendados and state authorities for "inventing rebellions that d[id] not exist," and for persecuting those "who struggled for freedom of all the peasants of Bolivia" [*que lucharon por la libertad de todos los*

---

<sup>160</sup> *La Razón*, December 17, 1946 cited in Maldonado, "'Katari irrumpiendo La Paz,'" 65, 66, 67.

<sup>161</sup> Choque, *El indigenismo y los movimientos indígenas en Bolivia*, 220-221.



*campesinos de Bolivia*].<sup>162</sup> Gotkowitz argues that during the first four months of 1947, rural unrest in La Paz mostly involved peaceful means, such as “work stoppages, insolence, the appropriation of goods, [and] the withholding of fees.” Violence became more prominent after May-June, when clashes between colonos and hacendados occurred at Finca Anta (Pacajes), hacienda Tacanoca (Los Andes), and Puerto Acosta (Camacho Province).<sup>163</sup>

Recurrently, hacendados and local authorities raised charges of race war throughout 1947. In response, the FAD issued a manifesto: “nobody understands us” [*nadie nos entiende*], and “nobody knows our language, because according to them, we are the devil’s children” [*nadie conoce nuestro lenguaje, porque según ellos somos hijos del diablo*]. While state authorities heeded hacendados’ and vecinos’ paranoia of “ferocious, savage and anthropophagus” indians, they closed their eyes to colonos’ and comunarios’ miseries, forced to live “persecuted and incarcerated” lives without the possibility of defending themselves. Consequently, according to the FAD, “everybody condemns us, everybody murmurs that it is necessary to exterminate the indian” [*todos nos condenan, todos murmuran, que al indio hay que exterminar*] and that “the indian is the discredit to aristocratic Bolivia” [*el indio es el desprestigio de Bolivia aristocrática*].<sup>164</sup> The FAD’s manifesto expressed more than the frustration of colonos, comunarios, and their urban allies with “aristocratic Bolivia.” The denunciation of “aristocratic Bolivia” countered hacendados’ and vecinos’ charge of race war. When hacendados and vecinos demonized indians as “ferocious, savage and anthropophagus,” the FAD gave voice to indians explaining why they rebelled. Hacendados and vecinos argued that they were victims of indians’

---

<sup>162</sup> “Libro de Acta de la FOL,” December 22, 1946 cited in Maldonado, ““Katari irrumpiendo La Paz,”” 68-69.

<sup>163</sup> Gotkowitz, *A Revolution for Our Rights*, 251.

<sup>164</sup> “Manifiesto La FAD adherida a la FOL” cited in Rivera Cusicanqui and Lehm, *Lxs artesanxs libertarixs*, 95.

“savage” violence, denying that they were oppressors of indians. The FAD illuminated how deceptive and spurious their charge of race war was, and demonstrated that the real victims were indians. The government ignoring this fact saw colonos’ and comunarios’ rebellion as a problem and aligned with “aristocratic Bolivia.” The FAD denounced this collusion between governmental authorities, hacendados and vecinos, which bolstered the structure of oppression of indians.

### ***The Force of Destabilization***

As colonos and comunarios took the decrees of the Indigenous Congress into their own hands and defined the meanings of those decrees in their own terms, rural struggle went far beyond the limited vision of indigenous incorporation conceived by the military-socialist state of Toro, Busch, and Villarroel. Rural rebellions throughout 1946 and 1947 unleashed a political force that went beyond state control. Land invasions, sit-down strikes and physical attacks on haciendas led to a struggle against the hacienda regime. While the Villarroel government sought to implement a legal process to materialize the abolition of pongueaje and other policies geared toward indigenous emancipation, this process did not guarantee an end of the hacienda regime, which was what colonos and comunarios wanted. Without directly attacking that regime, legal processes determined by the state would not achieve a desired outcome, regardless of how reform-minded the intention behind those processes was. When colonos and comunarios referred to the decrees of the Indigenous Congress to legitimize their actions against hacendados and local authorities, they did not conform to the legal venues dictated by the state. Rather, they created their own legality, aimed at undermining, displacing, and eliminating the hacienda

regime. Such a “non-state legality” had concrete expressions: land occupation, sit-down strikes, and physical attacks on hacendados’ properties.

Despite its benevolent gesture toward colonos and comunarios, the military-socialist state did not support rural rebellions that undermined its legality and by extension, its legitimacy. Its desire to impose rules of rural change exemplified the contradictions of its reformist program. While it called for indigenous education and the abolition of pongueaje, it denounced colonos’ and comunarios’ rebellions aiming at materializing those progressive changes. Rebellions not only threatened the hacienda regime but also the rule of law that was sacred to the state. Colonos’ and comunarios’ actions were equivalent to an indian rebellion that would displace the political process determined by the state. Rural unrest clearly undermined power relations. The state’s rejection of rural rebellions disclosed the ultimate contradiction of the military-socialist project for rural change. How was it possible for a state to simultaneously promote change and repudiate popular actions geared toward change?

For rebellious indians, a supportive state was less an authority to be obeyed than an ally that could be used to their advantage. In this sense, state attempts to impose a vertical control over rural change contravened a process on the ground. The legality of rural change dictated by the state effectively lost meaning, when colonos’ and comunarios’ actions destabilized state control and rendered it meaningless in the political process toward indigenous emancipation. The state was a component of this process since its “emancipatory” decrees and official favoritism for the indigenous majority were incorporated into the rebellions that undermined the hacienda regime. The direct actions of colonos and comunarios led the way in the destabilization of the oppressive system in the countryside.

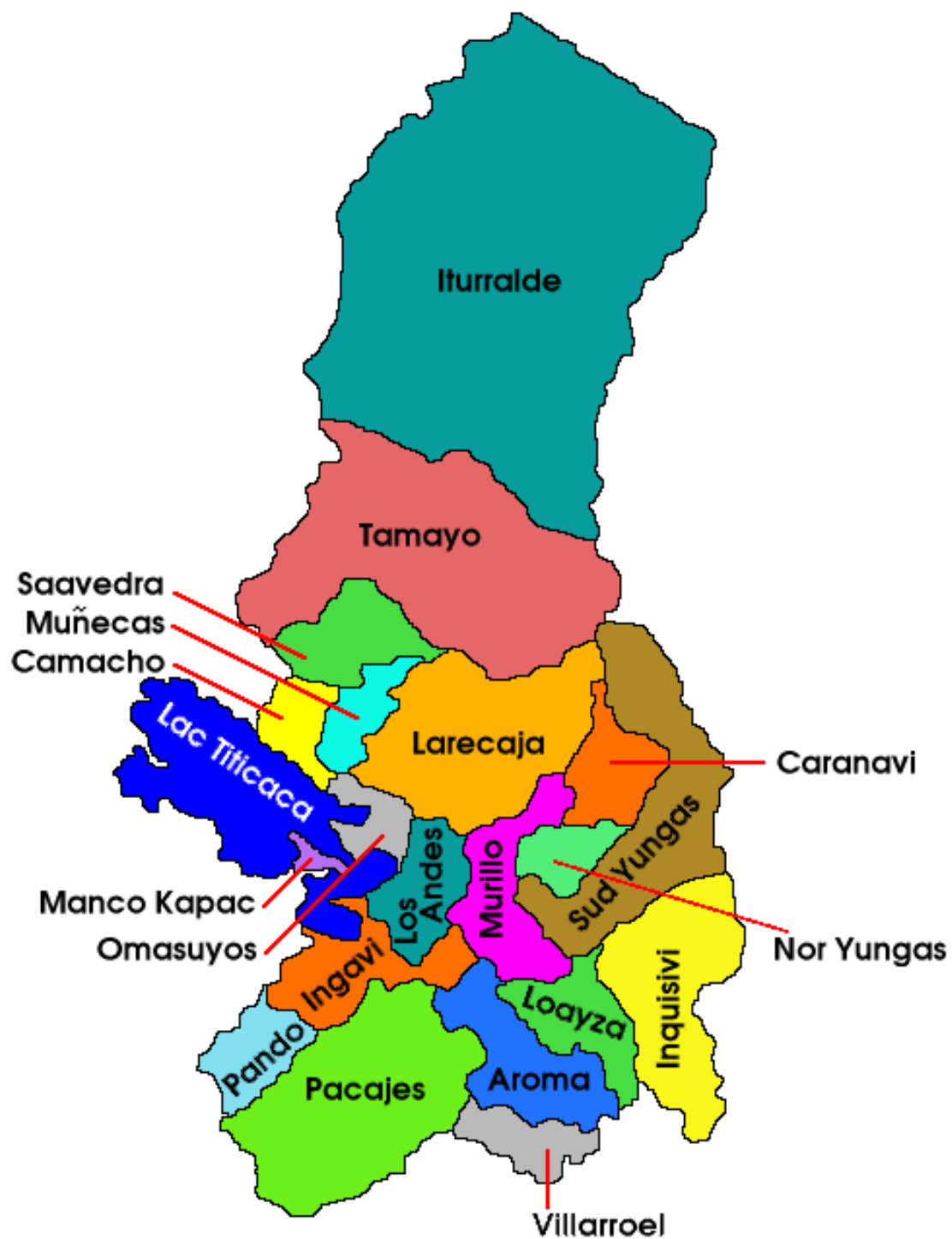
This autonomous process sustained the dynamism of rural uproar in 1946-1947. Autonomy was a central component of previous non-state political projects, such as the *Escuela-Ayllu* and the Indian Republic of the *Alcaldes Mayores Particulares*. Those projects produced discourses, ideologies, pedagogies, and theories that could be applied to practice, and raised a consciousness of indigenous emancipation. The rural rebellions in 1946-1947 moved this consciousness toward a turbulent moment of destabilization of the hacienda regime. In this sense, the rural rebels of 1946-1947 represented a continued and radicalized transformative force of the indigenous masses, with a capacity to generate emancipatory politics. In no way was it possible to subsume this political force to a homogenizing vision of *lo nacional*. When the MNR seized power in April 1952 to institute a Revolutionary Nationalist state, colonos and comunarios were already on the revolutionary road. The new government had to establish formal links between the state and these active popular groups, for whom a revolution was already unfolding before 1952.<sup>165</sup> Establishing those formal links, however, would be a tension-laden process, rendering more instability and disorder.

---

<sup>165</sup> Gotkowitz, *A Revolution for Our Rights*, 276.



<Illustration 1.1> The nine Departments of Bolivia (Source: *Vector Stock*  
<https://www.vectorstock.com/royalty-free-vector/bolivia-map-vector-1605158.>)



<Illustration 1.2> Department of La Paz with twenty Provinces (Source: *Federación de Juventud de la Provincia Larecaja* <http://fjpl.blogspot.com/2006/05/ubicacion-geografica.html>.)

## Chapter 2

### **The National Revolution: Permanent Disorder and the Revolutionary Establishment**

In December 1963, miners of Catavi and Siglo XX in Potosí confronted the government of Víctor Paz Estenssoro (1960-1964) over the Triangular Plan, a financial assistance program for Bolivia's mining industry, which was financed by credits from the U.S., West Germany, and the International Development Bank. The government wanted to enforce the second phase of the Plan, which included massive layoffs and wage cuts. A number of the mines had gone on strike against the Plan since July 1963. Amid tensions, the FSTMB (*Federación Sindical de Trabajadores Mineros de Bolivia*) inaugurated its twelfth annual congress on December 3 of that year. The congress concluded with a declaration that denounced the government's anti-worker policy and its alignment with imperialism. Considering this to be "a call for confrontation," the government arrested two leaders of Siglo XX, Federico Escóbar and Irineo Pimentel, on December 7. Miners of Catavi and Siglo XX responded by taking technicians and members of the administration of Catavi, including four U.S. engineers, as hostages. The government sent soldiers to siege the mines, isolate the protesting miners, and subdue the popular resistance to the Triangular Plan. Pro-government (*oficialista*) peasant militias from Ucureña in Cochabamba partook in the barricades, which the Bolivian military set up to encircle the mines. "Even though clashes between peasants and the miners" did not take place during the conflict, the former's participation in the military operation marked the political "distance between the two popular sectors" and provoked a strong sense of "resentment" among "the miners."<sup>166</sup> For many miners,

---

<sup>166</sup> Cajías, *El poder de la memoria*, 253-259.

peasant collaboration with the military attested to the backwardness of indians who were vulnerable to government manipulation.

The political divide between the miners and peasants did not simply mean the latter's alignment with the national government as opposed to the former. The Revolutionary Nationalist state instituted after April 1952 strived to incorporate popular sectors into its project of nation-state making. It implemented the nationalization of the mines, universal suffrage, and agrarian and educational reforms. The revolutionary reforms created new institutional mechanisms through which the relationship between the state and popular sectors was established and maintained. Those mechanisms rested on officialista rural unions and COMIBOL (*Corporación Minera de Bolivia*), the national mining company founded in the wake of the MNR's seizure of power.<sup>167</sup> State control over the miners and peasants, however, remained susceptible to their contestation, thus debilitating the revolutionary regime. The lack of state control was more visible in the mines, where unions under Marxist influence constituted a potent political force to organize the miners against any potential anti-worker policy.<sup>168</sup> Even though *oficialismo* infiltrated rural organizations with a relative success, peasant subsumption to the state did not necessarily imply an effective top-down control. State control was highly contested and negotiated since peasants frequently ignored the official system of governance.<sup>169</sup> While one can talk about a peasant alignment with the Revolutionary Nationalist state as opposed to militant miners, it is more useful to focus on relationships between the state and different popular groups.

---

<sup>167</sup> Guillermo Bedregal, *COMIBOL: una historia épica* (Fondo Editorial de los Diputados, 1998); Jorge Dandler, "Campesinado y Reforma Agraria en Cochabamba (1952-3): Dinámica de un movimiento campesino en Bolivia," in Calderón and Dandler, *Bolivia*.

<sup>168</sup> Lora, "La clase obrera después de 1952."

<sup>169</sup> Jorge Dandler, "La 'Ch'ampa Guerra' de Cochabamba: Un proceso de disgregación política," in Calderón and Dandler, *Bolivia*; Kohl, "The Cliza and Ucureña War."



How did state-society relations evolve to produce dissimilar patterns of interaction between the state and different popular groups in Bolivia after the National Revolution? How did those patterns disclose contradictions and limits of the Revolution? These are the main questions this chapter addresses.

The chapter looks at two specific cases, the Cliza-Ucureña conflict in Cochabamba during 1959-1960 and the Massacre of the Night of San Juan in 1967 (known as *La Noche Triste de San Juan*), which violently exposed the structural problems of the Agrarian Reform and the nationalization of the mines. In the mines, the problems stemmed from the dependency of the Bolivian mining economy, the vein depletion, and the lack of technological investment. These problems dated back to the 1930s-1940s, when the increase in production costs was already visible in major mines owned by the three tin barons (Aramayo, Hochschild, and Patiño). The global recession during the Great Depression had a great impact on Bolivia due to its heavy dependence on mining exports (tin in particular). These problems continued to plague the Bolivian economy after the nationalization of the mines in 1952. In this chapter, I look at published testimonies of miners to illustrate their perceptions of the nationalization, which were tied to their political consciousness. It argues that miners' consciousness was rooted in their memory of struggles dating back to the time of the tin barons between the 1920s and 1952. It utilizes Jorge Sanjinés's film *El Coraje del Pueblo* (*The Courage of the Pueblo*), recalling the miners' revolutionary struggle that violently clashed with the military regime of René Barrientos Ortuño (1964-1969) during *La Noche Triste*. In order to represent "an explicit articulation of popular memory" of *La Noche Triste*, Sanjinés and his filmmaking team (*El Grupo Ukamau*) "scripted" the film "in collaboration with" actual miners and "survivors" of *La Noche Triste*,

who “were called upon to...re-stage their survival.”<sup>170</sup> The film contains oral testimonies from survivors, adding a personal dimension to the formation of that memory. Different individuals speak as participants in the popular struggle for the national vindication spearheaded by the miners. Their individual voices are “embed[ded]...within collective experience” articulated into a filmed political narrative of a revolutionary movement of the Bolivian people.<sup>171</sup>

As for the agrarian problems, the chapter discusses the corporatist system, which the MNR sought to establish in the countryside through state-controlled rural unions. Cliza and Ucureña were among the rural areas, where the MNR maintained the most effective political control through clientelistic networks with local peasant leaders (caciques). Yet, the conflict between caciques of Cliza and Ucureña exposed the precariousness of state control even in these areas. The chapter illustrates how local cleavages and interests rendered state control ineffective in the countryside. It examines points of rupture in the state-peasant relationship after the Agrarian Reform, which the Cliza-Ucureña conflict revealed. Despite their co-optation into the clientelistic networks controlled by the state after the reform, peasants were never obedient clients of their patrons in the state. The Cliza-Ucureña conflict blatantly showed the state’s lack of control in the countryside in the 1950s-1960s.

Based on the study of the relationship between the Revolutionary Nationalist state on the one hand, and popular sectors represented by the miners and peasants on the other, the chapter argues that constant challenges posed by popular groups made political disorder a permanent trait in Bolivia after 1952. It illustrates how this “permanent disorder” was expressed in violent state-society confrontations, such as La Noche Triste and the Cliza-Ucureña conflict.

---

<sup>170</sup> John Mowitt, *Re-takes: Postcoloniality and Foreign Film Languages* (University of Minnesota Press, 2005), 152.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid*, 154.

### *Militant Miners*

The Catavi massacre in 1942 marked a major turning point in the history of Bolivia's miners' movement. Pro-labor laws decreed by Toro and Busch, such as obligatory unionization and protection of workers' right to collective bargaining, were never implemented.<sup>172</sup> Nevertheless, those decrees changed the overall political climate as they triggered miners' self-unionization. This coincided with the emergence of workers' parties, such as the PIR and the POR, whose revolutionary programs were based on early works by Tristán Marof.<sup>173</sup> The Communist (PIR) and Trotskyite (POR) ideologies influenced miners' movement during the 1930s-1940s, making the proletarian revolution a central component of that movement's struggle against the tin barons and their governmental allies. La Rosca was a common enemy to different urban revolutionary groups emerging after Chaco War. For Marxists, the defeat of La Rosca and its imperial connections to North America was a necessary step toward national liberation leading to a proletarian revolution.<sup>174</sup> The Catavi massacre, one of the bloodiest moments in the miners' struggle, revealed the oppressive nature of the Bolivian state and its tin baron allies. The mining company owned by Simón Patiño refused to negotiate with the miners who demanded better working conditions and a wage increase in accordance with the inflation rate in 1942. That year, Patiño's personal revenue from his tin business increased by eighty-four percent, "inflation had reached thirty percent," and miners' real wages were raised by less than five percent.<sup>175</sup> At the same time, the tin industry accounted for 66.8% of Bolivia's exports and 62.2% of

---

<sup>172</sup> Nash, *We Eat the Mines and the Mines Eat Us*, 41.

<sup>173</sup> Marof, *La Justicia del Inca; La Tragedia del Altiplano*.

<sup>174</sup> "Programa del Partido de la Izquierda Revolucionaria"; "Tesis de Pulacayo."

<sup>175</sup> Dunkerley, *Rebellion in the Veins*, 15; Malloy, *Bolivia*, 119; Nash, *We Eat the Mines and the Mines Eat Us*, 41-42.

government revenues, sustaining the national economy.<sup>176</sup> The conflict between the miners and the Patiño Company ended with a military carnage on December 21, 1942. On this day, soldiers of the Peñaranda government fired at protesting miners in Catavi. The massacre, according to the official count, left nineteen miners dead. The surviving miners, however, argued that almost 400 died.<sup>177</sup>



<Illustration 2.1> The pueblo shouts against its enemies. (*El Coraje del Pueblo*, directed by Jorge Sanjinés (Grupo Ukamau; Radiotelevisione Italiana, 1971))

The scene of the massacre portrayed by *El Coraje del Pueblo* is full of anger and pain. The barbarous military violence has deeply wounded the collective body of the pueblo. The multitude of miners wails and agonizes over the deaths of their brothers, sisters and comrades. The survivors' ire and sadness fills the Andean landscape bloodied by military brutality. The

---

<sup>176</sup> Walter Gómez D'Angelo, *La minería en el desarrollo de Bolivia* (Los Amigos del Libro, 1978), 191.

<sup>177</sup> Nash, *We Eat the Mines and the Mines Eat Us*, 41.

soldiers transport the bodies of massacred miners on a truck. The bodies are then dumped into a large pit like trash.<sup>178</sup>



<Illustration 2.2> Dead miners testify to the state violence and the wounds inflicted upon the collective body of the pueblo.

Following the massacre, miners' unions found more reasons to defeat La Rosca. The PIR and the POR expanded their political base in the mines during this period whereas the MNR was quick to denounce "the tragic reality" of the Bolivian nation in light of the massacre.<sup>179</sup> Simón Patiño, dubbed as "Devil's Metal" (*Metal del Diablo*), became a symbol of the antinación that dominated over the nation.<sup>180</sup> When the MNR, the PIR, and the POR sought to incorporate miners' unions into their organizational structure, the FSTMB came into being to organize those unions at the national level. Founded on June 13, 1944 in Huanuni, the FSTMB brought together eighteen unions of Bolivia's major mines, which represented approximately 45,000 workers. The

---

<sup>178</sup> "El Coraje del Pueblo," film directed by Jorge Sanjinés (Grupo Ukamau; Radiotelevisione Italiana, 1971).

<sup>179</sup> Cajías, *El poder de la memoria*, 204.

<sup>180</sup> Céspedes, *Metal del Diablo*; Montenegro, *Nacionalismo y coloniaje*.

Federation's executive committee (*directiva*) was composed mostly of leaders affiliated with the MNR. The Federation expected the Villarroel government to support its struggle against mine owners.<sup>181</sup> The mob lynching of Villarroel in July 1946 and the subsequent installation of a government of La Rosca compelled the Federation to devise a new strategy. The Federation called for a national congress of miners, which convened on November 8, 1946 in Pulacayo in Potosí. The congress approved a thesis penned by Guillermo Lora of the POR. The "Pulacayo Thesis," adopted as the Federation's official platform, demonstrated the influence of Trotskyism on miners' unions, defining the proletariat as "the revolutionary social class par excellence," [*la clase social revolucionaria por excelencia*] and "mining workers as the most advanced and combative sector of the national proletariat" [*Los trabajadores de las minas, el sector más avanzado y combativo del proletariado nacional*], who should lead petty bourgeois sectors of "small merchants and property owners, technicians, bureaucrats, artisans and peasants" [*Los pequeños comerciantes y propietarios, los técnicos, los burócratas, los artesanos y los campesinos*].<sup>182</sup> The proletarian nature of the miners, underscored by the Thesis, differentiated these vanguard workers from the rural majority construed in class terms as a landed petty bourgeoisie.

During the six-year period (*sexenio*) of the restitution of La Rosca (1946-1952), the FSTMB and the MNR forged an alliance. Despite the ideological influence of the POR, the Federation's leaders represented by Juan Lechín Oquendo cooperated with the MNR's militants to organize dozens of armed insurrections and strikes during the *sexenio*.<sup>183</sup> The PIR participated in the lynching of Villarroel because his government persecuted Communists. The PIR's

---

<sup>181</sup> Cajías, *El poder de la memoria*, 206.

<sup>182</sup> "Tesis de Pulacayo."

<sup>183</sup> Cajías, *El poder de la memoria*, 208-209.

collaboration with La Rosca against Villarroel turned out to be a crucial error as the government of the sexenio violently repressed students, the miners, and other workers, who demanded greater political participation of the people, the expansion of public education, and the nationalization of the mines. The PIR had lost its credential as a revolutionary party. The Communists disillusioned by their party's "oligarchic turn" founded the PCB (*Partido Comunista de Bolivia*) in 1950, but the new Communist party never recovered the political influence that the PIR had maintained until the mid-1940s.<sup>184</sup> Even though the POR wielded a significant ideological influence on the FSTMB, its support base was confined to the mines. The MNR's support base was broader; it included urban professionals, artisans, and merchants who thanks to their Spanish literacy and property-holding status, were eligible to vote. The miners, therefore, chose the MNR as their "national political instrument" to take power with a broader support base and sought to use it to their advantage in the common struggle against La Rosca.<sup>185</sup>

The nationalization of the mines became a central political issue after the MNR seized power by an armed insurrection where miners played a critical role. On October 31, 1952, President Víctor Paz (1952-1956) of the MNR, and Juan Lechín, the General Secretary of the COB (*Central Obrera Boliviana*), signed the decree that nationalized the mines.<sup>186</sup> The revolutionary government chose the site of the Catavi massacre to proclaim the nationalization, and thereby indicated this act to be the culmination of the miners' struggle. Nationalization placed the nation's most important economic resource under the control of miners. The National

---

<sup>184</sup> Céspedes, *El presidente colgado*, 222-251; James Dunkerley, "The Origins of the Bolivian Revolution in the Twentieth Century," in Merilee S. Grindle and Pilar Domingo, *Proclaiming Revolution: Bolivia in Comparative Perspective* (David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies, Harvard University; Institute of Latin American Studies, University of London, 2003), 140.

<sup>185</sup> Malloy, *Bolivia*, 146.

<sup>186</sup> Dunkerley, *Rebellion in the Veins*, 58; Malloy, *Bolivia*, 175.

Revolution made the miners “for the first time...the lords of the national wealth.” Bolivian Independence Day (August 6) acquired new meanings for the miners after 1952. Juan Rojas, a miner of San José in Oruro, recalls the Independence Day celebration in 1953: “It was a grand celebration, such as I had never seen in previous August when the company ran them. That was the first year that the engineers celebrated with the workers.”<sup>187</sup>

An intensely debated issue after the nationalization was the compensation former mine owners demanded. MNR leaders expressed their intention to compensate the stakeholders of the properties nationalized. As indicated by correspondences between the Bolivian government, the U.S. Embassy, and the White House during 1952-1953, MNR leaders recognized that the White House was closely looking at how Bolivia’s revolutionary regime would act in the Cold War context.<sup>188</sup> The U.S. was a major source of foreign aid to Bolivia, and the largest buyer of the country’s mostly unrefined tin during 1942-1957.<sup>189</sup> The MNR government had to convince the

---

<sup>187</sup> June Nash, *I Spent My Life in the Mines: The Story of Juan Rojas, Bolivian Tin Miner* (Columbia University Press, 1992), 172.

<sup>188</sup> “Memorandum by the Assistant Secretary of State for Economic Affairs (Thorp) and the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs (Miller) to the Secretary of State,” April 2, 1952, *Miller files, lot 53D 26, “Bolivia”*; “Memorandum of Conversation, by the Secretary of State,” October 7, 1952, *Secretary’s Memoranda lot 53D 444, “August 1952-February 1953”*; “Memorandum by the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs (Mann) to the Under Secretary of State (Bruce),” December 17, 1952, 824.2544/12-1752; “The Ambassador in Bolivia (Sparks) to the Department of State,” March 13, 1953, 824.2544/3-1353: *Telegram*; The cited Memoranda and telegram in this footnote are from William Z. Slany, N. Stephen Kane and William F. Sanford Jr., *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954 Volume IV: The American Republics* (United States Government Printing Office, 1983).

<sup>189</sup> Cole Blasier, “The United States and the Revolution,” in James M. Malloy and Richard S. Thorn, *Beyond the Revolution: Bolivia since 1952* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 1971), 76-78; Kenneth D. Lehman, *Bolivia and the United States: A Limited Partnership* (The University of Georgia Press, 1999), 75, 124; “Braked but not Broken: Mexico and Bolivia-Factoring the United States into the Revolutionary Equation,” in Grindle and Domingo, *Proclaiming Revolution*, 100; Stephen Zunes, “The United States and Bolivia: The Taming of a Revolution, 1952-1957,” *Latin American Perspectives* 28, 5 (2001): 38.



White House of its commitment to capitalist development, and at the same time, balance its capitalist interests against miners' demand for the nationalization without compensation.

Despite its nationalist and anti-imperialist rhetoric, the MNR aligned more with the U.S. than with the miners. The leadership of the COB agreed with the MNR's compromised position. The government instituted "workers' control" (*control obrero*) with the right to veto the management of COMIBOL. A co-government (*co-gobierno*) between the MNR and the COB was set up with five workers' ministers in the governmental cabinet. In exchange for these, the COB accepted the MNR's proposal of nationalization with compensation. During the negotiations, Guillermo Lora "called for the immediate occupation of the mines" as he was keenly aware that ongoing negotiations "prompt[ed] the first and possibly the most critical down-turn in popular mobili[z]ation."<sup>190</sup> Lora's assessment resonated with the rank-and-file miners who saw the nationalization as "a positive step for the Bolivian people" but were opposed to compensating former mine owners.<sup>191</sup> Domitila Barrios de Chungara, leader of the Housewives Committee in Catavi and Siglo XX, comments:

I now understand that the MNR wasn't what my father had always wanted. I remember, for example, that when the mines were nationalized, he was happy. But he said that the "tin barons" shouldn't be paid. And he protested strongly and insisted to the people who met in our house: "How can we indemnify them?"<sup>192</sup>

While the nationalization of the mines became a symbol of the revolutionary victory of the Bolivian pueblo, it cost a large sum of money to indemnify the former tin barons. Barrios asks rhetorically, "Why were the mines nationalized?"<sup>193</sup> The MNR government initially agreed

---

<sup>190</sup> Dunkerley, *Rebellion in the Veins*. 56-57.

<sup>191</sup> Nash, *We Eat the Mines and the Mines Eat Us*, 263.

<sup>192</sup> Domitila Barrios de Chungara with Moema Viezzer, *Let Me Speak!: Testimony of Domitila, a Woman of the Bolivian Mines* (Monthly Review Press, 1978), 51.

<sup>193</sup> *Ibid*, 52.

to pay \$27 million to former mine owners in total, which was equivalent to “more than two-thirds of [Bolivia’s] foreign exchange reserves” in 1952-1953.<sup>194</sup> Between 1953 and 1957, the government paid more than \$12 million in accordance with that agreement.<sup>195</sup> The negative effect of this payment on COMIBOL became more visible when tin price decreased following the end of the Korean War (1950-1953).

Bolivia virtually “bought the nationalization” from the mine owners, damaging its own economy.<sup>196</sup> Moreover, the mineral vein depletion was becoming increasingly serious, a problem that had been present since the 1940s. The Aramayo Group, for instance, noted that the company’s “production cost of tin increased from 55.61 to 87.22 centavos per pound between 1944 and 1948” because of depletion. The ore head grade of Bolivian tin was approximately 4% at that time, and decreased to less than 1% by the beginning of the 1950s. Tin barons had done little to increase mining production in their Bolivian possessions. In total, they had invested less than \$10,000,000 in technological innovations and improvements since 1940. The Patiño Group had spent more than \$270,000,000 in its Canadian mines alone during the same period.<sup>197</sup>

Barrios’s father explained the absurdity of the situation:

“Suppose,” he said, “that I bought you a beautiful doll or one of those puppets that can talk and walk. With that doll you could make propaganda, earn your living, and so forth. But, let’s suppose that you’ve loaned that doll to a man and he’s taken it on tours and has made it work whole lot. You’ve already asked him to return it to you because the doll is yours, you’ve fought with him, and nothing. Instead, that man has hit you and has won, because he’s big and strong. But one day, after so much fighting, you grab him and you hit him hard and you take the doll away from him. And the little doll is yours again. But after so many years of work, it’s totally broken and old. It’s not as useful as when it was brand new. Now then, after taking your doll back from the man, should you pay him for the

---

<sup>194</sup> Dunkerley, *Rebellion in the Veins*, 58.

<sup>195</sup> Víctor Andrade, *My Missions for Revolutionary Bolivia, 1944-1962* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 1976), 151-152.

<sup>196</sup> Private Conversation with a Resident of the Bolivian City of El Alto, September 27, 2016.

<sup>197</sup> Bedregal, *COMIBOL*, 62-64.

way the doll has aged? Don't you see that you shouldn't? It's the same as the 'tin barons' who've gotten rich with our mine. The mine's being returned to the people. But what's happening? They're going to pay them, they're going to give indemnification to those men for the damage they've left us."<sup>198</sup>

Undercapitalization stemming from depletion and the lack of technological investment had perennially damaged COMIBOL's productivity. The company's administration complained about "excessive labor costs" derived from union intervention, subsidies for mining company stores (*pulperías*), and re-employment of all the workers who had been fired for their political activities during the time of tin barons.<sup>199</sup> The number of workers in the nationalized mines increased from 29,500 in 1952 to 36,500 in 1956. In 1952, according to Guillermo Bedregal, the then president of COMIBOL, 14,179 workers worked in pits (*trabajos de interior mina*) whereas 14,794 were *trabajadores del exterior* (bureaucrats, and those in transport and processing activities outside the pits). The rate of workers in pits to *trabajadores del exterior* had become 3:7 (11,438 opposed to 24,222) by 1956.<sup>200</sup> By 1967, more than two-thirds of COMIBOL's employees were composed of desk workers while only a fifty percent (around 7,600) of manual workers engaged in production in pits.<sup>201</sup> Walter Gómez D'Angelo emphasizes that despite the administration's complaints about increased labor costs, those costs in fact decreased during the first years after the nationalization (\$86 per month in 1952 to \$42 in 1956).<sup>202</sup> Wage of COMIBOL's workers, adjusted for inflation, "fell by 42.5 per cent between 1950 and 1955."<sup>203</sup> Many economists point out labor indiscipline and militancy as main causes of drop in

---

<sup>198</sup> Barrios, *Let Me Speak!*, 52.

<sup>199</sup> Gómez, *La minería en el desarrollo económico de Bolivia, 1900-1970*, 122.

<sup>200</sup> Bedregal, *COMIBOL*, 238.

<sup>201</sup> Dunkerley, *Rebellion in the Veins*, 62.

<sup>202</sup> Gómez, *La minería en el desarrollo económico de Bolivia, 1900-1970*, 24, 49.

<sup>203</sup> Dunkerley, *Rebellion in the Veins*, 60.

productivity.<sup>204</sup> Production per worker in pits, however, rose from 3.91 fine tons in 1952 to 4.5 in 1956 “despite constantly falling ore content, [and] an acute shortage of equipment,” indicating that a high level of labor input was made to extract minerals.<sup>205</sup> Labor indiscipline was more a myth than a reality.

What damaged COMIBOL most stemmed from the multiple exchange rates applied to the company’s dollars. This was part of the MNR’s overall economic policy to finance development of petroleum in the eastern lowlands. COMIBOL sold its foreign exchange earnings to the BCB (*Banco Central de Bolivia*) “at rates considerably below the free-market rate.” It “exchange[d] its dollars for bolivianos at a rate of 230 in 1953, 325 in 1954, and 570 in 1955.” The market rate, however, skyrocketed from 682 to 2,979 during the same period. The dollars bought at a low rate were then transferred to the national petroleum company, YPFB (*Yacimientos Petrolíferos Fiscales de Bolivia*).<sup>206</sup> COMIBOL, in turn, purchased necessary tools and services for production at the market rate. Consequently, the gap between earnings and maintenance cost of the company infinitely increased. The MNR government virtually sacrificed COMIBOL to develop the petroleum industry. The MNR’s development policy was implemented in a way that drastically undermined the country’s largest source of exports and foreign exchange earnings. While COMIBOL paid for the development of the petroleum industry, a process that would take decades to accomplish, its mines remained undercapitalized with no investment in maintenance, mineral exploration, metallurgical research, and technological renovation.<sup>207</sup> If the MNR’s economic policy sought to diversify Bolivia’s mono-

---

<sup>204</sup> Bedregal, *COMIBOL*, 242-247; Richard S. Thorn, “The Economic Transformation,” in Malloy and Thorn, *Beyond the Revolution*, 176.

<sup>205</sup> Dunkerley, *Rebellion in the Veins*, 60.

<sup>206</sup> Thorn, “The Economic Transformation,” 173-174, 376.

<sup>207</sup> Bedregal, *COMIBOL*, 76.

export economy, its implementation seriously damaged the sector on which it relied.

Paradoxically diversification led to the decapitalization of the mining industry, which was detrimental to Bolivia's economic development. Unfortunately for COMIBOL, the drop of tin prices in foreign markets exacerbated all these problems.

The MNR moved against miners during the crisis of the mining industry. Foreign financial aid to Bolivia required the MNR to end subsidies for pulperías and freeze miners' wages. Amid the uncontrollable inflation to which its policy of multiple exchange rates contributed, the MNR accepted the conditions to obtain foreign aid in 1956, and thereby, "shifted the costs" of solving the economic crisis onto the miners and other popular sectors.<sup>208</sup> The IMF Stabilization Plan of 1956 provoked dozens of miners' strikes during the presidency of Hernán Siles Zuazo (1956-1960). The implementation of the Plan signaled the growing reliance of the revolutionary state on foreign aid, which contradicted its discourse of national sovereignty.

U.S. financial aid to Bolivia between 1956 and 1964 "amounted to \$327.7 million compared with a sum of \$76.4 million over the previous decade." Aid was further enlarged after Washington's launch of the Alliance for Progress. During 1960-1964, U.S. aid to Bolivia increased by over 600%.<sup>209</sup> Military dependence accompanied this increasing economic reliance. The U.S. was the main sponsor of the rebuilding of the Bolivian military that had been greatly reduced since 1952. U.S. military aid to Bolivia multiplied by 32 times between 1958 and 1964. "[B]y early 1964," about 90% of "senior officers of the Bolivian army" had received training from U.S. personnel.<sup>210</sup>

When Víctor Paz implemented the Triangular Plan during his second presidency (1960-

---

<sup>208</sup> Malloy and Gamarra, *Revolution and Reaction: Bolivia, 1964-1985*, 4.

<sup>209</sup> Dunkerley, *Rebellion in the Veins*, 85, 108.

<sup>210</sup> Blasier, "The United States and the Revolution," 94-95.

1964), the “revolutionary” state’s alignment with imperial as opposed to miners’ interests became even more obvious. The subsequent military regime of Barrientos furthered this trend. In 1965, the Barrientos government officially abolished co-gobierno and control obrero, enforced the third phase of the Triangular Plan, persecuted union leaders, and invaded the mines that resisted the Plan. This resulted in the assassination of union leaders, the disarming of miners’ militias, the military occupation of the mines, large-scale layoffs, and a 40-to-50% reduction in wages.<sup>211</sup> When Ernesto Che Guevara arrived in Bolivia to launch a guerrilla war in Ñancahuazú in November 1966, miners’ organization had not yet recovered from the damages caused by military violence. Yet, Guevara’s war prompted the miners to reactivate their unions. From late 1966 to mid-1967, the unions strived to regain political ground they had lost during the first two years of the military regime. After separate meetings in Catavi and Huanuni in April 1967, the FSTMB convoked a general conference (*ampliado nacional*) to discuss miners’ strategies to defeat the military dictatorship and achieve national liberation. The conference was scheduled to take place at Siglo XX on the Night of San Juan (June 23-24) in 1967. This festive night, dedicated to Pachamama (feminine force of the earth in the Andes), carried a political meaning in 1967, because it came together with miners’ struggle against the military regime and U.S. imperialism. In turn, the military regime was concerned about a possible connection between Guevara and the miners. Even if a few miners joined Guevara’s guerrilla group, an organizational link of the guerrillas to the mines did not exist.<sup>212</sup>

Eusebio Girona Cabrera, student delegate to the conference at Siglo XX, was a survivor

---

<sup>211</sup> Dunkerley, *Rebellion in the Veins*, 124-125; James M. Malloy, “Revolutionary Politics,” in Malloy and Thorn, *Beyond the Revolution*, 145-146; Malloy and Gamarra, *Revolution and Reaction*, 10-14.

<sup>212</sup> Dunkerley, *Rebellion in the Veins*, 147-149; Nash, *We Eat the Mines and the Mines Eat Us*, 125, 155, 277-278.

of the massacre perpetrated by the military in La Noche Triste. His testimony narrated in *El Coraje del Pueblo* underscores the destructive effect of U.S. imperialism on miners' unions, miners' central role in vindicating the nation, and the urgent need of students' participation in the struggle against imperialist domination and the military regime:

A partir de 1964 se inicia la ocupación cínica de los sectores estratégicos de la economía y la sociedad boliviana por parte del imperialismo norteamericano. Para la realización de este plan era fundamental la destrucción del sindicalismo boliviano y principalmente el sindicalismo minero porque los trabajadores mineros se habían convertido en una especie de defensores de la dignidad y la soberanía del país. En este sentido es que los trabajadores del subsuelo convocan un ampliado en el que debían discutirse los problemas graves que afectaban a la suerte de la nación boliviana. El ampliado convocado por mineros representaba para el gobierno militar fascista de Barrientos y principalmente para el imperialismo norteamericano un grave peligro porque allí deberían alinearse los puntos fundamentales de lucha y allí debería salir un apoyo masivo de los trabajadores y los universitarios hacia la guerrilla comandada por Che Guevara. Frente a esta situación es que los universitarios no podríamos estar en margen. Así es que nos hacemos presentes en el ampliado minero a fin de discutir con ellos toda una política de defensa de los intereses del país [From 1964 onwards, the shameless occupation of the strategic sectors of the Bolivian economy and society had been initiated by North American imperialism. In order to achieve this, the destruction of Bolivian trade unions was essential, especially miners' union, because mining workers had become a sort of defenders of the dignity and the sovereignty of the country. In this sense, underground mining workers convoked a general conference in which the grave problems affecting the fate of the Bolivian nation had to be discussed. The conference convoked by the miners represented a grave threat to the military-fascist government of Barrientos and North American imperialism because there in the conference, the fundamental points of our struggle would be proposed, and workers and students would show their massive support for the guerrillas commanded by Che Guevara. Facing this situation, we university students couldn't stand on the sidelines. Therefore, we made our presence in the general conference of miners in order to discuss with them all political issues of defense of the country's interests].<sup>213</sup>

The threat of U.S. imperialism and the protagonist role of the miners in vindicating the nation were central themes of the debate in the conference. A leader of the miners opened the conference referring to the injustice of the fascist military repression in the mines. He urged the

---

<sup>213</sup> "El Coraje del Pueblo".

miners to “remain vigilante and conscious” [*guardemos la conciencia vigilante*] as the revolutionary force against “agents of the Barrientos regime” [*los agentes del Barrientismo*].<sup>214</sup>

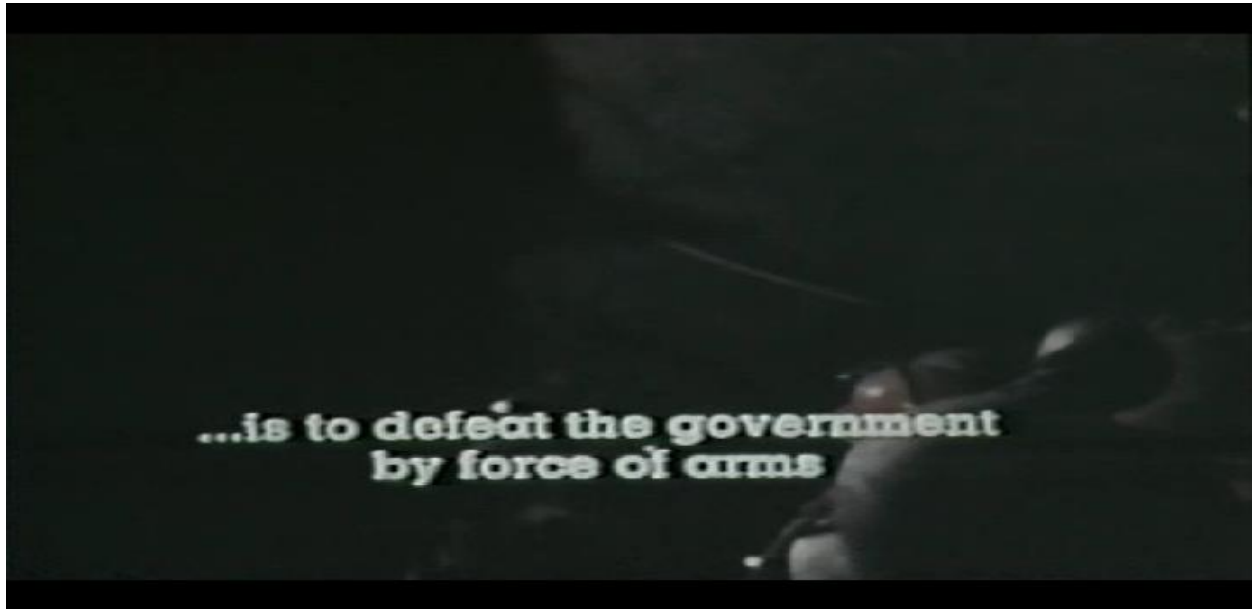
A mine worker named Reinaga emphasized that the miners and their families suffered from wage cuts whereas bureaucrats, generals, and those with power in the city were enriching themselves with huge salaries. “That’s unjust” because the miners are the ones “who produce, maintain, and sustain the national economy” [*quienes producen, quienes mantienen, quienes sustentan la economía nacional*]. Reinaga concluded his discourse by saying, “This is a work of North American imperialism” [*Este es una obra del imperialismo norteamericano*] that used “a succession of governments and their internal lackeys” [*gobiernos por turno y sus lacayos internos*] to dominate Bolivia. In response to this, the crowd of miners shouted, “Death to the military!” [*¡Mueran los militares!*] The leader of the miners affirmed Reinaga’s anti-imperialist discourse. “North American imperialism wants to subdue this country” [*El imperialismo norteamericano quiere someter a este país*] that “constitutes a strategic reserve in the Western Hemisphere on account of its tin. That’s why it’s in their interest to send the military thugs to the mining camps to dominate by force. That’s why it’s in their interest to have lackey governments in political power” [*constituye una reserva estratégica de la esfera occidental en cuanto a su estaño. Por eso tiene interés en mandar los gorilas a los campamentos mineros para dominarlos por la fuerza. Por eso tiene interés en tener gobiernos lacayos en el poder político*]. The miners responded, “Death to Yankee imperialism!” [*¡Muera el imperialismo yanqui!*]<sup>215</sup>

---

<sup>214</sup> Ibid.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid.





<Illustration 2.3> Miners applaud the proposition of armed struggle.

Another miner advocated for a cross-class alliance encompassing workers, peasants, and university students. “The working class and the Bolivian pueblo in general should show the pathway, the course to follow for the total liberation from oppression, the total liberation from exploitation” [*la clase obrera y el pueblo boliviano en general deben señalar su camino, el rumbo a seguir, compañeros trabajadores, para liberarse totalmente de opresión, para liberarse totalmente de explotación*]. This struggle was not only for the miners but also for “the peasantry” [*sector campesinado*] and “university students” [*universitarios*]. What garnered the most enthusiastic support was the suggestion of an armed struggle “to knock down...to crush the reactionary government” [*poder botar...aplantar el gobierno reaccionario*]. The conference concluded with a demand for the abolition of wage cuts, the proposition of a miner-student pact, and the proclaiming of miners’ commitment to sending economic aid to Che Guevara’s guerrillas. The miners shouted, “Long live the armed struggle! Long live Che Guevara” [*¡Viva la*

*lucha armada! ¡Viva Che Guevara!*], and “Free Bolivia? Yes! Yankee colony? No!” [*¿Bolivia libre? ¡Sí! ¿Colonia yanqui? ¡No!*]<sup>216</sup>

After the conference ended, the celebration of the Night of San Juan began. The miners danced, drank, and sang around bonfires that were lit to warm Pachamama in the cold night of winter solstice. The military began its operation against Siglo XX at 4:50 in the morning, when the fiesta was ending. Most of the miners had returned to their homes while a few stayed around the bonfires. The defenseless miners were bombarded with bazookas and machine guns. The sneaky operation killed at least eighty seven people (including children).<sup>217</sup> La Noche Triste became a main site of the collective memory of the popular struggle for the dignity and empowerment of the Bolivian pueblo. *El Coraje del Pueblo* partook in subsequent politics of memory of La Noche Triste. The film was produced and released in 1971, coinciding with the period of leftist rejuvenation under General Juan José Torres. Divergent segments of miners’ organization, the PCB, and the POR successfully pressured the Torres government (1970-1971) to open the Popular Assembly that represented an instrument of independent workers’ power vis-à-vis the state.<sup>218</sup> The Assembly, according to Zavaleta, signaled the radicalization of a populist process through which the nationalist state, personified by Torres, sought to incorporate the masses into a system of national governance. The unexpected death of Barrientos in a mysterious helicopter accident in April 1969 created a power vacuum, leading to a political crisis. Leftist organizations capitalized on the crisis to create an organ of workers. Even if the Assembly did not stand for an actual power that was parallel to and autonomous from the nationalist state, it

---

<sup>216</sup> Ibid.

<sup>217</sup> Barrios, *Let Me Speak!*, 115-117; Dunkerley, *Rebellion in the Veins*, 148-149; Nash, *We Eat the Mines and the Mines Eat Us*, 155, 278.

<sup>218</sup> Cajías, *El poder de la memoria*, 95; Dunkerley, *Rebellion in the Veins*, 188.

“function[ed] as a power” with a possibility of becoming a site for the articulation of the revolutionary force directed independently by workers.<sup>219</sup> In this political context, *El Coraje del Pueblo* made a powerful commentary upon the brutality of the military violence during La Noche Triste, which was historically connected with a longer popular struggle dating back to the time of La Rosca.

The military seized power in November 1964, arguing that it would restore the National Revolution undone by the MNR.<sup>220</sup> *El Coraje del Pueblo* defies this discourse of revolutionary restoration. The film’s revolution is opposed to a Bolivian state headed by La Rosca, the MNR and “the military thugs” in succession. A change in the political regime mattered little to miners’ revolution unless it produced workers’ power to defeat the oligarchic and military state that partook in the imperialist domination of the pueblo. The revolution of the pueblo, represented by the miners, clashed with the “revolutionary” state that signified less a departure from than a continuation of the “prerevolutionary” mining oligarchy. When the MNR sought to subsume popular revolution to its system of governance through the nationalization of the mines, its relationship to the miners showed the contradiction between state interests to retain power and radicalism rooted in the bases. This contradiction was manifest, when the MNR imposed the Stabilization Plan and the Triangular Plan, rebuilt armed forces, and deployed those forces to crush miners’ opposition to the plans. The MNR forged an alliance with the miners to take power. The alliance ended as foreign aid and the military became more important for the MNR to retain power. A nationalization accompanied by control obrero and co-gobierno definitely was a change for the miners. A reform directed by the state, however, was not identical with workers’

---

<sup>219</sup> Zavaleta, *El poder dual en América Latina*, 197.

<sup>220</sup> Dunkerley, *Rebellion in the Veins*, 122-134; Malloy and Gamarra, *Revolution and Reaction*, 9.

power that necessitated more than formal incorporation of their demands into the system of governance.<sup>221</sup> In the Bolivian context of revolution in the 1950s-1960s, that power meant a mass capacity of miners to persistently confront and undermine the oligarchic and military state that repeated the domination, exploitation and oppression by La Rosca.

The financial crisis, combined with perennial undercapitalization of the mines, compelled the MNR to align increasingly with foreign financial institutions and the U.S. To be sure, dependency does not simply mean a passive subordination of the periphery to the hegemonic core. As James F. Siekmeier underscores, the MNR recognized that Bolivia could obtain needed economic and food aid from the U.S. by using the nationalization of the mines as a bargaining chip in negotiation with the U.S. Embassy and the State Department.<sup>222</sup> The White House did not want “[a] collapse of the Bolivian economy,” which would increase a possibility of the rise of an “extreme anti-United States orientation” and a pro-Soviet current in Bolivia.<sup>223</sup> The huge imbalance of forces between Bolivia and the U.S., however, made it imperative for the former to depend on the latter to an increasing extent. MNR’s Bolivia was surely not Árbenz’s Guatemala, or Castro’s Cuba, which dared to antagonize the U.S. Empire. The MNR prioritized maintaining its power, and used an anti-imperialist and nationalist ideology of national emancipation for that purpose. The contradictions of this ideological appropriation were so obvious that miners’ alliance with the MNR rapidly broke down. Conflicts and tensions between the miners and the MNR destabilized the government since then. This antagonistic pattern of state-society relation

---

<sup>221</sup> Lora, “La clase obrera después de 1952,” 181-182; Zavaleta, *El poder dual en América Latina*, 90-96.

<sup>222</sup> James F. Siekmeier, *The Bolivian Revolution and the United States, 1952 to the Present* (The Pennsylvania University Press, 2011), 2-3, 5-9.

<sup>223</sup> “Memorandum by the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs (Mann) to the Under Secretary of State (Bruce).”

continued to define miners' engagement with the military regimes that claimed to restore the National Revolution.

### ***Peasant-State Alliance, 1953-1970***

While antagonism defined miners' relationship with the Bolivian state since the mid-1950s, the countryside became the pillar of support for the same state. This did not simply mean state manipulation of peasants who passively obeyed their caciques affiliated with powerful patrons in the government. State control over the countryside was highly susceptible to local contestations, which stemmed from land disputes, personal rivalries, conflicts over inter-communal boundaries, and factional divide within oficialista rural unions.

Rural conflicts in the Cochabamba Valley in the 1950s and 1960s illustrate the tension-laden nature of the relationship between the centralizing drive of the state and rural populations with distinct interests. The Valley was an important site for the MNR and the subsequent military regimes because it was a center of the rural insurrections in 1952-1953, which created a state of mass insurgency in the countryside. The MNR chose Ucareña (the center of the Valley's insurgency in 1952-1953) as the place to proclaim the agrarian reform signed on August 2, 1953. The rural unrest in this period was similar to that in 1946-1947 in the sense that a change in government encouraged colonos and comunarios to rebel against hacendados. Having learned that a revolution toppled the pro-hacienda government in April 9-12, 1952, colonos and comunarios seized lands by themselves, burned down hacendados' houses, and physically attacked hacendados. The countryside of Cochabamba, La Paz, and Oruro was virtually out of control from April 1952 to August 1953, while many hacendados fled to the city.<sup>224</sup> The MNR's

---

<sup>224</sup> Antezana and Romero, *Historia de los sindicatos campesinos*, 203-287.

priority at that time was the nationalization of the mines, but the intensity of the rural unrest made it impossible to leave agrarian problems aside. President Víctor Paz issued a decree to create the Agrarian Reform Commission on March 21, 1953, which notably included Communists and Trotskyites.<sup>225</sup> The establishment of the Commission, however, hardly pacified the countryside. During the second half of April 1953, a document with rebellious contents circulated with “the stamp of the *Central de Campesinos de Ucureña*.” The document warned that the “announced Agrarian Reform” would “permit” hacendados to escape “the mobilized masses,” a problem for peasants who had waged a long-term struggle to obtain justice. For them, justice meant “nationalizing lands with no compensation [for hacendados], and handing land over to peasants” [*la Nacionalización de las tierras sin indemnización y su entrega a los campesinos*].<sup>226</sup>

The document argued that agrarian liberation would not happen through the government’s commission. Instead, “land occupation” [*ocupación de tierras*] directed by “peasant masses” would lead to more legitimate “forms of emancipation” [*modalidades reivindicativas*] in the countryside. While this document was circulating in the Cochabamba Valley, some peasant leaders in the Department of Chuquisaca “proceeded with the arbitrary distribution of land” [*procedieron a la arbitraria distribución de tierras*]. This “new wave of indigenous agitation” [*nueva ola de agitación indigenal*] coincided with colonos’ sit-down strike in Pucara located in the intersection between Chuquisaca, Cochabamba, and Santa Cruz. The Chief of the Office of Peasant Affairs went to Pucara, and tried to persuade the peasants “to work for the hacienda...until the Agrarian Reform is decreed” [*trabajar para la hacienda...hasta que*

---

<sup>225</sup> Ibid, 245.

<sup>226</sup> Ibid, 251.

*se decrete la Reforma Agraria*]. The peasants responded, “We don’t want Agrarian Reform, but rather Agrarian Revolution” [*no queremos Reforma Agraria, sino queremos Revolución Agraria*].<sup>227</sup> The political force, unleashed by colonos and comunarios in 1952-1953, showed a great organizational capacity on the side of the rural masses, generating a social crisis at the national level, revealing the incapacity of the state to maintain control over society, and radicalizing the overall revolutionary politics in the countryside. Peasants disrupted the MNR government’s attempt to implement a top-down agrarian reform.

Similar to the rural unrest in 1946-1947, rural unions emerged with peasants taking the initiative in organizing themselves to raise their agrarian demands.<sup>228</sup> By May 1953, colonos in the main areas of agrarian production in Cochabamba, La Paz, and Oruro were mostly unionized.<sup>229</sup> During the following two months, these areas were sites of an intense mobilization. Local officials and newspapers reported about “imminent assault” by “indian hordes.”<sup>230</sup> While these reports often indicated agitation by “extremist” elements controlled by Communists and Trotskyites, the actual influence of the PCB and the POR in the countryside was not as strong as the MNR imagined. The PIR had mostly lost its rural bases that felt betrayed by its participation in overthrowing Villarroel. The PCB never regained these bases. Even if some peasant leaders in Ucureña, including José Rojas, the most powerful cacique of the region, were affiliated with the POR, Trotskyites did not maintain an ideological or organizational influence among the rural masses. They mobilized without a party affiliation.<sup>231</sup> Their demand for nationalization without indemnification surely resonated with the Trotskyite agrarian platform that made the exact same

---

<sup>227</sup> Ibid, 250-252.

<sup>228</sup> Ibid, 210-219.

<sup>229</sup> Antezana, *La revolución campesina en Bolivia*, 83-84.

<sup>230</sup> Antezana and Romero, *Historia de los sindicatos campesinos*, 269.

<sup>231</sup> Dunkerley, *Rebellion in the Veins*, 70-72.

demand, urging the masses to occupy lands and establish their control in the countryside. Yet, the Trotskyite advocacy for “the destruction of the regime of private property of the means of production” [*la destrucción del régimen de la propiedad privada de los medios de producción*] found little resonance among the vast majority of rural people.<sup>232</sup>

By the end of July, the Agrarian Reform Commission had almost finished its work, and would soon disclose its final proposal. Upon receiving the visit of several peasant leaders in his office, Vice President Hernán Siles clearly stated that “the agrarian reform will be carried out with indemnification” [*la reforma agraria se efectuará mediante la indemnización*], because a reform without indemnification would result in a chaotic and disorderly situation for the country.<sup>233</sup> The Agrarian Reform decreed a few days later included a provision requiring ex-colonos to pay money, or other goods to hacendados in exchange for the plots they had received. The reform was not framed in terms of the nationalization of private property but granting ownership to “those who worked the land” and creating “agrarian capitalism” based on medium sized landholdings. This was a Communist position represented by Arturo Urquidi, an ex-leader of the PIR, who played a central role in the Agrarian Reform Commission. The reform in no way called for a transition of agrarian capitalism to a socialist economy, which would have entailed a large-scale collectivization of lands, but it absorbed a key element of the Communist proposal regarding agrarian change.<sup>234</sup>

---

<sup>232</sup> “El POR llama a las masas campesinas a luchar organizadamente por la conquista de las tierras: Resolución del Ampliado del Comité Central del POR,” February 18, 1953; “Proyecto de resolución sobre la cuestión agraria presentado por el POR a la Central Obrera Boliviana,” June 1953; the two documents cited in this footnote are from Lora, *Escritos escogidos sobre el problema campesino y nacional*.

<sup>233</sup> Antezana and Bedregal, *Historia de los sindicatos campesinos*, 276.

<sup>234</sup> Dunkerley, *Rebellion in the Veins*, 72; “Programa del Partido de la Izquierda Revolucionaria.”



The Agrarian Reform also restituted communal lands usurped by hacendados. Ex-colonos became owners of the plots, on which they had worked for hacendados. The reform did not expropriate properties classified as “small and medium,” and “agricultural enterprises” mostly located in the lowland departments in the East.<sup>235</sup> The protection of agricultural enterprises signaled the reform’s goal of promoting agro-industry, meant to “modernize” agriculture, increase agrarian productivity, “generate surpluses for exportation,” and reduce Bolivia’s dependence on mineral exports.<sup>236</sup> Likewise, the reform envisioned landholding peasants as participants in a market economy with surpluses produced on their individual plots. The idea of landholding peasants drew upon the discussion on incorporation of indians into national society that had informed education policies in the countryside during the 1930s-1940s. Converting indians into productive rural producers was a major goal of the Agrarian Reform, with “productive” also meaning to turn them into Spanish-speaking citizens with modern hygiene and voting rights. The reform was, therefore, integrally tied to universal suffrage and the educational reform (1955). These reforms aimed at removing *lo indio* from *lo nacional*, to create mestizo citizens, the cultural assimilation of indians into national society.<sup>237</sup> It was a conversion of indians into peasants that perpetuated the stigmatization of *lo indígena* as an undesirable element of *lo indio*. In this sense, mestizaje reinscribed the social dominance of European descendants

---

<sup>235</sup> William E. Carter, “Revolution and the Agrarian Sector,” in Malloy and Thorn, *Beyond the Revolution*, 243-244; Dunkerley, *Rebellion in the Veins*, 72-73.

<sup>236</sup> Javier Fernández J., Pablo Pacheco B., and Juan Carlos Schulze M., *Marco de interpretación de la cuestión agraria en Bolivia* (Centro de Estudios para el Desarrollo Laboral y Agrario, 1991), 31.

<sup>237</sup> Xavier Albó, “From MNRistas to Kataristas to Katari,” in Stern, *Resistance, Rebellion, and Consciousness in the Andean Peasant World, 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries*, 382; Manuel E. Contreras, “A Comparative Perspective on Education Reforms in Bolivia: 1950-2000,” in Grindle and Domingo, *Proclaiming Revolution*, 260-267.

who continued to discriminate and deprecate rural migrants in the city and indigenous populations in the countryside.<sup>238</sup>

An increase of rural-urban migration was another important consequence of the Agrarian Reform. This stemmed largely from the fact that ex-colonos, now freed from hacienda bondage, could seasonally, or permanently migrate to commercial centers, provincial towns, and urban areas in search of extra incomes and education for their children.<sup>239</sup> Rural migratory patterns established links between the countryside and the city, by which the economic and social presence of indigenous populations in urban areas grew. As hacendados' presence declined in the countryside, *minifundio* (small landholding) prevailed in many parts of the rural altiplano. In 1963, according to Uri Mendelberg, 72% of Bolivian peasants "owned less than five hectares of land."<sup>240</sup> The MNR wanted to avoid the predominance of minifundios, which it saw as unproductive and not conducive to "agrarian modernization." A more serious obstacle to the agrarian development was the lack of equipment, manure, and seeds needed to improve productivity. Despite the MNR's promise of credits and governmental aid to peasants, this state assistance was not readily available to the majority of smallholders (*minifudistas*). The government prioritized owners of medium-sized lands and agricultural enterprises (especially those in the eastern lowlands), which it deemed to be more promising. The lack of assistance forced many smallholders to receive loans from relatives and vecinos, making smallholders ever more dependent on local power holders with more resources. However, these local power

---

<sup>238</sup> Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, "Mestizaje colonial andino: Una hipótesis de trabajo," (originally published in 1993) in Rivera Cusicanqui *Violencias (re)encubiertas en Bolivia*.

<sup>239</sup> Herbert S. Klein, "Social Change in Bolivia since 1952," in Grindle and Domingo, *Proclaiming Revolution*, 251-252; Barbara Leóns and William Leóns, "Land Reform and Economic Change in the Yungas," in Malloy and Thorn, *Beyond the Revolution*, 296.

<sup>240</sup> Mendelberg, "The Impact of the Bolivian Agrarian Reform on Class Formation," 48.

holders enriched themselves further by reinvesting capital in local commerce.<sup>241</sup> As Maria L. Lagos vividly illustrates for the Province of Tiraque in Cochabamba, smallholders' dependency perpetuated socioeconomic hierarchy between the rich and the poor in the countryside. To be sure, reciprocity structured relationships between borrowers and lenders of animals, equipment, seeds and other resources for production since borrowers and lenders were often related by kinship. Inequality, however, characterized these "reciprocal" relationships: poor peasants relied on private loans from the rich whereas the better-off purchased commodities, such as imported fertilizers, on their own.<sup>242</sup>

Anthropologists and ethnohistorians have documented various cases from the Andean countryside, where reciprocity persists as a principle of social negotiation between people who are located in different strata of the local hierarchy. Reciprocity is not identical with equality between kin groups and community members, who are bounded by mutual obligations to each other. They are socioeconomically differentiated because of their differential access to markets and resources in the Andean countryside.<sup>243</sup> After the Agrarian Reform, the Bolivian countryside reproduced inequalities linked to unequal accessibility to markets and resources. Landholding did not necessarily guarantee the empowerment of ex-colonos and comunarios as citizens entitled to cultural, political and social rights. An important question was, "What could they do with their new landholdings and formal rights won from the revolutionary state after 1952?"

---

<sup>241</sup> Ibid, 52-53.

<sup>242</sup> Maria L. Lagos, *Autonomy and Power: The Dynamics of Class and Culture in Rural Bolivia* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994), 82-86.

<sup>243</sup> Giorgio Alberti and Enrique Mayer, *Reciprocidad e intercambio en los Andes peruanos* (Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1974); César Fonseca and Enrique Mayer, *Comunidad y producción en la agricultura andina* (Asociación Peruana para el Fomento de las Ciencias Sociales, 1988); Brooke Larson and Olivia Harris with Enrique Tandeter, *Ethnicity, Markets, and Migration in the Andes: At the Crossroads of History and Anthropology* (Duke University Press, 1995).

Smallholdings and suffrage meant a significant victory in a short term for the majority of ex-colonos and comunarios. The perpetuation of the poverty of the rural majority, however, overshadowed the significance of that victory in the long-term.

The Agrarian Reform had been a product of a decades-long struggle of colonos and comunarios to achieve their emancipation from hacendados' grip and abusive local authorities. This emancipation means the elimination of the system of domination in the countryside. The Reform had not eliminated that system. The oficialista rural unions instituted in the altiplano, Northern Potosí, and the Cochabamba Valley exemplified the new structure of domination. The unions, affiliated to the newly created Ministry of Peasant Affairs, functioned as a mechanism of political control that subsumed rural organizations to the state. In the altiplano and Northern Potosí, where the communitarian organization of ayllu persisted, a union structure was added to the preexisting system of political, social and territorial control.<sup>244</sup> With the elimination of the hacienda regime, rural politics centered largely on local conflicts, involving union factions and communities. Dominant factions, connected with powerful politicians at the local, regional and national level, controlled the distribution of resources coming from governmental offices. When peasants became controlled by the state after the Agrarian Reform, what was replicated was the political divide within the governmental structures, resulting in a competition for governmental positions and favors that led different factions to fight each other. Consequently, unionist factionalism increased inter- and intra-community conflicts and rivalries. In exchange for favors received, peasants mobilized during elections and political conflicts, in which their patrons were

---

<sup>244</sup> Albó, *Desafíos de la solidaridad aymara*, 79-84; "From MNRistas to Kataristas to Katari," 383-385; Rivera Cusicanqui, *Oprimidos pero no vencidos*, 148-153.

involved. This form of “political pongueaje” testified to the “degradation” of rural politics after the Reform. The Andean countryside became “an electoral bastion of oficialismo.”<sup>245</sup>

The situation in the Cochabamba Valley was similar to the altiplano and Northern Potosí in the sense that it also became an electoral bastion after the Agrarian Reform and showed a scenario of local conflicts connected to factionalism within the government. The Valley, however, differed significantly from the altiplano and Northern Potosí in terms of demographic composition, economic structure, and social organization. In the Valley, smallholdings predominated before the Reform. The rebellions in the Valley in the 1930s-1940s did not revolve around the restitution of communal lands but the vindication of individual smallholders known as *piqueros* who had been turned into colonos and sharecroppers (*pegujaleros*) by hacendados. Differences between colonos and piqueros dated back to the mid-nineteenth century when hacendados sold plots of land to colonos to repay their debts that had resulted from declining agricultural profits. By the 1930s, colonos and piqueros constituted the majority population in the countryside of the Valley. Piqueros, considered to be mestizo, or *cholo* (a pejorative label attached to rural migrants and mestizos who exhibit indigenous cultural traits), were active participants in local commerce. Piqueros’ individual landholdings, their integration into market economy, and their fluency in Spanish distinguished them from colonos and comunarios in the altiplano and Northern Potosí, who were communally organized, prioritized productive activities in their communities, and primarily spoke Aymara or Quechua. The cholo peasant image of piqueros fit relatively well into the ideal of mestizo citizens, which the MNR promoted as an integral component of social change after the National Revolution. Even though piqueros were

---

<sup>245</sup> Rivera Cusicanqui, “Mestizaje colonial andino,” 96; “Democracia liberal y democracia del ayllu: El caso del norte de Potosí, Bolivia” (originally published in 1990) in Rivera Cusicanqui, *Violencias (re)encubiertas en Bolivia*, 148.

associated with an independent free peasantry who successfully combined commercial and subsistence activities, their meager incomes often made them indebted to hacendados and other local power holders.<sup>246</sup> The majority of them, according to Jorge Dandler, possessed parcels of land, which were smaller than those worked by a colono.<sup>247</sup> They could easily lose their “freedom” because of “debts, or a natural or personal calamity” that forced them to sell their plots and become dependent on hacendados.<sup>248</sup>

*Caciquismo* was a visible element of rural unions, many of which were associated with individual caciques.<sup>249</sup> Personal rivalries between caciques replicated the factional divide within the MNR after the Cochabamba Valley’s unions were formally subsumed to the Ministry of Peasant Affairs in the wake of the Agrarian Reform. A month after the Reform was signed, the Ministry combined all peasant unions in Cliza and Ucureña. Minister of Peasant Affairs Ñuflo Chávez Ortíz appointed the cacique of Ucureña, José Rojas, as the general secretary of the regional union that brought together all peasant organizations in Cliza-Ucureña.<sup>250</sup> Rojas was, according to James V. Kohl, “a legend in his own time.” He fought in Chaco War during which he was captured by the Paraguayan army. He spent thirty months in a prison camp in Paraguay. After he was repatriated following the Peace Treaty of 1935, he played a leading role in unionizing colonos of hacienda Santa Ana and the creation of a rural school in Ucureña. Persecution by hacendados led to his imprisonment by local authorities and his deportation to

---

<sup>246</sup> Dandler, “La ‘Ch’ampa Guerra’ de Cochabamba,” 256-257; Kohl, “The Cliza and Ucureña War,” 613; Lagos, *Autonomy and Power*, 28-29; Larson, *Cochabamba, 1550-1900*, 305-321; Rivera Cusicanqui, *Oprimidos pero no vencidos*, 145.

<sup>247</sup> Dandler, “La ‘Ch’ampa Guerra’ de Cochabamba,” 257.

<sup>248</sup> Larson, *Cochabamba, 1550-1900*, 315.

<sup>249</sup> Caciquismo is a form of local governance by charismatic strongmen. Caciques rely on clientelism and their personal charisma to control people. They are usually connected to political bosses in higher echelons of government, to whom they are in turn subordinate.

<sup>250</sup> Antezana and Romero, *Historia de los sindicatos campesinos*, 302.

Argentina. He returned to Ucureña following the MNR's seizure of power, and assumed the leadership for the region's peasants mobilizing against hacendados.<sup>251</sup> This life trajectory made him an epitome of peasant struggle to the eyes of colonos, pegujaleros, and piqueros in the Valley.

Rojas's cooptation into the MNR signaled his break with the POR with which he had been affiliated. While he became the leader of oficialismo in Cliza-Ucureña with support of the Ministry of Peasant Affairs, his control over the region was only partial. Unions in Cliza mostly aligned with Sinforoso Rivas, a former miner of Catavi, who competed with Rojas over union leadership in Cliza-Ucureña. Even though Rojas consolidated his position as the most powerful cacique in the Cochabamba Valley by the late 1950s, Cliza largely remained beyond his control. Cliza's opposition to his leadership continued, when President Hernán Siles appointed him as the Minister of Peasant Affairs in 1959. From 1953 to 1959, the conflict between Cliza and Ucureña was endemic, and rendered the political climate of the Valley highly unstable.<sup>252</sup>

This conflict was part of the changing social structure after the Agrarian Reform. The distribution of hacienda lands to ex-colonos did not necessarily mean that ex-colonos became independent smallholders and that they could profitably trade their surpluses in local and regional markets. They had to compete with piqueros who had better consolidated their landholdings and had already been integrated into a market economy. Combined with an increased rural-urban migration that enhanced the degree of economic and social links between the countryside and the city, the incorporation of ex-colonos into the Valley's commercial

---

<sup>251</sup> Kohl, "The Cliza and Ucureña War," 612-613.

<sup>252</sup> Dandler, "La 'Ch'ampa Guerra' de Cochabamba," 254-255; Kohl, "The Cliza and Ucureña War," 612-616; Rivera Cusicanqui, *Oprimidos pero no vencidos*, 145-146.

economy accelerated “the restructuring of the mercantile space” of the region, which shaped patterns of socioeconomic differentiation among and between ex-colonos and piqueros.<sup>253</sup>

Unions of Ucureña were, according to Dandler, composed predominantly of ex-colonos whereas those of Cliza had a higher presence of piqueros.<sup>254</sup> This distinction should not lead to a simplistic assumption of the Cliza-Ucureña conflict being a fight between two peasant classes with differential landholdings. Some piqueros had surely established themselves as a relatively wealthy peasantry. Others were in a precarious economic situation because of meager incomes, which rendered their property holdings insecure amid the competition with vecinos and ex-colonos. The breakup of hacienda lands had not directly benefited them since its main beneficiaries were ex-colonos. An image of class conflict between rich and poor peasants, therefore, hardly corresponded to the union fight in Cliza-Ucureña.<sup>255</sup> Even if the internal differentiation among peasants resulted in a conflict between ex-colonos and piqueros, one should look at this conflict less as a direct cause of a political divide than as an element of tension-laden relationships between different fractions of a regional society. A relevant question here is, “How were those relationships tied into political rivalries in Cliza and Ucureña, which revolved around competition over union control?”

If rural unions of oficialismo functioned as an institutional channel of distribution of clientelistic favors from the state to peasants, their control meant a political power to decide upon who would receive and be excluded from those favors in a local society. Favors distributed in forms of equipment, manure, seed, school, and paved roads were much needed for peasants to produce surpluses and trade more profitably in the market economy. Peasants competed with

---

<sup>253</sup> Ibid, 147.

<sup>254</sup> Dandler, “La ‘Ch’ampa Guerra’ de Cochabamba,” 257.

<sup>255</sup> Ibid, 256-257.



each other to obtain those resources, available only to a limited number of people. The Cochabamba Valley was not an exception to this general pattern of inter-peasant competition. Union rivalry was entangled in the preexisting inter- and intra-community conflicts and tensions in the altiplano and Northern Potosí. In the Valley, unions became a principal site of political contention that embroiled different peasant groups with each other. Peasants, emancipated from hacendados, now found themselves dependent on their caciques favored by political bosses in higher echelons of government.<sup>256</sup> This dependency made any officialista propaganda about peasant emancipation and revolutionary change in the countryside absurd and paradoxical, if not meaningless.

Peasant subordination to unionist clientelism of the state did not mean that rural populations were passive objects of clientelistic control. The Cliza-Ucureña conflict blatantly revealed the capacity of rural groups to undermine the state's project geared toward establishing a stable order in the countryside. In late 1959, the conflict entered a violent phase that entailed large-scale mobilizations of peasants under the banner of inter-conflicting factions led by José Rojas and his new rival, Miguel Veizaga. Veizaga rapidly arose as the most powerful cacique in Cliza since the beginning of 1959, thanks to support of Wálter Guevara Arze, one of the founding members and ideological architects of the MNR, who had parted with Hernán Siles and Víctor Paz. The party had nominated Juan Lechín as Paz's running mate for the presidential election in 1960. Guevara believed that one of the candidacies should have been his. He left the party, formed the MNRA (*Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario Auténtico*), and vied for the presidency against his old party. Rural votes were indispensable for any candidate to win the election; peasants constituted the absolute majority of the electorate after universal suffrage was

---

<sup>256</sup> Albó, *Achacachi, medio siglo de lucha*; Harris and Albó, *Monteras y guardatojos*, 73-90.

decreed in 1952.<sup>257</sup> One can extrapolate the demographic weight of the countryside from the fact that “[o]ver 72 percent of the economically active population worked in agriculture,” according to the 1950 census.<sup>258</sup> As Guevara attempted to establish his own clientelistic networks in the countryside, he turned to areas of high demographic concentration, such as the Cochabamba Valley. In the congress of the *Federación Departamental de Campesinos de Cochabamba*, which took place in April 1959, Rojas defeated Veizaga who ran for the position of the executive secretary with Guevara’s support. Even though oficialistas represented by Rojas prevailed in Congress, the opposition led by Veizaga successfully infiltrated several provincial unions. By early January, Veizaga claimed support of various towns, including Aiquile, Ansaldo Arque, Ayopaya, Mizque, Quillacollo, Tarata, and parts of Arani, Punata, and Sacaba.<sup>259</sup>

The challenge of Veizaga’s faction posed a significant threat to oficialismo in the Cochabamba Valley. Veizaga aligned with miners of Huanuni, who were confronting the Siles government. In the Huanuni union elections of December 1959, oficialista leadership was removed from power. 120 armed men commanded by oficialistas assaulted the union office on January 22, 1960. The miners calling for union autonomy fought back and defeated oficialistas.<sup>260</sup> Amid confrontations, Huanuni’s unions signed “a mutual defense pact” with peasants led by Veizaga, countering the oficialista miner-peasant alliance that had been forged between Rojas’s peasants on the one hand, and unions of Colquiri, Japo and Morococala on the other in March 1959.<sup>261</sup> In the context of the tension-laden political climate in the mines since

---

<sup>257</sup> Dandler, “La ‘Ch’ampa Guerra’ de Cochabamba,” 259-260; Kohl, “The Cliza and Ucureña War,” 615-616.

<sup>258</sup> Dunkerley, *Rebellion in the Veins*, 5.

<sup>259</sup> Dandler, “La ‘Ch’ampa Guerra’ de Cochabamba,” 260; Kohl, “The Cliza and Ucureña War,” 617.

<sup>260</sup> Cajías, *El poder de la memoria*, 243-246; Dunkerley, *Rebellion in the Veins*, 98-99.

<sup>261</sup> Kohl, “The Cliza and Ucureña War,” 617-618.

the promulgation of the Stabilization Plan in 1956, a peasant alliance with the miners opposed to the government was not a propitious sign for the Siles administration. As Kohl notes, peasant politics in the Valley in the 1950s transcended parochial local interests that were confined by clientelistic machinations controlled by political bosses at the higher level. During the Cliza-Ucureña conflict, caciques of different factions sent their representatives to “mining centers of Oruro and Potosí” to obtain “arms and munitions.” Víctor Paz and Wálter Guevara mediated a truce between different caciques in March 1960 but to no avail. By May of that year, the conflict became like a real warfare that included “extensive entrenchment” and hundreds of peasants armed with automatic weapons, and explosives.” This happened despite the military occupation of the Valley. Some armed peasants “burst out of the military zone and into northern Potosí.”<sup>262</sup>

The Cliza-Ucureña conflict in 1959-1960 was an exemplary case for political scientists, such as James M. Malloy, to argue about “deflation of national power,” which indicated the decomposition of the governing capacity of the MNR from the Siles administration to the military coup in 1964. It might be tempting to argue that Bolivia “reverted to ‘lower’ forms of organization” with “[e]ffective decision-making power” being “localized and/or segmented” during this period.<sup>263</sup> The lack of central control was indeed blatantly visible: local conflicts were destabilizing the rule of the state not only in the Cochabamba Valley but also in Achakachi and Oruro; and miners of Catavi and Siglo XX were vehemently confronting the national government. It is, however, necessary to recognize that state governance always entails tension-laden processes of contestation and negotiation between governing groups and divergent popular

---

<sup>262</sup> Ibid, 617-621.

<sup>263</sup> Malloy, *Bolivia*, 246-247.

actors.<sup>264</sup> The central question should not be whether and how the former impose control upon the latter, but rather, how interactions between the two sides shape state-society relations that are contingent on local responses to changes produced in high politics and governing institutions. In the Valley during 1959-1960, a local response to power struggle at the national level led to the rise of a cacique (Veizaga), whose conflict with Rojas (the old power holder) generated its own dynamics of political action and reaction in the region. To be sure, this did not displace the system of rural unions subsumed under the state. The rural forces led by caciques remained within the domains of state governance even as peasants frequently disobeyed and ignored governmental authorities. If the peasant mobilization during the Cliza-Ucureña conflict undermined the rule of the state in the Valley, this did not lead to a popular rejection of the MNR. Yet, the conflict showed that popular forces continued to pose a significant challenge to the state after they had been coopted. While the countryside was not a site of anti-government mobilization during the most part of the rule of the MNR and the subsequent military regime of Barrientos, it hardly represented an orderly rule of the revolutionary state.

Soon after Víctor Paz won the election in early June 1960, Veizaga submitted to the president-elect, renounced his affiliation with the MNRA, and returned to the MNR.<sup>265</sup> As he affirmed his subordination to the MNR, *antioficialismo* in the Cochabamba Valley dissipated. Still, this did not put an end to the conflict in the region as Rojas demanded legal prosecution of Veizaga. Paz and Siles believed that prosecution would only perpetuate the conflict by provoking Veizaga's group to rebel but the government's attempt to reconcile the opposing groups failed. On August 29, 1960, Rojas announced his plan to mobilize "his" peasants and siege the city of

---

<sup>264</sup> Laurence Whitehead, "The Bolivian National Revolution: A Twenty-First Century Perspective," in Grindle and Domingo, *Proclaiming Revolution*, 51.

<sup>265</sup> Kohl, "The Cliza and Ucureña War," 623.

Cochabamba. A week later, the government yielded to his demand, and dispatched one hundred carabineers to arrest Veizaga but Veizaga successfully escaped, and returned to Cliza in November to lead the town's unions against his rivals. A violent clash between carabineers and Cliza's peasants ensued, resulting in more than fifty deaths. While Rojas and Veizaga signed a Pacification Pact on December 17, 1960, the feud between unions of Cliza and Ucureña persisted.<sup>266</sup> A number of unions aligned with Juan Lechín, who sought to establish his own rural base for his presidential bid in 1964. Their feud with those allied with Paz continued to provoke violent actions on both sides. Perennial disorder, created by this conflict, compelled the government to increasingly rely on the military to pacify the region. General Barrientos, the commander in the pacification mission, emerged as the man who was able to maintain order in the region. His influence in the government increased as the military assumed an important role in pacifying intractable peasants, which enabled him to challenge Paz.<sup>267</sup>

The Valley would remain Barrientos's main support base after he overthrew Paz on November 4, 1964. In 1966, the alliance between the region's peasants and the general's government was formalized through the "Military-Peasant Pact" that was renewed every year. The Pact replaced the MNR's clientelism by a military strongman's personalistic leadership. Consequently, the massive force of rural subversion unleashed in 1952-1953 had "found itself...deteriorated" and upheld a military regime that brutally repressed and massacred the miners and other popular sectors.<sup>268</sup> The authoritarian and clientelistic rule of the military state contradicted the project of peasant emancipation for which rural populations had risen up during the time of the hacienda regime, a contradiction that did not prevent peasants from aligning with

---

<sup>266</sup> Ibid, 624-626.

<sup>267</sup> Dandler, "La 'Ch'ampa Guerra' de Cochabamba," 264-268.

<sup>268</sup> Ibid, 270.

the state in the 1960s. Conflicts became manifest in the 1970s, when the state instituted by the Military-Peasant Pact dissipated amid the increasing radicalization of rural unions under the ideological influence of Indianism and Katarism.

### ***Conclusion: A Permanent Disorder***

Referring to Bolivian political history since the National Revolution, James Dunkerley asked in 1984, “[I]f disorder is so prevalent, might it be order itself? Could there not be a system in the chaos? Should it not be understood less as interruption than continuity?”<sup>269</sup> These questions invite one to look at chaos and disorder in Bolivian politics in terms of their own dynamics to generate particular patterns of political relations that have shaped the country’s history. Even if one can talk about the absence of a hegemonic state with a capacity to produce an ideological consensus, or “a common...framework” to structure contentious politics of *lo nacional* in Bolivia after 1952, it is indispensable to recognize that the state is not the sole locus of order.<sup>270</sup> If a revolutionary regime undertakes reforms to change society in an orderly transformation from the *Ancien Régime*, it has to come to terms with different interest groups that have struggled against the old system in their own terms. During the 1950s and 1960s, Bolivia’s revolutionary regime had to deal with militant miners and large rural masses, capable of destabilizing any semblance of order in the mines and the countryside. The revolutionary state subsumed popular demands by nationalizing the mines, abolishing pongueaje, distributing lands,

---

<sup>269</sup> Dunkerley, *Rebellion in the Veins*, xi.

<sup>270</sup> Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* ed. Quintin Horace and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (International Publishers, 1971), 12-13; William Roseberry, “Hegemony and the Language of Contention,” in Gilbert Michael Joseph and Daniel Nugent, *Everyday Forms of State Formation: Revolution and the Negotiation of Rule in Modern Mexico* (Duke University Press, 1994), 361, 365.

enfranchising the masses, and expanding public education. These reforms aimed to establish a stable system of governance, but they unmistakably failed to achieve their goal. What makes a revolution is not equivalent to a new system of governance, but the broader process of political mobilization that discloses the unjust nature of existing social order and that entails a mass movement against injustice. Regime change and institutional reforms can be products of that process. Yet, they do not constitute a revolution in and by themselves.

It might be tempting to judge the National Revolution as an “uncompleted revolution.”<sup>271</sup> However, what was the revolution that was to be “completed?” Colonos, comunarios, and the miners initiated their struggles before the MNR formulated its Revolutionary Nationalism that absorbed a substantial part of the PIR’s programs of agrarian change and the leftist demand of nationalization of the mines. Colonos, comunarios and the miners critically shaped the process that became the National Revolution. Their project of self-emancipation was not rooted in the MNR’s abstract notion of *lo nacional* but in concrete experiences of exploitation at haciendas and the mines, and their longstanding struggle against the system of oppression that directly affected them. One can define social revolution as a “rapid, basic transformation of a society’s state and class structure,” which is “accompanied and in part carried through by class-based revolts from below.”<sup>272</sup> However, the revolting masses do not necessarily align with the supposed revolutionary state. A critical question here is not “How does the revolution incorporate those masses?” but “How do divergent popular responses define political and social processes that unfold following their own logics of action, confrontation, mobilization, negotiation and contestation?”

---

<sup>271</sup> Malloy, *Bolivia*.

<sup>272</sup> Theda Skocpol, *State and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, and China* (Cambridge University Press, 1979), 4.

In the political scenario determined by the mass mobilizations of colonos, comunarios and the miners from the 1940s to the early 1950s, the decisive actor was not a revolutionary party that wanted an orderly transformation of Bolivian society. The game changers were the popular bases that ceaselessly disrupted, sabotaged, and undermined oppressive systems by strikes, physical attacks on haciendas, and occupation of lands and mining facilities. These revolutionary actions clashed with the MNR as they caused disorder in the mines and the countryside. Co-gobierno, control obrero, and rural unions were mechanisms by which the MNR tried to incorporate the miners and peasants into its revolution, thus attenuating the revolutionary push of the popular bases. In this sense, the National Revolution did not differ from other state-centered revolutionary projects in Latin America, which co-opted select popular sectors into the system of state governance. As those projects did, the National Revolution created its own hierarchical order and reproduced vices of the old regime: clientelism, corruption, racism, and by November 1964, violent military authoritarianism. Unlike the Cuban and Mexican cases, where revolutionary parties stayed in power for long periods of time, Bolivia's revolutionary politics from the 1940s onwards were mass actions in the countryside and the mines, which destabilized state governance and made turbulent conflict a permanent trait of state-society relations.<sup>273</sup> The

---

<sup>273</sup> John Mason Hart, *Revolutionary Mexico: The Coming and Process of the Mexican Revolution* (University of California Press, 1997 [1987]); Jocelyn H. Olcott, *Revolutionary Women in Postrevolutionary Mexico* (Duke University Press, 2006); Marifeli Pérez-Stable, *The Cuban Revolution: Origins, Course, and Legacy* (Oxford University Press, 1998); Lois M. Smith and Alfred Padula, *Sex and Revolution: Women in Socialist Cuba* (Oxford University Press, 1996). In even relatively successful cases of revolutionary state-building, concrete meanings of the revolution stem from local experiences rooted in history of a particular locality and region. See, Ana María Alonso, *Thread of Blood: Colonialism, Revolution, and Gender on Mexico's Northern Frontier* (The University of Arizona Press, 1995); Joseph and Nugent, *Everyday Forms of State Formation*; Daniel Nugent, *Spent Cartridges of Revolution: An Anthropological History of Namiqipa, Chihuahua* (The University of Chicago Press, 1994); Mary Kay Vaughan, *Cultural Politics in Revolution: Teachers, Peasants, and Schools in Mexico, 1930-1940* (The University of Arizona Press, 1997).



MNR seized power amid the political crisis generated by mass mobilization to become one more actor in Bolivia's revolutionary politics, where the state's position was constantly challenged by "intractable" bases.

The political situation in the mid-1960s was disheartening to many leftist and nationalist intellectuals who saw in popular mobilizations of the 1940s and 1950s a possibility of revolutionary transformation: the mines had been occupied by the military and the countryside had been co-opted by the Military-Peasant Pact. The resurgence of miners' militancy following the death of Barrientos in 1969 and the rise of radical Aymara-Quechua movements in the 1970s would change this once more.

## Chapter 3

### Indianism and Katarism: Aymara-Quechua Radicalism

*Yawar Fiesta*, a novel by José María Arguedas, illustrates an intercultural relationship structured by a system of domination rooted in the colonial divide between European descendants and indians. Principal characters in the novel are *gamonales* (local landowners) and indians around Puquio in the Peruvian Andes. The colonial divide in the novel does not replicate the Manichean line of the opposition between all-oppressive hacendados and totally victimized indians, which is a typical element of indigenista literature in the Andes.<sup>274</sup> In the novel, gamonales align with indians against the national government that seeks to prohibit “bullfights without [professionally] trained bullfighters.”<sup>275</sup> This prohibition creates a conflict in Puquio, where a festive bullfight known as *turupukllay* has been celebrated in the anniversary of the founding of Peru on July 28. The gamonales headed by Pancho Juménez fiercely oppose the government’s imposition of the prohibition whereas those in favor of the elimination of *turupukllay* believe that the new form of professional bullfight would remove Puquio’s “barbaric” tradition. Pancho responds to the subprefecto of Lucanas, who has decided to implement the prohibition:

I tell you, Señor Subpre, the Indians are the town, the real Puquio...Up here in the highlands, holidays of all kinds, where they be saints’ days or national ones, belong to the Indians. The townsmen might be loaded with money; they might tear the Indians’ hearts out. But if there’s a fiesta in the town, it’s the *ayllus*’!...That’s how life is in the highlands.<sup>276</sup>

---

<sup>274</sup> Ciro Alegría, *El mundo es ancho y ajeno* (Merlin Press, 1983 [1945]); Alcides Arguedas, *Raza de bronce* (Editores Gisbert & Cía S.A., 1979 [1919]); Jorge Icaza, *Huasiyungo* (Stockcero, 2009 [1934]); Clorinda Matto de Turner, *Aves sin nido* (Stockcero, 2004 [1889]); Manuel Scorza, *Redoble por Rancas* (Penguin Books, 1997 [1970]).

<sup>275</sup> José María Arguedas, *Yawar Fiesta* tran. Frances Horning Barracough (University of Texas Press, 1985 [1941]), 36.

<sup>276</sup> *Ibid.*, 53-54.

For those seeking to “modernize” Puquio, turupukllay exemplifies backward remnants of the premodern past. In this context, modernization signifies cultural progress achieved along a linear trajectory of civilizational development that should be guided by a modern state with a progressive vision of social change. Turupukllay, as described in *Yawar Fiesta*, entails explosion of a dynamite that kills the bull. In the process, many participants are injured and some are even killed. The Peruvian state promises cultural progress as it prohibits turupukllay that purportedly symbolizes barbaric indian culture. The prohibition provokes hierarchically related local actors, gamonales and indians, in Puquio to form an alliance in defense of their cultural tradition.

To be sure, *Yawar Fiesta* does not offer a narrative about a harmonious reconciliation between gamonales and indians. The exploitative nature of the former’s domination over the latter is hardly invisible in the novel. In the words of the subprefecto, gamonales “chew coca” like indians while at the same time, they “skin the Indians alive” as “the landowning exploiters.” Culturally they share something with indians, whom they exploit and abuse. The intercultural relationship between gamonales and indians in *Yawar Fiesta* is laden with a contradiction that perpetuates social domination rooted in the colonial divide along ethnic lines. The existing power relations structure the interaction between the two groups, replicating the tensions between indians and descendants of European invaders.

A similar tension is present in Argueda’s later novel *Todas las sangres* (*All Bloods*), which shows an alliance between Bruno (a son of a hacendado) and Rendón Willka (a rural migrant who has been recently rehabilitated into his community) in the Andean town of San Pedro de Lahuaymarca. Bruno and Rendón are in alliance to confront the capitalist modernization represented by the U.S. mining consortium with which Bruno’s elder brother, Fermín, collaborates. Bruno, according to Misha Kokotovic, aligns with indians to defend “a

regional culture rooted in indigenous Andean traditions against a modernization imposed from outside.” Bruno’s vision of authentic traditional order rests on the “idealiz[ation]” of the “past,” when he believes gamonales ruled as benevolent patrons of indians. This paternalistic vision conflicts with Rendón’s idea of indigenous modernity based on communal collectivism that antagonizes domination by gamonales. The gamonal-indian alliance becomes possible as Rendón’s interest in defending his community coincides with Bruno’s “benevolent authoritarianism” that allegedly protects indians from foreign capital.<sup>277</sup> Actual contents of Bruno’s project, however, place a supposedly benign patron at the top of the social hierarchy and replicate the hierarchical relationship between gamonales and indians.

Toward the end of *Todas las sangres*, Bruno kills Lucas, one of the oppressive gamonales. Before dying, Lucas sees “in Bruno’s eyes...what indians used to talk about: *yawar mayu*, a river of blood” [*En los ojos de don Bruno había un río de sangre; el yawar mayu del que hablaban los indios*]. Through his act of justice against an oppressive gamonal, Bruno is united with the Andean force symbolized by the river of blood (*yawar mayu*). After killing Lucas, Bruno fatally wounds Fermín, another symbol of oppression and consequently is imprisoned in the provincial jail. Afterward Rendón gathers Bruno’s colonos and tells them, “The river and the will of the patron separated us before; now the river and the will of the patron have united our lives” [*Antes, el río y la voluntad del patrón nos separaban; ahora el río y la voluntad del patrón han unido nuestras vidas*]. Vicenta, Bruno’s wife, declares that the colonos are free. Affirming the union between Bruno and his indians, Rendón proclaims, “Now we are a great community” [*Ahora somos comunidad grande*]. Troops dispatched by the government soon

---

<sup>277</sup> Misha Kokotovic, *The Colonial Divide in Peruvian Narrative: Social Conflict and Transculturation* (Sussex Academic Press, 2005), 105.

capture and execute Rendón. Because of this, it is unclear whether the freedom won by the colonos after Bruno's union with yawar mayu has enabled them to actually exercise freedom. Nevertheless, throughout *Todas las sangres*, Arguedas clearly indicates his belief in the persistent force of the indigenous Andean community, which remains vital despite colonial violence. As Rendón says in Quechua before being executed, "flowers" of *pisonay* (a type of native Andean tree that is a metaphor for *lo indio* in this context) "will grow and spread eternally" [*El pisonay...derramará sus flores por la eternidad de la eternidad*]. His death does not signify the death of the indigenous collectivism he represents. As he dies, the major characters of *Todas las sangres*, including Bruno in prison and Fermín and his wife Matilde, hear a fearful sound that is like "the mountain's walk" [*las montañas empezaran a caminar*] or "a growing subterranean river" [*un río subterráneo empezara su creciente*]. Adalberto, one of the gamonales antagonized by the colonos, is listening to that sound on the peak of a mountain. The novel ends as he utters, "Those indians headed by Rendón have chilled me. I think they have chilled me forever" [*Me han enfriado esos indios amaestrados por el Rendón. Creo que me han enfriado para siempre*].<sup>278</sup>

Indianism and Katarism, analyzed by this chapter, were similar to the collective force of *lo indio* represented by *Todas las sangres*. They were main expressions of an Aymara-Quechua politics that, like yawar mayu flowing with a chilly and fearsome sound, unleashed powerful force of a social change. Indianists and Katarists in Bolivia vehemently challenged the colonial divide in their spheres of ethno-politics, critically questioning the revolutionary projects implemented by the Bolivian state since 1952. Indianism and Katarism emerged as ideological

---

<sup>278</sup> José María Arguedas, *Todas las sangres* (Editorial Horizonte, 2014 [1964]), 439, 458, 472, 477-478.

projects of Indian, or Aymara-Quechua emancipation from the colonial state during the 1960s-1970s. Although the National Revolution entitled indigenous populations to educational, land, political and voting rights, those racialized as indian had to face a harsh reality in which they continued to be discriminated because of their skin color, Aymara or Quechua surname, and other cultural elements associated with *lo indio*. Their incorporation into national society surely increased their contact with European descendants on a greater scale but never produced a harmonious coexistence of the two groups. The perpetuation of the colonial divide undermined the notion that the National Revolution had liberated indians, converted them into mestizo peasants, and opened a new era for Bolivia. While leftist ideologues, intellectuals and militants persistently confronted the limits of the Revolution, an ethnicity-centered politics arose as an ideological alternative to miners' unions and political parties of the left.<sup>279</sup>

The chapter delves into how Indianism and Katarism revealed colonial dimensions of the Bolivian state. It analyzes writings of Fausto Reinaga who is known as “the father of Indianism” and “the Fanon in the Andes.”<sup>280</sup> It shows how Reinaga's works during the 1960s laid the discursive and ideological foundation for the Aymara-centered politics of decolonization and emancipation, which arose in Bolivia during the 1970s. It illustrates how Katarism as a militant peasant unionism of the altiplano emerged out of the ideological and political milieu created by Indianist movements in the 1960s and 1970s. It examines the dialogue between Indianism and Katarism, disclosing divergent positions of Aymara and Quechua ideologues and militants regarding their relations to leftist parties, the state, and trade unions. It looks into how Katarists

---

<sup>279</sup> Hurtado, *El Katarismo*; Lora, “La clase obrera de 1952”; Reinaga, *La Revolución India*; Zavaleta, *El poder dual en América Latina*.

<sup>280</sup> Jose Antonio Lucero, “Fanon in the Andes: Fausto Reinaga, Indianismo, and the Black Atlantic,” *International Journal of Critical Indigenous Studies* 1, 1 (2008).

negotiated and clashed with the state in their effort to organize Andean peasants under autonomous unions. Indianists maintained a separatist strategy vis-à-vis the Bolivian state, which according to them, represented an illegitimate system of colonial oppression imposed upon colonized Indians. Yet, this chapter shows how Reinaga's Indianism resulted from his engagement with Revolutionary Nationalism. It argues that the colonial nature of the Bolivian state criticized by Indianism and Katarism was a foundational contradiction of Bolivia as a nation-state that had formally incorporated the indigenous majority as its citizens without eliminating the colonial hierarchy between European descendants and Indians.

### ***Cracks in State Control in the Countryside***

During the second administration of Víctor Paz, the U.S. sponsored a civic action program as it did in many other Latin American countries in the 1950s and 1960s. Under the program, soldiers labored in the countryside in order to assist rural development projects, such as clearing land and construction of roads and schools. The Barrientos government continued this program while it increased its education expenditures from 14.7% of government spending in 1964 to 21% in 1965. The percentage reached 33% by 1968. According to Melvin Burke and Malloy, the military regime also sponsored a “number of educational and human resource studies” mostly with U.S. aid.<sup>281</sup> Expanded public education was designed as a tool to teach peasants to speak “correct” Spanish, be loyal to the patria, and conform to sociocultural normativity defined in terms of mestizaje. This social engineering upheld the patron-client relationship established between the military regime and peasants through the Military-Peasant

---

<sup>281</sup> Melvin Burke and James M. Malloy, “From National Populism to National Corporatism: The Case of Bolivia (1952-1970),” *Studies in Comparative International Development* 9 (1974): 64; Malloy and Thorn, *Beyond the Revolution*, 388.

Pact. The military created an image of itself as an agent of rural change and the guide for peasants to overcome their backwardness and underdevelopment. Barrientos “spoke Quechua, drank *chicha* beer, hopped to any corner of the countryside in his helicopter, lavished small gifts,” appointed “loyal peasants” to “official posts,” and instituted “the Armed Forces’ Civic Action and Community Development Program.” Paternalistically subsuming peasants to his regime, he represented himself as “the supreme leader of the peasantry.”<sup>282</sup>

The Military-Peasant Pact ruptured in the late 1960s. This rupture occurred when the *Bloque Independiente Campesino* and the CORB (*Confederación de Obreros Rurales de Bolivia*) defied the new agrarian tax, which Barrientos sought to implement following the suggestion by U.S. fiscal advisors. The new tax was to be imposed on peasants who had consolidated their land title granted by the Agrarian Reform. Specific details of the agrarian tax were yet to be elaborated. Yet, it provoked strong protests throughout the countryside, especially in La Paz and Oruro, once the government announced it in 1968. It was a hot topic of debate during the national conference of the CNTCB (*Confederación Nacional de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia*) in December 1968.<sup>283</sup> The *Bloque* and the CORB represented the opposition that was strongly expressed during the conference. In its founding document released in February 1969, the CORB characterized the CNTCB as “a representative organism of the interests of old patrons and the new rich landowners...which defends none of the interests of rural workers whatsoever” [*un organismo representante de los intereses de los viejos patronos y de los nuevos ricos de la tierra, y que no defiende ningún interés de los obreros rurales*]. The CORB attacked large eastern lowlands landholders, whose holdings were classified as agrarian enterprises, and

---

<sup>282</sup> Albó, “From MNRistas to Kataristas to Katari,” 386.

<sup>283</sup> Ibid, 388.



therefore, were not subject to land distribution. These landholders were “the new rich landowners” to which the CORB’s founding document referred. The “principal objective of the CORB” [*Objetivo principal de la CORB*], according to the document, was “to struggle for the conquest of the broader democratic goals of Bolivian agriculture” [*luchar por la conquista de las más amplias metas democráticas para la agricultura boliviana*]—goals which should ensure genuine economic and social development for the rural majority. The new agrarian tax was detrimental to Bolivian agriculture because it put additional burdens on small peasants, whose meager incomes from small parcels of land were hardly a stable source of income. The CORB, therefore, suggested that the government wanted to increase its fiscal incomes by imposing more taxes on poor peasants.<sup>284</sup>

Despite an upwelling of these dissenting voices in the countryside, the majority of peasants continued to align with the military regime. Even though the *Bloque* became affiliated with the COB and established contact with student groups in the city, its influence on the rural masses was limited. It functioned more as the “peasant voice” of leftist groups in the city than as “an organic representative of the [rural] masses.” Aside from the *Bloque* and the CORB, the left organized migrant workers in the tropical forests, which were sparsely populated by small indigenous communities. The communities’ territories had been subject to colonization by increasing numbers of settlers after the Agrarian Reform. Settlements of Andean migrants coexisted with a small number of ranches. Ranchers exploited migrant workers in a way that was similar to the abusive mode of labor exploitation in haciendas before the Reform. Seizing several ranches in 1969 and 1970, militants of the PCML (*Partido Comunista Marxista Leninista*) brought migrant workers in Santa Cruz into a number of trade unions, such as the UCAPO

---

<sup>284</sup> Antezana, *La revolución campesina en Bolivia*, 101-102.

(*Unión de Campesinos Pobres*). In February 1971, these settler peasant unions coalesced into the *Federación Nacional de Colonizadores*, which participated in the Popular Assembly. The Assembly invited only small groups of peasants, such as the *Bloque*, the CORB, and the *Federación de Colonizadores*, who were under leftist influence.<sup>285</sup> The small number of seats assigned to rural delegates attested to the nominal nature of peasant representation in the Assembly. Of the 218 delegates to the Assembly, only 23 represented rural sectors.<sup>286</sup> This underrepresentation of the countryside reflected the divide between the miners and peasants, and perpetuated the mutual distrust between them. Peasant participation in the Assembly did not imply a cross-class alliance but an incorporation of a minority segment of rural sectors into a political organization led by the left.

Even if some of the actions of the *Bloque*, the CORB, and the *Federación de Colonizadores* suggested a possible rupture with the Military-Peasant Pact, their nominal presence in an anti-military politics controlled by the left revealed their limits as an independent political force. Could peasants emancipate themselves without breaking away from the hierarchical relationship that placed them in a dependent position? What type of the relationship should they develop with those in the city? How would they shape their relationship with diverse urban groups that sought to drive them toward a particular political direction guided by leftist revolutionary ideology? Would they be able to avoid being subsumed to those groups and maintain their autonomous capacity to determine their own political direction? These questions were central to the new generation of Aymara and Quechua intellectuals and militants, who emerged as prominent actors in rural politics at the beginning of the 1970s.

---

<sup>285</sup> Albó, “From MNRistas to Kataristas to Katari,” 389-390.

<sup>286</sup> Hurtado, *El Katarismo*, 45.

### ***Fausto Reinaga's Indianism***

According to Pedro Portugal Mollinedo and Carlos Macusaya Cruz, Laureano Machaca Khota, community leader of Majalaya in Camacho, was a silenced predecessor of Indianists and Katarists. In July 1956, about 4,000 comunarios led by Machaca took over Puerto Acosta, the capital of Camacho. Machaca “proclaimed” that he was “the Aymara president, and installed his own government.” He appointed his own mayor, subprefecto, tax collectors, customs officers, and police chiefs. Arguing against the unjust rule of a few whites over a “million indians,” he revealed his plan to bring more comunarios under his control, march to Viacha and El Alto “with an indian army of 100,000 combatants,” siege and assault the city of La Paz, and take power. A complot between some of his deputies and vecinos of Escoma prevented the materialization of his plan. In the night before his departure to Escoma on October 21, the vecinos hosted a huge fiesta for him and his men. He “dr[a]nk all night long” as invited by deputies Acho and the Surco brothers, who were conspiring with the vecinos against him. In the morning, Machaca departed “only with some dozens of armed militants” as suggested by Acho and the Surco brothers. Armed men following the direction of the vecinos ambushed Machaca’s group, and captured him alive. He was apparently executed shortly after being captured.<sup>287</sup> His death ended the three-month period of an Aymara rule during which the president challenged the Bolivian state by defining his government as the sole legitimate authority of governance in Bolivia. The MNR government apparently did not take the “Aymara president” seriously. It sent neither carabineers, nor any other armed groups to suppress the movement, while the press only published a few brief reports. The government probably considered the situation in Puerto Acosta and Escoma to be

---

<sup>287</sup> Portugal and Macusaya, *El indianismo katarista*, 104-109.

one of conflicts between comunarios and vecinos, which had frequently occurred in the countryside since the time of the hacienda regime.

Studies on Laureano Machaca began in the 1970s when Aymara intellectuals and militants under Indianist and Katarist influence contested the colonial nature of the Bolivian state as a structure of domination by a white minority over the indian majority.<sup>288</sup> In the ideological milieu informed by Indianism and Katarism, a memory of the Aymara government being cunningly toppled by white Bolivians emerged, presenting Machaca as representative of the Aymara heroism that had guided anti-colonial struggle of Qullasuyu; he joined the pantheon of Aymara heroes, including Túpaq Katari, Bartolina Sisa, Tomás Katari, and Zárate Willka.

Indianism as an ideological alternative to Marxist and Revolutionary Nationalist projects of social change was on the margins during the 1960s, when the rural masses in general aligned with the MNR and subsequent military regimes and when revolutionary politics continued to be defined mainly in terms of socialist revolution spearheaded by the miners. With independent peasant organizations beginning to confront the Military-Peasant Pact in the late 1960s, however, Indianism anticipated a new politics that would undermine the dominant ideological landscape in Bolivia after the 1970s. Even though the Agrarian Reform was a major victory for indigenous peasants who played a central role in the revolutionary process during the 1940s-1950s, Indianists repudiated it, calling it “a conquest of the Indian” [*una conquista del indio*]; Indians “fell into the trap of laws, decrees, resolutions, circulars, etc., of the mestizo-white” [*cayó en la trampa y fue envuelto dentro del zarzal de leyes, decretos, resoluciones, circulares, etc., del mestizo-blanco*].<sup>289</sup> The Indianist discourse against the National Revolution critically and

---

<sup>288</sup> Ibid, 104-110.

<sup>289</sup> Reinaga, *La Revolución India*, 301.

rancorously expressed disillusionment with the limited nature of the revolutionary reforms since 1952 and evinced the persistence of a social cleavage along the colonial line of ethnic differentiation. The rise of Indianism signaled that the problem of ethnic domination had remained, opening the door to an ideological proposal articulated in an essentialist language of the authentic roots of Indian race.

The PAN (*Partido Autóctono Nacional*), the first Indianist party, was founded in 1960 with twenty-two members and fourteen signatories, including Constantino Lima Chávez (known as Takir Mamani Larkha in Aymara), Felipe Flores, Gabino Apaza, Juan Rosendo Condori, Macario Angel Limachi, and Raymundo Tambo.<sup>290</sup> The PAN was, according to Constantino Lima, rooted in a consciousness of the fact that “all the [existing] political parties are of our executioners, our oppressors, European invaders” [*todos los partidos políticos son de nuestros verdugos, de nuestros opresores, de nuestros invasores de Europa*]. It was, therefore, indispensable to establish “our own political ideology and our own political organism” [*nuestra propia ideología política y nuestro propio organismo político*].<sup>291</sup> The PAN proposed that Indians were the central actors in “construct[ing] with their labor and sweat the cities, the roads” [*construye con su fuerza y su sudor: las ciudades, los caminos*]; they worked the land, produced in the mines, and fought in wars for Bolivia. The party also regarded Indians as the race that made the Peru-Bolivia Confederation possible in the 1830s and that spearheaded the struggle for “freedom” under “Tomás Catari and Tupac Catari.” This was arguably the first moment in Andean history when Indian was defined as a political subject with an explicit racial connotation

---

<sup>290</sup> The PAN is also known as the *Partido Agrario Nacional*. Here I adhere to the preference of one of the party’s founders, Constantino Lima Chávez, who during the interview with me, termed the party *Partido Autóctono Nacional*.

<sup>291</sup> Interview with Constantino Lima Chávez, November 14, 2016.

in an ideologically enunciated platform of self-emancipation. Different Indianist groups shared this conception of Indian as a subject of self-emancipation. The PAN was somewhat ambiguous on the relationship between Bolivia and Indians. While the PAN suggested that the Republic of Bolivia perpetuated the colonial domination of Indians and that Indians were different from Bolivians, Indians were still *in Bolivia*, that is, a part of Bolivia. As “the only human entity...rooted in the land...that is the Patria” [*la única entidad humana que se halla arraigada a la tierra que es la Patria*], Indian was “the substantial, real and historic Bolivian” [*el boliviano sustancial, real e histórico*].<sup>292</sup>

While the PAN alluded to internal colonialism that placed Indians under the yoke of the Bolivian Republic created by European descendants, it defined its anticolonial struggle in terms of Indian’s centrality to a Bolivia. Its founding charter highlighted the historic heritage dating back to “the times of Tihuanacu and the Inca rule” [*tiempos del Tiahuanacu y del Incanato*], which Aymaras and Quechuas shared as Indian.<sup>293</sup> The ideological line of divide between that heritage and colonial Bolivia remained porous. This ambiguity stemmed from the fact that Indianists formulated their discourses and programs based on their political and social experiences bounded by the Bolivian nation-state. In other words, their frustrations with existing system of power and yearnings for self-empowerment were rooted in what they felt and observed as Aymara and Quechua in the Bolivian society into which they were incorporated through the National Revolution. Despite the Agrarian Reform and universal suffrage, which were won “by peasants of Bolivia,” they continued facing “ingratitude, deceits and the lack of security for [their] union leaders” [*ingritudes, engaños y falta de garantías para los dirigentes sindicales*]

---

<sup>292</sup> “The Founding Charter of the PAN” included in Portugal and Macusaya, *El indianismo katarista*, 119-120.

<sup>293</sup> Ibid.

who fought for the empowerment of the masses.<sup>294</sup> The PAN was among the first groups that articulated an Indianist viewpoint of the supposedly emancipatory and inclusive system instituted under the banners of progress and revolution after 1952.

The PIAK (*Partido de Indios Aymaras y Keswas*) expanded upon the critical question the PAN had raised regarding the validity of the existing system of power in Bolivia. According to its founder Fausto Reinaga, the PIAK—which was founded in 1962 and renamed as the PIB (*Partido Indio de Bolivia*) in 1966—was the “ideological, political, and bellicose instrument” [*instrumento ideológico, político y bélico*] to fight “our enemy,” white-mestizo (*cholaje*). The PIAK’s ultimate goal was power achieved through “the democratic reason or the force of Revolution” [*por la razón democrática o por la fuerza de la Revolución*]. The “democratic reason” in this context meant an anticolonial thinking that diverged with the formal system of political representation enshrined by the liberal notion of representative democracy. The PIAK defined its struggle in terms of “POWER OR DEATH” [*PODER O MUERTE*], which “w[ould] not spare sacrifice, or our own life” [*no escatimaremos ningún sacrificio ni el de nuestra propia vida*].<sup>295</sup> Even though the PIAK did not overtly promote an armed struggle to overthrow a liberal state, its combatant discourses of Indian emancipation were at odds with the notion of political representation of different social interests subsumed under the republican state of Bolivia. It insinuated a democracy that was identical to a militant struggle against the colonial oppression embodied by the republican state.

The PIAK proposed an ideological project of Indian liberation founded upon spiritual connection between Aymaras and Quechuas, on the one hand, and the Andean force expressed

---

<sup>294</sup> “Manifesto of the PAN,” cited in Portugal and Macusaya, *El indianismo katarista*, 124-125.

<sup>295</sup> “El Acta de la Fundación del PIAK” and “El Partido de Indios Aymaras y Keswas al Pueblo de Bolivia” January 1, 1963 included in Reinaga, *La Revolución India*, 482-484.

by Inti, Pachamama, and *achachilas* and *apus* of Huayna Potosí, Illampu, Illimani and Sajama, on the other. The PIAK historically based this project on the struggle of Túpaq Katari remembered as “the Martyr of our Liberty” [*Mártir de nuestra Libertad*]; the blood shed by Katari was the blood of the Indian race represented by the PIAK, and his struggle for self-emancipation was the example for Indians to follow. With Indians linked to the ancestral forces and past struggles for liberation, “the rhythm of our time” would revitalize itself to initiate an emancipatory process according to the PIAK.<sup>296</sup>

The PIAK’s cosmological language alludes to the notion of *pachakuti*, the cataclysmic moment of temporal-spatial rupture. Reinaga visited Machu Picchu in 1961. This visit, according to his niece Hilda Reinaga, left a huge impact upon his ideological formation and led him to reflect upon the spiritual force that he felt in the Inka ruin. In the early 1960s, Fausto Reinaga adopted an explicit Indianist language of racial struggle enunciated by the PAN and overtly parted with Revolutionary Nationalism to which he had adhered for almost two decades.<sup>297</sup> In this sense, the PIAK’s foundation represented a crucial moment in the ideological transformation he underwent.

Fausto Reinaga’s ideological trajectory is often divided into the Marxist and Revolutionary Nationalist (1940-1960), the Indianist (1960s-1970s), and the Amautist (after 1980) periods. This periodization can be misleading because, during his Marxist and

---

<sup>296</sup> “El Acta de la Fundación del PIAK”; “El Partido de Indios Aymaras y Keswas al Pueblo de Bolivia.”

<sup>297</sup> Patrick Louis Williams Kearney, “Insurgent Legacy: Fausto Reinaga and the Indian Revolution,” (MA Thesis, University of California, San Diego, 2014), 177-178; Portugal and Macusaya, *El indianismo katarista*, 135; Hilda Reinaga G., *Fausto Reinaga: su vida y sus obras* (Vicepresidencia del Estado Plurinacional de Bolivia, 2011 [2004]), 19-21. Fausto Reinaga’s visit to Machu Picchu, according to Esteban Ticona Alejo, took place in 1963. See Ticona, *El indianismo de Fausto Reinaga*, 130-138. I here adhere to Hilda Reinaga’s statement in her book regarding Fausto Reinaga’s visit to Machu Picchu.



Revolutionary Nationalist period, Reinaga already addressed many of the issues on which he would elaborate after 1960. During the 1940s-1950s, Reinaga grappled with the questions of land, indian emancipation, and “national liberation.”<sup>298</sup> His first book, *Mitayos y Yanaconas* (1940), centers on socioeconomic organization of Tawantinsuyu that would be one of his central points of reference in his Indianist works. At the time of the book’s publication, he believed that “the Bolivian demographic panorama” consisted mainly of indians and miners. He saw in their sufferings in the countryside and the mines colonial vestiges perpetuated under the hacienda and mining oligarchy.<sup>299</sup> In *Tierra y Libertad. La revolución nacional y el indio* (1953), which in his own words, is “the product of my BOLIVIAN NATIONALISM” [*El producto de mi NACIONALISMO BOLIVIANO*], Reinaga is explicit about the centrality of indians to the Bolivian nation:

*ningún problema de carácter económico, social, político, inmigratorio, sanitario, militar, educacional, cultural, revolucionario, etc., puede encararse y menos resolverse a espaldas de la mayoría nacional, a espaldas del indio* [Problems of economic, social, political, migratory, sanitary, military, educational, cultural, revolutionary type cannot be confronted and even resolved with backs turned on the national majority, the indian].<sup>300</sup>

Many of Reinaga’s writings in the 1940s-1950s show visible indigenista-Marxist imprints of José Carlos Mariátegui and Tristán Marof, which emphasize collectivist tradition of the indigenous community, the urgency of land distribution, and struggle against the hacienda and mining oligarchy.<sup>301</sup> In Reinaga’s writings at that time, indigenista, Marxist, and Revolutionary

---

<sup>298</sup> Ticona, *El indianismo de Fausto Reinaga*, 130-134.

<sup>299</sup> José Fausto Reinaga, *Mitayos y Yanaconas* (Imprenta Manuelo, 1940), 6-7.

<sup>300</sup> Fausto Reinaga, *Tierra y Libertad. La revolución nacional y el indio* (Rumbo Sindical, 1953), 7, 34.

<sup>301</sup> Reinaga, *Mitayos y Yanaconas*; Belzu. *Precursor de la revolución nacional* (Ediciones “Rumbo Sindical,” 1953); *Tierra y Libertad*.

Nationalist elements coexisted with a current of thinking that would be more fully articulated by Indianist works. For instance, he concludes the prologue to *Tierra y Libertad* by saying:

*la causa del indio es sagrada para mi, porque ella es mi propia causa. Por mi ascendencia y cuna: Tomás Catari y Macha, por mi carne y alma, por mi sangre y espíritu, por la sal de mis huesos y lo rojo de mis sueños: soy tan indio, me siento tan indio* [[T]he cause of the indian is sacred for me, because it is my own cause. For my descent and origin: Tomás Catari and Macha, for my flesh and soul, for my blood and spirit, for the salt of my bones and the red of my dreams: I am so indian, I feel so indian].<sup>302</sup>

Reinaga's indian here subsumes himself to Revolutionary Nationalism as the next paragraph of the prologue calls for "indian's liberty" and "his incorporation into the civil life of the Nation" [*su incorporación a la vida civil de la Nación*].<sup>303</sup> Indian liberation with revolutionary change in the Bolivian nation remained a central goal for Reinaga during the 1940s-1950s. However, he did not call for passive assimilation of indians into white-mestizo national society. His principal political subject was always indian, and his critical issue was the relationship between indians and the Bolivian nation, in which he saw a possibility of their emancipation in the revolutionary context of the 1940s-1950s. As suggested by his discourses after 1960, his view of that relationship radically shifted to what he called the domination by "white-mestizo (*cholaje*) Bolivia" over "Indian Bolivia."<sup>304</sup>

In a long footnote to *La Revolución India*, Reinaga describes his ideological conversion into Indianism in this way:

*En mis obras de 1940 a 1960 yo buscaba la asimilación del indio por el cholaje blanco-mestizo. Y en las que he publicado de 1964 a 1970 yo busco la liberación del indio, previa destrucción del cholaje blanco-mestizo. En lugar de la Revolución Nacional o la Revolución comunista, yo planteo la Revolución india...A esta altura de la evolución de mi pensamiento, ningún intelectual del cholaje blanco-mestizo tiene valor. Y no encuentro en Bolivia un hombre que*

---

<sup>302</sup> Ibid, 8.

<sup>303</sup> Ibid, 8.

<sup>304</sup> Reinaga, *La Revolución India*, 172-184.

*mezcla consideración* [In my works from 1940 to 1960, I sought the assimilation of the Indian through the white-mestizo miscegenation (*cholaje blanco-mestizo*). And in those, which I have published from 1964 to 1970, I look for the liberation of the Indian preceded by the destruction of white-mestizo Bolivia. Instead of the National Revolution, or the Communist Revolution, I am now calling for the Indian Revolution...No white-mestizo intellectual has value at this height of the evolution of my thinking. I do not find in Bolivia a man who deserves consideration].<sup>305</sup>

Rejecting white-mestizo Bolivia, Reinaga harshly criticized white-mestizo intellectuals of Bolivia and other Latin American countries, who he believed forged a false imaginary of racial mixture and progress through mestizaje.<sup>306</sup> His critiques of those intellectuals rested on a notion that would become fundamental for various Indianist projects: “Indians are a race, a pueblo, a Nation; the Indian race is not a social class” [*Los indios son una raza, un pueblo, una Nación; la raza india no es una clase social*]. The peasant label attached to Indians, according to Reinaga, was “a stupidity” because that class category was a European import “brought and imposed” by what he saw as “revolutionary snobbism.”<sup>307</sup> In this ideological formula of racial politics, Marxism and Revolutionary Nationalism raised deceptive political agendas of popular emancipation, which only manipulated Indians for leftist and nationalist initiatives. For Reinaga and many other Indianists of his time, that was equivalent to white-mestizos’ colonial domination over Indians. According to Indianism, Indians could emancipate themselves only with a racial consciousness rooted in their common experiences as a colonized nation. The PIAK, therefore, declared in 1965 that “[n]o white-mestizo party has the capacity, consciousness, and willingness to give freedom to the Indian. The Indian liberation will be the Indian’s own

---

<sup>305</sup> Ibid, 453-454.

<sup>306</sup> Fausto Reinaga, *El Indio y el Cholaje Boliviano. Proceso a Fernando Diez de Medina* (Ediciones Partido de Indios Aymaras y Keswas del Kollasuyu, 1964); *La intelligentsia del Cholaje Boliviano* (Ediciones Partido Indio de Bolivia, 1967); *El indio y los escritores de América* (Ediciones Partido Indio de Bolivia, 1969).

<sup>307</sup> Reinaga, Prologue to *El Indio y el Cholaje Boliviano*.

work” [*Ningún partido del cholaje boliviano tiene capacidad, conciencia y voluntad para dar libertad al indio. La liberación del indio será obra del mismo indio*]. In this sense, the principal goal of the Agrarian Reform, according to the PIAK, should not only consist of the abolition of pongueaje and land distribution but also of “the total liberation of [Indian] race” [*la total liberación de su raza*].<sup>308</sup>

For Reinaga, Indian consciousness was rooted in “the Indian soul” that made “Indians think as Indian” [*los indios se piensen como indios*]. He believed that this consciousness was indispensable for Indians to be free from the yoke of colonial slavery of white-mestizo Bolivia. This way of self-emancipatory thinking was the fundamental component of “the authentically Indian intellectual,” whom Reinaga defined as Indianist. While “white-mestizo intellectual[s]” [*el cholaje intelectual*] wrote about Indians, whom they sought to incorporate into their society, Reinaga criticized this indigenista proposal for being another attempt at “de-Indianization.”<sup>309</sup> The only political organ with the capacity to save Bolivia, according to Reinaga, was the Indianist party. In this sense, Reinaga’s Indianism was not only for the liberation of Indian race but also the salvation of a Bolivian nation of which that race was the central part. “For this reason,” the PIAK urged “Indians of Bolivia” to join “the ranks of the PIAK” through which they should fulfill their “sacred obligation” to “salvage Bolivia and liberate their race” [*salvará Bolivia y a la raza india*].<sup>310</sup>

While Reinaga conceptualized the marginalization of Indians in terms of colonial domination perpetuated by a Bolivian nation-state, this did not lead his Indianism totally to reject Bolivia as an overarching frame to envision national belonging. Reinaga “the Indianist” believed

---

<sup>308</sup> “A los indios de Bolivia,” cited in “Manifiesto del Partido Indio de Bolivia.”

<sup>309</sup> Reinaga, Prologue to *El Indio y el Cholaje Boliviano*.

<sup>310</sup> “A los Indios de Bolivia.”

that Indian was “the Messiah, the Savior of Bolivia” [*el Mesías, el Salvador de Bolivia*]. His Indianist party intended “to save Bolivia; the sanguine and spiritual Bolivia; the eternal Bolivia; the Indian Bolivia” [*salvar a Bolivia; a la Bolivia sanguínea y espiritual; a la Bolivia eterna; a la Bolivia india*]. At the same time, this Indianism wanted to salvage mestizos with an Indian origin, redeeming “the cholo Bolivia” that was a product of cultural-ethnic miscegenation with white-mestizos. Reinaga “the Indianist” ultimately argued for substitution of Indian Bolivia for that of white-mestizos to construct what he saw as the “real Nation” and the “SOVEREIGN STATE with real power” [*ESTADO SOBERANO, con poder real*]. For him, Indians represented “the only real and rational being for Bolivia” [*Lo único real y racional para Bolivia*] that had suffered from the lack of an “authentic” ideological foundation and manipulation by white-mestizos.<sup>311</sup> Bolivian nationalism did not fully vanish from Reinaga’s writings during his Indianist period when he clearly distinguished himself from Revolutionary Nationalists; Indian was like a nation oppressed by the *antinación* as conceptualized by Carlos Montenegro. As Montenegro did, Reinaga saw in Bolivia two irreconcilable forces with the one perpetuating the colonial domination over the other. Whereas Montenegro understood this domination in nationalist terms that articulated a homogeneity among indians, workers and “revolutionary” intellectuals like himself as Bolivian, Reinaga believed that *lo indio* should be the main subject of emancipatory politics in Bolivia. From Reinaga’s viewpoints, the source of colonial domination in the country was the racial divide between Indians and white-mestizos; hence, the Indian Revolution as a political solution to eliminate the latter, which he viewed as fallacious, oppressive, and spurious.

---

<sup>311</sup> Reinaga, *La Revolución India*, 373.

Several Aymara nationalist intellectuals criticize Reinaga for affirming the validity of the colonial category “Bolivia.” In their critiques, his “Bolivian Indianism” rendered the colonial “current of thinking...legitimate and normative,” and therefore opened a way for Bolivia’s white-mestizo intellectuals and politicians to appropriate the emancipatory forces of Indian thinking.<sup>312</sup> These critiques rest on the premise that Indians, such as Aymaras, are separate from Bolivia and that they should found their own nation-state in order to part with the oppressive structure of the Bolivian state.

Reinaga did not conceptualize the Indian Revolution in such a separatist way even if he sought to eliminate the oppressive face of Bolivia, which he believed stemmed from white-mestizo domination over Indians. As other Indianists of his time did, Reinaga belonged to the generation of militants who formulated their ideas out of social experiences of the revolutionary upsurge in the 1940s-1950s. As many leftist and nationalist intellectuals had during the 1960s, he had lost his faith in the transformative possibility raised in those decades. However, the revolutionary experiences accumulated during the 1940s-1950s remained a significant point of reference for many Indianists. Despite his ideological turn against Marxism and Revolutionary Nationalism, Reinaga maintained close and intimate personal contacts with indigenista and Marxist intellectuals, such as Guillermo Carnero Hoke, Luis Eduardo Valcárcel, and Tristán Marof.<sup>313</sup> In the prologue to *El Indio y el Cholaje Boliviano*, Reinaga indeed states that “we Indians are not adversaries to Marxism, on the contrary, we believe and think that Marxism in Bolivia has no other objective than the liberation of Indian race” [*Los indios no somos adversos*

---

<sup>312</sup> Abraham Delgado Mancilla, *Descubrimiento, conquista, invasión, 1492-1532. Desmontando y desmitificando la historia y el pensamiento colonial* (Laboratorio del Pensamiento Indianista-Katarista, 2017), 190-195, 204-205.

<sup>313</sup> Ticona, *El indianismo de Fausto Reinaga*, 253-272.

*al marxismo, todo lo contrario, creemos y pensamos que el marxismo en Bolivia no tiene otro objeto que la liberación de la raza india*].<sup>314</sup> Such a statement might be a mere rhetorical recognition of the ideal political role Marxism should play from an Indianist perspective. Reinaga surely maintained an antagonistic position on Marxist and Revolutionary Nationalist parties after his Indianist turn.<sup>315</sup> However, it is important to recognize that his earlier experiences during the 1940s and 1950s continued to inform his Indianist discourses and programs. As Esteban Ticona Alejo suggests, lingering effects of Marxism and Revolutionary Nationalism somewhat uneasily “coexist[ed]” with “Indianism in [Reinaga]’s thinking” even though their ideological influences were no longer “decisive.”<sup>316</sup>

### ***Katarist Challenge to the Military-Peasant Pact***

In the city of La Paz, Aymara student movements, such as the MUJA (*Movimiento Universitario Julian Apaza “Tupaj Katari”*) and *Movimiento 15 de Noviembre*, emerged in the 1960s. Named after the Aymara rebel leader and the date of his execution by the Spanish colonial authority, the MUJA and *15 de Noviembre* challenged the historical interpretation that vilified him and other Aymara rebels, such as Bartolina Sisa and Zárate Willka, as symbols of dangerous indian race war. These movements, according to Mariana Ari, represented “the Indian struggle on the part of a new generation of Indians who lived in the city of La Paz but” remained culturally and socially connected with “their communities” in the countryside. They confronted

---

<sup>314</sup> Reinaga, Prologue to *El Indio y el Cholaje Boliviano*.

<sup>315</sup> Reinaga, *La Revolución India*, 352-365.

<sup>316</sup> Ticona, *El indianismo de Fausto Reinaga*, 271-272.

not only Revolutionary Nationalists but also many leftist student movements that “violently rejected Indianism” and often made a racist mockery of them in pejorative ways.<sup>317</sup>

Several members of the MUJA and *15 de Noviembre* returned to the countryside and played leadership roles in their communities and rural unions. Among those members were Jenaro Flores, the future leader of the CSUTCB (*Confederación Sindical Única de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia*), and Raymundo Tambo, who was a principal leader of the MUJA. Comunarios with urban experience, such as Flores and Tambo, often assumed a high-level leadership position without having previously held low or mid-level positions in the community. Comunarios returning from the city were seen as more suitable for a position that required a broader grasp of issues pertaining to the community’s dealings with other communities, unions, NGOs and the state. Around 1965, Tambo became a leader of the rural union in his community of Sullkawi in the Aroma Province in La Paz. Despite his community’s adherence to the Military-Peasant Pact, he wanted to create an independent union in the countryside. Jenaro Flores adhered to the Pact during this period even though he maintained contact with the MUJA and *15 de Noviembre*. Upon returning to Antipampa, his community of origin, Flores partook in a rural development research project conducted by National Agrarian Reform Service and the University of Wisconsin researchers, who chose him as one of their research assistants.<sup>318</sup> According to Teodomiro Rengel who was interviewed by Portugal and Macusaya, Flores’s dominant position in the Aroma section of the CNTCB was due to the support of his military

---

<sup>317</sup> Mariana Ari, “1992: 500 años sin la voz india,” in Bridikhina, *El 12 de Octubre revisado y revisitado*, 184-185.

<sup>318</sup> Albó, “From MNRistas to Kataristas to Katari,” 391-392; Hurtado, *El Katarismo*, 31-39; Portugal and Macusaya, *El indianismo katarista*, 150-151, 156.



patron during the late 1960s. This made his relationship with Tambo very uneasy and conflict-ridden.<sup>319</sup>

Flores's political transformation took place around 1970 when he was elected the executive secretary of the FDTCLP (*Federación Departamental de Trabajadores Campesinos de La Paz*). Flores renamed this federation as the FDTCLP-TK (Tupaj Katari), indicating his new independent, Aymara-centered unionism to confront the Military-Peasant Pact. Despite his affiliation with the Pact in the 1960s, Flores earned a reputation for his defiant posture within officialista unions; he became a "communist" in the eyes of governmental officials and other rural leaders. Flores's political conversion, according to Javier Hurtado, stemmed partly from his personal contact with Fidel Huanca Huarachi. During his days in the university, Huanca believed that he had discovered the Aymara history of Túpaq Katari's struggle.<sup>320</sup> Flores's exchange with Huanca and other independent union leaders, such as Raymundo Tambo, led Flores to adopt an Aymara-centered revolutionary ideology and discard the Military-Peasant Pact in order to create an alternative peasant organization.<sup>321</sup>

Peasants increasingly defected from the Military-Peasant Pact after the early 1970s, signaling the rise of a new ethno-nationalist independent peasant unionism known as Katarism that emphasized the centrality of Aymara and Quechua pueblos to the Bolivian nation. The Katarist conception of emancipatory politics centered on Aymaras and Quechuas as oppressed classes and nations in Bolivia. Katarism by definition espoused the class notion of domination and underscored internal colonialism that structured relationship between Aymaras and

---

<sup>319</sup> Testimony of Teodomiro Rengel cited in *El indianismo katarista*, 151.

<sup>320</sup> Hurtado, *El Katarismo*, 34.

<sup>321</sup> Albó, "From MNRistas to Kataristas to Katari," 392-393; Portugal and Macusaya, *El indianismo katarista*, 153.

Quechuas on the one hand and the Bolivian nation on the other.<sup>322</sup> Katarism, therefore, differed from Indianism that rejected the category “peasant” and promoted a racial politics of *lo indio*. Even if Indianist and Katarist ideologues and intellectuals highlighted the difference between the two ideologies, concrete political actions of organizing oppressed pueblos and confronting the Military-Peasant Pact were more urgent tasks in emancipatory politics. Despite their initial political conflict, Jenaro Flores and Raymundo Tambo became the most prominent union organizers among Aymara and Quechua peasants opposed to the Pact in the altiplano during the 1970s.

Katarist peasant unions emerged as visible actors in national politics during the Torres government. When the COB went on general strike on October 7, 1970 against the junta then led by Alfredo Ovando Candía (1969-1970), peasants from Aroma led by Flores and Tambo blockaded the road to Oruro in support of Torres, who was leading the coup against Ovando. The COB initially gave a lukewarm acquiescence to the Torres coup because it was not convinced of his leftist credential. The COB ultimately “offered its ‘militant support’” to him but “warned that ‘at the first sign of any deviation or retreat we the workers will be the first to denounce the fact to the people and occupy our own barricades.’” While it aligned with Torres, the COB maintained an independent position that frequently conflicted with his government regarding cabinet composition and expropriation of the mining concessions yielded to foreign companies under Barrientos.<sup>323</sup> This somewhat contrasted with Katarists’ active support for Torres. Katarists saw in Torres an ally against the peasant unions that had been loyal to Barrientos. Katarist interest in having a strong ally, according to Hurtado, coincided with Torres’s own need of an alternative

---

<sup>322</sup> “Primer Manifiesto de Tiahuanaco,” July 30, 1973 included in Hurtado, *El Katarismo*, 303-307.

<sup>323</sup> Dunkerley, *Rebellion in the Veins*, 177-178, 184-185.

peasant support base to consolidate his regime; the existing rural unions had been mostly Barrientos's clients and the COB would continue to confront the government.<sup>324</sup>

The Katarist-Torres alliance meant the formation of another state-affiliated peasant unionism vis-à-vis the Military-Peasant Pact established by Barrientos. While Katarists rejected union subordination to a Military-Peasant Pact, their politics were not completely free from a military regime. Katarist tactic of using a supportive government for countering the Pact ran the risk of being subordinated to that government, which was intent on utilizing peasants for its own political purpose. This, however, did not mean that Katarists simply affirmed their dependent relationship with the military state and lost their autonomous force of organization. When Jenaro Flores was elected the executive secretary of the FDTCLP in March 1971, a multitude of peasants went around the downtown areas of La Paz shouting "Tupaj Katari to power, peasants to power, Jenaro Flores to power!" [*Tupak Katari al poder, campesinos al poder, Jenaro Flores al poder*]<sup>325</sup> Katarist unions' ethno-nationalism confronted and defied the established power relations structured along the colonial divide of ethnic differentiation. The invocation of Túpaq Katari and Aymara power in the capital's center showed a rebellious force and thereby subverted the established power relations. Just four months before Flores was elected the executive secretary of the FDTCLP, the commemoration of the 189<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Túpaq Katari took place in Ayo Ayo, where Katari was quartered by Spaniards. Torres attended the commemoration organized by the *Centro MINKA*, an institution of indigenous cultural promotion, which was founded by Aymara professionals in the city. The use of *wiphala* (a 7-by-

---

<sup>324</sup> Hurtado, *El katarismo*, 42-44.

<sup>325</sup> Ibid, 38.

7 square flag of seven colors arranged diagonally) as an Aymara symbol along with the Bolivian national flag displayed the coexistence of Bolivian nationalism with an Aymara nationalism.<sup>326</sup>

Katarists supported Torres during the Sixth National Congress of the CNTCB, which took place in Potosí on August 2, 1971. The delegates led by Jenaro Flores and Raymundo Tambo confronted those in support of the Military-Peasant Pact and representatives of the *Federación Revolucionaria de Oruro* led by Macabeo Chila. The *Federación Revolucionaria* upheld a more defiant leftist position regarding the Torres government and called for the establishment of a worker-peasant government. Even though this position resonated with the Trotskyite thesis of a cross-class alliance headed by the proletariat, the Popular Assembly did not invite the *Federación Revolucionaria*. During the Congress, Katarists “maintained a contradictory position regarding the Military-Peasant Pact.” Their state-affiliation prevented them from explicitly rejecting the Pact despite their call for union independence. The *Federación Revolucionaria* saw their ambivalence toward the Pact as a betrayal. However, Katarists were able to garner the majority support in the Congress with Tambo elected as its president and Flores as its executive secretary.<sup>327</sup>

The CNTCB in 1971 did not accept a dependent relationship with the Torres government. The Katarists-Torres alignment was never formalized into an official system of state-union pact, through which the government could have exercised political control over Katarist unions. The nature of the relationship between the government and Katarists was contingent on how each side capitalized on its ally for the purposes of establishing its own sphere of power and defeating a shared political enemy of the old military-peasant alliance created under Barrientos. The

---

<sup>326</sup> Ibid, 38.

<sup>327</sup> Ibid, 49-51.

CNTCB under Katarists lasted only nineteen days as the coup led by General Hugo Bánzer Suárez toppled the Torres government on August 21, 1971 and led to the installation of a rightist dictatorial regime, forcing many leftist and Katarist militants into exile. While the Bánzer regime (1971-1978) reinstituted the Military-Peasant Pact, the alternative structure of peasant unions established by Katarists persisted in a clandestine mode, challenging state control in the countryside. The CCTK (*Centro Cultural Tupaj Katari*), founded by the CNTCB in La Paz, functioned as a clandestine center of Indianist and Katarist activities during the Bánzer dictatorship. The Radio Méndez operated by the *Centro* broadcasted various programs in Aymara, which included critical commentaries on peasants' affiliation with the military state.<sup>328</sup>

### ***Tiwanaku Manifesto of 1973***

Indianists and Katarists maintained informal networks of contact with merchants, students and workers of Aymara descent in La Paz and more formal links with several foreign NGOs and Christian organizations. Support from those organizations and urban residents helped Indianists and Katarists survive the persecution under Bánzer. On July 30, 1973, the Centro MINKA, the *Centro Campesino Túpaj Katari*, the *Asociación de Estudiantes Campesinos de Bolivia*, and the *Asociación Nacional de Profesores Campesinos* signed and proclaimed the Tiwanaku Manifesto. The Manifesto elaborated on various cultural, economic, and political issues raised by Indianists and Katarists. Its first paragraph plainly refuted mestizaje promoted since the National Revolution. Harmonious incorporation of indigenous peasants into national society, according to the Manifesto, did not exist. “[A]n integration of cultures” had not occurred in Bolivia. What had actually taken place was “a superimposition and domination,” which kept

---

<sup>328</sup> Ibid, 52-55.

“us in the lowest and most exploited stratum” [*habiendo permanecido nosotros, en el estrato más bajo y explotado*] of the social hierarchy. The Aymara and Quechua marginalization was an oppression of a pueblo “economically exploited and culturally and politically subjugated” [*económicamente explotados y cultural y políticamente oprimidos*] by another pueblo that claimed to have formally included indigenous peasants into its national society. The Manifesto forcefully expressed the effect of internal colonial domination on Aymaras and Quechuas: “We are foreigners in our own country” [*Somos extranjeros en nuestro propio país*].<sup>329</sup>

In many ways, the Tiwanaku Manifesto of 1973 critically disclosed the limited nature of the revolutionary reforms implemented after 1952. The National Revolution’s promise to vindicate indigenous peasants was an imposture in the sense that indigenous peasants “always suffered a systematic attempt at destroying” [*han sufrido siempre un intento sistemático de destrucción*] their cultural heritages. Rural education, “by its methods, programs and language” [*por sus métodos, por sus programas y por su lengua*], alienated them from their cultural origin because it was designed “to convert indian into a kind of mestizo” [*convertir al indio en una especie de mestizo*] and further “his assimilation into the western and capitalist culture” [*su asimilación a la cultura occidental y capitalista*] of individualism and private landholding. This was opposed to “our history” that was “essentially communitarian.”<sup>330</sup> Essentializing *lo aymara* and *lo quechua* in terms of *lo comunitario*, the Manifesto negated mestizaje as a social project that had been imposed by the Bolivian state after 1952, and lamented that “because of the bad education and false political intrigues” [*por obra de mala educación y de la falsa politiquería*], indians “no longer want to be indians” [*no quieren ser indios*] and “have assimilated the worst

---

<sup>329</sup> “Primer Manifiesto de Tiahuanaco.”

<sup>330</sup> Ibid.

defects of other pueblos” [*han asimilado los peores defectos de otros pueblos*]. This mestizaje, according to the Manifesto, had produced mestizos who had become “new exploiters of their indian brothers” [*nuevos explotadores de sus propios hermanos*].<sup>331</sup>

The Indianist imprint in the Manifesto may not be surprising because two of the possible authors of the document were Raymundo Tambo and Rosendo Condori, who were members of the PAN and the PIB. Yet, “peasantry” rather than “Indian” was the principal political subject of the Manifesto, whose political proposition revolved around creation of independent peasant politics and unions. Peasants were surely Aymara and Quechua in the sense that their struggle for “the revolution in the countryside” [*La revolución en el campo*] had to rest on their historic origins rooted in “the great ideals of Tupaj Katari, Bartolina Sisa, [and] Willca Zárate” [*los grandes ideales de Tupaj Katari, de Bartolina Sisa, de Willca Zárate*].<sup>332</sup> Katarism combined this culturalist notion of emancipatory struggle with peasant politics of class. This combination was a principal point of differentiation between Katarism and Indianism. The Tiwanaku Manifesto plainly showed this difference, representing the “crystallization of two separate [ideological] currents” that were articulated as Indianism and Katarism.<sup>333</sup> As Waskar Ari succinctly describes, Katarists underscored the oppression of “Indian peasants...as a class and nation,” which necessitated “an ethnic and class struggle” without separating the two fronts of emancipatory politics.<sup>334</sup> Indianism found itself in a somewhat self-contradictory position, which stemmed from its rejection of “peasant” as a form of political identity: it discredited those who recognized the peasant dimension of Aymaras and Quechuas in and from the countryside. If

---

<sup>331</sup> Ibid.

<sup>332</sup> Ibid.

<sup>333</sup> Portugal and Macusaya, *El indianismo katarista*, 238.

<sup>334</sup> Ari, *Earth Politics*, 167.

Katarism emerged out of the context of the ideological formation informed by Indianism during the 1960s and early 1970s, the position articulated in the Tiwanaku Manifesto signified its formulation as a distinctive ideological current vis-à-vis Indianism. In this sense, to cite Rivera Cusicanqui, the Manifesto synthesized “the multiple currents of political vindication” of Aymara and Quechua peasants, who were the principal actors of emancipatory politics in Katarism.<sup>335</sup>

### ***Struggle against Persistent Marginalization***

Katarists were among the first groups that overtly defied the Bánzer dictatorship after the Military-Peasant Pact began to show unmistakable signs of disintegration in the mid-1970s. A critical turning point in the peasant-state relationship was the military massacre of peasants in the Cochabamba Valley on January 29, 1974. Bánzer issued a presidential decree on January 20 to remove “state subsidies on a range of basic goods and services.” Immense numbers of factory workers, housewives, miners, peasants, and students declared civic stoppages, clashed with the police, and unanimously demanded repeal of the decree. The most intensive mobilization took place in Tolata in Cochabamba, where about 20,000 peasants blocked the highway around the town, demanding a meeting with President Bánzer. The military accepted their demand, but what arrived in Tolata were six tanks and eight military trucks loaded with soldiers with orders from the president who wanted “a complete ‘mopping up of the subversives’.” After brutally repressing peasants in Tolata, the military continued its job, subduing “subversives” in nearby villages of Epizana, Melga, and Suticollo. The estimated death toll of the so-called “Massacre of the Valley” was between 80 and 200.<sup>336</sup>

---

<sup>335</sup> Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, “Luchas campesinas contemporáneas en Bolivia: el movimiento ‘katarista’: 1970-1980” in Zavaleta, *Bolivia, hoy*, 142.

<sup>336</sup> Dunkerley, *Rebellion in the Veins*, 210-212; Hurtado, *El katarismo*, 64-65.



The military brutalization of peasants in the Cochabamba Valley marked the virtual termination of the Military-Peasant Pact even if the Pact officially remained in place until the late 1970s. Bánzer, according to Dunkerley, was confident in maintaining his regime without massive peasant support because he believed that the military had sufficiently strengthened its repressive capacity and that his violent persecutions had successfully weakened miners' political force. Bánzer justified the massacre, arguing that the protest was the work of Cubans and exiled Chilean socialist leader Carlos Altamirano.<sup>337</sup>

Increasing numbers of peasants began to desert from the Military-Peasant Pact following the Massacre of the Valley. Katarists overtly challenged officialista union leaders in a provincial peasant Congress in Colquencha in Aroma in January 1975. The vehemence of Katarists and young militants influenced by them forced the military to intervene in Colquencha, ban radio programs of the CCTK, and declare Jenaro Flores as "one of the subversives." In 1975 and 1976, Katarists prevailed in a number of provincial peasant congresses in the altiplano, and ascended to union leadership in many provinces.<sup>338</sup> The abrupt death of Raymundo Tambo in a mysterious truck accident in 1976 did not stop the Katarist ascension that according to Xavier Albó, signaled "the awakening of the giant."<sup>339</sup> In October 1976, a national Congress of the CNTCB occurred in Tarija under the auspices of the government, which sought to reestablish its control over the countryside. The government's attempt to impose Oscar Céspedes as the leader of the CNTCB provoked strong oppositions from the nationalist sector of Santa Cruz and a group from

---

<sup>337</sup> Dunkerley, *Rebellion in the Veins*, 212.

<sup>338</sup> Hurtado, *El katarismo*, 66-67.

<sup>339</sup> Albó, "From MNRistas to Kataristas to Katari," 395-397.

Cochabamba. The two oppositions “broke with the CNTCB and formed a ‘Committee of the Bases’” to align with Katarists against the Military-Peasant Pact in the late 1970s.<sup>340</sup>

The disintegration of the Military-Peasant Pact concurred with the formation of a new Indianist party, the MITKA (*Movimiento Indio Túpaq Katari*), whose founding members included Constantino Lima, Felipe Quispe, Jaime Apaza, and Luciano Tapia. While Fausto Reinaga continued his ideological writing in the name of the PIB, he distanced himself from the MITKA because according to Portugal and Macusaya, he did not want his political organ to be replaced by another Indianist party. The MITKA was formally founded as a political party with its own constitution in 1978. The founding congress of the party took place in the community of Wisk’achani in Pacajes, which was also known as the City of Rocks, from April 26 to 28, 1978.<sup>341</sup> The 283 delegates to this congress proclaimed that the only political option for “the GREAT INDIAN PUEBLO” [*el GRAN PUEBLO INDIO*] was “the Indian Revolution”; “the historic root and trunk of ‘the Bolivian nationality’” [*la raíz y el tronco histórico de la “nacionalidad boliviana”*] was the Indian pueblo that should emancipate itself as a nation.<sup>342</sup> The MRTK (*Movimiento Revolucionario Túpak Katari*) was founded a few months later under Jenaro Flores’s leadership, adopting a more conventional leftist platform of peasant struggle led by “Aymaras, Quechuas, Cambas, Chapacos, Guaranis, [and] other ethnic groups categorized as rural workers” [*aymaras, quechuas, cambas, chapacos, guaraníes, más otros grupos étnicos catalogados como trabajadores del campo*].<sup>343</sup>

---

<sup>340</sup> Hurtado, *El katarismo*, 67, 93.

<sup>341</sup> Ari, “El 12 de Octubre revisado y revisitado,” 187; Portugal and Macusaya, *El indianismo katarista*, 242-243, 322-323.

<sup>342</sup> “Manifiesto del Movimiento Indio Tupak Katari,” Kollasuyo Marka, 1978 included in Portugal and Macusaya, *El indianismo katarista*, 579-590.

<sup>343</sup> Testimony of Macabeo Chila cited in Hurtado, *El katarismo*, 110.

Rivera Cusicanqui argues that the rise of Katarism represents the articulation between the “long memory” of anticolonial struggles from the 1530s and the “short memory” of the revolutionary movements dating back to the 1940s-1950s. The revolutionary project of incorporating peasants into national society “only meant a partial rupture with the past” of indian subjugation. The Revolution affirmed the continuity between the colonial past under Spanish rule on the one hand and the present moment of racial marginalization of Aymara and Quechua peasants on the other. “The Katarist movement,” according to Rivera Cusicanqui, “express[ed] these contradictions that evidence[d] the failure of the project of cultural homogenization” formulated under the rubrics of mestizaje after the National Revolution.<sup>344</sup>

Portugal and Macusaya argue that Rivera Cusicanqui’s idea of long memory/short memory has “vulgarized” analyses of “indigenous movements in the Andes,” including Indianism and Katarism. They also criticize her for obscuring the actual process of ideological formation rooted in a conscious effort “to understand the present.”<sup>345</sup> This critique draws attention to more concrete acts of consciousness-raising and political organization, which have contributed to the formation of Indianism and Katarism. If indigenous movements articulate their discourses with reference to Spanish colonialism and past anti-colonial rebellions, this is not due to “a ‘long memory’” that has existed “in a latent state” and is activated during popular upsurge.<sup>346</sup> Social actors produce ideas with reference to the past, spread those ideas throughout society, articulate collective memories, and partake in the making of the popular imaginary of history through works of consciousness-raising and political organization. When Indianists and Katarists of the 1960s and 1970s confronted the Military-Peasant Pact and the continuing

---

<sup>344</sup> Rivera Cusicanqui, “Luchas campesinas contemporáneas en Bolivia,” 164.

<sup>345</sup> Portugal and Macusaya, *El indianismo katarista*, 31-32.

<sup>346</sup> *Ibid*, 31.

marginalization of the vast majority of indigenous populations in Bolivia, they drew upon select pasts to create a historic legitimacy of their movements. In doing so, they exaggerated the negativity of the colonial domination and the positivity of the “communitarian essence” of colonized Andean society. Such a Manichean binary easily found its expression in discursive opposition between colonial society and Andean community, which was ideologically formulated into the notions of two Bolivias and internal colonialism.

Economic marginalization of indigenous groups reinforced the Indianist and Katarist arguments on colonial oppression that had persisted in Bolivia. The National Revolution’s material outcomes were lacking for the poor majority of the nation, contradicting its discourse of modernity and progress. Peasants, according to the Tiwanaku Manifesto, “produce[d] 78% of the GNP” [*producimos el 78% del Producto Bruto Nacional*] but received only “34% of the national income” whereas “21% of [those] incomes” [*el 21% de los ingresos nacionales*] went to “the large business and property owners” [*los empresarios y grandes propietarios*] who constituted 1.7% of the population. Agrarian credits were available only to “new large landholders” [*los nuevos terratenientes*] and agro-industrialists in the lowlands. Perennially low incomes and high mortality rates perpetuated the general state of poverty in the countryside. The Manifesto denounced this dismal situation in which “nobody remember[ed] peasants” [*Nadie se ha acordado del campesino*] and suggested that the ruling minority had failed them and only made them perpetually subject to the paternalistic control of the oppressive system of exploitation.<sup>347</sup>

The grim reality portrayed by the Tiwanaku Manifesto corresponded to Bolivia’s socioeconomic index published by the INE (*Instituto Nacional de Estadística*) and the international organizations, including the CEPAL (*Comisión Económica para América Latina y*

---

<sup>347</sup> “Primer Manifiesto de Tiahuanaco.”

*el Caribe*) and the World Health Organization. Massive poverty persisted at the national level as seen in the fact that 80% of the Bolivian “population was below the poverty line” in 1976. Even though infant mortality rates consistently declined from 1950 to the late 1970s, the pace of progress was very slow compared to other Latin American countries. During 1950-1955, Bolivia’s infant mortality rates per thousand were 175.7, which was higher than the Latin American average (127.7) by around 40%. The gap became bigger by 1970-1975 in both absolute and proportional terms, when the infant mortality rates for Bolivia remained high (151.3) and that for Latin America decreased to 81.7; hence, an almost 90% differential.<sup>348</sup> Life expectancy in Bolivia increased from about 38 to 45 from 1950-1955 to 1970-1975. The expectancy for Haiti changed from 36 to 47 during the same period, meaning that despite revolutionary reforms, Bolivia was worse than the poorest American country in this category.<sup>349</sup> In 1976, “66 percent of homes lacked electricity” while “plumbed water and sanitary facilities” were available only to 22 percent of the population. During the mid-1970s, “earners in the top twenty percent received sixty one percent of the total incomes” whereas “the lowest forty percent received only thirteen percent.” Discrimination against rural migrants persisted in various sites of daily life in the city, such as banks, hospitals, offices, and schools.<sup>350</sup> The Bánzer regime vaunted the economic growth under its rule. This economic growth resulted in fact from increased foreign loans and favorable conditions in world markets for the country’s primary exports, but most Bolivians continued to suffer from poverty.<sup>351</sup>

---

<sup>348</sup> Juan Antonio Morales, “The National Revolution and Its Legacy,” in Grindle and Domingo, *Proclaiming Revolution*, 222-223.

<sup>349</sup> Herbert S. Klein, “Social Change in Bolivia since 1952,” Grindle and Domingo, *Proclaiming Revolution*, 244.

<sup>350</sup> María E. Placencia, “Inequality in Address Behavior at Public Institutions in La Paz, Bolivia,” *Anthropological Linguistics*, 43, 2 (2001).

<sup>351</sup> Dunkerley, *Rebellion in the Veins*, 229-230.

One should not reductively attribute the rise of Indianism and Katarism to a reactionary response of a few ideologues to the supposed failure of the National Revolution to materialize a social inclusion for historically marginalized sectors. It is, however, indispensable to recognize the socioeconomic context in which radical ideological alternatives could be articulated into elaborate political programs. When Indianism and Katarism critically questioned the structural nature of the social oppression, which dated back to the Spanish colonial time, their discourses acquired concrete meanings in the context of the perpetual marginalization experienced by people of indigenous descent. As long as “the indian hide” continued being “cheap” [*La piel de un indio no cuesta caro*] to cite the title of the Peruvian short story by Julio Ramón Ribeyro, radical militancy remained a political option for the racialized mass.<sup>352</sup> What would be the historic legitimacy of the Bolivian nation-state that perpetuated the colonial subjugation of indians? The Bolivian governing groups somehow had to address this question, which pointed directly to a foundational core of their nation-state.

### ***Indianism, Katarism, and Mestizaje***

*La Nación Clandestina (The Clandestine Nation)*, Jorge Sanjinés’s film scripted mostly in Aymara, shows how Sebastián, an ex-comunario of Willkani, has become cholo through mestizaje and restores his Aymara roots in order to be rehabilitated into his community through *Jacha Tata Danzanti* (Dance of Death). During his return journey from the city of La Paz to Willkani, Sebastián reflects upon the different pasts that have led the community to expel him. He discarded his Aymara surname, Mamani, and replaced it with “Maisman” to be converted

---

<sup>352</sup> Julio Ramón Ribeyro, “La piel de un indio no cuesta caro,” (published in 1961) in Julio Ramón Ribeyro *Cuentos completos* (Alfaguara, 1994).

into mestizo. He believed that the National Revolution and the Agrarian Reform had freed peasants and, therefore, confronted Vicente, his brother, who criticized the government and the Military-Peasant Pact. He also became a henchman of the intelligence team of the Interior Ministry, partaking in clandestine murders of political dissidents. However, Sebastián's desire to achieve social mobility through mestizaje did not materialize. Upon the death of his father, Sebastián's mother sent Vicente to bring him back to Willkani. While Vicente looked for his younger brother in La Paz, two men stopped him and interrogated him on what he was doing. When he identified himself as a rural teacher who was in search of his brother Sebastián Maisman, he learned that Sebastián was not called "Maisman" but "Mamani, the indian." Vicente finally found his brother, inebriated out of frustration, in a bar.<sup>353</sup> Sebastián's life in the city was a failure and exemplified the frustration of rural migrants, whose aspiration to social mobility had to confront a grim reality of persistent racism and marginalization of indians.

Following his brother's suggestion, Sebastián returned to Willkani to participate in the funeral of his father. The comunarias/os welcomed his return and, after the funeral, appointed him as a leader of the community. His life as comunario was, however, full of tensions. He sexually violated Basilia to force her to marry him. A comunario was upset because he thought that he was better prepared and more eligible for the leadership position than a mestizo like Sebastián. Additionally, Sebastián did not know how to work the land because he grew up in the city. Other comunarias/os were willing to help him, but he did not harmoniously fit into the norms of the community. As Basilia straightforwardly told him before his sexual aggression, "in the city, they don't know, you're one of them and you don't know anything" [*En la ciudad ya no*

---

<sup>353</sup> "La Nación Clandestina," film directed by Jorge Sanjinés (Grupo Ukamau; Televisión Española S.A., and Channel Four, 1989).

*saben, tú eres uno de ellos y no sabes nada*]. Sebastián committed his biggest sin against the community when he deceived other comunarias/os in order to obtain personal benefits out of Willkani's negotiation with a North American aid organization. The comunarias/os decided to expel Sebastián who "is in service of nobody" [*no sirves para nada*]. In a crying voice, Sebastián's mother declared, "He is not my son" [*no es mi hijo Sebastián*]. If he returned to the community, the comunarias/os would kill him.<sup>354</sup>

As Sebastián reflects on all of the past moments that have critically defined his relationship with his community, the temporal differentiation between the past and the present disappears. *La Nación Clandestina* captures several moments, when he stares at the Sebastián of the past as if the two Sebastián's exist at the same time. The Sebastián of the past is clearly different from what he is right now. However, the difference does not express itself through a differentiation along a line of temporal progression but through a contrast between what is remembered and who is remembering. The remembering Sebastián and the remembered Sebastián "appear simultaneously in front of the camera in the production of a single strip of film." Even if the former recognizes his Aymara origins, his coexistence with the latter makes it impossible for him to totally negate the mestizaje, which he has undergone in the city. His mestizaje does not lead him to discard those origins and convert himself into a mestizo, ontologically separate from Aymara. The Aymara part of his being coexists with mestizo elements, which he has acquired during his life in the city. In this sense, his mestizaje contradicts "the linearity of the discourse of...*mestizaje*" as a process of the cultural-ethnic break between the backward indian past and the modern mestizo subject.<sup>355</sup>

---

<sup>354</sup> Ibid.

<sup>355</sup> Jeff D. Himpele, *Circuits of Culture: Media, Politics, and Indigenous Identity in the Andes* (University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 131.





<Illustration 3.1> The ex-comunario stares at his pasts with the Andean landscape in the background. (*La Nación Clandestina*, directed by Jorge Sanjinés (Grupo Ukamau; Televisión Española S.A.; Channel Four, 1989)

The social reality illustrated in *La Nación Clandestina* is an Andean landscape divided between indians and national society. While the latter seeks to define itself as a homogeneous mestizo nation, various “clandestine nations” within Bolivia, such as Aymara, remain marginalized and stigmatized as indian. The uneasy nature of relationships between Bolivia and the clandestine nations replicates the contradictions and tensions that stem from the perpetuation of the former’s domination over the latter. Sebastián personifies these contradictions and tensions; he is an Aymara, whose incorporation into the Bolivian nation has not erased the social stigma attached to his indianness and only placed him on the margins of national society. His mestizaje does not signify linear progress of an underdeveloped society toward a better, “modernized” phase of social evolution. Progressive discourse of mestizaje loses substantial meaning and reinscribes colonial stigma onto the indian body in the guise of cultural-ethnic homogeneity and equality among all Bolivians.

When Sebastián arrives in Willkani, only a few old comunarias/os and children are there because most comunarias/os went to the mine to join the miners' protest against the military government that has taken power by coup. With the help of Tankara, the sage (*yatiri*) of the community, Sebastián prepares *Jacha Tata Danzanti*, a dance to death, to pay for his sins against the community. Comunarias/os from the mine return to the community while Sebastián performs the *Danzanti*. Tankara tries to mollify ire of the comunarias/os who are infuriated by Sebastián's presence. Vicente tells his brother, "Sebastián, brother, what have you come for? They're gonna kill you!" [*Sebastián, hermano, ¿para qué has venido? ¡Te van a matar!*] He and Basilia stop others to protect Sebastián, and Tankara continues his effort to persuade the comunarias/os so that Sebastián can dance and thereby "pay for his sins" [*así pagará sus culpas*]. The comunarias/os are not easily mollified and keep saying, "We have come from having fought alongside the miners with our dead, and this one is dancing!" [*Nosotros venimos de haber peleado al lado de los mineros con nuestros muertos y está bailando*]. The comunarias/os finally stop talking when Tankara says for the third time, "Let him dance until he dies so that he washes his sins. He is dancing the ancient dance with respect, with permission of old comunarios. Don't kill him! He will dance our ancient dance until he dies. Leave him alone and listen! Understand his pain!" [*Déjenle bailar hasta morir, que lave sus culpas, está bailando la danza antigua con respeto, con el permiso de los ancianos, ¡no lo maten! Él bailará nuestra danza antigua hasta morir. ¡Déjenlo y escuchen! ¡Comprendan su dolor!*]

The *Danzanti* continues, and everybody watches it. As the dance goes on, Sebastián becomes exhausted. He tries to sustain his body, but he eventually falls down and never stands up again. He has fulfilled his *Danzanti* to rehabilitate himself into the community. The sequence in the film shifts to his funeral with comunarias/or weeping out of sadness. Among the comunarias/os appears a Sebastián. He stares at the funeral parade of the Sebastián who has died of the *Danzanti*.<sup>356</sup>



<Illustration 3.2> The ex-comunario has fallen down on the verge of dying from his performance of the *Danzanti*

---

<sup>356</sup> Ibid.



<Illustration 3.3> The reborn comunario looks at the funeral of his past that has been embraced by the community

The dead Sebastián is the ex-comunario rejected by the community. The death of this Sebastián has led to the birth of another Sebastián, the comunario. This reborn comunario, however, does not represent the return of Sebastián to the old past conceptualized in a backward-looking fashion. The new Sebastián does not embody an Aymara nation construed as a pure and pristine form of the community untouched by external influences but carries all his past experiences and memories, including those accumulated through his life in the city. In other words, Sebastián “the comunario” is composed culturally and socially not only of *lo aymara* but also of mestizo elements derived from his contact with Bolivian national society. As the community of Willkani has accepted this Aymara, it incorporates a mestizaje into its own communal society that fundamentally remains Aymara. Because of this, the Aymara nation delineated in *La Nación Clandestina* does not signify a backward-looking utopia, an archaic, unchanging and timeless world as Mario Vargas Llosa would argue.<sup>357</sup> On the contrary, the film

---

<sup>357</sup> Mario Vargas Llosa, *La utopía arcaica: José María Arguedas y las ficciones del indigenismo* (Fondo de Cultural Económica México, 1996).

illustrates a nation with the capacity to reconstitute and renovate itself through interactions with the other world that affects its cultural and social formations. While the notion of mestizaje projects a linear process of change through which mestizos displace Aymaras and other groups considered to be indian, the rebirth of Sebastián as comunario shows a different type of relation between *lo indio* and mestizaje. In the words of Paul A. Schroeder Rodríguez, “it is the hegemonic” notion of cultural-ethnic change that is subsumed to an Aymara nation adhering to the Andean notion of cyclical time.<sup>358</sup> The reborn Sebastián personifies such an inversion of the dominant cultural relationship between *lo indio* and mestizaje, making a communitarian renovation and pachakuti possible.

The reconstitution of *lo aymara* in *La Nación Clandestina* is a process through which a colonized Aymara nation defines the terms and outcome of its relationship with the colonial world of Bolivia. The rise of Indianism and Katarism in the 1970s needs to be understood in terms of such a process through which racialized groups redefine the meaning of their ethnicity and race in the context of their relation to the dominant society. Generally speaking, people who offer ideological and intellectual assessments of Indianism and Katarism in Bolivia are divided into two opposing camps. One group discusses Indianism and Katarism in terms of the ideological formation that represents colonized Andean nations’ own, independent way of thinking.<sup>359</sup> The other group criticizes those ideologies for creating a(n) dangerous and extremist idealization of the preconquest past—an idealization, – which irrationally demonizes a civilized

---

<sup>358</sup> Paul A. Schroeder Rodríguez, “La fase neobarroca del Nuevo Cien Latinoamericano,” *Revista de Crítica Literaria Latinoamericana* 37, 73 (2011): 32; “After New Latin American Cinema,” *Cinema Journal* 51, 2 (2012): 102.

<sup>359</sup> Hurtado, *El Katarismo*; Ayar Quispe, *Indianismo* (Ediciones Pachakuti, Awqa, 2011); Wankar Reynaga, *Tawa Inti Suyu. 5 Siglos de Guerra India* (Sexta Edición, La Paz, 2005).

Western world as opposed to an archaic civilization of Tawantinsuyu.<sup>360</sup> Despite their disagreement, these two groups share the assumption that Indianism and Katarism have been articulated against a Western world conceptualized as a colonial structure of oppression upheld by white-mestizo Bolivia. In other words, both proponents and critics of Indianism and Katarism focus on the antagonistic side of Indianism and Katarism's relation to an ideologically constructed West.

However, Indianism and Katarism expressed more than racial antagonism against white-mestizo Bolivia. Indianists and Katarists in the 1960s and 1970s grappled with contradictions and limits of the National Revolution that promised progress but perpetuated colonial patterns of domination. Ethnicity and race became an important component of emancipatory politics to claim citizenship formally guaranteed but practically denied to the indigenous majority. Indianism and Katarism articulated an ideological formation rooted in indigenous experiences of marginal incorporation into national society, disclosing colonial dimensions of the Bolivian state: a state that discriminated against its indigenous citizens, such as the "Sebastián, the indian." Indianism and Katarism could be legitimate ideological pathways for this indian to emancipate himself from the oppression, which he suffers because of his indian race.

Marxists with orthodox ideological formation, such as Juan Manuel Poma Laura, characterize Fausto Reinaga as an idealist frustrated by huge discrepancy between his ideal and actual reality. This frustration, according to Poma, led Reinaga to reject supposedly colonial and Western thoughts, undertake a mission of inventing a new political philosophy of Indian race,

---

<sup>360</sup> H.C.F. Mansilla, *Una mirada crítica sobre el indianismo y la descolonización. El potencial conservador bajo el manto revolucionario* (Rincón Ediciones, 2014).

and ignore the genuine revolutionary subject embodied by “the indian proletariat.”<sup>361</sup>

Conservative reactionaries represented by H.C.F. Mansilla dismissively argue that Indianism is a rhetorical aggregation of personal frustrations and resentments of a few ideologues toward the Bolivian society imagined as colonial. In Mansilla’s opinion, Indianism represents a “romantic, irrational and antidemocratic” utopianism forged by “losers in the process of modernization” that has benefited only a few privileged segments of Bolivian society.<sup>362</sup> Reactionary critics of Indianism adhere to the notion of linear social progress, in which the present and modernity are separated from the “bygone past” that is congealed in the realm of tradition and cultural conservatism. From this point of view, Indianists only romanticize the preconquest past to which they anachronistically want to return.

These critics assume that modernization is a predetermined process of social evolution and attack Indianism because it deviates from what they preconceive as a universal process of linear progress. They ignore the fundamental component of Indianists’ racial politics: “a historical consciousness” rooted in ethnic origins.<sup>363</sup> Early Indianists, in search of their collective roots, made their own readings of the precolonial and colonial pasts and formulated alternative points of ideological reference to raise consciousness of Indians’ true identity, origins, and task as an oppressed nation and pueblo. In the words of Guillermo Carnero Hoke, “we can do nothing...if we do not know from where we come” [*Nada podemos hacer, entonces, si antes no sabemos de dónde venimos*].<sup>364</sup> The problem of historical consciousness in Indianism was a problem of imagining a past that would culturally valorize the racialized masses, be the basis of

---

<sup>361</sup> Juan Manuel Poma Laura, *Fausto Reynaga. O la frustración del programa indio* (Textos marxistas, 2011), 257-258.

<sup>362</sup> Mansilla, *Una mirada crítica sobre el indianismo y la descolonización*, 13, 59.

<sup>363</sup> Guillermo Carnero Hoke, *Nueva teoría para la insurgencia* (Editorial Amerindia, 1968), 103.

<sup>364</sup> *Ibid*, 104.

their collective identity anchored in common experiences as Indians, and give them a sense of historic continuity between the preconquest time and the present politics of emancipation. In this sense, one needs to look at Indianism not as a narrowly defined political platform for the Indian Revolution and the reconstitution of Qullasuyu-Tawantinsuyu but as an ideological use of the past, which is directed toward solving issues of the persistent social divide and racialization of the masses stigmatized as indian. Criticizing Indianism for refusing to follow a supposedly universal process of modernization toward a Western modernity only reinscribes Western supremacy constructed as an ideological project. As Indianism has essentialized *lo indio* for the purpose of consciousness-raising, its critics have invented their own version of an ideological construct of modernity. What is crucially absent in their critiques of Indianism is a critical inquiry into how the notion of the “West” has been historically forged as the dominant mode of cultural, economic, and social development in the historical context of the colonial expansion of the European and North American Empires. As innumerable intellectuals demonstrate, the idea of the West was an outcome of the colonial expansion that has produced and reproduced destructive forms of mass exclusion, genocide, impoverishment, marginalization, and terrorization on a global scale.<sup>365</sup> Indianism was an Andean response to the specific instance of this massive and systemic violence that had affected the Andes since the first moment of Spanish colonialism in the 1530s.

---

<sup>365</sup> Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton University Press, 2000); Gerald Horne, *The Apocalypse of Settler Colonialism: The Roots of Slavery, White Supremacy, and Capitalism in 17<sup>th</sup> Century North America and the Caribbean* (Monthly Review Press, 2018); Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (Bogle-L’Ouverture Publications, 1972); Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (Pantheon Books, 1978); Michel-Rolph Trouillot, “Anthropology and Savage Slot: The Poetics and Politics of Otherness,” in Richard G. Fox, *Recapturing Anthropology: Working in the Present* (School of American Research, 1991); Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* (The University of North Carolina Press, 1994 [1944]).



The Indianist and Katarist parties, such as the MITKA and MRTK, obtained low votes (between 1-2%) in the national elections from 1978 to 1989. Internal conflicts in these parties also damaged Indiaism and Katarism during this period. Indianist and Katarist leaders often accused their “brothers” in the same party of embezzling money from the party and betraying their pueblo. These accusations stemmed from rivalries between party leaders who conspired to defeat their rivals in their bid for winning the leadership position in the party. Some Indianists defecting from their party chose the worst alternative: they sided with the military regime of General Luis García Meza (1980-1981), which was financed by cocaine trades and brutally repressed social movements and opposition parties.<sup>366</sup>

Despite their defects, Indianists and Katarists were part of the process through which the landscape of national politics had critically changed. The CSUTCB, founded in 1979 under the leadership of Jenaro Flores, became one of the most influential political organizations, replacing the COB and the FSTMB as the most powerful organ of popular politics. National politics incorporated the language of multiculturalism and cultural plurality of the nation during the 1980s-1990s. The CIDOB (*Confederación de Pueblos Indígenas de Bolivia*) became a visible current of social movements after it successfully organized the March for Territory and Dignity in 1990 and the March for Territory, Land, Political Participation and Development in 1996. The CONAMAQ (*Consejo Nacional de Ayllus y Markas del Qullasuyu*), established in 1997, outspokenly called for the reconstitution of the ancestral indigenous jurisdictional entities of the preconquest Aymara federation, including “ayllus, markas and suyus of Qullasuyu.” Neoliberal multiculturalism, implemented by the Constitution of 1994, was a state response to this new landscape of popular politics that had acquired strong ethnic contents vis-à-vis those pertaining

---

<sup>366</sup> Portugal and Macusaya, *El indianismo katarista*, 491-518.

to class.<sup>367</sup> As Jeff D. Himpele mentions, *La Nación Clandestina* “correspond[ed]” to this multiculturalist “turn in Bolivian politics,” which reformulated the terms of social debate on national identity. The imaginary of mestizo homogeneity no longer resonated with the actual social landscape inhabited by diverse indigenous groups. “[T]he term ‘pluri-multi’” displaced that imaginary as a principal language of intellectual debates and policy-making “to describe national diversity.”<sup>368</sup> Even though Indianists and Katarists were not the only actors in producing these changes, their critique on the colonial nature of the Bolivian state raised a fundamental question about the structure of that state that privileged its European heritage. This question has remained central to Bolivian politics of decolonization.

To be sure, the ideological language and political activism of Indianists and Katarists were only a part of the process that produced Bolivian debates on decolonization and national diversity from the 1980s onwards. One important dimension to this process was the massive influx of indigenous migrants into urban areas since the Agrarian Reform of 1953. Bolivia’s major cities absorbed huge numbers of migrants from the countryside, the mines and provincial towns. This migratory process raised several new social issues and questions, which the next chapter discusses for the city of El Alto. El Alto is known as an Aymara city because Aymara migrants are the majority in the city. As the next chapter illustrates, migrants in El Alto face various social obstacles that perpetuate their marginal conditions. At the same time, their experiences show how they have confronted their marginalization and have created a distinct social landscape that raises its own possibility of social change.

---

<sup>367</sup> Almut Schilling-Vacador, “Indigenous Identities and Politico-Jurisdictional Demands of CSUTCB and CONAMAQ in the Constitutional Change Process of Bolivia,” *T’inkazos* 4 (2008): 23-24; Donna Lee Van Cott, *The Friendly Liquidation of the Past: The Politics of Diversity in Latin America* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2000).

<sup>368</sup> Himpele, *Circuits of Culture*, 131.

## Chapter 4

### City of Migrants: El Alto's Rise in National Imaginary

The four-volume work by Xavier Albó, Tomás Greaves, and Godofredo Sandoval looks into the relationship between *lo aymara* and *lo q'ara* in Chukiyawu/La Paz. This work was a major product of the scholarly effort launched in Bolivia and Peru during the 1980s to analyze massive influx of rural migrants into the city since the mid-twentieth century.<sup>369</sup> Spatial divide between indigenous migrants and white-mestizos reflect the social stratification of urban residents of different ethnic origins. The two groups are located at different altitudes of the Bolivian capital, known as *Chukiyawu*, or *Chukiyawu Marka* in rural Aymara communities. Residents of Chukiyawu represent “a cultural variation” produced among urban Aymaras who mostly inhabit barrios located at higher altitudes of La Paz and what would become the City of El Alto. Q'aras live in the *Zona Sur* (Southern Zone) at lower altitudes and residential areas in the middle part of La Paz, such as Miraflores and Sopocachi. Despite its physical distance from the places inhabited by q'aras, Chukiyawu is not separate from them. Chukiyawu/La Paz is more than a dualistic division of the city into indigenous and white-mestizo sections. The world of Aymara migrants produce “a subculture” situated “within a more broadly articulated [sociocultural] universe” resulting from the intersection of *lo aymara* and *lo q'ara* in an urban space, hierarchically organized along the line of ethnic differentiation.<sup>370</sup>

---

<sup>369</sup> Albó, Greaves and Sandoval, *Chukiyawu: la cara aymara de La Paz. I; Chukiyawu: la cara aymara de La Paz. II.; Chukiyawu: la cara aymara de La Paz. III.*; Golte and Adams, *Los caballos de troya de los invasores*; Matos, *Desborde popular y crisis del Estado*; Sandoval, Albó, and Greaves, *Chukiyawu: la cara aymara de La Paz. IV.*

<sup>370</sup> Albó, Greaves and Sandoval, *Chukiyawu: la cara aymara de La Paz. I.*, 87, 94; *Chukiyawu: la cara aymara de La Paz. III.*, 14.

A central thesis of Albó, Greaves and Sandoval is about rural migrants' capacity to create their distinct cultural and social spheres that "always manage to survive" despite constant pressure of assimilation into the dominant society construed as Western and civilized.<sup>371</sup> That survival does not simply imply a transfer of rural communitarian culture to the city along with the physical relocation of Aymaras from the countryside. As Aymara migrants settle in urban barrios, obtain new jobs, participate in the city's labor market, study in the university, and/or launch their small businesses (*microempresas*), such as artisanal production and vending on the streets or in a small shop, their life acquires a different cycle of economic production and social interaction vis-à-vis those who stay in the countryside. Many migrants regularly visit their community of origin, where they keep working lands and participating in fiesta. Their prime concern is, however, not communal activities but their work and education of their children in the city, which are indispensable for the improvement of their family's living standards. This creates a social distance between them and comunarias/os in the countryside because comunarias/os often perceive migrants in the city as caring less about "the benefit of their community" and pursuing "only their personal interest."<sup>372</sup>

As migrants become "residents" of the city, *jaqis* (persons in Aymara) of the community perceive them as cholos, or mistis who are "outside the communal life" despite their sociocultural "roots" derived from their "past" lives as comunarias/os.<sup>373</sup> Yet, *aymaras mistis* in the city do not necessarily lose their Aymara identity as long as they are culturally and socially linked to their place of origin. Their experience of racism in the city also makes them aware of

---

<sup>371</sup> Albó, Greaves and Sandoval, *Chukiyawu: la cara aymara de La Paz*. I., 87.

<sup>372</sup> Sandoval, Albó, and Greaves, *Chukiyawu: la cara aymara de La Paz*. IV., 105.

<sup>373</sup> Esteban Ticona, "Mestizo, cholo, 'misti', 'ch'ixi'" *La Razón* July 8, 2012 accessed via [http://www.la-razon.com/suplementos/animal\\_politico/Mestizo-cholo-misti-chixi\\_0\\_1646235411.html](http://www.la-razon.com/suplementos/animal_politico/Mestizo-cholo-misti-chixi_0_1646235411.html).

how their Aymara origins continue to affect their urban lives. In offices, schools, streets, and public transportations, such as minibuses, *micros* (small size buses with about 25 seats) and *trufis* (taxis with regular routes and fares like buses), they are discriminated for their skin color, indigenous surname, and other cultural attributes ascribed to *lo indio*. In their barrios in La Paz and El Alto, infrastructural underdevelopment and public insecurity are a serious problem that reinforces their marginal position in society. Many rich households in the Zona Sur hire *cholas* (female mistis) as household employees (*trabajadoras del hogar*) who cook, clean, and fulfill menial tasks in the house. According to the INE, the Department of La Paz accounted for 19% of 117,735 household employees in Bolivia with 94.3% of those employees being women. Household employees are mostly underpaid (Bs. 500-1000 per month, which is lower than the minimum wage, Bs. 2000) and subject to racist humiliation by their employers.<sup>374</sup>

Even if an Aymara world of Chukiyawu has been created in La Paz and El Alto, its formation occurs in the context of the persistent socio-ethnic divide in the two cities. This divide, does not simply mean that Chukiyawu is subordinate to the dominant white-mestizo world, replicating the colonial subordination of *lo indio* to q'aras. Chukiyawu is not a fixed ethnic space of *lo aymara* conceptualized in essentialist terms of authentic Aymara identity as opposed to q'ara. As Doreen Massey underscores, social space is “a product of interrelations” between processes through which “identities/entities” are constructed. Chukiyawu as a social space contains multiple stories of rural migration and urban settlement, stories that do not necessarily

---

<sup>374</sup> “Ser trabajadora del hogar en Bolivia,” *El Deber* March 30, 2016 accessed via *Shorthand Social* <https://social.shorthand.com/diarioeldeber/uyYrhYNMG8f/ser-trabajadora-del-hogar-en-bolivia>; “Sin seguro de salud, salarios bajos y maltratos, el drama invisible de las trabajadoras del hogar,” *Agencia de Noticias Fides* March 30, 2018 accessed via <https://www.noticiasfides.com/nacional/sociedad/sin-seguro-de-salud-salarios-bajos-y-maltratos-el-drama-invisible-de-las-trabajadoras-del-hogar-de-bolivia-386887>.

correspond to the notion of *lo aymara* essentialized as a communitarian culture, or a nation with “a coherent seamless authenticity.”<sup>375</sup> They are interrelated stories in the sense that they are part of the same city’s history shaped by migration from different places. This common belonging to Chukiyawu does not automatically make them constitute a coherent narrative of migration. Chukiyawu is not a predetermined territory “in which all interconnections have been established” and “everywhere is already linked with everywhere else.”<sup>376</sup> Conceiving it as an ethnic enclave or a separate place is misleading. Instead, I consider it to be in a constant process made by daily cultural and social experiences of Aymara residents in the city. These experiences are beyond the grasp of official maps with straight lines and jurisdictional divisions, which are designed to impose a bounded and fixed territoriality upon places. This territoriality is what Neil Smith and Cindi Katz call “absolute space” that “refers to a conception of space as a field, container, [or] a co-ordinate system of discrete and mutually exclusive locations.”<sup>377</sup>

This chapter complicates an absolute space of El Alto, which obscures the spatial formation shaped by social struggle of the city’s residents for achieving social mobility and personal well-being. It looks at the social space of El Alto from a historical perspective, focusing on different individual histories of migration to the city. It illustrates a historical process of the formation of an El Alto that has coexisted with the absolute space with demarcated boundaries on administrative map of the city. It delves into six individual testimonies of El Alto’s residents, which shed light on different experiences of migration to and settlement in the city. It delineates different histories of incorporation into urban margins, considering migrants’ experiences to be

---

<sup>375</sup> Doreen Massey, *For Space* (Sage Publications, 2005), 10.

<sup>376</sup> *Ibid.*, 11-12.

<sup>377</sup> Neil Smith and Cindi Katz, “Grounding Metaphor: Towards a Spatialized Politics,” in Michael Keith and Steve Pile, *Place and the Politics of Identity* (Routledge, 1993), 75.

central to the construction of social space in El Alto. It offers a history of El Alto as experienced by individual migrants who have partaken in the city's formation. Even though El Alto has rapidly grown into the second largest city in Bolivia over the last century, its history of administrative and institutional development shows that the Bolivian state has neglected its needs for basic services and infrastructures. Anthropologists and sociologists demonstrate that civic organizations, such as neighborhood associations (*juntas vecinales*), and unions of street traders, artisans, merchants and food sellers, have functioned as virtual governments of the city, where the state has ignored people's social needs.<sup>378</sup> This has rendered the city's relationship with the state so negative that some scholars comment on "the absence of the State" in El Alto.<sup>379</sup> The chapter centers on how individual migrants have made their lives in such a marginal urban space that has been profoundly criminalized, racialized and stigmatized as an indian city. Despite its recent centrality to national politics and the increasing visibility of its wealthy merchants known as *qamiri*, El Alto continues to suffer from the lack of basic services, infrastructure and public safety. The chapter examines how migrants have confronted these marginal conditions of their city.

### ***El Alto: A Space of Marginality***

Enrique Flores Gómez is resident of barrio Kiswara in District 4 of El Alto. He and his wife Inés Pinto González migrated to El Alto from Caracollo, a provincial town in Oruro, in 1993 to find a better job. It was, according to Flores, difficult to obtain a decent job in a small town like Caracollo. He and his wife looked for better opportunities for work and education of

---

<sup>378</sup> Lazar, *El Alto, Rebel City*; Sandoval and Sostres, *La ciudad prometida*.

<sup>379</sup> Franck Poupeau, "El Alto: una ficción política" *Bulletin de l'Institut français d'études andines* 39, 2 (2010): 446.

their children, and believed that in El Alto and La Paz, “there are more opportunities.”<sup>380</sup> A brother of Pinto had already settled in El Alto, and provided his sister’s family with a room.

Despite his help, her family’s life in El Alto “wasn’t easy”:

*Al principio no estaba como nos ven todavía porque no teníamos comodidades. Y ¿qué iba pasando a mis hijos? Estaban creciendo. Cada uno de ellos también ya era más jovencito y empezaron a estudiar todo. No era muy fácil aquí en la ciudad. Porque a veces no se encontraba trabajo. Y teníamos que hacer algún negocio para poder sobrevivir aquí en La Paz. Y así poco a poco conseguimos esta casita también y nos acomodamos aquí. Hicimos este negocio que tenemos aquí, estamos aquí siempre [At the beginning, it wasn’t like how we’re now because we didn’t have comfortable lives. And what was happening to my children? They were growing. Every one of them was now more and more adolescent, and they all began to study. It wasn’t easy here in the city because sometimes we didn’t find jobs. And we had to do a business to be able to survive here in La Paz. That way, little by little, we acquired this little house, and settled down here. We did this business we have here. We’re always here].<sup>381</sup>*

Her family runs a small shop that sells drinks, ice creams, and pastries. Even though this microbusiness does not generate high incomes, it has allowed the family to maintain a relatively stable life and own a modest house.

Flores and Pinto say that many people in El Alto live with difficulties. He argues that these difficulties stem from the Bolivian governing group’s mishandling of political power and that El Alto’s people should be aware of that. Politicians “didn’t know El Alto’s particularity” [*no conocían particularmente a Alto*] that has to do with its history as a city of migrants, and have not properly addressed the problems faced by the city’s inhabitants:

*Estabamos gobernados por presidentes que no conocían particularmente a Alto. Entonces El Alto es una ciudad de migrantes de comunidades, de ciudades. Entonces eso hace de que nosotros tengamos que también ser parte de ellos. Y la unión que se mantiene hasta ahora es justamente eso. Ahora para nosotros ha sido muy importante ver ese cambio que ha habido ahora. La Ciudad de El Alto pareció simple comunidad, pequeño pueblito. Solamente había el aeropuerto y la Avenida 6 de Marzo. Nada más. En estos veinticinco años estamos viviendo, la*

---

<sup>380</sup> Testimony of Enrique Flores Gómez, January 11, 2017.

<sup>381</sup> Testimony of Inés Pinto González, January 11, 2017.



*Ciudad de El Alto es una de las ciudades más pobladas de Bolivia, sería la tercera ciudad más poblada de Bolivia y con jóvenes, bastante jóvenes. Entonces antes no se podía vivir por su clima, por la altitud. Mucho decía que es muy difícil vivir en El Alto. Sin embargo ahora la ciudad ha crecido bastante. En relación a otras ciudades su crecimiento ha sido muy rápido* [We're governed by the presidents who didn't know about El Alto's particularity. El Alto is a city of migrants from communities, cities. That means they're part of us, and that's precisely the unity that has been maintained until now. Now for us it has been very important to understand the change that had been made here. The City of El Alto looked simply like a small community, pueblo. There were only the airport and the 6 de Marzo Avenue, nothing else. But in these twenty five years in which we have been living, the City of El Alto, it's one of the most populated cities of Bolivia, it would be the third most populated city of Bolivia and with a lot of young people. Then in the past, one couldn't live in El Alto because of its climate, the altitude, many said it was very difficult to live in El Alto. Nevertheless the city has sufficiently grown. Compared to other cities, its growth has been so rapid].<sup>382</sup>

Despite El Alto's rapid growth over the last three decades, the city's residents believe that their city is still far behind other cities in terms of infrastructural development and provision of basic services, such as electricity, public transportation, and water. El Alto's citizens, according to Flores, "should take more consciousness" [*nosotros tenemos que tomar más conciencia*] to educate their children who should assume the leading role in making a "genuine socioeconomic change" [*cambio verdadero socioeconómico*] for the city to advance toward a better future.<sup>383</sup>

As indicated by the census data, urban expansion of El Alto has been immense since Flores's and Pinto's arrival in the city until today. The 1992 census showed that El Alto had grown into the fourth largest Bolivian city with 405,492 inhabitants. El Alto's population had increased by an annual rate of 9.23% from the previous census conducted in 1976, when the registered number of city's inhabitants was 95,434.<sup>384</sup> Population growth rate of the Department of La Paz during the same period was 1.66%, the fifth highest among Bolivia's nine departments

---

<sup>382</sup> Testimony of Enrique Flores Gómez.

<sup>383</sup> Ibid.

<sup>384</sup> Garfias and Mazurek, *El Alto desde una perspectiva poblacional*, 21.

with Santa Cruz growing most rapidly (4.16%).<sup>385</sup> Construction boom in urban areas during the Bánzer regime attracted more migrants seeking jobs in the city. Moreover, the small parcels of land distributed after 1953 were insufficient for the generation of rural populations that came of age in the 1960s and 1970s. The scarcity of lands in these decades motivated more and more young rural people to move to the city. The drought in 1983 further deteriorated the economic situation in the countryside, resulting in a large-scale rural exodus. After the government of Víctor Paz (his fourth presidency from 1985 to 1989) implemented the neoliberal restructuring in 1986, mines with low productivity, including Catavi and Siglo XX, were closed, leaving many miners unemployed, and these miners looked for alternative jobs in cities. The huge wave of migration from mining towns since the mid-1980s led to the formation of miners' barrios in El Alto, such as Santiago II.<sup>386</sup>

El Alto had been a district (*subalcaldía*) of the city of La Paz since 1970. El Alto's civic organizations, such as the FEJUVE (*Federación de Juntas Vecinales*) had campaigned for elevation of the district's jurisdictional status to autonomous municipality. When El Alto's civic leaders and officials coalesced into the FURIA (*Frente de Unidad y Renovación Independiente de El Alto*) founded on August 4, 1984 to deal more coherently with higher authorities, the process toward the jurisdictional elevation of the district had become irreversible.<sup>387</sup> Public opinion shifted in favor of that elevation as a result of active campaigns of El Alto's civic leaders. On October 19, 1984, the FEJUVE of El Alto and the municipal government of La Paz

---

<sup>385</sup> George Gray Molina, "The Offspring of 1952: Poverty, Exclusion and the Promise of Popular Participation," in Grindle and Domingo, *Proclaiming Revolution*, 347.

<sup>386</sup> Garfias and Mazurek, *El Alto desde una perspectiva poblacional*, 14; Lazar, *El Alto, Rebel City*, 47.

<sup>387</sup> Johnny Fernández Rojas, *Así nació El Alto* (Centro de Formación y Capacitación para la Participación Ciudadana, 2015), 56.

agreed to institute “a by-institutional commission” that would elaborate on formulas for practical planning in areas of “political, legal, technical-administrative, [and] economic-financial” [*politico, jurídico, técnico-administrativo, económico-financiero*] affairs of the Fourth Municipal Section of the Murillo Province. El Alto’s civic organizations had demanded since the 1960s that that section be created and that El Alto become its capital. On March 6, 1985, the National Congress ratified the Law 728, authorizing the creation of the Fourth Municipal Section of the Murillo Province “with El Alto of La Paz being its capital” [*con su capital El Alto de La Paz*].<sup>388</sup> Continuing pressure from El Alto’s civic organizations ultimately compelled the national government to elevate the city to a separate municipality vis-à-vis La Paz in 1988.<sup>389</sup>

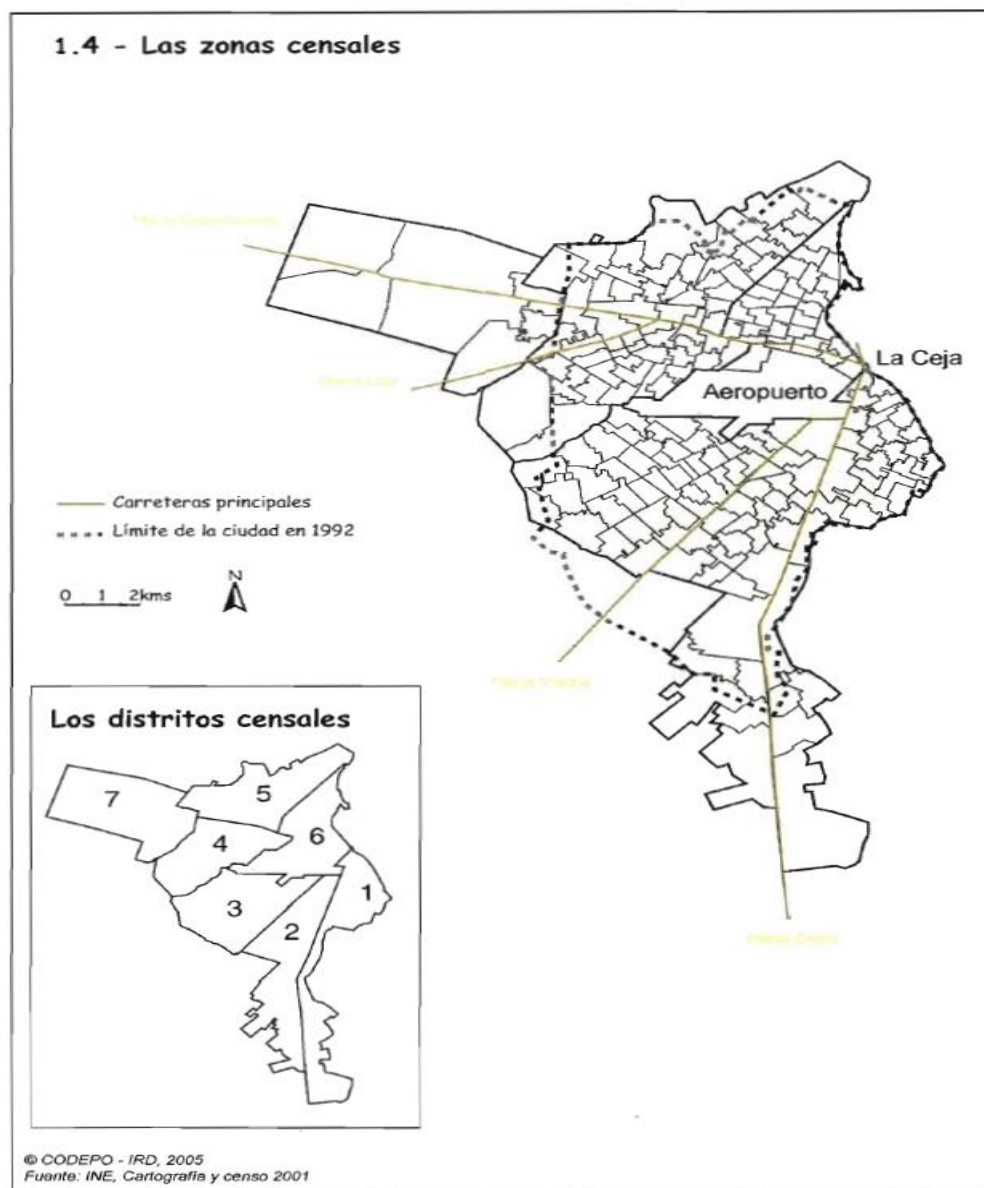
The municipal government of El Alto initially divided the city into seven administrative districts officially instituted in 1996. Three distinct axes of urban expansion, according to Sandra Garfias and Hubert Mazurek, penetrate different lines of these seven districts and the additional seven added later. As indicated by red lines in Map 4, these axes linearly cross three different roads that head toward Oruro, Copacabana and Viacha, respectively. The beginning point of two of those axes is Ceja whereas the axis connected to Viacha starts in the Intersection of Viacha, which is located in the endpoint of the Airport section along the 6 de Marzo Avenue. Garfias and Mazurek subsume the areas around the road toward Laja and Desaguadero to the axis of Copacabana probably because of those areas’ small demographic and physical size indicated by the 2001 census.<sup>390</sup>

---

<sup>388</sup> “Memorándum de entendimiento entre la Honorable Alcaldía Municipal de La Paz y la Federación de Juntas Vecinales de El Alto,” October 19, 1984; “Ley 728 aprobada por el Congreso Nacional,” March 6, 1985; the documents cited here are included in Fernández, *Así nació El Alto*, 60 and 62 respectively.

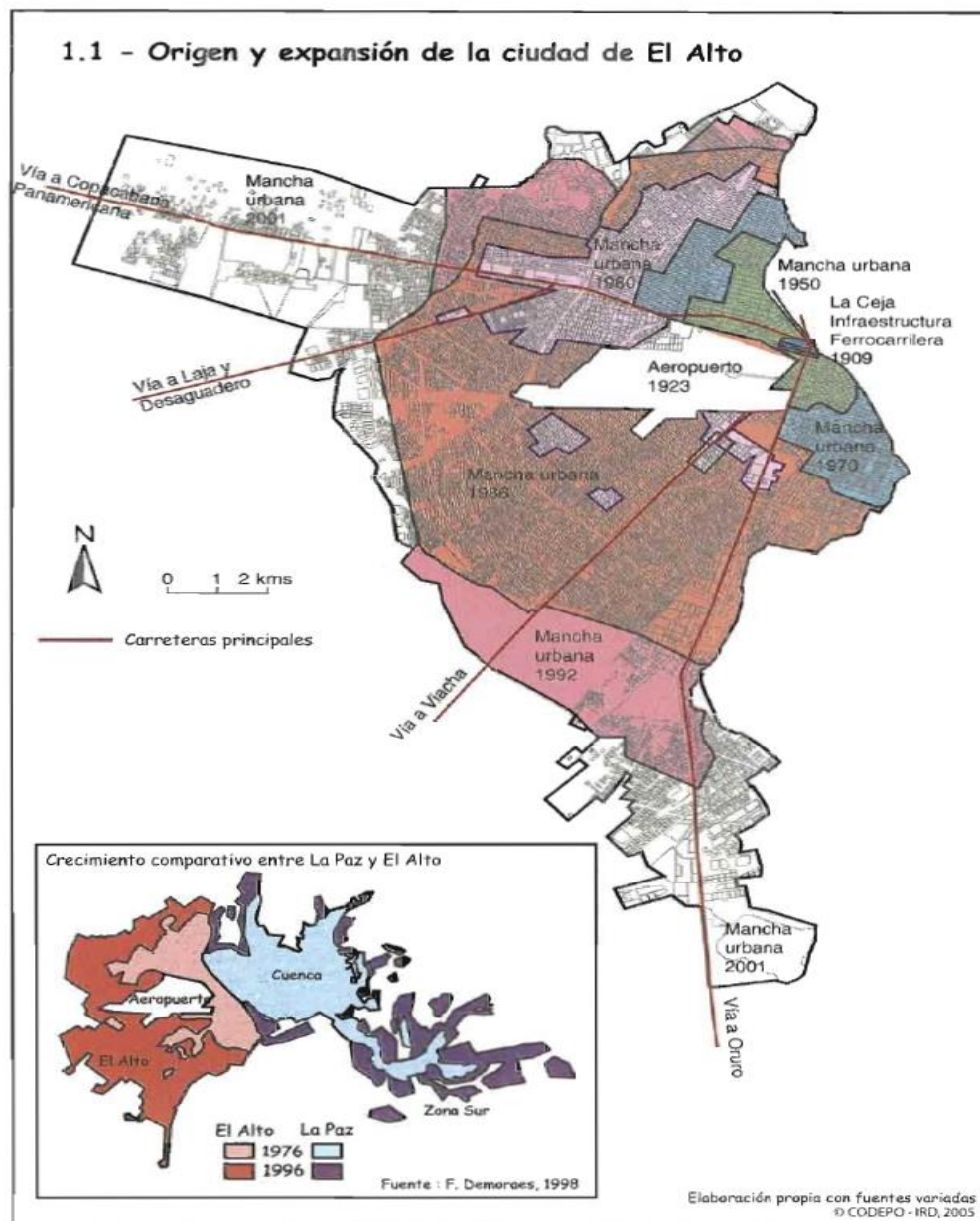
<sup>389</sup> Poupeau, “El Alto,” 436.

<sup>390</sup> Garfias and Mazurek, *El Alto desde una perspectiva poblacional*, 14.

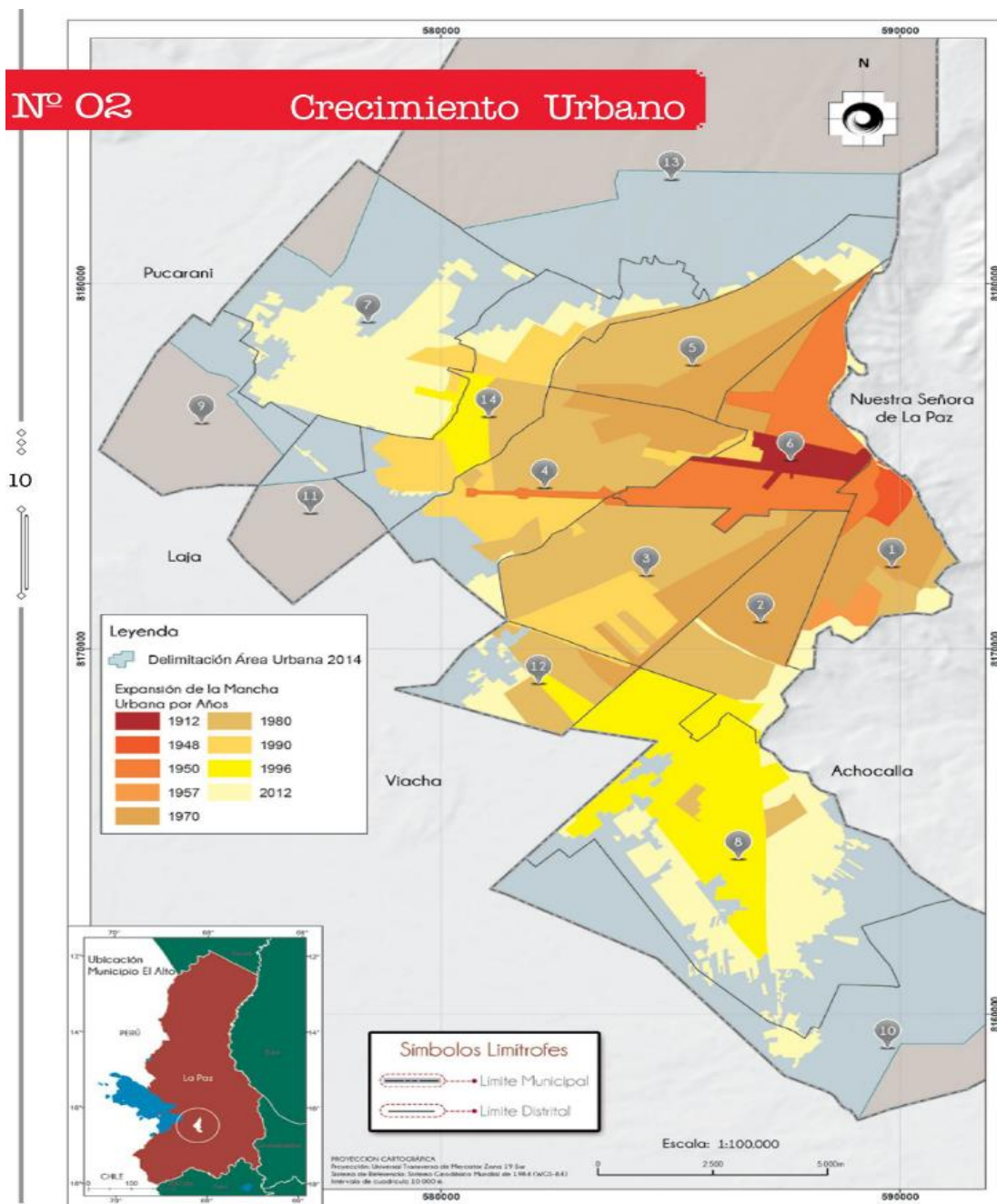


•19

<Illustration 4.1> The administrative division of El Alto according to the 1992 census (Source: Sandra Garfias and Hubert Mazurek, *El Alto desde una perspectiva poblacional* (Consejo de Población para el Desarrollo Sostenible; Institut de recherche pour le dÈveloppement, 2005), 19)



<Illustration 4.2> Expansion of El Alto from the year of first documented settlement of migrants until 2001 (Source: Garfias and Mazurek, *El Alto desde una perspectiva poblacional*, 12)



<Illustration 4.3> Urban expansion of El Alto from 1912 to 2012 (Source: *El Alto. Atlas Geográficos del Municipio de El Alto* (Gobierno Autónomo Municipal de El Alto, 2015), 10)

Commenting on Garfias's and Mazurek's spatial division of El Alto, Franck Poupeau proposes that "three distinct spatial circles" exist in the city. The first circle is composed of "Ceja and the first barrios constructed in the 1950s (Villa Dolores, Ciudad Satélite, 16 de Julio, Ballivián)." These barrios, more densely populated than other areas, display features of a "modernized" city, such as "houses built with modern materials and [relatively] good access to basic services." More residents in this circle are literate in Spanish, and encompass populations "employed principally in commercial and service sectors."<sup>391</sup> One here may add a few barrios of the District 3 around the Plaza de la Cruz, such as Villa Adela, to this circle because they show a high demographic density and relatively decent infrastructural development in terms of housing, road construction, and provision of basic services. The second circle consists of the settlements constructed mostly between 1970 and 1990. In terms of urban development, these settlements are more peripheral than those in the first circle. Even if residents of the second circle may be (self-) employed in a relatively stable way in construction, commercial and service sectors, their living conditions, especially housing, are more precarious. The third circle is the most recently settled and least developed part of El Alto, the most spacious and least populated part of the city. More than 70% of populations in this part live without electricity and sanitary services, with mostly unpaved roads and with houses largely built with adobes.<sup>392</sup>

In the 2001 census, 74% of El Alto's residents identified themselves as Aymara.<sup>393</sup> The 2012 census showed that the city continued to grow and had surpassed La Paz in size; El Alto had become the second largest Bolivian city inhabited by 842,378 populations, and trailed only

---

<sup>391</sup> Poupeau, "El Alto," 439.

<sup>392</sup> Ibid, 439.

<sup>393</sup> "Censo Nacional de Población y Vivienda 2001," *Instituto Nacional de Estadística del Estado Plurinacional de Bolivia* accessed via <http://datos.ine.gob.bo/binbol/RpWebEngine.exe/Portal?lang=esp>.

Santa Cruz with 1,441,406 inhabitants. The INE projected that by 2017, El Alto's population would reach about 910,000. 83.4% of the city's population had migrated from other parts of the Department of La Paz. Commerce and public transport remained the main sectors of employment in the city; the census indicated that 38.8% of El Alto's population worked in those sectors. Another important area of employment was manufacturing sector with 20.6% of the city's employment. The number of households with mobile and domestic phone services greatly increased from 18.1% in 2001 to 78.3% in 2012, and domestic Internet service was available to only 5.1% of El Alto's households. The percentage of poor populations measured by Unsatisfied Basic Needs (NBI) significantly declined from 66.9% in 2001 to 36% in 2012.<sup>394</sup> In the wake of El Alto's expansion, seven more districts were created between 2001 and 2010. Currently the city consists of fourteen districts: Ten of these fourteen (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 12, and 14) are designated as urban zones in the municipal administration whereas four (9, 10, 11, and 13) are rural.<sup>395</sup>

Maps depicting urban expansion of El Alto only partially reflect how the city has been made by migrants' struggle for survival in a marginal space. The space, reduced to an "orderly" arrangement of district numbers and straight lines, is a creation of the state that wants to build a modern city, the utopian project of progress for all. The divide between urban and rural zones renders the difference between modern and backward areas "legible" to policy-makers who in the words of James C. Scott, impose a "uniformity of codes, identities, statistics, regulations, and

---

<sup>394</sup> "El Alto. La ciudad más joven de Bolivia," bulletin published by the INE of the Plurinational State of Bolivia on March 7, 2017.

<sup>395</sup> *El Alto. Atlas Geográfico del Municipio de El Alto* (Gobierno Autónomo Municipal de El Alto, 2015), 11-15.



measures” upon the city.<sup>396</sup> That uniformity does not exist in El Alto, and this is a problem for the state dreaming of “modernization” that homogenizes urban space in accordance with Western standards.



<Illustration 4.4> A typical cityscape of Ceja in El Alto (Miguel Rivera, “Comisión identificará áreas de mayor congestión en El Alto,” *La Razón* April 10, 2012 accessed via [http://www.la-razon.com/index.php?url=/ciudades/Comision-identificara-areas-congestion-Alto\\_0\\_1593440679.html](http://www.la-razon.com/index.php?url=/ciudades/Comision-identificara-areas-congestion-Alto_0_1593440679.html))

The state has to address another problem in El Alto; its incapacity to eliminate “disorderly” elements that are manifest in Ceja, the city’s administrative and commercial center. Traffic jams are common, especially in the early morning and evening on workdays, in Ceja with the roads jammed with innumerable minibuses and micros, mostly fully packed. Usually police officers, municipal guards, and citizen volunteers in zebra costume control rush hour traffic. However, controlling traffic more often than not becomes a daunting task because many drivers will aggressively drive their vehicles to move slightly faster, provoking other drivers to react in a hostile way, with verbal fights ensuing out of car windows on the driver’s seat. Some will simply

---

<sup>396</sup> James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Conditions Have Failed* (Yale University Press, 1999), 78, 83.

ignore traffic signs and control by police, municipal guards, or volunteers while many pedestrians will disregard those official authorities in a similar way. El Alto's city hall hardly embodies an orderly urban space. The streets around the hall are as dirty as other corners of the city, with trashes scattered. The hall is smeared with greases as are other buildings surrounding it. Street vendors occupy the most of the alleys around it; the areas around it are like a street market with Aymara merchants (*comerciantes cholas/os*) selling books, magazines, newspapers, drinks, food, fruit, meat, snack, vegetable, pirated foreign TV dramas and movies, and other items. Minibuses pass these areas with numerous pedestrians crossing the streets. Ceja is not a space ordered by a modern state but constantly undermines the state's order and creates its own informal economy and traffic. It consists of intricate elements characterized as a chaos. As Issac Rivera, musician from La Paz, calls it, it is "the chaos we live" [*el caos que nosotros vivimos*], a chaos of "the city to which I belong" [*la ciudad a que pertenezco*].<sup>397</sup> Rivera made this statement with reference to "Pérez," a downtown section of La Paz. The chaotic space is surely not restricted to Ceja and other parts of El Alto. It encompasses multiple places across El Alto and La Paz, interlinked by informal economy and "disorderly" traffic, to constantly challenge the state's order. The chaos embedded in this space of El Alto/La Paz is something experienced by people of the city on a daily basis.

---

<sup>397</sup> Interview with Issac Rivera, January 19, 2017.



<Illustration 4.5> Convergence of pedestrians, street vendors, and vehicles in an intersection of alleys in Ceja (Sergio Mendoza, “Vecinos de la Ceja reclaman por excesivo comercio en vía pública,” *Página Siete* December 26, 2013 accessed via <http://www.paginasiete.bo/sociedad/2013/12/27/vecinos-ceja-reclaman-excesivo-comercio-publica-9720.html>)

The chaotic space of El Alto is a product of the city’s history from the early twentieth century. The areas now constituting Ceja had been inhabited by a few hacendados and their colonos, and ayllus until the 1940s. These areas were part of the parishes of San Pedro and San Sebastián, known as the “indian parishes” of the city of La Paz from the 1790s to the 1870s. Expropriation of communal lands was intensified after the 1860s, and the Law of Disentailment (*Exvinculación*) of 1874 facilitated land takeover by property owners. In the city of La Paz, this resulted in significant decline of indigenous populations. Total indigenous populations in the three indian parishes (San Pedro, San Sebastián, and Santa Bárbara) decreased by almost 30 percent between 1852 and 1877 (From 8,066 to 5,733). The national census of 1854 showed that those populations constituted 58 percent of La Paz’s population but by 1909, “neither ayllus nor communities” appeared in the census. Ex-comunarios, displaced from the communities, became

artisans, construction workers, household workers, and small merchants.<sup>398</sup> The “disappearance” of the communities, according to Rossana Barragán, did not erase the indigenous face of La Paz, which coexisted with European-white urban society. She argues that the incorporation of indigenous populations into La Paz resulted in “a new identity” reflecting the “pluri-ethnic” character of the city.<sup>399</sup>



<Illustration 4.6> El Alto at the beginning of the twentieth century (Taken by J. Cordero from Franck Poupeau, “El Alto: una ficción política,” *Bulletin de l’Institut Français d’Études Andines* 39, 2 (2010): 430)

In 1912, the Guaqui-La Paz Railway Company (FCG) founded its train station in what would become Ceja. The flat terrain of El Alto was an ideal site for airline transport facilities, such as the school of aviation, which opened in 1923. The same year, the Lloyd Aéreo Boliviano (LAB) built its offices around a small airfield, constructed in Ceja. In 1933, the YPFB (*Yacimientos Petrolíferos Fiscales Bolivianos*), Bolivian national petroleum company, established its depositories in what would become barrio Senkata of El Alto.<sup>400</sup> Still, then, El Alto was

---

<sup>398</sup> Barragán, *Espacio urbano y dinámica étnica. La Paz en el Siglo XIX*, 75-76, 98.

<sup>399</sup> *Ibid*, 188-205, 234.

<sup>400</sup> *El Alto*, 11; Poupeau, “El Alto,” 432-433.

hardly a city but a small settlement with a number of business and official buildings and facilities, which was shaping a peripheral site of the city of La Paz.

Settlements in El Alto grew after 1940. Between 1942 and 1952, seven barrios were founded, setting off the urbanization of El Alto. Four of them (Bolívar, Ciudad Satélite, 12 de Octubre, and Villa Dolores) were around Ceja, in the south of El Alto while Alto Lima, Ballivián, and 16 de Julio were created in the north. These barrios were largely settled by migrants from the countryside and provincial towns. Neighborhoods of La Paz at higher altitudes had become overpopulated by the late 1930s, and some residents from those neighborhoods moved to the “up above” (*arriba*), seeking to “t[ake] advantage of low price of land” in El Alto.<sup>401</sup> The influx of migrants gave rise to a commerce pertaining to construction, food, housing, and distribution of goods in El Alto. Hacendados owning lands in El Alto turned their possessions into urban sections (*urbanizaciones*), dividing their lands into small fractions for sale. During the 1940s, 134,000 land titles of former haciendas in El Alto were transferred to colonos, comunarios, and migrants. New small landholders built houses, markets, and small shops in their lands. Street vending was the most common commerce in El Alto; most residents of the first urbanizaciones in El Alto lived on selling drinks, food, and agrarian products transported from the countryside. Small incomes, obtained from these, helped to alleviate the difficulties stemming from poor living conditions in barrios of El Alto. Electricity and water services in these barrios were established in the 1950s, although not all precariously built houses gained access to these services.<sup>402</sup>

---

<sup>401</sup> Garfias and Mazurek, *El Alto desde una perspectiva poblacional*, 11.

<sup>402</sup> Poupeau, “El Alto,” 433-434; Marco Alberto Quispe Villca, *De ch’usa marka a jach’a marka (De pueblo vacío a pueblo grande). Pequeñas historias contadas desde el alma misma de El Alto* (Plural Editores; Fundación Wayna Tambo, 2004).

More migrants arrived in El Alto after the Agrarian Reform of 1953, and the city's population grew from 11,000 in 1950 to 30,000 in 1960, leading to the emergence of new barrios built by new migrants. Juntas vecinales emerged in the 1950s to organize each barrio in more systemic ways, enabling residents of El Alto to claim citizenship rights vis-à-vis the national state.<sup>403</sup> Juntas vecinales coalesced into the *Consejo Central de Vecinos de El Alto de La Paz* founded on July 3, 1957. The "immediate priority" of the *Consejo Central* was to meet the needs of El Alto's residents for "potable water, a sewage system, electricity, street lighting, and the installation of a medical center." The *Consejo* raised the demand that would remain central to El Alto's relations to the national state: "administrative decentralization" that led to the autonomous administration of El Alto.<sup>404</sup>

On December 19, 1963, the *Consejo Central* published a manifesto emphasizing the "urgent" need for "the creation of the Fourth Section of the Murillo Province" with El Alto being its capital. The population growth required "greater attention" of the government to El Alto's "social, economic, hygienic, and ornamental needs" [*aspecto social, económico, higiénico y de ornato*]. By the time of the manifesto's publication, El Alto's population reached 45,000. Most of the inhabitants of this urban periphery, according to the manifesto, were "actually living in the worst conditions of underdevelopment" [*actualmente viven en peores condiciones de sub-desarrollo*] without basic services, such as potable water, public hygiene, street lighting and trash cleaning. This problem was especially acute in barrios Bolívar, Ceja, 12 de Octubre, Tejada, and Villa Dolores. El Alto had "received no benefit from the municipal and administrative authorities" [*no ha recibido ningún beneficio de las autoridades municipales y administrativas*]

---

<sup>403</sup> Poupeau, "El Alto," 434-435.

<sup>404</sup> Fernández, *Así nació El Alto*, 19.



that neglected its need for urban infrastructure, such as “plazas, parks, [paved] avenues and streets” [*plazas, parques, avenidas y calles*]. The *Consejo* proclaimed that the authorities had “completely abandoned” [*completo abandono*] El Alto’s residents. Given “the state of negligence” of these authorities, it was obligatory for the representative of residents to “demand creation of the Fourth Section of the Murillo Province” [*pedir la creación de la Cuarta Sección de la provincia Murillo*], which would “elevate our social, economic and cultural level” [*eleva nuestro nivel social, económico y cultural*].<sup>405</sup>

By the late 1970s, El Alto’s population had reached more than 200,000 inhabitants, a “vertiginous demographic and urban growth” [*Vertiginoso crecimiento demográfico y urbano*] that would continue, according to the FEJUVE.<sup>406</sup> This number was bigger than populations of departments of Beni (168,000), Pando (34,000), and Tarija (187,000) indicated by the 1976 census.<sup>407</sup> At the same time, El Alto had become a center for the national commerce; the city’s commercial fairs had grown as has the amounts of goods exchanged. Conducted outside formal economic regulation, informal economy of El Alto’s commerce involved massive amounts of products from different departments and provinces of Bolivia, and other countries, such as Argentina, Chile, and Peru. This became a central component of the city’s space as an urban space regulated by informality and dominated by Aymara merchants.

El Alto’s image as “informally regulated” negatively portrayed El Alto as a periphery defined by “lawlessness,” the lack of order and rule; it was a space of danger, unsafety,

---

<sup>405</sup> “El Concejo Central de Vecinos de El Alto de La Paz. Pide urgente la creación de la Cuarta Sección de la provincia Murillo,” December 19, 1963 included in Fernández, *Así nació El Alto*, 22.

<sup>406</sup> Guillermo Gutiérrez Villegas, “Fundamentos para la creación de la Cuarta Sección de la provincia Murillo, con su capital Ciudad de El Alto,” March 20, 1980 included in Fernández, *Así nació El Alto*, 38-39.

<sup>407</sup> Gray, “The Offspring of 1952,” 347.

underdevelopment, and “indian backwardness” in the national geography envisioned by policy-makers. In this sense, it remained an unincorporated space excluded from national society. An irony was that it was so central to the national economy, decisively influencing the distribution of daily goods consumed by most Bolivians, including white-mestizos in La Paz. El Alto was necessary for La Paz to feed its populations. Its superior cultural and social position determined its relations to El Alto racialized and stigmatized as an uninhabitable place for “civilized modern” citizens. Gonzalo Choquehuanca Quispe, member of *Red de la Diversidad-Fundación Wayna Tambo* and resident of barrio Río Seco in El Alto, says:

*El Alto estaba creciendo. El Centro siempre nos veía una manera muy periférica, muy despectiva, muy lejana... Una cosa que hace la ciudad es este tema colonial. Es que no miraba más allá. No miraba a los pueblos. No miraba a las formas de entender las tradiciones y prácticas* [El Alto was growing. The Centro of La Paz saw it in a very peripheralizing, disrespectful, and self-distancing way. They called it a dangerous place... One thing the city does has to do with this colonial notion. That is to say, it didn't look further. It didn't look at the pueblos. It didn't try to understand the forms of cultural traditions and practices].<sup>408</sup>

The hierarchical divide between El Alto and La Paz, a barbarism/backwardness-civilization/modernity binary, meant that from the first moment of its growth, the former was relegated to the marginal place designated for indians. However, they were the majority; their presence could not be ignored; they walked the same streets in the Centro of La Paz as white-mestizos. They were different from white-mestizos, and belonged to Chukiyawu, a city defined by *lo aymara*, creating their cultural and social space in La Paz. Two faces of the city, Chukiyawu and La Paz, showed the two worlds to which migrants from the countryside, the mines and provincial towns would be related. Even if migrants wanted to be included in La Paz, the space of civilization and progress, they were largely pushed to urban margins, a world

---

<sup>408</sup> Interview with Gonzalo Choquehuanca Quispe, November 18, 2016.



inhabited by the masses who did not belong to modernity. The white-mestizo minority with money, fluent Spanish, light skin color, and/or no surnames, such as Choque, Mamani, and Quispe, monopolized modernity. Physical belonging to the city did not necessarily allow migrants to move up the social ladder. The city, once inhabited by indians, was not a modern space anymore as far as “civilized” residents were concerned. When the city degenerated into disorder, mess and turmoil, indians were targeted as a source of the problem.<sup>409</sup>

Criminalizing the urban poor is a modern phenomenon that excludes “undesired” classes and races from benefits of modernity constructed by the nation-state.<sup>410</sup> As Pablo Piccato argues for Mexico City from the late years of Porfirio Díaz’s rule to the establishment of the Mexican revolutionary regime in the 1920s, criminalization of the culturally and socially stigmatized bodies rested “on the [criminological] premise that criminals were a separate ‘variety’ of the human race,” and that penitentiary regulations should be applied to making them “more obedient and fit for progress.”<sup>411</sup> The modernity created in a criminalizing and racializing mode marginalized people who were suspected to be criminal because of their physical appearance, skin color, and social behaviors. Crime rates in El Alto are among the highest in Bolivia with the city’s homicide rate per 100,000 inhabitants (27.4) being extraordinarily high, compared to the national average (8.6) in 2016.<sup>412</sup> According to a study by researchers from the PIEB (*Fundación*

---

<sup>409</sup> Nancy Egan, “‘Una lucha de razas, secular y honda’: The Proceso Mohoza, Bolivia 1899-1905” (MA thesis., University of California, San Diego, 2007); Ann Zulawski, *Unequal Cures: Public Health and Political Change in Bolivia, 1900-1950* (Duke University Press Books, 2007).

<sup>410</sup> Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* (The New Press, 2010).

<sup>411</sup> Pablo Piccato, *City of Suspects: Crime in Mexico City, 1900-1931* (Duke University Press, 2001), 51, 63.

<sup>412</sup> Rubén Ariñez, “El Alto es la ciudad con más homicidios, asesinatos y feminicidios del país,” *La Razón* May 31, 2017 accessed via [http://m.la-razon.com/ciudades/seguridad\\_ciudadana/Alto-ciudad-homicidios-asesinatos-feminicidios\\_0\\_2719528036.html](http://m.la-razon.com/ciudades/seguridad_ciudadana/Alto-ciudad-homicidios-asesinatos-feminicidios_0_2719528036.html).

*para la Investigación Estratégica en Bolivia*), 46 percent of El Alto's residents between 2001 and 2005 experienced being robbed on the streets.<sup>413</sup> High crime rates stemmed from the massive influx of migrants, high unemployment, the elimination of social safety net, and the proliferation of drug-trafficking after the neoliberal restructuring in 1986. Santa Cruz was another city with high crime rates.<sup>414</sup> Unlike El Alto, however, Santa Cruz has been endowed with a progressive image of modern city. For example, on April 10, 2002, the fiftieth anniversary of the National Revolution, the MNR's vice presidential candidate Carlos D. Mesa Gisbert asserted: "This department [of Santa Cruz], in 1952, was considered to be the future, and now it's Bolivia's present" [*en 1952 se avizó a este departamento como el futuro, y ahora es el presente de Bolivia*].<sup>415</sup>



<Illustration 4.7> Dolls hanged to evince the seriousness of public insecurity to which El Alto's barrios have responded in their own ways (Miguel Rivas, "Desde 2014, El Alto tuvo 16 intentos de linchamiento y 3 ajusticiamientos," *La Razón* April 11, 2016 accessed via [http://www.la-razon.com/ciudades/linchamientos-vulneracion-derechos\\_0\\_2470552947.html](http://www.la-razon.com/ciudades/linchamientos-vulneracion-derechos_0_2470552947.html))

<sup>413</sup> Juan Yhonny Mollericona P., Adriana Paredes Cruz and Ninoska Tinini Maydana, "La Seguridad Ciudadana entre las fronteras de lo Público y lo Privado. Una indagación sobre la participación comunitaria en la prevención del delito," *Programa de Investigación Estratégica en Bolivia* (2006): 4.

<sup>414</sup> Antonio Edgar Moreno Valdivia, "Violencia e inseguridad en la Ciudad de El Alto," *Revistas Bolivianas* 31 (2011): 117-118.

<sup>415</sup> Dunkerley, "The Origins of the Bolivian Revolution," 136.

The tropical city of the gas-rich department with lesser indians (Guaraní and migrants from the altiplano and the Cochabamba Valley) is conceived as a modern city, being the model for other Bolivias to follow. On the contrary, the indian city is like innumerable dolls hanging on its streets; a social problem, an example not to follow. Those dolls usually carry intimidating letter signs, such as “*Ladrones serán colgados*” (“Thieves will be hanged”), “*Gente sospechosa será linchada*” (“Suspicious people will be lynched”), and “*Autos sospechosos serán quemados*” (“Suspicious cars will be burned down”), to warn drug dealers, hustlers, murderers, and thieves looking for their victims. Residents set up dolls as a “model of collective violence” of lynching against suspected criminals hustling around the streets.<sup>416</sup> As Daniel M. Goldstein argues for Villa Sebastián Pagador, a barrio of rural migrants in the city of Cochabamba, mob lynching in Bolivia’s poor urban barrios stems from “generalized insecurity and suspicion.” Because the corrupt and inefficient police and judicial system have failed to provide barrios with public safety, residents implement justice by their own hands. Lynching, in this context, results from “a lack of confidence in attaining justice in any other way.”<sup>417</sup> With the police and judicial system being incapable of guaranteeing a safe living environment, residents resort to collective violence as a mechanism of self-protection. Twenty-six cases of lynching were reported between 2005 and 2006 in El Alto.<sup>418</sup> Miguel Rivas of the daily *La Razón* reported in April 2016 that between 2001 and 2008, at least eighty-eight incidents of lynching took place in the city. In nine of those incidents, the lynched died because of the collective violence unleashed by “infuriated residents.” Between 2014 and 2016, at least sixteen incidents of lynching occurred in El Alto. Not all victims of lynching were criminals but fell victims simply because their appearance and

---

<sup>416</sup> Mollericona, Paredes and Tikini, “La Seguridad Ciudadana entre,” 10.

<sup>417</sup> Goldstein, *The Spectacular City*, 187-188.

<sup>418</sup> Mollericona, Paredes and Tikini, “La Seguridad Ciudadana entre,” 11.

behaviors aroused suspicion on the part of residents.<sup>419</sup> The prevalence of mob lynching in the city has reinforced the negative image of the indian city; people lynching suspects are blamed for acting savage, beating up and/or killing strangers without evidence and due process. However, only a few residents of El Alto are privileged to attain justice through due process.

### ***El Alto: A Space of Struggle***

Ángel Limachi Yapaco, migrant from the mining town of Coro Coro in Pacajes, decided to migrate to El Alto, looking for a new life. Deteriorating economic situation in the town affected his decision:

*He vivido en esta parte por 14 años. He migrado en la década de 2001-2002 justamente después del cierre de la fábrica. Mi origen es minero. Soy de la mina de Coro Coro. Hemos migrado porque ya desde los 90 y el año 2000, la vida se hizo difícil en el pueblo. No hubo ningún mineral. Los minerales totalmente estaban deteriorados. Y, muchos compañeros, muchos del pueblo han ido a la ciudad para buscar el horizonte, buscar el trabajo, ¿no? Y luego después la gente vino [I have lived in El Alto for fourteen years. I migrated in 2001-2002 just after the factory was closed in my place of origin. I was a miner, from the mine of Coro Coro. We migrated because between the 1990s and 2000, life in the town became difficult. There was no ore. The mines were depleted. Many of my comrades went to the city, looking for a new life, looking for work, no? Since then people came to the city].<sup>420</sup>*

Limachi is now employee of the FANAGOM (*Fábrica Nacional de Gomas*) that produces rubber and sells it to mines of Colquiri, Porco, Bolívar and Huanuni. The company imports rubber trees largely from Argentina but maintains facilities for collecting trees in eastern tropical areas of Bolivia, “generating some jobs” [*genera unos empleos*] for “collectors of rubber trees in the East” [*recolectores de árboles de goma en el oriente*]. However, “this isn’t enough” for mass

---

<sup>419</sup> Miguel Rivas, “Desde 2014, El Alto tuvo 16 intentos de linchamiento y 3 ajusticiamientos,” *La Razón* April 11, 2016 accessed via [http://www.la-razon.com/ciudades/linchamientos-vulneracion-derechos\\_0\\_2470552947.html](http://www.la-razon.com/ciudades/linchamientos-vulneracion-derechos_0_2470552947.html).

<sup>420</sup> Testimony of Ángel Limachi Yapaco, January 23, 2017.

production, forcing the company to rely on Argentine trees that are processed under control of Argentine sellers.<sup>421</sup> Limachi is a worker incorporated into a regional network of commodity exchange and extractivist industry, which establishes a transnational link between mining and rubber industries. He belongs to that network as a wage earner (*asalariado*), dependent on his boss. His marginal incorporation into the regional system of capitalist exploitation has allowed for his settlement in El Alto but his life still remains precarious. Housing has been an ever-present difficulty for him:

*Gracias a Dios, yo tuve un entendimiento de un tío donde vivo ahora, ¿no? Estoy en su casa, viviendo. Es poco difícil conseguir tierras. Han incrementado mucho. Desde que las tierras han incrementado mucho, entonces es poco difícil en esta situación para conseguir el tema de vivienda. Nos falta poco en ese normal como eso. Después estamos solo viviendo prácticamente. Solo vivimos para vivir, no para ahorrar dinero y ganar [Thanks to God, I had an uncle who understood my situation. I'm currently living in his house, no? It's little bit difficult to get landed properties. Their prices have gone up a lot. Since the prices have gone up a lot, then it's little bit difficult to get a housing. We're little bit lacking in things like that that might be normally given to others. We're just living in practical ways. We only live to live, not being able to save money and earn a lot].<sup>422</sup>*

Braulio Rojas Choque and his wife were born in Aymara communities around the town of Viacha in Ingavi. They married in 1995, and had lived in Viacha until 2000, when they moved to El Alto with their two little sons. Life in the city was initially tough for them. Rojas did everything possible to earn a living for his family. For a few years, he made bread by using his baking skills, which he had learned from his father in Viacha. Bread-selling generated relatively stable incomes for his family. Those incomes were, however, not sufficient for the family to stably settle in El Alto. Rojas's wife became pregnant with the couple's third child soon after they began new life in the city while their sons were now at the school age. The most difficult

---

<sup>421</sup> Ibid.

<sup>422</sup> Ibid.

moment came when Rojas's wife was diagnosed with cancer and was hospitalized for a year.

Rojas remembers this time as "very tough" [*muy fuerte*]:

*Cuando mi esposa tuvo enfermo, tuvo el hospital como casi un año, eso fue la época más difícil porque yo tenía mi hija pequeña, Mariana, estaba bebé. Y entonces tuvo que ir al hospital. Casi un año estaba allá por su tumor que afectaba su pulmón desde la espalda. Entonces, fue, eso fue fuerte para mí, más que todo. Yo cocinaba varias con los chicos y el bebé, mi hija pequeña. Eso fue muy difícil. Me veía en el hospital para cumplir con los gastos del hospital. Muy difícil. Yo creo que eso sería más, me acuerdo. Y espero que no va a volver esto* [When my wife got sick and was in hospital for almost a year, that was the most difficult time, because I had my little daughter Mariana, she was a baby. Then my wife had to go to hospital. She was there for almost a year in hospital because of the tumor that affected her lung from the back. Then, it was, that was very tough to me, more than anything. I cooked various things with my sons, the baby, my little daughter. That was very tough. I used to go to hospital and pay for my wife's treatment. Very difficult. That was the most difficult, I remember. I want this not to happen again].<sup>423</sup>

Rojas and his family had to overcome difficult moments like this largely on their own. They received "moral support but not material" [*apoyo moral pero no material*] assistance from their relatives in Viacha:

*Yo creo que la mayor gente, hacemos es, claro, tenemos apoyo moral pero no material. Lo que quiero decir es que cuando salimos de la casa de los papás, cuando a otro lugar, a otra ciudad, aprendemos por nuestra cuenta a crecer en todo sentido. Ah, tenemos que, nosotros buscamos con mi esposa un lugar donde vivir, a alquilar. Así pensamos mientras que yo busqué trabajo, otros trabajos. Pero no podíamos ir a la casa de mi mamá a decir, "¡Ah! Mira. Eso me falta," o "Necesito dinero." No. Cuando salimos, decidimos, ¿cómo se dice?, romper ese parte, ¿cómo se llama?, esa "paternidad," o "dependen de sus papás." Entonces eso fue la razón. Nosotros, aprendimos nosotros aquí en El Alto vivir, cómo vivir. Hay días que tenemos comida. Hay días que no había comida. Pero así aprendemos poco a poco* [I think, grown-up people, what we do is that, sure, we have moral support but nothing material. I want to say, when we left my parents' house, when we came to other place, to the city, we learned on our own to grow in every sense. Ah, we have to do so, we looked for a place to live, to rent it. We thought that way when I looked for job. But we couldn't go to my mom's house to say, "Ah! Look. I don't have this," or "I need money." No. When we left, we decided, how should I say? To break from that part, how is that called? I mean, "paternity," or "being dependent on parents." And that was the reason. We

---

<sup>423</sup> Testimony of Braulio Rojas Choque, February 13, 2017.

learned here in El Alto how to live. There were days when we had food, there were days without food. But that way we learned little by little].<sup>424</sup>

Aside from making and selling bread, Rojas frequently visited Viacha, where he worked as volunteer for foreign groups that had launched rural development projects. This experience enabled him to learn many skills that according to him, helped him stabilize his family's life. While he was volunteering in a project in the mid-2000s, he met a North American engineer from a Christian organization, who lived in Senkata in the District 8 of El Alto. The North American was a member of a mission team working on community organization and water development in La Paz's rural areas. He hired Rojas with a weekly salary of \$20, a huge sum for a rural migrant with little source of financial support. Afterward the financial situation of the Rojas family improved. The family stopped renting rooms and bought a private house in Villa Candelaria in the District 3 of El Alto. Rojas has become the director of a local NGO collaborating with the WEFTA (*Water Engineers for the Americas*) on water development in Aymara communities in La Paz. Rojas and his wife keep working hard to support university education of their sons who study engineering at the UMSA. Rojas deeply appreciates the opportunity, which his contact with North Americans has given him. As a relatively successful migrant who made it in the city, he frames his family's history of migration in terms of progressive development:

*Salimos porque fue más por, más por la familia, para crecer como una familia. Hubiera estado cerca de mis papás. Pero yo creo que ya ahora para crecer como familia, aprender, mandar solo de la familia. Yo creo que hacemos muchas familias eso aquí en Bolivia, saliendo la casa de sus papás. Entonces eso fue la razón. Y también buscar nuevas oportunidades de trabajo [We left because it was mostly for, mostly for the family, to develop as a family. I would have lived close to my parents. But I believe it was necessary to develop as family, learning and working alone as family. I think many families do that here in Bolivia, leaving*

---

<sup>424</sup> Ibid.

their parents' home. Then that was the reason. And also to look for new opportunities for work].<sup>425</sup>

Rojas is among a few fortunate migrants, to whom legitimate opportunities of a better life have been available and who have been able to capitalize on them to achieve a social mobility. Not many are lucky enough to encounter the same opportunities in El Alto. Sixto Justo Solis Mamani, migrant from the countryside of Pacajes, say that people in the countryside “think of migrating to the city since childhood” [*desde niños están pensando en migrar, digamos a la ciudad*]. The city is imagined as a place of opportunity, attracting rural people. “Many governments passed” without improving living conditions in the countryside; the governments had “forgotten” the countryside. The government of Evo Morales (2005-present), according to Solis, implemented some development projects that have helped people in the countryside:

*Aquí por ejemplo en últimos años poco, digamos, las condiciones en el campo han mejorado puesto que ha sido el gobierno, el último gobierno de Evo Morales. Pero anteriormente fueron totalmente olvidados. No hay, digamos, escuela que fueran a estudiar, a salir con bachillería. No hay universidad. Y por otro lado, no hay un agua potable, no hay electricidad. Ahora sí están haciendo un avance con este gobierno. Han pasado varios gobiernos. Nunca dieron nada* [Here for example in recent years the conditions in the countryside have gotten better since there was the government, the last government of Evo Morales. But previously, they were totally forgotten. There was no school for degree, there was no university. On the other hand, there was no potable water, there was no electricity. Now, yes, they're making some advances with this government. Many governments passed. They never gave nothing].<sup>426</sup>

Rural migrants have moved to the city in order to escape from the “forgotten” state of the countryside, which have prevented them from accessing better education and job opportunities. They, however, mostly lacked necessary skills required for decent jobs in the city, where their

---

<sup>425</sup> Ibid.

<sup>426</sup> Testimony of Sixto Justo Solis Mamani, January 23, 2017.



knowledge and skills in agriculture was not useful. They have to learn new skills on a precarious basis:

*Como ha sido una migración muy fuerte, ha sido una gran dimensión de, la población la ve bastante. Pero también han venido a vivir aquí, digamos, en El Alto con casa precaria, una construcción precaria, no había servicios básicos. Prácticamente no hubo trabajo. También han tenido que profesar porque no ha sido planificado. Tienen que tener mucha precariedad. ¿Ya? No hubo trabajo. El trabajo era muy como trabajos eventuales, informales. Y por el otro lado también la parte de migrantes, ellos están tan dedicados a cultivo, sembrar papas, cultivar chuños, cebada, todo que es parte de agronómica. Pero cuando llegan a la ciudad, no saben de trabajo porque aquí se quieren mecánicos, se quieren electricistas, se quieren costureros. Ellos no saben nada. Cuando migran personas mayores, no tienen conocimiento sobre esto. [As it has been a very strong migration, it has been a huge change with enough effect. But they also have come to live here, let's say, in El Alto, and live in precarious house, a precarious building. There weren't basic services. Practically there was no job. They also had to work hard. It must be precarious for them. There was no job, ya? Job was very like temporary, informal jobs. On the other hand, a good part of migrants, they were so dedicated to cultivating, sowing potato seeds, cultivating chuños and barley, everything agricultural. But when they arrive in the city, they don't know how to work because here mechanics, electricians, tailors are needed. They don't know nothing. When people migrate, they have none of knowledge on this].<sup>427</sup>*

When they arrive in El Alto, most migrants “don’t have resources, money.” Competition for jobs and profits is widespread in El Alto with “more migrants arriving” [*más migrantes llegan*] in the city. Migrants have left their home to escape the marginal conditions that have hampered the improvement of their living standards; however, they even “don’t have a house” in the city. They make a living by “hard work” but mostly cannot work well and earn enough money. Solis started his life in El Alto as an assistant to construction workers (*albañiles*). Later he became a carpenter that “was a decent job” [*fue un buen trabajo*] and gave him “a possibility of studying at the university” [*una posibilidad de estudiar en la universidad*]. University education prepared him for a microbusiness to produce and sell furniture. He believes that

---

<sup>427</sup> Ibid.

education has helped him obtain necessary knowledge for living in the city. The problem of many people, according to him, is “the lack of education,” which prevents many of them from accumulating knowledge, developing a vision, and advancing with superior technology and machines. In his words, “human resources aren’t prepared” [*recursos humanos no están preparados*]. This is why people’s situation “doesn’t get better in the city” [*en la ciudad tampoco mejora*]. He attributes this lack of progress to the “communist principle” [*formación comunista*] of Aymaras and Quechuas in the countryside:

*Esta mentalidad ha sido un sector de cultura aymara y quechua que tiene una formación comunista, donde que realmente es una comunista andino, no es comunista que conocemos, planteado todo el mundo, realmente lo comunista, ¿cómo se llama?, de Cuba, ¿no? No es tan igual, un comunista muy distinto donde realmente ellos viven más o menos planteando por sobrevivencia. No es lucro. Es una, como te puedo decir, ellos viven, cuidando tierras, no las explotan. Ellos no van a ver explotación, no van a ir con estos materiales de lucro sino que simplemente a sobrevivir y compartir con la naturaleza. Y eso es. Es un producto de cultura, ¿ya? [This mentality has been a part of Aymara and Quechua culture that has a communist principle, where it’s really an Andean communist, not communism in Cuba, no? It’s not that same, a very distinct communist, where they really live more or less working for survival, it’s not for profit. That is to say, I can tell you, they take care of lands but don’t exploit them for profits. They aren’t gonna exploit them. They aren’t gonna capitalize on these materials of profit but simply use them to survive and share with nature. That’s it. It’s a product of culture, ya?]<sup>428</sup>*

According to Solis, he clashed with his parents who maintained the “communist principle,” because he suggested to them to use the family’s land in an entrepreneurial way that would allow for profits. They did not accept his suggestion because of their adherence to the traditional use of land. Frustrated, he came to believe that his parents’ culture opposed modernity. In contrast, he thinks that his “Westernized” mentality has made him more profit-oriented and progressive.<sup>429</sup> He has internalized a Western modernity as opposed to Aymara and Quechua culture, while he

---

<sup>428</sup> Ibid.

<sup>429</sup> Ibid.

has grappled with material problems of underdevelopment in the countryside and the city. For most rural migrants who have moved to the city with a hope of improving their living standards, the priority is about accumulating money and achieving social mobility rather than about a cultural identity rooted in the past. A meaningful identity for people like Solis is something that enables them to empower themselves in concrete material terms.

According to Tomasa Apaza born in El Alto, people “trample each other” [*se pisa*] because they “are selfish” [*gente es egoísta*].<sup>430</sup> Apaza is a middle-aged woman with a small textile workshop in her house located in a peripheral section of El Alto. She lived in Alto Lima in District 5 of the city. Her parents, however, were unable to afford the increasing housing price in this area, and had to move to peripheral part. She and her husband went to the countryside, and lived there for a time. At that time, she learned how to cultivate the land and sow seeds but her husband left her. He “threw me away with my children” [*nos botaron allá a nosotros con mis hijos*] she says, making her life tough. Poverty was a daily reality for her family. Soon after Apaza’s husband abandoned the family, her house was mortgaged, and the family suffered from the lack of food. During this time of familial crisis, Apaza mainly sold noodle on the streets to survive. She gradually accumulated money to buy a sewing machine. Before her husband irresponsibly went away, Apaza had woven clothes to earn a small income. The machine enabled her to work on textile more efficiently and profitably, giving her a relatively stable income. Survival of the family remains a primary concern for her even when her grown-up sons now work to complement her income:

*Antes su papá tiene un hijo en el campo. Entonces allí poquito he aprendido sembrar, cargar todo eso. Entonces mi esposo me alejó. Entonces nos botaron también allá a nosotros con mis hijos. También así. No nos ayude. Solamente yo trabajo ahorita, soy artesana. Tejo. Todo eso vendo por docena. Con este estoy*

---

<sup>430</sup> Testimony of Tomasa Apaza, January 22, 2017.

*sobreviviendo yo toda mi vida. Ahorita. Desde mis diecisiete años, he empezado este trabajo. Pero un cinco años he dejado porque mi esposo me abandona. Nosotros sufrimos. Ellos muy bien saben. La casa hipotecada por banco. Nos quitó. Nos botaron afuera. De ahí nosotros no teníamos ninguna papa para comer. Por lo menos decía, “Con tierra, se puede alimentar.” No había nada. Así allí. Un poquito he empezado a salir a vender fideo así. Comidita, poco a poco [In the past, their dad had a son in the countryside. Then there I learned a little bit of sowing and taking care of all this. Then, my husband left me. They threw me away with my children. It was like that. He never helped us. I’m only working now. I’m an artisan. I weave all this. I sell it in dozens. With this, I have survived until now. Since I was seventeen years old, I have done this work. But I stopped that for five years because my husband abandoned me. We suffered. He knows it very well. The house was mortgaged by bank. We were thrown out. We had no potato to eat. I said, “At least in the countryside, one can get food from the land.” There was nothing. It was like that. I began to sell noodle, little food on the streets].<sup>431</sup>*

Apaza sustained her family largely without support from her relatives because her broken marriage alienated her from relatives of her husband. Her brother was the only person who helped her. With no other family to whom she was related, Apaza was forced into the life of a single mom. In her world, where people threw her and her little kids away, selfishness was among the most felt elements of humanity:

*Con mi trabajo, más que todo yo salgo adelante. Y sigo trabajo. Sigo trabajando. Y no me gusta prestarme. No me gusta pedir a la gente. Creciendo con trabajos a tener cosas... Tal vez otra gente se colabora. El único mi hermano me ha colaborado [With my work, I move ahead. I keep working. I don’t like borrowing. I don’t like asking other people for something. Growing with work to own things... Maybe other people help each other. Only my brother has helped me].<sup>432</sup>*

The current government “is just fine” [*está bien nomás*] according to Apaza, because “it’s helping people” [*está colaborando con gente*]. She hopes that it will continue its works for poor people and youths like her sons. A particular difficulty in her life stemmed from physical distance between her house and the urban center. For a long time, public transportation did not

---

<sup>431</sup> Ibid.

<sup>432</sup> Ibid.

exist in her barrio. She had to walk a long distance to move between her house and the place, where minibuses from and to other parts of El Alto came. Her barrio still remains isolated from the urban center, and lacks many basic services. “On this side, it’s difficult” [*Este lado es difícil*], she says. “There, *Mi Teleférico* is gonna arrive. It’s full of things like Teleférico, *Puma Katari*, and *Wayna Bus*. What’s here? Nothing” [*Mi Teleférico va a llegar allí. Allí está llenando de teleférico. Allí entra Puma Katari, Wayna Bus. Todo ahí. ¿Aquí? Nada*].<sup>433</sup> Her cynicism about people and society expresses her negative perception of social reality, where adverse circumstances constantly haunt marginalized individuals.

Felipe Callisaya, plastic artist from Río Seco, remains positive despite his precarious life without a stable income, while he is aware of the harsh realities of his city, where many people suffer various forms of violence, such as homicide and racism. He “looks at a society...as a doll” [*mira una sociedad...como muñeco*]. Doll “has no life” and “no soul” but it still “tries to be” in a world with positive meanings. Callisaya, through his work of art, seeks to create these meanings that give “a hope for everybody” even under circumstances characterized by violence:

*Con tiempo, este muy pequeño ha tenido estas ganas de, con las cerámicas baratos, tratar de hacer algo bonito con eso. Y lo que me motiva es el hecho de que trato de hacer, tal vez una parte de mí deje una cierta, este corazón, trata de demostrar este para vida* [As time goes, this little child wanted to do something pretty with cheap ceramic stuffs. What motivates me is the fact that I try to do, try to demonstrate this aspect of life, maybe a part of myself].<sup>434</sup>

---

<sup>433</sup> Ibid. Puma Katari and Wayna Bus are bus systems with regular fare and route run by the municipal governments of La Paz and El Alto. They began their operation in 2014 to “modernize” public transportation. Mi Teleférico is the urban cable-car system opened across El Alto-La Paz in the same year.

<sup>434</sup> Interview with Felipe Callisaya, February 24, 2017.

As Callisaya wants to artistically express “something new,” his life as an artist creates a possibility of self-renewal and self-rejuvenation at the personal level.<sup>435</sup> This does not eliminate the fear of an uncertain future. One of Callisaya’s works illustrates how this fear is overcome:

*Cuentan que un día un gato andava cantando por los tejados cada noche. Pero un día las personas cansados de la música del gatón le lanzaron con todo lo que podían, zapatos, pelotas, incluso comida.*

*El gato sintiéndose mal se fue a un bosque, mirando a la luna él pronunció estas palabras “Al parecer a las personas de esa ciudad no les gusta mi cantar. Pero esta noche quiero cantar una balada que salga del fondo de mi corazón.” Y así lo hizo.*

*Al finalizar se presenta una misteriosa bella dama.*

*Dama - ¡Qué bello cantas!*

*Gato – Gracias. Disculpe. ¿Podría saber quién usted?*

*Dama – Soy la brisa del viento que pasa a bailar esas melodías que cuentan una historia.*

*Gato - ¡Oooh! Usted si sabe de música. Supongo que a usted hermosa dama durante su caminar deber una canción que le guste.*

*Dama – Si hubo uno que cuenta una historia de amor con un final trágico.*

*Gato - ¿Cómo se llama?*

*Dama – Se llama el grito de la llorona.*

*Y el silencio se rompió con el grufir dolorosa de aquellos gritos de dolor y tristeza. Se cuenta que desde aquel evento el gato canta la historia de aquella dama misteriosa.*

[They say, one day a cat walked singing on the roofs every night. But one day people, tired of the cat music, threw at him everything they could, shoes, balls, even food.

The cat, feeling bad, went to the woods, looking at the Moon. He seemed to utter these words to people of that city, “They don’t like my singing but this night I want to sing a ballad that comes from the bottom of my heart.” And thus he did it. Upon finishing it, a mysterious beautiful lady appeared.

Lady: How beautifully you sing!

Cat: Thank you. Excuse me, could you tell me who you are?

Lady: I’m breeze of the wind that happens to dance on those melodies, which they call a story.

Cat: Oh! You indeed know music. I assume that for you beautiful lady during your walk, I should sing a song, which you like.

Lady: If there was one who tells a story of love with a tragic end.

Cat: How is it called?

Lady: It’s called the scream of a woman ghost.

---

<sup>435</sup> Ibid.

And the silence was broken by painful growl of those screams of pain and sadness. Someone says that since that night the cat sings about the story of that mysterious lady].<sup>436</sup>

This is, according to Callisaya, “a story of fear” [*un cuento de miedo*].<sup>437</sup> He describes it by four pictures painted with colored pencils. In front of the paintings stands a plastic object that represents the cat. Even though this story of the singing cat is narrated in a melancholic tone, the visual representation is more playful. The cat is represented as if he is poised to jest. In the scene, where city people throw “shoes, balls, even food” at undesired beings like him, he shows a perplexed face. After he met with the mysterious lady, however, he sings with happiness and joy. The fear of rejection and persecution by the city does not make him lose the optimistic sense of festivity. He sings happy songs about a memorable moment, the encounter with the mysterious beautiful lady. His joy expresses a hopeful outlook, and the suffering in the city will not erase it.



<Illustration 4.8> The singing cat stands in front of the paintings, showing his encounter with the mysterious beautiful lady (Felipe Callisaya’s Facebook Page, August 21, 2017 (2:57 p.m.), [https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story\\_fbid=1888597658129252&id=100009371097469&pnref=story](https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=1888597658129252&id=100009371097469&pnref=story), the permission given by Callisaya for the use of the image)

<sup>436</sup> Comment on Felipe Callisaya’s Facebook Page, August 21, 2017 (2:57 p.m.), [https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story\\_fbid=1888597658129252&id=100009371097469&pnref=story](https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=1888597658129252&id=100009371097469&pnref=story).

<sup>437</sup> Ibid.

A positive outlook is not enough for people of El Alto to move up the social ladder. As Solis says, “to a certain extent, yes, our lives have improved. But we still lack many things” [*Hasta cierto punto, sí, la vida ha mejorado. Pero todavía nos faltan varias cosas*].<sup>438</sup> For the majority of migrants in El Alto, the past marginality in the countryside, the mines, and provincial towns has continued to haunt their lives in the city. The space of marginality, extended from their places of origin, delimits the range of available opportunities to them.

The people testifying in this chapter have struggled to obtain what those with privileged backgrounds mostly take for granted: employment, education, housing, medical treatment, electricity, transportation, and potable water. Each individual story of life in El Alto shows its own distinct trajectory of struggle. One may identify common denominators among the city’s residents, such as Aymara, cholo, and identities derived from place of origin; however, the commonality does not over-determine individual trajectories of life. These are heterogeneous trajectories of struggle that contemporaneously exist in the city; “a simultaneity of stories-so-far” as Massey would argue.<sup>439</sup> Discourses centering on Aymara and rebellious character of El Alto cannot but be reductive because they ascribe a fixed identity to the city.<sup>440</sup> These discourses construct an El Alto’s uniqueness, a political difference opposed to other essentialized categories, such as mestizo and *lo nacional*, that perpetuate the myth of coherent nationhood.<sup>441</sup> An important question here is not about the particular nature of El Alto’s difference but how the

---

<sup>438</sup> Testimony of Sixto Justo Solis Mamani.

<sup>439</sup> Massey, *For Space*, 12.

<sup>440</sup> Pablo Mamani Ramírez, “El espíritu aymara de El Alto,” *Página Siete* March 6, 2017 accessed via <http://www.paginasiete.bo/especial01/2017/3/6/espíritu-aymara-alto-129516.html>; Saavedra, “La Insurgencia del Poder Kolla”; Untoja, *Retorno al Ayllu*.

<sup>441</sup> García, *Identidad Boliviana*; Mesa, *La sirena y el charango*.



city's people seen as different experience their incorporation into urban society, disclosing their modes of struggle against their marginal conditions.

### *State in El Alto*

Despite the recent proliferation of discourses of “indigenous hegemony” and economic power of *Kolla* (Aymara-Quechua) in Bolivia, the marginal conditions of El Alto's residents testifying in this chapter evince that the majority of indigenous people, or Kollas suffer from impoverishment and material deprivation.<sup>442</sup> With the emergence of qamiris, or the “Aymara bourgeoisie,” being Aymara in El Alto is no longer associated exclusively with poverty and suffering. Kolla power symbolized by qamiris finds its expression in the building style known as *cholet* pioneered by Aymara architects, such as Freddy Mamani.<sup>443</sup> It is legitimate to inquire into how qamiris and other indigenous actors have created their own social space that makes indigenous empowerment possible, restructuring economic and social relations in Bolivia. At the same time, it is necessary to recognize that “indigenous hegemony,” or “Kolla power” has not eliminated the marginalization of the majority of people of indigenous descent in Bolivia. This is a marginalization that affects people's daily lives in concrete ways: precarious housing, job

---

<sup>442</sup> Andrew Canessa, “Todos somos indígenas: Towards a New Language of National Political Identity,” *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 25, 2 (2006); Nancy Postero, “Morales's MAS Government: Building Indigenous Popular Hegemony in Bolivia,” *Latin American Perspectives* 37, 3 (2010); Saavedra, “La Insurgencia del Poder Kolla”; Untoja, *Retorno al Ayllu*.

<sup>443</sup> Gemma Candela, “Edificios de estilo explosivo,” *La Razón* May 27, 2012 accessed via [http://www.la-razon.com/index.php?url=/suplementos/escape/Edificios-estilo-explosivo\\_0\\_1619838089.html](http://www.la-razon.com/index.php?url=/suplementos/escape/Edificios-estilo-explosivo_0_1619838089.html); Jorge Llanque, “Qamiris aymaras. Nuevas elites en Oruro,” *T'inkazos* 29 (2011); Marco Quispe, “‘Chalets de altura’ están de moda,” *La Razón* July 31, 2011 accessed via [http://la-razon.com/index.php?url=/ciudades/Chalets-altura-moda\\_0\\_1441055916.html](http://la-razon.com/index.php?url=/ciudades/Chalets-altura-moda_0_1441055916.html); “El Alto construye identidad y poder con su arquitectura,” *Página Siete* March 6, 2017 accessed via <http://www.paginasiete.bo/especial01/2017/3/6/alto-construye-identidad-poder-arquitectura-129519.html>.

insecurity, and danger of being robbed on the streets. According to *El Alteño*, El Alto's daily, many residents of the city arm themselves with a small knife and defense sprays for self-protection, when they walk the streets in the night.<sup>444</sup> Public insecurity and other forms of social exclusion are real issues haunting people in El Alto. Without solving these issues, the discourses of indigenous hegemony and Kolla power represent ideologies devoid of practical contents.

El Alto's drastic growth as a commercial center and central role in popular insurgency during 2000-2005 have prompted many ideologues and intellectuals to portray El Alto as an Aymara city, a rebel city, the Bolivian capital of revolution, and/or the capital of the Aymara nation.<sup>445</sup> Aymaras truly are the demographic majority in El Alto, representing 46% of its indigenous populations, according to the 2012 census.<sup>446</sup> The narratives of Aymara city and revolutionary capital often extol El Alto's economic and political power to change society. One easily encounters on the streets of El Alto graffiti signs, such as "*Nuestra ciudad está cambiando*," ("Our city is changing"), and "*Lo mejor está por venir*" ("The better is to come"). Does this change, if it is happening, significantly depart from the colonial divide between ethnic groups, which has marginalized indians?

---

<sup>444</sup> "Pesadilla nocturna, la gente camina armada," *El Alteño* February 19, 2017.

<sup>445</sup> "El Alto, ciudad revolucionaria y heroica," *El Diario* March 6, 2015 accessed via [http://www.eldiario.net/noticias/2015/2015\\_03/nt150306/principal.php?n=76&-el-alto-ciudad-revolucionaria-y-heroica](http://www.eldiario.net/noticias/2015/2015_03/nt150306/principal.php?n=76&-el-alto-ciudad-revolucionaria-y-heroica); Lazar, *El Alto, Rebel City*; Mamani, "El espíritu aymara de El Alto"; Untoja, *Retorno al Ayllu*.

<sup>446</sup> "Censo Nacional de Población y Vivienda 2012," *Instituto Nacional de Estadística del Estado Plurinacional de Bolivia*.



<Illustration 4.9> The cholet in El Alto signals the economic power of qamiris in Bolivian society (Marco Quispe, “El Alto construye identidad y poder con su arquitectura,” *Página Siete* March 6, 2017 accessed via <http://www.paginasiete.bo/especial01/2017/3/6/alto-construye-identidad-poder-arquitectura-129519.html>)

Some changes have been surely made. Education level in El Alto slightly increased between 2001 and 2012 even if it is still very low following the nationwide trend; 17% of El Alto’s populations, according to the 2012 census, had earned a college degree whereas the number in the same category in 2001 was 10%. The percentage increased from 18% to 25% nationwide during the same period.<sup>447</sup> In 2001, 35% of houses in El Alto had water pipe; the situation had become better by 2012 with 59% of houses equipped with water pipe. The improvement in water service in El Alto during this period did not deviate from the nationwide trend (34% to 49% increase). The low percentage in piped water service at the national level reflected the overall underdevelopment in Bolivia, encompassing the countryside and tropical

---

<sup>447</sup> *Característicos de la Población* (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, 2015), 43.

areas in the lowlands. El Alto was still much behind other cities, such as La Paz (84%) and Santa Cruz (73%), whereas it was almost on the same footing as Cochabamba (60%).<sup>448</sup>

The slight improvement of living standards in El Alto, indicated by the census, does not resonate with the view of the city's people regarding their socioeconomic conditions.

Employment is as precarious as it was during the mid-twentieth century. Racism is as prevalent as it was back then. Politicians are as inattentive as they were to El Alto's needs. El Alto's informal economy and social movements reflect the city's marginal development. Informality has been a strategy of survival of migrants who could not count on a stable system of formal economy. El Alto's civic organizations and federations of street traders, artisans and merchants have assumed a central role in addressing the city's problems pertaining to basic services and public safety, because the government has neglected those problems. Juntas vecinales and federations of different economic sectors have raised their demands for those services and the improvement of public safety in often confrontational ways. This confrontational politics was necessary because the municipal, departmental, and national governments did not prioritize El Alto. As Sian Lazar points out, the city has developed "through its relation to the state" construed "in a negative way," highlighting exclusion of its residents from social rights to basic services, public education, and a safe environment.<sup>449</sup> The state herein did not play the central role "in the organi[z]ation of the means of collective consumption at the basis of daily life of all social groups: housing, education, health, culture, commerce, transport, etc."<sup>450</sup> The state has officially ruled El Alto with its administrative and judicial systems. Its rule has been virtually

---

<sup>448</sup> "Censo Nacional de Población y Vivienda 2001"; "Censo Nacional de Población y Vivienda 2012."

<sup>449</sup> Lazar, *El Alto, Rebel City*, 61.

<sup>450</sup> Manuel Castells, *City, Class and Power* tran. Elizabeth Lebas (St. Martin's Press, 1978 [1977] [1976] [1975] [1972]), 2-3.

“nonpresent” in the sense that it does not “protect citizens’ rights, defend them against harm and threat,” and guarantee them a secure space for living. As Goldstein aptly puts it, the Bolivian state in poor barrios is a “phantom state” that institutes official rules without taking care of citizens in urban margins. The state does not provide for citizens but still requires them to follow its rules. Those disobeying the rules are stigmatized as criminals, delinquents, or undisciplined.<sup>451</sup> Have poor migrants and their offspring in El Alto benefited from their incorporation into these margins, where they have encountered a state governing without providing for them? Some migrants have surely made it in the city with hard work combined with luck. The residents testifying in the chapter say one thing in common: they could not expect any help from the government, or any other authority. This is a harsh reality El Alto’s history of marginal development reveals.

State-society relations in El Alto, marked by governance without providing, replicate many problems embedded in Bolivia’s nation-state making since the National Revolution. Are the poor, indigenous majority included in national society? As Peruvian scholar may put it, “the popular outburst” (*desborde popular*), sparked by massive migration from the countryside, the mines, and provincial towns, has shaped national society with a popular, pluri-ethnic face.<sup>452</sup> *Lo indígena* is now so central to the cultural representation of *lo nacional* in Bolivia. The Bolivian Republic has been replaced with a Plurinational State of Bolivia, a political change of huge symbolic magnitude. The symbolic valorization of *lo indígena* culminated in the promulgation of the Plurinational Constitution in February 2009, which recognized thirty-six indigenous original peasant pueblos and nations as entities with an autonomous jurisdictional capacity to govern

---

<sup>451</sup> Goldstein, *Outlawed*, 83-84.

<sup>452</sup> Golte and Adams, *Los caballos de troya de los invasores*; Matos, *Desborde popular y crisis del Estado*; Perú.

their territories.<sup>453</sup> The new Constitution was promulgated at Ceja with President Morales highlighting that the Constitution was “inspired by the struggle of our ancestors, indigenous brothers” [*inspirado en la lucha de nuestros antepasados, en la lucha de nuestros hermanos indígenas*], the founders of the country, and Túpaq Katari.<sup>454</sup> The long-term effect of this symbolic convergence of *lo aymara*, *lo indígena*, and *lo nacional* is yet to be seen.

The Morales administration has attempted to impose a stronger control over civic organizations in El Alto through clientelistic infiltrations of pro-government factions, provoking a discussion on “unionist mafias in El Alto,” (*mafia sindical alteña*) which rule the city by bribing leaders of those organizations and persecuting opponents to the government.<sup>455</sup> This “mafia unionism” reflects the nationwide situation pertaining to indigenous federations and trade unions, such as the CIDOB, the COR (*Central Obrero Regional*), the CONAMAQ, the CSUTCB, and workers’ organizations, such as the COB, which are currently divided into officialista and opposition factions. In terms of political relations between state and society, the Morales administration shows many continuities from previous governments with which the administration insists the Plurinational State has parted: clientelism, corruption, and the lack of transparency. Symbolic change has not eliminated these. The Plurinational State has become a power that in its attempt to coopt grassroots organizations, fosters factional divides, conflicts, and frictions in these organizations.

---

<sup>453</sup> “Bolivia’s Constitution of 2009,” accessed via *Constitute* <http://www.parliament.am/library/sahmanadrutyunner/Bolivia.pdf>.

<sup>454</sup> Salvador Schavelzon, *El nacimiento del Estado Plurinacional. Etnografía de una Asamblea Constituyente* (Fondo de Naciones Unidas para la Democracia; Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales; Grupo Internacional de Trabajo sobre Asuntos Indígenas; Centro de Estudios Jurídicos e Investigación Social, 2012), 508.

<sup>455</sup> Interview with Kawi J. Kastaya Quispe, October 23, 2016; A.D. Mancilla, *Poder y masacre en El Alto. La Mafia Sindical Alteña* (Viejo Topo, 2016).

El Alto witnessed one particularly intense, huge, and bloody moment, when people of the city violently clashed with a national government. This clash stemmed from the government's attempt to impose an overwhelmingly unpopular policy of gas export. This moment known as the "Gas War," "the Black October," or "the Massacre of September-October of 2003" tragically revealed the state-society rift in Bolivia. As the next chapter illustrates, the national government at that time had rendered itself illegitimate to the Bolivian pueblo by brutally killing its own citizens. El Alto became the principal battlefield of the pueblo's war against this illegitimate government.

## Chapter 5

### The Massacre of September-October, 2003: A Rupture

*Arriba El Alto (Long Live El Alto)*, theatrical work by the Team Tronco-Compa (*Teatro Tronco-Compa*), exhibits a history of El Alto. In its first sequence, it shows the encounter between rural migrants and those from the mines in the city. The two migrant groups express an uneasy feeling at each other during their first encounter. Their costumes indicate their different social origins; former miners wear mining helmets and t-shirts whereas rural migrants are dressed in indigenous garments of the altiplano, including *awayu* (woven blanket of Aymara and Quechua communities), *lluch'u* (Andean hat woven from llama or alpaca wool), and poncho. The two groups are surprised to see each other, and a brawl between them soon begins. *Arriba El Alto* describes their friction through a tug of war in which migrants are divided into two groups because of their cultural and social difference. This initial divide disappears after they are settled in the city and start their new lives. Their lives in the city are laden with various hardships, including racism, insecurity, and the lack of public services. They make a living as street vendors; a *cholita* (young indigenous woman in pollera) is rejected at the workplace despite her best qualification for the job; a woman is robbed on the streets in the night; workers eat lunch bought from a female street vendor; and chaotic situations in minibus are staged in a comically exaggerated fashion.<sup>456</sup> All these scenes portray different facets of life in El Alto, troubled by discrimination, insecurity, racism, and the lack of infrastructural development.

The El Alto staged by *Tronco-Compa* is a space of marginality and suffering. At the same time, it gives birth to a new generation creating a possibility of social change. The history

---

<sup>456</sup> *Arriba El Alto* presented by Teatro Tronco-Compa at *Red de la Diversidad-Fundación Wayna Tambo*, February 11, 2017.



narrated in *Arriba El Alto* contains a sub-story, a love affair between Ángel and Victoria, who are from different migrant families. Their romantic relationship tragically ends. When Ángel is fulfilling his mandatory military service, El Alto rises up against the government of Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada (known as Goni) in October 2003. Ángel is in the military unit ordered to suppress the city's rebellion. While carrying out the order, he runs into Victoria among the multitude confronting soldiers. Because of his loyalty to El Alto and love for Victoria, Ángel refuses to shoot at the city's people, and his captain summarily executes him for disobeying the order. Victoria screams out of the pain over the death of her lover, a pain that alludes to the afflictions suffered by El Alto's people in October 2003. *Arriba El Alto* concludes by projecting a long list of more than seventy names onto the stage. These names are of those killed by the military in El Alto, La Paz, Sorata, and Warisata during a popular rebellion in September-October 2003.<sup>457</sup>

El Alto was the principal site of this rebellion that was brutally repressed by the Sánchez de Lozada government (2002-2003). *Arriba El Alto* stages the collective memory of this bloody time, preserved by El Alto's people. The city's struggle against Sánchez de Lozada was a history made by migrants incorporated into the margins of urban society. Ángel and Victoria personify not only the pain of El Alto, whose barrios and pueblos have been violated by the Bolivian state, but also epitomize the new generation that carries memories of migration and all the hardships endured by migrants. In this sense, *Arriba El Alto* shows how migrants remember history of their struggle in the city over generations. Their rebellion against a repressive government is part of this long-term history, representing the continuation of a larger process of the popular struggle against the system of oppression that perpetuates racism, social exclusions and state violence.

---

<sup>457</sup> Ibid.

Popular rebellions in El Alto, La Paz, Sorata, and Warisata in September-October 2003 came to be known as the “Gas War” because they were provoked by the Sánchez de Lozada government’s attempt to export natural gas. Victims of the state’s repression and their families call the same event “the Massacre of September-October 2003,” highlighting the government’s brutality. The Massacre represented the most violent moment in El Alto’s history of migration and struggle. This chapter sheds light on the significance of the Massacre in light of migrants’ experience of state violence in 2003. It also discusses the massacre in Sorata and Warisata on September 20, 2003, which preceded the violence in El Alto in October. Journalistic and scholarly writings mostly discuss the city’s uprising in 2003 as the culmination of the national political upsurge from 2000.<sup>458</sup> In that discussion, the city’s victory over Sánchez de Lozada signified the peak moment of the indigenous-popular insurgency starting from the massive civic protest against the privatization of public water services in Cochabamba in 2000. Without neglecting El Alto’s role in the larger process of popular insurgency at the national level, the chapter relates the Massacre to the city’s people’s experience of being victimized by the state. It argues that that victimization is perpetuated until today, making victims of the Massacre “doubly victimized” under the Plurinational State.

Intellectuals adhering to Indianism and Katarism argue that the popular uprisings in September-October 2003 were an anti-colonial struggle of the Aymara nation against the colonial-neoliberal state of Bolivia. According to these intellectuals, this struggle dated back to the rebellion of Túpaq Katari in 1781, which was headquartered in what is now El Alto.<sup>459</sup> Other

---

<sup>458</sup> García, *Las tensiones creativas de la revolución*; Gutiérrez, *Los ritmos del Pachakuti*; Benjamin Kohl and Linda Farthing, *Impasse in Bolivia: Neoliberal Hegemony and Popular Resistance* (Zed Books, 2006).

<sup>459</sup> Pachakuti Aqarapi Wanka, *Macha. Políticas de descolonización del Estado Plurinacional de Bolivia en la perspectiva de 500 años de Guerra anticolonial* (Centro Multidisciplinario

studies highlight that Aymaras, artisans, merchants, miners, peasants, priests, professionals, shop owners, and students were brought together as a common front of popular insurgency during September-October 2003.<sup>460</sup> Some of these studies center women who participated in the popular struggle from 2000 to 2003.<sup>461</sup> Several scholars discuss El Alto's uprising as "Bolivia's Third Revolution" articulating the indigenous-popular struggle from Túpaq Katari and the national-popular force rooted in the National Revolution.<sup>462</sup> According to Forrest Hylton and Thomson, the long-term indigenous struggle against colonialism and that of the national-popular pueblo from 1952 came together during October 2003, when "heterogeneous popular forces organized themselves, deliberated in open assemblies, and took action in their own spheres."<sup>463</sup> Gutiérrez draws attention to the autonomous sphere of popular politics between 2000 and 2005, which she believes produced a "communitarian-popular" space of political action, confrontation and organization. The "great local force," unleashed in El Alto during October 2003, resulted in "a

---

Wiñaypacha "CEMUWI", 2016), 173-183; Patricio Mamani Chipana, *Fuerza y qamisa de Katari-Sisa. Movimiento Apiawayqui tumpa Katari-Sisa. Kataris y Sisas volvemos siendo trillones como la flor de quinua* (Coca Chimpu, 2010), 47-61; Pablo Mamani Ramírez, *El rugir de las multitudes. La fuerza de los levantamientos indígenas en Bolivia/Qullasuyu* (La Mirada Salvaje, 2010 [2004]), 151-173; *Microgobiernos barriales. Levantamiento de la ciudad de El Alto (Octubre 2003)* (La Mirada Salvaje, 2010 [2005]); Felix Patzi Paco, "Rebelión indígena contra la colonialidad y la transnacionalización de la economía: Triunfos y vicisitudes del movimiento indígena desde 2000 a 2003," in Hylton, Patzi, Serulnikov and Thomson, *Ya es otro tiempo el presente*; Felipe Quispe Huanca, *La Caída de Goni. Diario de la "Huelga de Hambre"* (Ediciones Pachakuti, 2013).

<sup>460</sup> Luis A. Gómez, *El Alto de pie. Una insurrección Aymara en Bolivia* (Textos Rebeldes, 2004); Julio Mamani Conde, *Octubre. Memorias de dignidad y masacre* (Agencia de Prensa Alteña, 2013 [2006]).

<sup>461</sup> Denise Y. Arnold and Alison Spedding, *Mujeres en los Movimientos Sociales en Bolivia, 2000-2003* (Centro de Información y Desarrollo de la Mujer, 2005); Forrest Hylton, Lucila Choque, and Lina Britto, *La Guerra de Gas contada desde las mujeres. Altupata warminakan sartasitapa lup'iwipampi wali ch'amampi. La fuerza y el pensamiento de las Mujeres Alteñas en el movimiento de octubre 2003* (Centro de Promoción de la Mujer Gregoria Apaza, 2005).

<sup>462</sup> Dunkerley, "Evo Morales, the 'Two Bolivias' and the Third Bolivian Revolution"; Hylton and Thomson, *Revolutionary Horizons*.

<sup>463</sup> Ibid, 7, 114.

specie of *factual autonomous interregnum*” in which the sovereignty of the national state was contingent upon collective decisions made by the indigenous-popular bases. Here autonomy of the bases is a space of local self-governance that makes a radical democratization possible. In Gutiérrez’s democracy, self-organized indigenous-popular multitudes are the protagonists of emancipatory politics that is “neither state-centric nor enclosed” by a structure of institutionalized political power.<sup>464</sup>

These studies on indigenous-popular insurgency between 2000 and 2005 shed light on different political dimensions of El Alto’s uprising in 2003. The chapter contributes to the current discussion by looking into how that uprising stemmed from people’s experiences of the marginalization in national society and state violence in September-October 2003. It utilizes testimonies of members of the Association of the Victims of the Massacre in September-October 2003, and refers to journalistic reports on political events in 2003 in order to contextualize those testimonies in the debate on civic organizations, national politics, and social movements. It examines current politics of memory of the Massacre, which involves the Morales administration, civic organizations, and Indianist-Katarist groups. It shows points of divergence between the victims’ testimonies and ideological discourses produced by different political interests, and captures several moments, when those discourses functioned as discursive frameworks for El Alto’s people to articulate their demands for the nationalization of natural gas, a new Constitution and structural change in the national economy.

### ***Popular Challenges to the Neoliberal State, 1985-2002***

---

<sup>464</sup> Gutiérrez, *Los ritmos del Pachakuti*, 269-270.

Since the MNR returned to power by electoral victory in 1985, Bolivian democracy formally functioned with three dominant parties, the MNR, the MIR (*Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria*), and the ADN (*Acción Democrática Nacional*). None of these parties obtained the majority votes in the general elections between 1985 and 2002. After the elections, multiple parties arranged a pact to form a coalition to contend in the congressional runoff that decided the ultimate winner. The candidate with the highest popular votes did not necessarily win the runoff. Víctor Paz of the MNR received the second highest votes in the general election of 1985 whereas Jaime Paz Zamora of the MIR finished in the third place in 1989. Yet, the two politicians successfully garnered the support of other parties to defeat their rivals in the runoff.<sup>465</sup>

The first major challenge to this “pacted democracy” emerged in the late 1980s, when the CONDEPA (*Conciencia de Patria*) led by Carlos Palenque Ávila, the owner and commentator of RTP Bolivia (*Radio y Televisión Popular*), attracted votes of the urban poor and indigenous groups in the countryside of La Paz. Palenque strategically used Aymara symbols, such as Tiwanaku and wiphala, to appeal to marginalized groups. His popularity stemmed from his TV talk show *La Tribuna Libre del Pueblo* (*The Open Tribunal of the Pueblo*) in which he publicly conversed with people from marginal sectors. He listened to their stories of suffering, and suggested that *La Tribuna Libre* was a public sphere for them to express their voices.<sup>466</sup> This gave him a paternalistic reputation as *El Compadre* (Godfather) of the pueblo, and made him a popular alternative to the dominant political parties seen as corrupt and detached from the poor majority. Palenque ran for presidency in 1989 and 1993, and received 12% (fourth place) and

---

<sup>465</sup> Eduardo Gamarra, “Political Parties Since 1964: The Construction of Bolivia’s Multiparty Systems,” in Grindle and Domingo, *Proclaiming Revolution*, 299-300; Merilee S. Grindle, “Shadowing the Past?: Policy Reforms in Bolivia, 1985-2002,” in Grindle and Domingo, *Proclaiming Revolution*, 336-338.

<sup>466</sup> Himpele, *Circuits of Culture*, 137-163.

14% (third place) of popular votes respectively. In 1989, he won the highest votes in the Department of La Paz, showing his popularity in the region.<sup>467</sup>

The CONDEPA disintegrated soon after Palenque's abrupt death caused by a heart attack in 1997. However, challenges to the dominant political parties loomed larger in the late 1990s. The six federations of coca growers (*cocaleros*) in Cochabamba and their leader Evo Morales surged as central actors in confronting the coca eradication program implemented by the national governments that collaborated with the DEA (*Drug Enforcement Administration*) of the U.S. Activists and journalists reported human rights violation of *cocaleros* during the enforcement of eradication that targeted mostly tropical areas of Chapare in Cochabamba.<sup>468</sup> Unlike coca produced in Yungas, the zone of production for daily use of people who chew coca leaves and make tea out of them, the majority of leaves from Chapare are channeled into drug-trafficking. More than "two-thirds of coca [leaves] destined for cocaine" in 2009, according to Linda Farthing and Benjamin Kohl, originated in Chapare.<sup>469</sup> The violence involved in coca eradication provoked a strong resistance from *cocaleros'* unions. Alternative crops, such as coffee, seeded by the USAID did not generate a stable income for Chapare's peasants who became increasingly distrustful of U.S.-imposed projects of substituting coca.<sup>470</sup> In the municipal elections of 1995, the six federations of *cocaleros* in Chapare aligned with the IU (*Izquierda Unida*), and won ten municipalities and a number of seats in town councils of Cochabamba.<sup>471</sup> This local grassroots takeover was in part an outcome of the LPP (*Ley de Participación Popular*) decreed in 1994.

---

<sup>467</sup> Dieter Nohlen, *Elections in the Americas: A Data Handbook. Volume II. South America* (Oxford University Press, 2005), 133.

<sup>468</sup> Kohl and Farthing, *Impasse in Bolivia*, 156-158.

<sup>469</sup> Linda Farthing and Benjamin Kohl, "Social Control: Bolivia's New Approach to Coca Reduction," *Latin American Perspectives* 37, 4 (2010): 200.

<sup>470</sup> *Ibid.*, 200-203.

<sup>471</sup> Gutiérrez, *Los ritmos del Pachakuti*, 192-193.

The Sánchez de Lozada administration (his first term from 1993 to 1997) designed the law to incorporate popular sectors into the government through a controlled opening for political participation. The law defined “territorial organizations of the base,” including “peasant communities, indigenous pueblos, and neighborhood associations” [*comunidades campesinas, pueblos indígenas y juntas vecinales*], as entities with “the legal capacity” to administer local public projects and services, such as education, health, and road construction.<sup>472</sup> Cocaleros’ unions took advantage of the LPP to establish their own control over local politics in Cochabamba. The MAS, officially founded in 1999, emerged out of this process shaped by Chapare’s opposition to coca eradication and the administrative decentralization by the LPP.

In the altiplano at the same time, Aymara communities mobilized under the CSUTCB that had undergone an ideological radicalization under its new leader Felipe Quispe Huanca. Quispe was the leader of the EGTK (*Ejército Guerrillero Tupak Katari*), an Aymara guerrilla group that was founded in 1986 and disintegrated after most of its members, including Quispe, were arrested and imprisoned in 1992. A year after he was released from the prison in 1997, Quispe was elected executive secretary of the CSUTCB. His inimical and vehement militancy against colonial domination by white-mestizo Bolivia gave him a reputation as the most radical Aymara leader. He combined the Indianist notion of racial struggle with antiimperialist and antineoliberal discourses about yanqui-gringo invasion. His militant ideology became a central component of political mobilization of indigenous groups affiliated with the CSUTCB. In Quispe’s own words, the CSUTCB “placed itself on [the frontline of] the communitarian offensive” [*se ha puesto en la ofensiva comunitaria*] against “the government of white-mestizos”

---

<sup>472</sup> “Bolivia: Ley de Participación Popular, 20 de abril de 1994,” accessed via *Lexivox Portal Jurídico* <https://www.lexivox.org/norms/BO-L-1551.pdf>.

[*gobierno de los blanco-mestizos*].<sup>473</sup> The CSUTCB's relationship with the CONAMAQ was uneasy at best because the CONAMAQ saw the CSUTCB's union structure as alien to ayllus. Even though the two organizations meant to defend the land and territory of indigenous communities, little coordination existed between them. Their mobilization capacity was still strong enough to effectively blockade highways and roads during the late 1990s and early 2000s. The CSUTCB reacted against the 1996 Law of the INRA (*Instituto Nacional de Reforma Agraria*) and the 1999 Water Law, seeing the former as detrimental to small-holders and the latter as the privatization of water services. At the same time, the CONAMAQ was strongly opposed to any foreign imposition that would displace ayllus. The CONAMAQ and the CSUTCB confronted the privatization and foreign takeovers of the national economy, which had been implemented on the basis of the 1994 Law of Capitalization.<sup>474</sup> Indigenous insurgency in the altiplano increasingly challenged neoliberalism after the late 1990s, undermining the neoliberal governance system in Bolivia.

The first major sign of crisis in Bolivian neoliberalism appeared in the city of Cochabamba in 2000. In October 1999, the Bolivian Congress passed the Law 2029 of Potable Water and Sewage System to privatize Cochabamba's public water services. Provoked by this, the city's civic organizations came together as *La Coordinadora de la Defensa del Agua y de la Vida* in November 1999, and organized protests in defense of water since January 2000. Known as "the Cochabamba Water War," the conflict over the city's water services received high international attention because it involved a subsidiary of a translational giant, the Bechtel Corporation. The municipal government of the city signed a contract with the Aguas del Tunari,

---

<sup>473</sup> Felipe Quispe Huanca "MALLKU", "CSUTCB: máxima instancia superior de las rebeliones," *AWQA* 5 (2014): 6.

<sup>474</sup> Kohl and Farthing, *Impasse in Bolivia*, 109-111, 158-159.



an international consortium owned by Bechtel. Under the contract, holdings of the state-owned water company, SEMAPA (*Servicio Municipal de Agua Potable y Alcantarillado*) would be sold to the Aguas del Tunari. The Water War came to represent the popular struggle against capitalist globalization and neoliberal usurpation of the public good; it was a war against the transnational takeover, privatization, and commodification of basic services and natural resources. With the concession given by the municipal government of Cochabamba, the Aguas del Tunari planned to take “control of not just the city water system but of all ground water, including the right to charge for water from pre-existing wells, surface irrigation systems and even, private, rainwater catchments.” This would result in a 200% price increase of water service.<sup>475</sup> The Water War reached its climax on April 4, when *La Coordinadora* declared an indefinite blockade of the city, entirely paralyzing the city. On April 6, multitudes of citizens stormed into facilities of the Aguas del Tunari, shouting “if the government doesn’t expel it, the very people of Cochabamba are gonna take it” [*si el gobierno no la expulsa, la misma gente de Cochabamba los va a sacar*]. Two days later, the governor of Cochabamba spoke to about 50,000 citizens in the city’s main plaza, and announced that the contract with the Aguas del Tunari would be annulled. On the same day, President Hugo Bánzer (1997-2001) declared a state of emergency, and sent troops to break the roadblocks. Violent clashes between citizens and armed forces ensued, leaving many casualties, including the death of a high school student. His death caused nationwide furors.<sup>476</sup> Amid pressures, the government surrendered to the popular demands to revoke the contract with the Aguas del Tunari and repeal the Law 2029. The Water War was extolled as the people’s victory over neoliberalism.<sup>477</sup>

---

<sup>475</sup> Ibid, 163-165.

<sup>476</sup> Gutiérrez, *Los ritmos del Pachakuti*, 76-78.

<sup>477</sup> Kohl and Farthing, *Impasse in Bolivia*, 166.

According to Gutiérrez, the popular power unleashed during the Water War represented “the non-institutional articulation of struggle” that produced its autonomous spaces of politicization of multiple sectors, including peasants, professionals, students, and the urban poor. Initially a local response to the privatization of water service, the Water War was converted into a broader collective struggle for “the recuperation of common goods” usurped by the neoliberal state.<sup>478</sup> Political legitimacy in this context did not stem from governmental institutions formally defined as official but from multiple sites of popular mobilization that generated their own rules of legitimate action to control common goods. In this political landscape, the state represented an illegitimate form of power because it surrendered common goods of the pueblo to transnational capital.

In the altiplano, the CSUTCB played a pivotal role in creating an Aymara insurgency between 2000 and 2001. Aymara comunarios clashed with the Bolivian state in April 2000, September-October 2000, and June-July 2001. During those three moments, the altiplano in La Paz and Oruro was largely under control of the comunarios blockading highways, stopping the traffic to the city of La Paz, and confronting police troops and soldiers. This situation raised the specter of an Aymara war against the Bolivian state, or white-mestizo Bolivia with the discourse of “two Bolivias” acquiring concrete meanings. Amid comunarios’ roadblocks and conflict with the Bolivian state, the Aymara nation appeared not in an abstract form of ideological rhetoric but “as an articulatory axis of the political community imagined” in terms of belligerent resistance to white-mestizo Bolivia.<sup>479</sup> The Aymara nation emerged as a communitarian form of governance in the altiplano, and fought the q’ara state understood as perpetuating colonial oppression. In this

---

<sup>478</sup> Gutiérrez, *Los ritmos del Pachakuti*, 73, 85.

<sup>479</sup> Mamani, *El rugir de las multitudes*, 48.

scenario of Aymara insurgency, the memory of a race war dating back to Túpaq Katari was reenacted as an Indian radicalism personified by Felipe Quispe.<sup>480</sup> Aymara insurgency was also an antineoliberal struggle. The forty-five demands, raised by the CSUTCB in June-July 2001, directly questioned large landholdings, extractivism, and privatization.<sup>481</sup> The enemy of the Aymara nation in the anticolonial war was a colonial-neoliberal state that simultaneously embodied q'ara and capitalism. On August 24, 2001, the CSUTCB reached an agreement with the government to lift the roadblocks after the government promised material benefits, such as rural development, social security, and an indigenous university.<sup>482</sup>

Even though the Aymara insurgency in 2000-2001 manifested its power as an explosive force of communitarian mobilization, the CSUTCB lacked “a precise formulation” of the discursive language to communicate its communitarian project to broader sectors of Bolivian society.<sup>483</sup> The absence of a communicative channel between insurgent Aymaras and other groups limited the former’s capacity to expand their insurgency and influence the national system of power in the long-term. Nevertheless, the “collective sense of Aymara belonging,” articulated during the insurgency, persisted in the altiplano, and critically informed “insurgent identities” that were hardly mollified by the colonial-neoliberal state of Bolivia.<sup>484</sup>

Chapare was another major site of popular rebellion against the neoliberal state. In this region, the six federations of cocaleros, affiliated with the MAS, organized numerous roadblocks. According to Pablo Mamani Ramírez, the roadblocks in September 2000 turned

---

<sup>480</sup> Ibid, 58; Patzi, “Rebelión indígena contra la colonialidad y la transnacionalización de la economía,” 214-215.

<sup>481</sup> Gutiérrez, *Los ritmos del Pachakuti*, 155-160.

<sup>482</sup> Patzi, “Rebelión indígena contra la colonialidad y la transnacionalización de la economía,” 229-230.

<sup>483</sup> Gutiérrez, *Los ritmos del Pachakuti*, 165, 175.

<sup>484</sup> Mamani, *El rugir de las multitudes*, 59-60.

Chapare into “a territory in rebellion.”<sup>485</sup> Cocaleros’ demands centered on the right to cultivate coca, violated by the *Plan Dignidad* (Dignity Plan), which the Bánzer administration had implemented since 1998 to eradicate coca in Chapare. The administration doubled the armed forces deployed in the region with military artilleries, such as tanks and attack helicopters, to crack down on narcotraffic and “remove Bolivia from the narcotraffic circuit until 2002.”<sup>486</sup> The militarization of Chapare led to violent clashes between armed forces and cocaleros, leaving hundreds of casualties that included several soldiers found dead in the region’s tropical forests.<sup>487</sup> This conflict, denominated “the Coca War,” reached its climax in January 2002. The Supreme Decree 26415, signed by Interim President Jorge Quiroga Ramírez (2001-2002) on November 27, 2001, triggered a large-scale rebellion in Chapare because it “ban[ned] the drying, transport and the sales of coca planted in illegal zones.” On January 15, 2002, cocaleros attempted to take over the Storage Center of Coca in the town of Sacaba, and clashed with soldiers who tried to stop them. During the second week of the conflict, *La Coordinadora del Agua* of Cochabamba joined the cocaleros. On January 25, Felipe Quispe declared his solidarity with Evo Morales, whom congressional deputies and senators of all parties but the MAS had agreed to deprive of his congressional deputyship on the allegation of orchestrating the murder of four soldiers in Sacaba. By the beginning of February, the roadblocks spread to Chuquisaca, La Paz, Potosí, and Oruro while cocaleros totally paralyzed the Cochabamba-Santa Cruz highway. The national government eventually entered negotiation, and promised to suspend the implementation of the Supreme Decree 26415 and to indemnify families of those who died during the conflict. In exchange for this, cocaleros lifted the roadblocks. Quispe criticized Morales for compromising

---

<sup>485</sup> Ibid, 71.

<sup>486</sup> Gutiérrez, *Los ritmos del Pachakuti*, 200.

<sup>487</sup> Mamani, *El rugir de las multitudes*, 69-70.

with the government. The ensuing dispute between Morales and Quispe put an end to the brief alliance between Aymara comunarios of the altiplano and cocaleros of Chapare.<sup>488</sup>

The Coca War acquired national significance because it came to represent the pueblo's defense of ancestral practices. The MAS spread the word that its struggle was against a government that criminalized the ancestral leaf in collaboration with the imperialist war on drugs. In this context, the party became a viable alternative to the dominant parties associated with the corrupt neoliberal system controlled by the U.S. Empire. The MAS astutely capitalized on this political climate during the campaign for the general elections that took place on June 30, 2002. A discourse underlining the defense of the pueblo and its cultural traditions from the imperialist aggression appealed to broad sectors of Bolivian society. The MAS combined this discourse with notions of national sovereignty and the defense of natural resources that had been sold out (*vendidos*) by the neoliberal oligarchic traditional parties for the benefit of the U.S. Empire and transnational capital.<sup>489</sup>

A few days before the elections, the U.S. Ambassador to Bolivia Manuel Rocha made a controversial comment on Evo Morales, when he suggested that the U.S. aid to Bolivia could be suspended if Morales won the elections. This provoked a huge public outcry in Bolivia; many Bolivians saw it as an imperialist bullying of their country. As a result, Morales's popularity as the opponent of imperialism drastically surged, and he finished in second place with 20.9% of the popular votes in the presidential election with his party winning 27 of 130 deputy seats and 8 of 27 senate positions. Felipe Quispe received 6.1% of the votes (mostly from the Department of La Paz) with his MIP (*Movimiento Indígena Pachakuti*) securing six deputy seats. Morales and

---

<sup>488</sup> Gutiérrez, *Los ritmos del Pachakuti*, 203-206.

<sup>489</sup> Ibid, 212-216.

the MAS decisively won in four of the nine departments (Cochabamba, La Paz, Oruro, and Potosí).<sup>490</sup> With the MAS and the MIP “invad[ing] the formal political space,” the crisis of the neoliberal system of governance became blatantly manifest.<sup>491</sup> Sánchez de Lozada with 22.5% of the electoral support formed a mega coalition that brought together his MNR, the NFR (*Nueva Fuerza Republicana*) of Manfred Reyes Villa (20.8% votes) and the MIR of Jaime Paz (16.3% votes). The future of Sánchez de Lozada’s second presidency was highly uncertain given the increasing popular challenge. The Gas War took place in this political context shaped by popular discontents and demands for an alternative to the neoliberal system. The Sánchez de Lozada administration faced a huge crisis only about six months after inaugurating. Known as the “Black February” in 2003, this crisis exacerbated the volatility of Bolivian politics.

### ***Black February, El Alto-La Paz in 2003***

On February 9, 2003, the Sánchez de Lozada administration announced an income tax increase. The new tax plan would be applied to every Bolivian citizen except those who earned less than Bs. 880 (approximately \$150) per month. The plan would affect the majority of the economically poor Bolivians who earned less than \$300 per month.<sup>492</sup> The tax increase, dubbed as *impuestazo* (tax hikes), provoked widespread popular protests, where the national police, the state’s instrument of oppression, joined. The police, suffering from low wages, mobilized in the

---

<sup>490</sup> Ibid, 209-210; Kohl and Farthing, *Impasse in Bolivia*, 171-172; Patzi, “Rebelión indígena contra la colonialidad y la transnacionalización de la economía,” 239-240.

<sup>491</sup> Gutiérrez, *Los ritmos del Pachakuti*, 214.

<sup>492</sup> “El gobierno boliviano recorta el salario de los trabajadores y los impuestos de los empresarios,” *Econoticiasbolivia* February 10, 2003 accessed via *Rebelión* <https://www.rebelion.org/hemeroteca/bolivia/salarios110203.htm>; the cited article is dated January 10, 2003. This is apparently a mistake on the part of the *Rebelión*. The article notes that “Sánchez de Lozada announced last night” his new tax plan via televised speech. Based on the fact that he made this speech on February 9, the cited date in the link is mistaken.

city of La Paz against the impuestazo on February 11. This compelled the government to deploy military forces in the capital, causing violent clashes between the military and the police in the urban center around the Presidential Palace. Eleven members of the police and four soldiers died during the fight. On the next day, a multitude of high school students of the *Colegio Nacional de San Simón de Ayacucho* entered the Plaza Murillo of the capital, and surrounded the Presidential Palace located on a corner of the plaza. They hurled stones at the doors and windows of the palace in protest against the impuestazo, and the military and palace guards threw teargases in response. While students confronted the military on Plaza Murillo, various sectors of El Alto and La Paz rose up. Throughout February 12-13, large numbers of merchants, students, trade unionists, and workers assaulted governmental offices, including the Ministry of Labor and the Vice Presidency. Multitudes of citizens vandalized the headquarters of the ADN, the MIR, and the MNR, which symbolized corrupt oligarchy. Citizens of El Alto expressed their rejection of the impuestazo by setting fire on the building of the municipal government of their city; this building would be known as “the Burned Municipality” (*Alcaldía Quemada*) from this day.<sup>493</sup> They also signaled their discontents with neoliberalism by raiding offices of the Coca Cola Company and privatized electricity and water service providers (*Electropaz* and *Aguas del Illimani*).<sup>494</sup>

---

<sup>493</sup> Kohl and Farthing, *Impasse in Bolivia*, 172; Mamani, *Microgobiernos barriales*, 257.

<sup>494</sup> Mamani, *Octubre*, 12; Patzi, “Rebelión indígena contra la colonialidad y la transnacionalización de la economía,” 245.

<Table 5.1> The new taxation rates proposed by Sánchez de Lozada in February 2003 (Source: “El gobierno boliviano recorta el salario de los trabajadores y los impuestos de los empresarios,” *Econoticiasbolivia* February 10, 2003 accessed via *Rebelión* <https://www.rebelion.org/hemeroteca/bolivia/salarios110203.htm>)

Income	% Tax	Deduction from Salaries
Until 880 Bs.	0	0
1,320 Bs.	4.2	55 Bs.
1,760 Bs.	6.3	110 Bs.
2,000 Bs.	7.0	140 Bs.
3,000 Bs.	8.8	265 Bs.
4,000 Bs.	9.8	390 Bs.
5,000 Bs.	10.3	515 Bs.
6,000 Bs.	10.7	640 Bs.
8,000 Bs.	11.1	890 Bs.
10,000 Bs.	11.4	1,140 Bs.
20,000 Bs.	12.0	2,390 Bs.
29,900 Bs.	12.1	3,628 Bs.

Leaders of civic organizations in El Alto argued that “the social convulsion” during February 2003 was a legitimate reaction of the people to unjust tax hikes. Bolivian civic organizations perceived the *impuestazo* as an exploitative policy designed to take more money out of poor people’s pockets. This perception resonated with the majority of the people, for whom additional deduction from their earnings was difficult to bear given their impoverished conditions.<sup>495</sup> Even though the percentage of the Bolivian people living in poverty decreased from 70.9% in 1992 to 58.6% in 2001, the majority of them still lived in poverty.<sup>496</sup> To people of El Alto, where state authorities had not properly addressed the lack of basic services and urban infrastructure, the *impuestazo* evidenced that the state imposed obligations without fulfilling its end of the deal. In this sense, the popular insurrection against the *impuestazo* critically

---

<sup>495</sup> Mamani, *Octubre*, 14.

<sup>496</sup> Mamani, *El rugir de las multitudes*, 126.



questioned the legitimacy of the neoliberal state that perpetuated the impoverishment and marginalization of the majority of the Bolivian people. The *impuestazo* stemmed from the IMF's demand to "reduce the national deficit from 8.5 to 5.5 per cent of GDP," which required the Bolivian government to increase revenues and decrease spending. Because of this, the *impuestazo* was associated with the imperialist domination by global financial institutions. The Sánchez de Lozada administration did not hesitate to use armed forces to suppress popular protests against the *impuestazo*. This "sent a clear message about who was ruling [the country]." <sup>497</sup> The rebellious force of Bolivian citizens compelled Sánchez de Lozada to withdraw the *impuestazo* after many lives had been lost. The clash between citizens and the military, and the police and the military on February 12-13 left more than thirty four people dead and 182 injured. Some of the injured citizens had to amputate an arm, or a leg because of the severity of their injuries. <sup>498</sup>

The massive insurrection against the *impuestazo* plainly disclosed the popular sentiments against a state associated more with a corrupt oligarchy, U.S. imperialism, and transnational capital, than with the Bolivian pueblo. The nature of the state was manifest; it represented only the oligarchic caste collaborating with foreign capitalists and the U.S. Empire, and did not help the poor majority. In this sense, people's violent actions against the ruling elite were legitimate forms of violence. Popular groups created their own rules of political mobilization and organization, when the state attempted to impose exploitative policies without benefitting the poor majority. In this situation, the Weberian notion of the state as a governing authority with monopolistic control over the use of violence was a fiction that forged its own imagined reality

---

<sup>497</sup> Kohl and Farthing, *Impasse in Bolivia*, 172-173.

<sup>498</sup> Gutiérrez, *Los ritmos del Pachakuti*, 226; Mamani, *El rugir de las multitudes*, 124.

of representative democracy and constitutional mandate.<sup>499</sup> As evinced by the events on February 12-13, the mandate, derived from the formal electoral process, no longer necessarily meant a political legitimacy in Bolivia. The problem was the ruling system itself, whose entire process of politics had become discredited to the eyes of the majority of the people. Civic organizations, peasant federations, trade unions, and alternative political parties, such as the MAS and the MIP, played a central part in organizing popular groups, and produced discourses about the colonial state of q'aras, corrupt oligarchy, imperialist domination, and neoliberal usurpation. The governing institutions of Bolivia came to embody a system of domination by the minority over the majority. The constitutional mandate enshrined by Bolivian democracy deteriorated into a fallacious concept completely detached from the political process determined by the people joining marches, protests, and resistance against the neoliberal state. This political dynamic of spontaneous mobilization of the bases would be a decisive force during the Gas War.

### ***Gas Export and “Maya y Paya”***

The catalyst of the Gas War was the gas exportation plan proposed by Sánchez de Lozada. On the basis of the Hydrocarbon Law passed in 1996, the YPFB had received only 18% of the profits generated by the sales of Bolivia's natural gas.<sup>500</sup> The new pipeline to Brazil was opened in 1999. The weight of hydrocarbons in overall exports increased from 12% in 1996 to 39% in 2004.<sup>501</sup> This strategic sector of the nation's economy was largely in the hands of transnational capital because of the capitalization during the first presidency of Sánchez de

---

<sup>499</sup> H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (Oxford University Press, 1998 [1923]).

<sup>500</sup> “Ley No. 1689 de 30 de Abril de 1996,” accessed via *Yacimientos Petrolíferos Fiscales Bolivianos* <file:///C:/Users/Cliente.PC-2/Downloads/ley-1689.pdf>.

<sup>501</sup> Kohl and Farthing, *Impasse in Bolivia*, 121-122.

Lozada, which privatized the YPFB and sold out the company's affiliated firms (Petrolera Chaco, Transredes, and Empresa Petrolera) to transnational companies, including Amoco, Enron, Shell YPF, Perez, and Pluspetrol.<sup>502</sup> As natural gas became increasingly central to the national economy, the public outcry over foreign control of the YPFB mounted. Two months after the Black February, various civic organizations, trade unions, peasant federations, and political parties, such as the MAS and the MIP, formed *La Coordinadora de Defensa del Gas*.<sup>503</sup> After failing to impose the impuestazo, the Sánchez de Lozada administration promoted gas export to lower the national deficit. The administration accepted the proposal of LNG, a transnational consortium consisting of Amoco, British Gas, Elf, Exxon, and Repsol. The consortium recommended Bolivia to build "a gas liquefaction plant in either a Chilean or Peruvian port" through which the country's gas would be exported to Mexico and California in the U.S. No plan was made to raise the percentage of gas profits allocated to the YPFB. In contrast, the press reported that foreign companies "expected a return of ten to one."<sup>504</sup>

Neoliberal takeover, determined by transnational capital, provoked critical reactions from civic organizations, trade unions, and the opposition parties. Transnational economic domination deprived Bolivia of its resources that should be used for improving people's living conditions. Roberto de la Cruz of the COR succinctly expressed this popular sentiment, when he said: *Claro no había otra, sigue cocinándose en fogones con leña y bosta, era imposible tolerar que los gringos tengan gas antes que nosotros* [Clearly there was no other way. We in the altiplano continue cooking with firewood and dung. It was impossible to tolerate gringos having gas ahead

---

<sup>502</sup> Ibid, 110.

<sup>503</sup> Gutiérrez, *Los ritmos del Pachakuti*, 238.

<sup>504</sup> Kohl and Farthing, *Impasse in Bolivia*, 173-174.

of us].<sup>505</sup> The gas export, proposed by Sánchez de Lozada, meant another deceptive policy that promised development but would not give people basic services, public safety, and stable jobs. According to the 2001 census, 91% of households in El Alto cooked with gas but the situation in the rural altiplano was akin to what De la Cruz described. In most localities in the department of La Paz but El Alto and the city of La Paz, the percentage of households cooking with firewood was higher than 70%. In some localities, it was higher than 90%.<sup>506</sup> Civic organizations and social movements asked, “Who is benefiting from Bolivia’s gas being exported to other countries?”

When Sánchez de Lozada and Mexican President Vicente Fox discussed gas export during their summit in early September, the Bolivian debate over gas was producing political deadlocks.<sup>507</sup> The Bolivian Episcopal Conference organized a national dialogue on the gas question, which took place in Santa Cruz on September 2. The MAS demanded the modification of the Hydrocarbon Law to “increase tax on petroleum companies” [*incrementar el impuesto a las petroleras*] that profited from Bolivia’s gas reserves. In addition, Evo Morales urged the government to hold a referendum on issues pertaining to gas but the government rejected both demands.<sup>508</sup> The press reported that Sánchez de Lozada considered a Chilean port to be “the best option” for Bolivia to export gas. This would be a reasonable choice from an economic

---

<sup>505</sup> “Bolivia despertó en Caracollo,” from private notes of journalist Edwin Mamani Luna of *El Alto*.

<sup>506</sup> “Censo Nacional de Población y Vivienda 2001.”

<sup>507</sup> “Demanda mexicana de gas sería cubierta por Bolivia,” *La Prensa* September 13, 2003 accessed via Biblioteca Municipal de La Paz (Henceforth, BMLP); “Los Presidentes de Bolivia y México hablarán sobre la exportación de gas,” *El Diario* September 1, 2003 accessed via Biblioteca y Archivo Histórico de la Asamblea Legislativa Plurinacional (Henceforth, BAH-ALP).

<sup>508</sup> “Poder Ejecutivo rechaza referendum sobre el gas planteado por el Mas,” September 3, 2003 *El Diario*; “Reencuentro Nacional fracasó por intransigencia de políticos,” *El Diario* September 3, 2003; both articles cited here were accessed via BAH-ALP.

perspective because of the port's proximity to Bolivia's gas reserves and "the lower interest rates associated with Chile's higher political stability rating."<sup>509</sup> The Chilean option was, however, politically risky given the Bolivian nationalist antagonism toward Chile that had deprived Bolivia of its exit to the Pacific Ocean during the War of the Pacific (1879-1883). Opponents of the government capitalized on the rumor about Sánchez de Lozada's preference of Chilean port. The president "insisted" that "he would like the Peruvian proposal" [*quisiera favorecer la propuesta peruana*]. However, civic organizations published documents to argue that Chile would take advantage of Bolivian gas to "convert itself into a 'continental dominator' in the Pacific Ocean" [*convertirse en un "dominador continental en el océano Pacífico*].<sup>510</sup> The anti-Chilean discourse, combined with the gas question, effectively appealed to the Bolivian people concerned with increased foreign exploitation of the national economy. In fact, Bolivian gas was just one of five options considered by California, and Bolivia and Mexico had made no concrete deal on gas sales. Nevertheless, the Bolivian public became increasingly anxious about consequences of gas exports in terms of a foreign economic takeover. Chilean company Gas Atacama, according to Wilson García Mérida of *Juguete Rabioso*, was genuinely interested in transporting Bolivia's gas to a Pacific port. The director of Gas Atacama confirmed his company's interest in Bolivian gas during the interview with the daily *El Deber* in Santa Cruz on September 3.<sup>511</sup> In this context of growing public anxiety and concern, the term "Gas War" appeared in the Bolivian public discourse in a "national offensive to defend gas and recuperate

---

<sup>509</sup> Kohl and Farthing, *Impasse in Bolivia*, 174.

<sup>510</sup> "Cosdena: Gas por Chile 'eliminaría para siempre' el retorno al mar," *La Prensa* September 6, 2003 accessed via BMLP.

<sup>511</sup> Wilson García Mérida, "Todo el gas para Chile," *Juguete Rabioso* September 18, 2003 accessed via *Red Voltaire* <http://www.voltairenet.org/article120409.html>.

hydrocarbon resources” [*ofensiva nacional para “defender el gas y recuperar los recursos hidrocarburíferos”*].<sup>512</sup>

While gas was a hot issue throughout Bolivia, new property registrations, known as *Maya y Paya* (“One and Two” in Aymara), provoked a popular uprising in El Alto from early to mid-September. The new registrations were to “restore the property records” [*reconstruir el registro de propietarios*] burned down during the Black February.<sup>513</sup> The municipal government of El Alto asked the city’s residents to present documents that verified their real estate holdings. A problem was the cost of this transaction for which one had to pay about Bs. 400 (slightly more than \$60). Most residents owned properties without official documents; therefore, they had to pay a lawyer, or anyone with a professional training to handle necessary bureaucratic procedures. José Luis Paredes, El Alto’s mayor, explained that the new registrations would enhance the municipal government’s capacity to document and protect property rights of his city’s residents. However, most residents were not only skeptical of his explanation but also very suspicious of the intent behind the new registrations. Bs. 400 was not a small amount for the majority of El Alto’s people. Moreover, they vividly remembered the *impuestazo*, which the national government wanted to impose only seven months earlier. Leaders of the COR and the FEJUVE argued that *Maya y Paya* was a disguised attempt to reintroduce the *impuestazo*, increase property taxes, and take more money out of poor people’s pockets. A dialogue between Mayor Paredes and the FEJUVE’s delegates led by Mauricio Cori took place on September 10, and the two sides only confirmed their disagreement. The majority of El Alto’s populations agreed with

---

<sup>512</sup> “Guerra del gas: Gobierno inicia campaña; oposición, protestas,” *Los Tiempos* September 1, 2003 accessed via BAH-ALP.

<sup>513</sup> “Vecinos rechazan vigencia de formularios impositivos,” *El Diario* September 2, 2003 accessed via BAH-ALP.

the argument of the FEJUVE's leaders even if the mayor noted that those leaders "didn't give me" [*no me ha dado*] a convincing "reason to annul Maya y Paya" [*razón para anular el Maya y Paya*].<sup>514</sup> When the FEJUVE launched an indefinite civic stoppage on September 15, tens of thousands of residents blockaded roads and streets around Ceja. Amid enormous opposition, Mayor Paredes annulled the controversial property registrations.<sup>515</sup> El Alto's rebellion against Maya y Paya once again disclosed that state authorities had lost the trust of citizens and that any state-society conflict could result in a violent confrontation.

### ***Memory of September-October, 2003***

Media reports, oral testimonies, and scholarly studies give different numbers of casualties from the Massacre of September-October, 2003, ranging from sixty to eighty deaths with 300-600 people wounded.<sup>516</sup> Victims of the Massacre were mostly from El Alto. Even though the city defeated the government of Sánchez de Lozada, its victory did not erase the pains endured by victims of military violence. Many of them still suffer from physical discomforts of the injuries caused by projectiles that penetrated their bodies during September-October 2003. The memory of bloody military violence continues to haunt them since they directly witnessed deaths and injuries of their families, friends and neighbors, and/or themselves were victims of that violence. The Morales administration has extolled the Gas War as a heroic struggle of the Bolivian pueblo for the dignity of the nation. Members of the Association of the Victims of the Massacre in

---

<sup>514</sup> "Fejuve El Alto no pudo demostrar que Maya y Paya son impuestazos," September 12, 2003, *La Prensa* accessed via BMLP.

<sup>515</sup> Gómez, *El Alto de pie*, 28-37, Mamani, *Octubre*, 21-22.

<sup>516</sup> "El Alto puso los muertos por los hidrocarburos," from notes of Mamani; Gómez, *El Alto de pie*, 143; Mamani, *Octubre*, 170; Edwin Mamani Luna, "A Luis Villca le costó un ojo defender el gas," *El Alteño* October 17, 2016; Mamani, *Microgobiernos barriales*, 340.

September-October 2003 (henceforth, *La Asociación*), however, unanimously say that the government has neglected victims of the Massacre and that they have received little material support from official authorities.

Many victims of the Massacre cannot obtain stable jobs because of their injuries that limit their physical capacity. Without stable incomes and material support from state authorities, many of them feel wretched even if they have been enshrined in the commemorative history of the Bolivian struggle for the defense of gas and national sovereignty. Litsen Quispe Callante, Vice President of *La Asociación*, testifies to this absurd commemoration of the Gas War:

*Este 16 de octubre cumplimos 13 años. Pero 13 años de no dignidad, de dolor, de frustración, de mucha rabia, que no se reconozcan las personas que han quedado totalmente destruidos físicamente y psicológicamente. Hemos seguido en todos estos tiempos un proceso a los excomandantes de las fuerzas armadas, en el cual hemos logrado obtener unas sentencias, sentenciados estos excomandantes. Están pagando su culpa en la cárcel. No ha habido sinceramente un apoyo ni de los Concejales, ni de la alcaldesa, de ninguna autoridad político. Pero sí nos levantamos en octubre para defender el gas de nuestro país [On this October 16 we will reach the thirteenth anniversary, but thirteen years of not much dignity but with pain, frustration, and many angers, which are never recognized, and with people who have been totally destroyed physically and psychologically. We have continued a process against ex-commanders of the armed forces. We have been able to win some cases, and these ex-commanders are imprisoned for their sin. There has been no sincere support from any political authority. But yes, we rose up to defend gas of our country].<sup>517</sup>*

The vice president spoke three days before the commemoration of the thirteenth anniversary of the Gas War, which was organized by the municipal government of El Alto. She suggested that victims of the Massacre suffered and that their struggle for defending the nation in October 2003 had been forgotten:

*Debe de haber una previsión médica para estas personas que sufren día a día. Es un calvario porque unas personas han perdido sus piernas, han perdido sus brazos. Nada más. Ni siquiera han perdido eso. Ha perdido hasta incluso a sus familias por no poder ya mantener su familia. Han habido fracasos. Han habido*

---

<sup>517</sup> Testimony of Litsen Quispe Callante, October 14, 2016.



*suicidios. La gente tiene que saber estos. Tienen que saber nuestras nuevas generaciones que vienen. Niños que han nacido en estos años, que no saben que hemos vivido en la Ciudad de El Alto por tener una mejor vida, por tener un mejor país* [There should be a medical service for these people who suffer day by day. It's a torture because people who lost a leg and who lost an arm, even their families have been lost. They are unable to sustain their family. There have been failures, suicides. People need to know these. Our new generations, who are coming of age, should know this. Children, who were born in these years, don't know that we have lived in the City of El Alto to have a better life and a better country].<sup>518</sup>

The Morales government presents itself as the political representative of the popular forces that brought down Sánchez de Lozada in October 2003. The government's political use of history of the Gas War obscures an important fact: Morales and the MAS played minor roles in the popular mobilizations in El Alto and La Paz during September-October 2003. Morales was travelling Libya, Geneva (in Switzerland), and Venezuela in October, and returned to Bolivia after the most violent phase of the Gas War had been over. Felipe Quispe and Roberto de la Cruz talk frequently about the absence of Morales, and emphasize that the MAS has taken advantage of the Gas War to win power in an opportunistic fashion.<sup>519</sup> Even though the MAS organized several roadblocks in Chapare in September, it disappeared from the scenario of popular insurgency between late September and October 13, when El Alto's residents mobilized with the COR, the FEJUVE, juntas vecinales, and federations of artisans, merchants and street vendors.<sup>520</sup> On October 13, the MAS published a document to respond to the bloody massacre perpetrated by the military on the previous day. Clashes between the military and El Alto on October 12 resulted in twenty-six deaths and 90-100 wounded people in dozens of barrios, including

---

<sup>518</sup> Ibid.

<sup>519</sup> Edwin Mamani Luna, "Evo no estuvo en los conflictos de octubre," *El Alto* October 17, 2017; Quispe, *La Caída de Goni*, 17.

<sup>520</sup> Iván Castellón Quiroga, "Guerra del gas en El Alto Bolivia, Octubre 2003," *eabolivia* accessed via <https://www.eabolivia.com/guerra-del-gas-en-el-alto-bolivia.html>; Edwin Mamani Luna, "Cronología por días octubre 2003," *El Alto* October 17, 2016.

Ballivián, Ceja, 16 de Julio, Los Andes, Río Seco, Senkata, Ventilla, Villa Adela, Villa Ingenio, and Villa Tunari. The battle in Río Seco was particularly intense, leaving fourteen residents dead.<sup>521</sup>

On the next day, the CSUTCB, *La Coordinadora del Gas*, and the MAS published documents on their political strategy to bring down the murderous government and set up a new system of governance. *La Coordinadora del Gas* and the MAS agreed on installing a Constituent Assembly to rewrite the Constitution after removing Sánchez de Lozada. The MAS proposed that “a new institutional order” should be established through the Assembly to “endow” Bolivian democracy “with *carne*” (real contents).<sup>522</sup> In 2004-2005, the MAS successfully incorporated the popular demand for the nationalization of the hydrocarbons industry into its opposition to Carlos Mesa, Sánchez de Lozada’s Vice President who according to the Constitution, assumed the vacant presidency after Sánchez de Lozada resigned. Between the popular victory in October 2003 and the referendum on gas in July 2004, the MAS became the most prominent electoral force in Bolivia. The municipal elections in December 2004 clearly demonstrated this with the MAS receiving the highest national votes.<sup>523</sup> In this favorable political situation, the MAS strategically focused on taking power through elections in a representative democracy and implementing reforms after it won power.

---

<sup>521</sup> “El Alto puso los muertos por los hidrocarburos”; “Pasión y Gloria de octubre 2003,” from notes of Mamani; Mancilla, *Poder y masacre en El Alto*, 52-57, 60-62; Edgar Ramos Andrade, “57 muertos en Masacre del 9 al 13 de octubre,” *Juguete Rabioso* October 14, 2003 accessed via *Red Voltaire* <http://www.voltairenet.org/article120437.html>.

<sup>522</sup> Gutiérrez, *Los ritmos del Pachakuti*, 259-260.

<sup>523</sup> Ibid, 284-308; “Partidos cuadruplicaron los votos de las agrupaciones,” *La Razón* December 23, 2004 accessed via *Bolivia.com*.  
<http://www.bolivia.com/noticias/AutoNoticias/DetalleNoticia24248.asp>.

The Morales government defines itself as “a Government of social movements,” leading the Process of Change for historically marginalized indigenous original peasant nations and pueblos of Bolivia. This is the ideological foundation of the Plurinational State, the “new institutional order,” conceived as the embodiment of Bolivia’s will to decolonize national culture, economy, politics, and society. A history of revolutionary change, presenting the MAS as the representative of the popular struggle of 2000-2005, has converted itself into the “official narrative” of that struggle, centering on the Process of Change headed by President Morales. This project of “popular power,” construed as “universalist,” pretends to unify all “subaltern classes” as “the real majority of society” under the single banner of the State.<sup>524</sup> In the MAS’s national history, opponents of the State are oppressors of the subaltern majority, or enemies of the revolutionary process of change, who “resent” the loss of their dominant position.<sup>525</sup>

Even if victims of the Massacre in September-October 2003 belong to the oppressed subaltern majority, their virtual abandonment by the Plurinational State makes their position paradoxical; despite the inclusion of the Gas War into the official history, victims of the military violence during that war are excluded from the State. This contradiction makes them doubly victimized in two intersecting temporalities. Their memory of victimization during September-October 2003 constantly haunts their traumatized psychology and wounded body. At the same time, their exclusion from the State perpetuates their victimization keeping them in a painful situation of suffering the trauma and wounds of the Massacre. Those victimized by a colonial-neoliberal state re-experience the victimization under a Plurinational State, because their traumatic memory of the Massacre and wounded body remain unhealed despite the official

---

<sup>524</sup> García, *Las tensiones creativas de la revolución*, 42-43.

<sup>525</sup> García, *El “Oenegismo”, enfermedad infantil del derechismo*.

commemoration of the Gas War as a heroic chapter of the national history. Through this double process of victimization, their memory of the Massacre is connected to their experience of exclusion from the State, continuously forcing them to “re-live” the painful moment of their violation by the past state.

Disjuncture between popular remembrance and State discourse of the Gas War was plainly visible during the fourteenth anniversary of the Massacre in September-October 2003. During the commemoration of the Massacre, which was organized by officialista factions of the COR and the FEJUVE, a representative of the victims of the Massacre denounced the lack of medical service and compensations for those violated by the military during September-October 2003. In a separate event, Nelson Condori, executive secretary of the CSUTCB, criticized President Morales for failing to implement the so-called “October Agenda,” the list of popular demands raised during the Gas War. On the same day, Minister of Presidency (*Ministerio de la Presidencia*) René Martínez insisted that his president had “complied with the October Agenda” [*cumplió con la Agenda de Octubre*] by nationalizing hydrocarbons, convoking the Constituent Assembly, promulgating a new Constitution, and founding a Plurinational State. This advocacy for the government echoed Vice President Álvaro García’s comment that “in that moment” of October 2003, “a ‘new epoch’ for Bolivia was initiated” [*se dio el inició una “nueva época” para Bolivia*].<sup>526</sup> By “new epoch,” García meant what he terms in his book “the third phase of the revolution,” when “democratic political rebellions in the elections” brought Morales to power as the first indigenous president of Bolivia.<sup>527</sup> Despite the total absence of the government’s

---

<sup>526</sup> “A 14 años, las víctimas y sus familias critican el abandono del Gobierno,” *El Alto* October 18, 2017 accessed via <http://www.elaltino.com.bo/bolivia/20171018/14-anos-victimas-sus-familias-critican-abandono-del-gobierno>.

<sup>527</sup> García, *Las tensiones creativas de la revolución*, 16.

representatives in the commemorations held in El Alto and La Paz, words of the revolution justified the position of the Plurinational State as the political expression of the indigenous-popular power expressed in 2003. Yet, the discrepancy between these words on the one hand, and those of participants in the Gas War and victims of the Massacre on the other indicated a disconnection of the official history of the War and the popular memories of the same event.

Luis Villca Gavincha was one of the victims, who was absent in the commemorations of the fourteenth anniversary of the Massacre in September-October 2003, since he passed away a week before the anniversary. He was injured in Villa Ingenio on October 12, 2003, when a bullet penetrating the upper right part of his head damaged his right eye. Since that day, he lived with three shards of bullet in the head and an artificial eye put on the place of the right eye. He died as a consequence of lacking medical attention for which he was unable to pay. He and his family, according to Edwin Mamani Luna of *El Alteño*, were “begging for justice and medical attention” [*mendigando justicia y atención médica*] in the Hospital del Norte in El Alto.<sup>528</sup> One year before passing away, Villca identifying himself as a descendant of Zárate Willka gave me this testimony:

*Es la época histórica, 70 vidas muertas y más de 400 heridos. Es muy importante que se levanta El Alto en esta época contra el gobierno sangriento. También en Warisata y Sorata. Las barricadas y la resistencia con hondas. Nunca más se repite esta historia. El Alto es un pueblo muy rebelde. El gobierno de Evo Morales aprovecha este. Solo aprovecha. Los dirigentes actuales que tenemos en la FEJUVE jamás pelean esto... Hay víctimas de Octubre Negro. La gente discapacitada durante esa época. El gobierno promete las cosas a esta gente. Promete que va a industrializar la economía. No ha hecho nada. No ha industrializado nada. Era uno de los diez puntos de la Agenda Octubre. El gobierno jamás logra estos puntos. Este gobierno nos molesta [It (October 2003) is a historic time. Seventy people died with more than 400 wounded. It's very important that El Alto rose up at this time against the bloody government. Also in*

---

<sup>528</sup> Edwin Mamani Luna, “Muere el héroe de octubre ‘mendigando justicia,’” *El Alteño* October 11, 2017 accessed via <http://www.elalteno.com.bo/ciudad/20171011/muere-heroe-octubre-mendigando-justicia>.

Warisata and Sorata. Barricades were made. Resistances were done with slings. This history should never repeat itself again. El Alto is a very rebellious pueblo. The Evo Morales government takes advantage of this. It only takes advantage of that. Our leaders in the FEJUVE never fight this... There are victims of Black October. People were disabled during that time. The government promised things to those people. The government promised to industrialize the economy. It has done nothing. It has industrialized nothing. It was one of the ten points of the October Agenda. The government never accomplished those points. The government is annoying to us].<sup>529</sup>

Villca gave this testimony five days before the thirteenth anniversary of the Gas War. During the anniversary, Roberto de la Cruz pointed out that neoliberals affiliated with the ADN, the MNR, and the NFR were in the government as advisers to various ministers. The ex-leader of the COR asked, “What can change if President Evo Morales lives with neoliberals?” [*¿Qué puede cambiar si el presidente Evo Morales convive con los neoliberales?*]<sup>530</sup> During the commemoration of the Gas War, which was organized by the History Department, the *Instituto de Investigación Fausto Reinaga* of the UPEA (*Universidad Pública de El Alto*), and the Collective MINKA (*Movimiento Indianista-Katarista*), Jaime Solares, executive secretary of the COB during the Gas War, deplored the government. He argued: “this government doesn’t support workers, the ordinary people” [*este gobierno no apoya a los trabajadores, a la gente popular*], but “the rich and business owners [*a los ricos, a los empresarios*].” During the same commemoration, Felipe Quispe repeated his usual critique of the government for perpetuating the colonial domination by q’aras who have stayed in power under the guise of an indigenous president.<sup>531</sup>

---

<sup>529</sup> Testimony of Luis Villca Gavincha, October 12, 2016.

<sup>530</sup> Edwin Mamani Luna, “Los neoliberales siguen en el poder,” *El Alto* October 17, 2016.

<sup>531</sup> The Speeches of Jaime Solares Quintanilla and Felipe Quispe Huanca at “El Homenaje y el Balance Político a los 13 Años de la Guerra del Gas del 2003,” Carrera de Historia de la UPEA, el Instituto de Investigación “Fausto Reinaga,” and the Colectivo MINKA, October 17-18, 2016.



<Illustration 5.1> *El Alteño* shows the last moment of Luis Villca Gavinchá begging for medical attention (Edwin Mamani Luna, “Muere el héroe de octubre ‘mendigando justicia,’” *El Alteño* October 11, 2017 accessed via <http://www.elalteno.com.bo/ciudad/20171011/muere-heroe-octubre-mendigando-justicia>)

These types of critiques on the government often incorporate narratives of victims of the Massacre into an ideological discourse about the MAS’s betrayal of the popular demands raised in October 2003. For example, members of *La Asociación* were specially invited to the commemoration of the Gas War, where Quispe and Solares made the above-mentioned critiques

of the government. The organizers of the commemoration wanted the event to center on the actual fighters of the Gas War, the logic behind the special invitation for *La Asociación* to the commemoration. The victims' presence together with those opposition figures conveyed a clear message: the pueblo valiantly fought for the defense of gas with its genuine leaders, such as Felipe Quispe and Jaime Solares, but ended up losing power to opportunists like Evo Morales and Álvaro García. In this scenario, the victims were present as symbolic examples of the pueblo's suffering perpetuated under the MAS that had abandoned it after winning the elections. The solution proposed by Quispe, Solares, and other invited speakers shared one general point: the pueblo should get ready to raise consciousness and organize people to retake power usurped by the MAS.

One of the victims, Genaro Quisbert Choque from Sorata, volunteered to give his testimony to the audience during the commemoration at the UPEA. Quisbert lost his right leg during the conflict between Sorata and the military commanded by Defense Minister Carlos Sánchez Berzaín on September 20, 2003. His story of suffering and abandonment garnered much sympathy among the audience. His testimony did not significantly differ from those of other victims, and from what he had mentioned in other contexts. He asked the authorities for assistance, and criticized brutality of Sánchez de Lozada and Sánchez Berzaín, who masterminded the massacres during September-October 2003.<sup>532</sup> On September 20, the military attacked Sorata and Warisata that were blockading the highways in protest against gas export. The attack was part of the military operation to rescue foreign tourists, stranded in Sorata

---

<sup>532</sup> The Speech of Genaro Quisbert Choque at “El Homenaje y el Balance Político a los 13 Años de la Guerra del Gas del 2003.”



because of the roadblocks.<sup>533</sup> On this day, when soldiers killed five civilians, including eight-year old child Marlene Nancy Rojas Ramos, in Sorata and Warisata, Quisbert fell to the military bullet that pierced his right leg. In the commemoration that took place in Sorata on September 20, 2016, he spoke:

*Yo he caído en Octubre Negro cuando ha venido el Sánchez Berzaín, su ministro cuando gobernaba con Sánchez de Lozada...Estaba adelante al medio. Ha llegado un bala de disparo de armas de fuego, del camino de Ilabaya. Entonces me han disparado, casi me han matado. Y ahí estábamos. Después no hay causa, he perdido un pie derecho. Entonces hasta hoy día no hay justicia. No hay ningún beneficio para las víctimas. No hay ayuda. El gobierno no ha hecho la justicia a Sánchez de Lozada. Pedimos la justicia aquí en Sorata contra Sánchez Berzaín y Sánchez de Lozada [I fell in Black October when Sánchez Berzaín came in the name of the Sánchez de Lozada government...I was on the front in the middle of the road. There, a bullet shot by a soldier got me on the road to Ilabaya. They fired at me, and almost killed me. There we were. After that, I lost my right leg. Until this day, there is no justice. There are no benefits for the victims. There is no help. The government hasn't brought Sánchez de Lozada to justice. We ask for justice here in Sorata against Sánchez Berzaín y Sánchez de Lozada].<sup>534</sup>*

The political atmosphere of Sorata, however, differed from that of the university. Oficialista peasant leaders and those opposed to the government, including Felipe Quispe, co-participated in the commemoration at Sorata. While Quispe sat on his chair on the podium set up for the commemoration in the central plaza of Sorata, oficialistas chanted slogans, such as “Viva Process of Change!” (*¡Jallalla Proceso de Cambio!*) and “Our President Brother Evo Morales!” (*¡Nuestro Hermano Presidente Evo Morales!*)

---

<sup>533</sup> “Fuego cruzado en Warisata deja 5 muertos y heridos,” *Bolivia.com* September 21, 2003 accessed via *El País* <http://www.bolivia.com/noticias/AutoNoticias/DetalleNoticia16029.asp>; “Fuerzas combinadas del ejército y la policía atacaron a tiros a campesinos que bloquearon caminos, con un saldo de 6 muertos,” *Bolpress* September 24, 2003 accessed via *Rebelión* <https://www.rebelion.org/hemeroteca/internacional/030924bolivia.htm>; Gómez, *El Alto de pie*, 42-47.

<sup>534</sup> Testimony of Genaro Quisbert Choque at Sorata, on September 20, 2016.

The two groups did not explicitly display antagonism toward their opponents while they focused on remembering those victimized by the military violence in 2003 regardless of their political affiliations. Yet, uneasiness was in the air. A person opposed to the government privately complained about the presence of “so many pro-MAS elements” [*muchos MASistas*]. Carlos Chino, a leader of the *Federación de Trabajadores Campesinos Originarios Milenarios de la Provincia Larecaja*, commented that the commemoration was to draw attention to “the thirteen years of impunity” enjoyed by Sánchez de Lozada and Sánchez Berzaín. Chino, a member of Felipe Quispe’s group, implicitly criticized the government for failing to fulfill the promise of bringing justice to those who “came to massacre this population” [*han venido a masacrar esta población*] in Sorata.<sup>535</sup>

In this tension-laden encounter between oficialista factions and those against the government, Genaro Quisbert’s testimony did not neatly fit into the narratives of the Gas War, which the two sides presented with reference to their political projects. He is clearly disappointed to see the government neglecting the needs of victims of the Massacre. This, however, did not automatically side him with the opposition led by Quispe. Neither the government, nor any opposition group has enabled him and other victims of the Massacre to obtain financial support and medical service, nor was Sánchez de Lozada and Sánchez Berzaín brought to justice. Even though political histories of the Gas War aim to incorporate the victims’ experience into their narratives as a heroic struggle of the pueblo, the actual victims do not benefit from politics of memory of the War. Political groups define the Gas War in ideological terms: the Aymara nation, national sovereignty, popular struggle and/or revolution. Ideological discourses of the War remain irrelevant to most victims precisely because they do not provide practical assistance

---

<sup>535</sup> Testimony of Carlos Chino, September 20, 2016.

for the people devastated by the Massacre and do not help bring Sánchez de Lozada and Sánchez Berzaín to justice.

### ***Massacres***

The massacre in Sorata and Warisata on September 20 was a crucial turning point in the conflict between the Bolivian state and the people during September-October 2003. According to Sánchez Berzaín, the military in those two places acted in self-defense against the armed groups of Evo Morales and Felipe Quispe that were intimidating foreign citizens in Sorata, and used legitimate violence to defend democracy from those groups.<sup>536</sup> Morales's group evidently played no role in the conflicts at Sorata and Warisata. In contrast, Quispe ordered ex-members of the EGTK to take firearms and ambush the military convoy commanded by Sánchez Berzaín.<sup>537</sup> Confronted with the ambush, the Defense Minister attacked Warisata, where he believed the rebel group was hiding. The massacre, directed by the Defense Minister, lasted between 3:30 and 4:30 in the afternoon, and left three people of Warisata dead (Ismael Marcos Quispe, Juan Cosme, and Marlene Rojas).<sup>538</sup> Benigno Ramos, uncle of Marlene Rojas, recalls the bloody day that cost lives of three people, including his niece:

*Directo a personas disparaban los soldados instruidos por los instructores. En este sentido ha sido allanado. Ha sido disparado incluso la casa de los abuelos que han concebido lo que es la Escuela-Ayllu. Estaba perforado por balas más o menos. Ya esa mañana, ¿no? Y en la tardecita, pues, muere una niña inocente que*

---

<sup>536</sup> Commentary of Carlos Sánchez Berzaín in “Un minuto de silencio. La historia de los movimientos sociales recientes en Bolivia,” documentary directed by Ferdinando Vicentini Orgnani (Alba Produzion, 2014).

<sup>537</sup> Quispe, *La Caída de Goni*, 12.

<sup>538</sup> “El saldo de los enfrentamientos,” *La Razón* September 22, 2003 accessed via *Bolivia.com* <http://www.bolivia.com/noticias/AutoNoticias/DetalleNoticia16055.asp>; “Fuego cruzado en Warisata deja 5 muertos y heridos”; “Fuerzas combinadas del ejército y la policía atacaron a tiros a campesinos que bloquearon caminos, con un saldo de 6 muertos”; Interview with Roberto Pacosillo Hilari, October 12, 2016.

*es Marlene Rojas Ramos que era prima sobrina de mí. Luego también muere, digamos, un estudiante Juan Marcos Quispe. Luego muere don Juan Cosme. Y nosotros nos hemos armado sinceramente. Hemos contestado. Ya algunos comunarios tenían las armas. Actualmente por lo menos quisiera que por lo menos, que vengan a reparar a lo que han baleado. En este sentido, la memoria siempre está con nosotros. Lo recordamos para siempre [Soldiers ordered by the commanders fired directly at people. Houses were raided in that way. They were shot. Old people knew what the Escuela-Ayllu meant. They shot at it in that morning. And in the afternoon, well, a child Marlene Rojas Ramos, my niece, died. Then, a student Juan Marcos Quispe died. Then, don Juan Cosme died. And, we armed ourselves. We contested. Some comunarios had arms. At least I would wish reparations for those who were shot. In this sense, the memory is always with us. We remember it forever].<sup>539</sup>*

Wilfredo Rojas, a teacher at the school of Warisata, related this history to his students in his class. During our visit to Warisata, Jaime Amaru Flores and I asked him to devote the class to remembering the massacre of September 20, 2003. With his consent, we were able to record his testimony during the class:

*Algunos hondeaban con hondas. Algunos tenían dinamita. Con eso explosionaban ¿no? Mostrando palos ¿sí? Hemos defendiendo así...Después llegan otra vuelta, el Regimiento Ingavi, Viacha, el Regimiento de Chua, Achakachi, tres regimientos suben a rebasarnos a Warisata. Eso era la Costa Tarde, donde los puentes estaban bloqueados. Asimismo han subido ¿no? Ahí han rebasado todo de Warisata. Nos han perseguido, los papás y todos, ¿no? Nosotros escapamos a cerros [Some made slingshots. Some had dynamites. With that, they made explosions. They had sticks too. We defended us in that way...Later, another round of the Regiment Ingavi, Viacha, [and] the Regiment Chua from Achakachi arrived. Three regiments came and overtook Warisata. That was in Costa Tarde, where we blockaded the bridges. They thus came, no? There, soldiers massacred all of Warisata. They persecuted us, the parents, didn't they? We escaped to mountains].<sup>540</sup>*

As Gutiérrez notes, “the demand of the president’s resignation began to spread” during the week following the massacre in Sorata and Warisata.<sup>541</sup> The deaths of innocent citizens, including an eight-year old child, infuriated the population who had been already discontented by

---

<sup>539</sup> Testimony Benigno Ramos Pajarito.

<sup>540</sup> Testimony of Wilfredo Rojas, October 5, 2016.

<sup>541</sup> Gutiérrez, *Los ritmos del Pachakuti*, 253.

the neoliberal system and the traditional political parties. In this context, the declaration of a civil war in Warisata on the day following the massacre demonstrated that the Bolivian state as a legitimate polity of governance had disappeared from the political scenario in the altiplano.<sup>542</sup> When the center of the conflict between the pueblo and the state moved to El Alto in October, the principal issue was no longer gas but President Sánchez de Lozada who had become the embodiment of all the injustices derived from neoliberalism and the existing political system. On October 8, the COR and the FEJUVE of El Alto launched an indefinite work stoppage that paralyzed all districts of the city except District 1. The next day, hundreds of miners from Huanuni clashed with soldiers at Ventilla in District 8 of El Alto. Between that day and October 11, one miner and three residents of the city, including five-year old child Alex Mollericona in Rosas Pampa of District 1, died from military violence.<sup>543</sup> Omar Yujra was a student of the UPEA, and was seriously injured on October 11. His mother retold what happened to her son:

*Hijo estaba estudiando aquí en UPEA. Creo que sábado, un sábado, creo que sí, 2003, allí viniendo mi hijo, habían atacado soldados. En la plaza balean a mi hijo al cuello. Atrás se queda su bala, atrás. Hasta ahora no puede recuperar mi hijo. Sigue, está mal. Trataba de estudiar. Pero no podía. Era tan dañada su cabeza [My son was studying here in the UPEA. I believe it was Saturday, a Saturday, I believe, in 2003. My son was coming home. Soldiers attacked him. In the plaza, they shot at my son's neck. Their bullet pierced it from behind. Until now, he can't be recuperated. He remains sick. He tried to study. But he couldn't. His brain was so damaged].*<sup>544</sup>

The Massacre blocked Yujra's path to high education. Victimizing young people, like Omar, has destroyed their professional careers. State violence cut short people's efforts at self-improvement

---

<sup>542</sup> Mamani, *El rugir de las multitudes*, 145-148.

<sup>543</sup> Gómez, *El Alto de pie*, 71-76; "Las fuerzas de seguridad sumergen a Bolivia en un espiral de sangre y violencia," *Econoticiasbolivia.com* October 11, 2003 accessed via *Rebelión* <https://www.rebelion.org/hemeroteca/bolivia/031012espiral.htm>; Mamani, *Octubre*, 37-48; Ramos, "57 muertos en Masacre del 9 al 13 de octubre."

<sup>544</sup> Testimony of Omar Yujra's mother, October 14, 2016.

and living a better life. Frank Alexander Huanca's testimony is yet another example of El Alto's young people, whose lives have been gravely affected by the Massacre. On October 12, a bullet hit the neck of his father, Julio Javier Huanca. Ever since, education has meant a luxury for him, as the oldest son he had to devote his life to earning money:

*Yo soy el hijo mayor de mi papá...Ha caído, ha caído en la zona de Kenko al lado de Senkata...Él tiene un proyectilito de la bala en la espalda. Entró al cuello, y por esta, toda atrás de la espalda, haciéndole mal. No puede trabajar...Yo era jovencito. Entonces cuando ha caído, yo seguiré trabajo hasta el Hospital Obrero, Hospital General. Desde 2003, yo no podía estudiar. No podía hacerlo. No podía terminar mi secundaria. Como el hijo mayor, tenía que apoyar mi familia. Yo tenía que trabajar y trabajar [I'm my dad's oldest son...He fell, he fell in Kenko near Senkata...He has a little bullet penetrating his back. It entered the neck, and through that, pierced all over the back, making him sick. He can't work. I was a little boy back then. When he fell, I had to keep working in the Hospital Obrero, and the General Hospital. I couldn't study after 2003. I couldn't do it. I couldn't finish the secondary education. As the oldest son, I have to support my family. I have to work and work].<sup>545</sup>*

Edwin Mamani was a fifteen-year old boy when a bullet pierced his left knee in October 2003. He did not identify the exact date of his injury. Even if he can walk, his physical capacity has been severely limited. This has disheartened him so much that during the interview, he looked totally dejected and downcast. In a dispirited voice, he said, "I had many dreams."<sup>546</sup>

The cases of Omar Yujra, Frank Huanca, Edwin Mamani, and many other victims of the Massacre show that victimization is a central component of the collective memory of September-October 2003. The sense of victimhood stems not only from an experience of military violence and the fact that no authority and political group take care of their needs. The victims represent the wound of the pueblo, whose struggle against a neoliberal state has compelled President

---

<sup>545</sup> Testimony of Frank Alexander Huanca, October 14, 2016.

<sup>546</sup> Testimony of Edwin Mamani, October 14, 2016. By coincidence, his name is identical with the journalist of *El Alteoño*, who has been cited in the dissertation. I clarify that that journalist and the young man presented here are different people with the same name.

Sánchez de Lozada to resign. Justice for the victims is a much broader issue that evokes a feeling of suffering at the national level. When the victims underscore their role in the defense of gas, they relate their personal sufferings to a national struggle for changing society. Their healing is a national vindication that will cure the wound inflicted in September-October 2003. Bertha Quispe's testimony exemplifies this aspect of the victims' remembrance of the Massacre as a national issue:

*No hay justicia para heridos en la Ciudad de El Alto. La Ciudad de El Alto ha luchado. El gobierno ayuda Cochabamba, Santa Cruz, Beni. En este lado hay ayuda. Para nosotros, nuestras calles y tierra no hay nada. Gas entra. Y como no tengo documentos, no tengo gas. Nosotros bosan gas, gas a domicilio. Yo no tengo gas a domicilio por falta de documentos. He agarrado un terrenito a crédito. Ese crédito me quita la casa. Mi esposo no puede trabajar. No puede cumplir. Pediría al gobierno, "Me ayuden, ayuden todos los heridos"* [There is no justice for the wounded people in the City of El Alto. The City of El Alto fought. The government helps Cochabamba, Santa Cruz, Beni. On this side there is help. For us, our streets and land, there is nothing. Gas enters, and because I don't have documents, I don't have gas. We are overflowing with gas, domestic gas. I don't have domestic gas because of the lack of documents. I loaned credits to get a small lot. I ended up losing my house because of the loan. My husband can't work. He can't. I would like to ask the government for help. "Please help us and all the wounded people"].<sup>547</sup>

The absurdity of Quispe's suffering is manifest in the fact that domestic gas service is not available to her family despite her and her husband's role in defending gas. Moreover, her family lost their home because she had debts, i.e. financial instability that pushed her to an increasingly marginal situation. The abandoned state of her family reflects the government's neglect of El Alto's needs, which is unjust given the city's central role in defending the nation's gas.

### ***Popular Responses to the Massacre***

---

<sup>547</sup> Testimony of Bertha Quispe, October 14, 2016.

Between September 20 and October 13, 2003, the military and the police killed 50-60 people in El Alto, La Paz, Sorata, and Warisata. The gruesome carnage on October 12 sealed the downfall of Sánchez de Lozada. Since that day, protests spread to hitherto tranquil residential areas of La Paz, and Plaza Murillo was attacked by infuriated citizens.<sup>548</sup> According to Sarah Cárdenas, the principal of *Colegio Martín Cárdenas* in Auquisamaña in the Zona Sur of La Paz, the massacre in El Alto and the countryside provoked students of this wealthy residential zone to confront the police and soldiers because these students believed that the massacred people “are our brothers and sisters of the same country” [*son nuestros hermanos y hermanas del mismo país*].<sup>549</sup> Vice President Carlos Mesa was profoundly disturbed by the massacre, and he publicly withdrew his support from Sánchez de Lozada. On October 15, a group of artists, intellectuals, priests and Feminists of the Collective *Mujeres Creando* initiated a hunger strike in Sopocachi in La Paz, demanding the president’s resignation. Amid growing pressures, Sánchez de Lozada insisted:

*Es importante decir a todo el pueblo de Bolivia que yo no voy a renunciar...No es posible que se reemplace la democracia con una dictadura sindical. Se va a reponer el orden y se va a derrotar a los sediciosos* [It’s important to say this to all Bolivians: I’m not going to resign...It’s impossible to replace democracy with a unionist dictatorship. The order will be restored, and the seditious instigators will be defeated].<sup>550</sup>

---

<sup>548</sup> Gómez, *El Alto de pie*, 101-114; Mamani, *Octubre*, 61-64; “Rebeldía,” booklet published by *El Alteño* in commemoration of the fourth anniversary (2007) of the Gas War.

<sup>549</sup> Interview on Sarah Cárdenas, November 24, 2016.

<sup>550</sup> Observatorio Boliviano de Opinión Pública, “Yo no voy a renunciar-Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada [Octubre 2003],” *YouTube* uploaded on September 24, 2012 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wme3O0vYObg>.





<Illustration 5.2> The front page of *Semanario Pulso* demanding the resignation of Sánchez de Lozada. The so-called *Ninja Alteño* (Ninja of El Alto) has become an emblematic image of El Alto's rebellion against Sánchez de Lozada in October 2003. (“¡Fusil, Metralla! ¡El Pueblo No Se Calla! La lucha por la dignidad,” directed by Rudy Menacho and Edwin Villca Gutiérrez (Tercer Mundo, 2004). Photo taken by José Luis Quintana

On October 14, Father Modesto Chino, parish priest of Senkata, held a liturgy dedicated to those killed by armed forces. During the liturgy, he proclaimed:

*Lo único que pedimos es justicia. Cuando la gente se siente engañada o se le miente, se enoja. El pueblo está luchando por un sueño, por una esperanza de días mejores* [The only thing we ask for is justice. When people are deceived or someone lies to them, they become angry. The pueblo is fighting for a dream, hoping better days].<sup>551</sup>

Sánchez de Lozada's resignation did not lead to a better day for El Alto's people. In the context of the social upheaval during September-October 2003, however, the people saw his removal from power as an indispensable step toward genuine social change; the city could not advance without bringing the “murderous power” to justice. Stained with blood of the city's people, the government had rendered itself totally illegitimate. Nothing would change as long as it remained in power and did not pay for the massacre of which it was guilty. If it did not voluntarily step

---

<sup>551</sup> “Rebeldía.”

down, the people should bring it down. El Alto's people had to win the Gas War in order to create a better future. Enrique Flores alludes to this aspect of the Gas War when he says:

*A partir del 2003 ha habido un proceso bastante doloroso. El país ha ido a la Guerra del Gas. Eso se da nada porque el gobierno entonces cada quería negociar con Chile que es nuestro enemigo avasallador. Entonces desde ahí hasta ahora lo que podemos ver es que, quizás una pequeña porcentaje se han recuperado pero continúan en manos de otras empresas recursos naturales. De este modo la Guerra del Gas a mi parecer ha quedado. Han olvidado. Ha sido una etapa en la que se quería cambiar este rumbo del país hacia una vida mejor pero no se ha dado eso hasta ahora. Entonces ese ha sido una experiencia de la Guerra del Gas donde los alteños hemos tenido que hacer un paro general aquí en la Ciudad de El Alto [Since 2003 there has been a very painful process. The country went to the Gas War. It did because the government back then wanted to negotiate with Chile, our enemy that subjugated us. Then from that on until now what we can see is that only a small percentage of natural resources have been recuperated. But they continue to be in the hands of foreign companies. In this way the Gas War, from my perspective, has not advanced. It has been forgotten. It was our step toward changing this country and making a better life but that has not been done until now. This has been an experience of the Gas War].<sup>552</sup>*

For Flores, the Gas War represented a history of the Bolivian pueblo personified by people of El Alto. When he notes that this history has been “forgotten,” he means that the possibility of advancing, generated during the War, has not materialized. He feels that the War has not significantly changed the economic, political and social problems pertaining to infrastructural development and public safety because problems still haunt El Alto's people. Despite the nationalization of the hydrocarbon industry, the continuing Bolivian dependence on the extraction and export of natural resources raises concern about the national economy in the long-term. This concern is often combined with critiques of environmental destruction and the violation of indigenous territorial rights in areas of extractivist activities.<sup>553</sup> For El Alto's people

---

<sup>552</sup> Testimony of Enrique Flores Gómez.

<sup>553</sup> Brent Z. Kaup, *Market Justice: Political Economic Struggle in Bolivia* (Cambridge University Press, 2013); Nancy Postero, “Even in Plurinational Bolivia: Indigeneity, Development, and Racism since Morales,” in Heather Merrill and Lisa M. Hoffman, *Spaces of Danger: Culture and Power in the Everyday* (University of Georgia Press, 2015), 239-244.

who construe the Gas War in political terms of revolutionary change, the persistence of “prerevolutionary” problems has hampered the progress of the pueblo that the city embodies. In this sense, “the Gas War...has not advanced.”

El Alto and La Paz in October 2003 were surely not immune to internal differences and tensions. Families of police officers received death threats from those who knew their familial relationship to the instrument of oppression. Leaders of juntas vecinales threatened shop owners and street vendors, who refused to close their business. When the Bolivian pueblo waged a war against “the murderous government,” it enforced its own rules of political mobilization, social control, and regulation of people’s activities.<sup>554</sup> The so-called “micro-governments of barrio” (*microgobiernos barriales*) in El Alto maintained their own internal self-governance, displacing the state as the legitimate authority in the city during October 2003. Assemblies of residents in the plazas and soccer fields were converted into “spaces of collective decision” on “political actions and control of the territory.”<sup>555</sup>

In the commemoration of the thirteenth anniversary of the Gas War, many audiences and presenters commented on the central role of autonomous politics of El Alto’s barrios in defeating the Sánchez de Lozada government. Fanny Nina, former president of the FEJUVE (2010-2012), dutifully advocated for the recuperation of independence of the city’s social organizations, such as juntas vecinales, from the national government.<sup>556</sup> The loss of political autonomy was a common concern shared among participants in the commemorations organized by different groups in the UPEA. Here one should not construe autonomy as local separatism revolving

---

<sup>554</sup> Arnold and Spedding, *Mujeres en los Movimientos Sociales en Bolivia, 2000-2003*, 59, 62.

<sup>555</sup> Mamani, *Microgobiernos barriales*, 306-307.

<sup>556</sup> Presentation by Fanny Nina at the Conmemoración de la Guerra del Gas, Carrera de Sociología de la UPEA, October 19, 2016; Presentation by Pablo Mamani Ramírez at “El Homenaje y el Balance Político a los 13 Años de la Guerra del Gas del 2003.”

around isolated enclaves of barrios confined to bounded territories. In El Alto during October 2003, the state-society relationship was expressed in a confrontational form of rupture, violently disclosing the friction and tension between an exclusive system of governance and marginalized barrios of a city. The slogan of civil war, raised during the Gas War, signaled this state of rupture between the neoliberal state and the Bolivian pueblo. In this sense, autonomous politics of microgobiernos barriales represented a form of self-organization that enabled the city's barrios to exert their power upon the state and shape national politics in their own terms.

Gas became a common ground for the popular mobilization in September-October 2003 not only because it was a strategic sector of the national economy but also because it symbolized an unmet need of a poor majority suffering from the lack of basic services, infrastructure, and material benefits derived from Bolivia's natural resources. The Gas War powerfully evinced the grievance and indignation regarding the exclusive social system and the state that perpetuated it. The violent events in El Alto, La Paz, and the rural altiplano during September-October 2003 did not fundamentally represent an Aymara struggle against q'aras, or a civil war waged by a united pueblo that wanted to destroy the Bolivian state. Even if those ideological elements were expressed in several moments during September-October 2003, the driving force of the popular struggle at that time was collective rage against the perceived failure of the system to deliver positive results for the poor Bolivian majority. This explains the escalation of the Gas War following the massacre in Sorata and Warisata, and the virtual collapse of the Sánchez de Lozada government after October 12. As Antonio Mamani Calani, a leader of *La Asociación*, notes, "we struggled for the liberation of our pueblo" [*luchamos por la liberación de nuestro pueblo*], which would allow for the dignity and a better life of El Alto's people.<sup>557</sup> When the government

---

<sup>557</sup> Testimony of Antonio Mamani Calani, October 14, 2016.

violently repressed this struggle, it confirmed the people's belief that it was against the pueblo and therefore, should be replaced. Thus, El Alto's victory over the neoliberal state could mean a re-founding Bolivia and the reestablishment of a legitimate system of governance.

### ***Epilogue: Victims Demanding Justice***

On October 16, multitudes of citizens marched down from El Alto to La Paz, and took over the capital's urban center with the Plaza San Francisco occupied by the hundreds of thousands of citizens. Sánchez de Lozada's allies, including Jaime Paz of the MIR and Manfredo Reyes of the NFR, recommended the president to resign. Seeing no hope in Sánchez de Lozada, U.S. Ambassador David Greenlee met with Carlos Mesa to discuss a constitutional exit to the crisis. Defense Minister Sánchez Berzaín urged the president to remain in office, arguing that "those people" on the streets "don't have any probability of winning the unconstitutional bid for the resignation of the president" [*no tiene ninguna probabilidad de ganar o de triunfar en el planteamiento inconstitucional para la renuncia del Presidente*].<sup>558</sup> The minister suggested to the president to transfer the seat of government to Santa Cruz. While the president considered this option, 2,000 miners from Huanuni were coming to El Alto in solidarity with the city's people. The regiment, stationed in Patacamaya in Aroma, had engaged with them since October 15, and decided to stop fighting and let them go. When Sánchez de Lozada learned this, he initially wanted to move his office to Santa Cruz following his defense minister's suggestion. After the MIR and the NFR announced their withdrawal from the governing coalition, however, he concluded that he could no longer govern and should resign. He, his defense minister, and some other members of his cabinet moved to the Air Force base in El Alto by helicopter, and then flew

---

<sup>558</sup> "El último día de Goni en el poder empezó a correr en Patacamaya," from notes of Mamani.

to Santa Cruz by airplane. The president and the defense minister were the first to flee to Miami in the evening of October 17. Colonel Luis Adolfo Trigo Antelo, according to Edwin Mamani, commanded this operation, called “Goni’s Escape”; the colonel is now President Morales’s ambassador to Venezuela.<sup>559</sup> The Congress ratified the resignation letter faxed by Sánchez de Lozada from Santa Cruz, and completed the constitutional transfer of the executive office to Carlos Mesa. The Gas War had ended.<sup>560</sup>

However, the victims’ and their families’ struggle just began. Without justice being brought to Sánchez de Lozada and Sánchez Berzaín who comfortably and sumptuously live in the U.S., the victims and their families feel abandoned and forgotten by the Morales government that had promised to make a new Bolivia in favor of the marginalized indigenous majority.<sup>561</sup> For the victims and their families, such a Bolivia would never arrive unless the two principal culprits of the Massacre are extradited and incarcerated in the country. The mother of a victim, Juan Carlos, angrily asks, “Until when won’t Sánchez de Lozada arrive?” [*¿Hasta cuándo no llegará?*] A bullet penetrated her son’s neck, disabling his body in October 2003. Sánchez de Lozada and his defense minister should pay for the damages inflicted on people, such as her son:

*Ese asesino escapa feliz. Vive feliz. ¿Qué hace ahora? A todos asesinos, rateros, a todas estas malas personas les sirve los EE.UU. Estamos esperando que Sánchez de Lozada llegue, que los EE.UU lo mande. Estamos llorando. Ayúdenos a los heridos, a las víctimas, a nosotros por favor* [That murderer escaped happy. He lives happy. What is he doing now? The U.S. helps all the murderers, thieves, all these bad people. We’re waiting for Sánchez de Lozada to arrive, for the U.S. to send him. We’re crying. Please help us, the wounded and the victims].<sup>562</sup>

---

<sup>559</sup> Edwin Mamani Luna, “Deja escapar a Goni y ahora es embajador de Evo,” *El Alto* October 17, 2016.

<sup>560</sup> Gómez, *El Alto de pie*, 139-148.

<sup>561</sup> Araceli Ortega, “Goni y Sánchez Berzaín, entre los CORRUPTOS ADINERADOS de EEUU,” *Prensa Rural* 42 (2016): 6.

<sup>562</sup> Testimony of the mother of Juan Carlos, October 14, 2016.

The lump-sum payments given to the victims and their families have been insufficient to cover for daily and medical needs. A lifelong pension (*renta vitalicia*) has not been granted. The prolonged legal process against Sánchez de Lozada and Sánchez Berzaín has not yet (as of 2018) led to their extradition to Bolivia. The government changed with a new Constitution. Officially the nation was refounded, and the new president has been advocating for the dignity and vindication of the historically marginalized indigenous original peasant nations and pueblos. However, the victims and their families continue suffering, they still live the pains of the Massacre. A new historic cycle will not start with those pains that keep tormenting the victims and their families.

The Massacre in September-October 2003 remains significant in the collective memory of Bolivian society. Military violence devastated many people who had migrated to the city in search of a better life. When the Sánchez de Lozada government repressed them, it destroyed their hope for the future. The pain, stemming from this destruction, is embedded in collective and individual memories of the Massacre, and is shared cross-generationally as seen in many youths of El Alto in their 20s, who recall the Massacre. Edwards Mamani Alvarado, student of the UPEA and resident of Ciudad Satélite in El Alto, was an eight-year old child in 2003, when his family lived in La Paz:

*En esa Masacre de Gas, una masacre grotesca contra los ciudadanos alteños, pues, no se ha olvidado claro. No se pueden ir esos recuerdos, porque hay mucha gente que sigue viviendo estos recuerdos con su físico, gente que ha sufrido el dolor, se ha perdido una pierna o con un brazo. Herido, incapacitado o discapacitado. También hay gente que ha perdido a sus queridos. Hay niños que han perdido a sus padres. Por eso no se puede olvidar esa trágica época, esos trágicos días* [In that Massacre of Gas, a grotesque massacre against El Alto's citizens, well, it hasn't been forgotten. Those memories can't be gone, because many people continue living these memories with flesh and blood, people who have suffered pain, who have lost a leg, or an arm, wounded and disabled people.

Also there are people who lost their loved ones. There are kids who lost their parents. That's why this tragic epoch, these tragic days can't be forgotten].<sup>563</sup>

Mamani underscores that it is wrong to use the term “Gas War because it was a massacre, an abuse of state power, the army and police against the people, its own pueblo, its own blood, its own brotherhood” [*la mal llamada Guerra del Gas porque fue una masacre, un abuso de los poderes estatales como el ejército y la policía ante la gente, su propio pueblo, su propia sangre, su propia hermandad*].

*El presidente de esta época escapó. Y no hay ninguna respuesta a pesar de que el gobierno actual de Evo Morales, pues, se prometió la extradición de este señor que abusó a este pueblo. No se hizo nada. Entró aquel discurso, a los alteños ofreció la justicia. Pero vemos que ahora nada de esto existe. El gobierno sigue buscando prolongar su poder. Pero no hace la atención a la necesidad* [The president of this epoch escaped. There is no response even though the current government of Evo Morales, well, promised the extradition of this gentleman who abused this pueblo. Nothing was done. That discourse about justice for people of El Alto emerged. But as we see now, none of this exists. The government continues to look to prolong its power. But it pays no attention to the necessity [of the victims of the Massacre].<sup>564</sup>

The victims' legal battle was initiated with the assistance of U.S. lawyers and human rights organizations in 2007. On April 3, 2018, the U.S. Federal Court for the Southern District of Florida convicted Sánchez de Lozada and Sánchez Berzaín of extrajudicial killings of innocent civilians in September-October 2003. The ruling ordered to pay a total of \$10 million “in compensatory damages to the plaintiffs” but the convicted appealed the verdict. On May 30, Federal Judge James I. Cohn overturned the verdict and absolved Sánchez de Lozada and Sánchez Berzaín. The judge stated that “the plaintiffs did not present any evidence for a premeditated plan to kill civilians.” In response, one of the plaintiffs, Teófilo Baltazar Cerro,

---

<sup>563</sup> Interview with Edwards Mamani Alvarado, November 14, 2016.

<sup>564</sup> Ibid.



asserted, “We have been fighting for justice for our family members for over fourteen years, and we have no plans to stop now. We will appeal this decision.”<sup>565</sup>

---

<sup>565</sup> “Abogados de Goni y Sánchez apelarán veredicto; 64 familias piden repartirse la indemnización,” *El Alteño* April 4, 2018 accessed via <http://www.elalteno.com.bo/bolivia/20180404/abogados-goni-sanchez-apelaran-veredicto-64-familias-piden-repartirse-la>; “Fiscalía asegura que sentencia contra Goni y Sánchez Berzaín favorece proceso de extradición,” *El Alteño* April 4, 2018 accessed via <http://www.elalteno.com.bo/bolivia/20180404/fiscalia-asegura-que-sentencia-contra-goni-sanchez-berzain-favorece-proceso>; “Goni y Sánchez Berzaín, declarados culpables en juicio en EEUU,” *El Deber* April 3, 2018 accessed via <http://www.eldeber.com.bo/bolivia/Justicia-de-EEUU-halla-culpable-a-Goni-Sanchez-de-Lozada-20180403-9464.html>; Edwin Mamani Luna, “Un juez de Florida exime de culpa a Goni y el Zorro,” *El Alteño* May 31, 2018 accessed via <http://www.elalteno.com.bo/ciudad/20180531/juez-florida-exime-culpa-goni-al-zorro>; “Judge Overturns Unanimous Jury Verdict That Found Former Bolivian President and Defense Minister Responsible for Massacre of Indigenous People,” *Center for Constitutional Rights* May 30 2018 accessed via <https://ccrjustice.org/home/press-center/press-releases/judge-overturns-unanimous-jury-verdict-found-former-bolivian>; “Jury Finds Former Bolivian President and Defense Minister Responsible for Extrajudicial Killings of Indigenous People in 2003,” *Center for Constitutional Rights* April 3, 2018 accessed via <https://ccrjustice.org/home/press-center/press-releases/jury-finds-former-bolivian-president-and-defense-minister>.

## Conclusion

*La piel de un indio no cuesta caro* is a story of dehumanization. Miguel has brought Pancho, a fourteen year-old boy from Cuzco, to his home in the Yangas Valley near Lima. The boy learns fast how to add and multiply numbers. Impressed by the boy's intelligence, Miguel tells Dora, his wife, "I will send him to night school in Lima. We can do something for this boy. I feel sympathetic" [*En Lima lo mandaré a la escuela nocturna. Algo podemos hacer por este muchacho. Me cae simpático*].<sup>566</sup> Mariella and Víctor, children of the president of the local association (*club*), come to Miguel's house. Pancho goes out with them to play in the mountains, and he dies of electrocution on the property of the association while he plays. The accident was due to the defect in the electronic cables connected to the property's wire fence; the cables leaked electricity into the fence. Pancho was electrocuted when his body contacted the fence. The president of the association covers up the accident by forging Pancho's death certificate and other documents signed by a doctor. According to the documents, the cause of the boy's death was a heart attack. After reading the documents shown by the president, Miguel comments, "This is a disgrace" [*Esto me parece una infamia*].

The president: *En estos asuntos lo que valen son pruebas escritas. No pretenderás además saber más que un médico. Parece que el muchacho tenía, en efecto, algo al corazón y que hizo demasiado ejercicio* [In these affairs, what matter are written proofs. You can't claim that you know it better than a doctor. In fact, the boy seemed to have some problems in the heart and did too much exercise].  
Miguel: *Digan lo que digan esos papeles, yo estoy convencido de que Pancho ha muerto electrocutado. Y en los terrenos del club* [Whatever your documents say, I'm convinced that Pancho died of electrocution in the property of your club].  
The president: *Tú puedes pensar lo que quieras. Pero oficialmente éste es un asunto ya archivado* [You can think in the way you want. But this is a matter already officially archived].<sup>567</sup>

---

<sup>566</sup> Ribeyro, "La piel de un indio no cuesta caro," 154

<sup>567</sup> Ibid, 160-161

The president offers Miguel a check of S/. 5,000, asking him to deliver it to Pancho's family without telling the truth about the boy's death. Miguel puts it in his pocket. The story ends as Miguel sighs and goes with Dora to the association's party to which they have been invited by the president.

An indian life costing S/. 5,000 does not matter much to power-holders in the Yungas Valley. His death is a trivial event in society, where indians are normally exploited, marginalized, and violated. It is a "non-event," an "unthinkable" history silenced by power, in Michel-Rolph Trouillot's terminology; it happened but nobody recognized its significance.<sup>568</sup> When Ribeyro wrote *La piel de un indio no cuesta caro* in 1961, massive rural uprisings were challenging the hacienda regime in the Peruvian Andes. According to Alberto Flores Galindo, at least 413 peasant rebellions occurred in the region from 1956 to 1964.<sup>569</sup> Ribeyro was wrong to suggest that Pancho's death meant nothing significant to Peruvian society; indigenous rebellions were undermining the oppressive system, compelling the national government to implement the Agrarian Reform in 1969. Silencing of histories, such as that of Pancho's death, is part of the dominant system. When oppressed people rise up and claim their rights, what has been a non-event, or an unthinkable history, is recuperated and reconstructed as part of society's collective memory.

Various revolutionary movements have risen and fallen in the "Andean region" since the early twentieth century. A few of them took power and instituted a revolutionary state with ambitious programs of sweeping social change.<sup>570</sup> The dissertation has examined some of these

---

<sup>568</sup> Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Beacon Press, 1997 [1995]), 70-107

<sup>569</sup> Flores Galindo, *In Search of an Inca*, 209.

<sup>570</sup> García, *Las tensiones creativas de la revolución*; Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre, *El antiimperialismo y el APRA* (Editorial-Impronta Amauta S.A., 1972 [1970] [1936] [1935]);

revolutionary projects in Bolivia from the 1930s to the present. The tragic reality of oppression, portrayed by Ribeyro and other indigenista writers, did not fully correspond to the Bolivian situations in haciendas, the mines, El Alto, and rural unions. Colonos, comunarios, Indians, Aymaras, Quechuas, the miners, peasants, and migrants in the city were not passive victims of insurmountable violence. The dissertation has shown how they responded to their marginalization, organized themselves as a political and social group, and confronted the oppressive system. How did the Bolivian state relate to them? Different governments have ruled the country, producing several ideologies and social programs. The Revolutionary Nationalist state implemented policies to incorporate the popular masses into national society. About half a century later, the Plurinational State was inaugurated with a Constitution to decolonize the state. Disorder, turbulence, and conflicts between the state and popular groups characterized Bolivian politics from 1952 to 2009. The overall structure of oppression remained in place with the marginalization of the racialized masses, perpetuated. Indianists and Katarists in the 1960s and 1970s correctly pointed out that the Bolivian state was inseparable from this oppression.

The Plurinational State insists that it is dismantling this oppressive structure. As Gutiérrez emphasizes, however, revolution is not identical with taking power, ruling on behalf of the people, and decreeing reforms from the executive office and legislative chambers.<sup>571</sup> The Plurinational State has been a product of the revolutionary process from the massive indigenous-popular mobilizations in 2000-2003. The process “opened possibilities *to change the world* in the

---

Mariátegui, *Siete ensayos de interpretación de la realidad peruana*; Montenegro, *Nacionalismo y coloniaje*; Reinaga, *La Revolución India*; José Luis Rénique, *Imaginar la nación. Viajes en busca del “verdadero Perú” (1881-1932)* (Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 2015); *Incendiar la pradera. Un ensayo sobre la “revolución” en el Perú* (Las siniestras ensayos, 2015).

<sup>571</sup> Gutiérrez, *Los ritmos del Pachakuti*, 43.

context of insurgent and rebellious acts” of the indigenous-popular bases,<sup>572</sup> making 2000-2003 an uncertain period for Bolivia. Politics was contingent upon decisions made by divergent social actors who mobilized in multiple locations, questioning the legitimacy of the national state. All these mobilizations raised new proposals pertaining to the political and economic systems that perpetuated exploitation and marginalization of the poor masses. 2000-2003 was a revolutionary time for Bolivia precisely because of these popular forces, broadening the horizon of social change in the country. The popular groups, examined herein, were among the central actors in creating revolutionary possibilities. None of them took power and established a revolutionary state to change Bolivia in a top-down mode. Their revolutions are in fact not a revolution from the perspective that theorizes revolution as a process to take power and establish a state led by the revolutionary vanguard. When they assaulted and undermined the oppressive system, however, their voices, hitherto silenced, for their dignity and vindication created an emancipatory process, whose contents, forms and meanings were determined by multiple participants in struggles for social emancipation.

As Holloway notes, state-centered revolutionary approach “subordinates the infinite richness of [emancipatory] struggle...to the single aim of taking power”; different groups are subsumed under the banner of a revolutionary party and state that represents “the correct revolutionary politics” and that imposes its revolutionary doctrines to justify its monopoly of power.<sup>573</sup> In various revolutionary movements in Bolivia from the 1930s, ordinary people, including colonos, comunarios, miners, peasants, and poor urban residents, played the central role in challenging and undermining systems of oppression, such as the hacienda regime, mining

---

<sup>572</sup> Ibid, 42.

<sup>573</sup> Holloway, *Change the World without Taking Power*, 214.

oligarchy, the Military-Peasant Pact, and neoliberalism. Intellectuals and militants with ideological projects produced and spread the languages of nationalism, workers' power, Indian liberation, and decolonization, which were aimed at taking power. One should not identify Bolivian revolutions with the political projects articulated by those languages. What makes a revolution is not discourse and language but rebellious actions of the oppressed people, which subvert the system of oppression. People become aware of the oppressive nature of the system through their experiences of exploitation and violence that affects their lives. Ideology acquires meanings for them, when they confront the oppression and fight for their emancipation with a consciousness as an oppressed people. Indigenous education and land right became central elements of Bolivian social discussion, because colono and comunario rebellions exposed the oppressive nature of agrarian regime ruled by hacendados and thereby, made it imperative to replace that regime. Marxism was important for the miners, because it gave them a framework to understand their relations to global capitalism, create political organizations to demand humane working conditions and fair wage, and resist repression by mine owners, the military and the MNR. Concepts discussed by Indianists and Katarists, such as Indian liberation, internal colonialism, and the anti-colonial struggle dating back to Túpaq Katari, could serve Aymara and Quechua masses, when they were articulated with the peasant mobilization against the Military-Peasant Pact. El Alto's people made anti-neoliberalism, national sovereignty, and slogans, such as "Gas for Bolivia," central to their struggle against the government that violently repressed their barrios, neighborhoods and city in 2003.

The "revolutionary states" headed by the MNR and the MAS (have) claimed that they (have) emancipated the oppressed peoples in Bolivia. The country's histories of popular struggle, however, suggest that social emancipation should be construed not as an endpoint of a state-led

process but as a continuous process that includes multiple fronts of insurgent action and insubordination, undermining an oppressive system.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Archives

Archivo y Biblioteca Nacionales de Bolivia

Archivo Histórico del Municipio de Cochabamba

Archivo de La Paz Archivo

Biblioteca y Archivo Histórico de la Asamblea Legislativa Plurinacional

Biblioteca Municipal de La Paz

Lexivox Portal Jurídico (<http://www.lexivox.org>)

Marxists Internet Archive (<https://www.marxists.org/espanol>)

Rebelión (<https://www.rebelion.org>)

### Booklets and Bulletins

“El Alto. La ciudad más joven de Bolivia.” Bulletin published by the INE of the Plurinational State of Bolivia on March 7, 2017

“Rebeldía.” Booklet published by *El Alteño* in commemoration of the fourth anniversary (2007) of the Gas War

### Films

“El Coraje del Pueblo.” Film directed by Jorge Sanjinés. Grupo Ukamau; Radiotelevisione Italiana, 1971

“¡Fusil, Metralla! ¡El Pueblo No Se Calla! La lucha por la dignidad.” Documentary directed by Rudy Menacho and Edwin Villca Gutiérrez. Tercer Mundo, 2004

“La Nación Clandestina.” Film directed by Jorge Sanjinés. Grupo Ukamau; Televisión Española S.A., and Channel Four, 1989

“Un minuto de silencio. La historia de los movimientos sociales recientes en Bolivia.” Documentary directed by Ferdinando Vicentini Orgnani. Alba Produzion, 2014)

### Hyperlinks to Maps



Federación de Juventud de la Provincia Larecaja (<http://fjpl.blogspot.com/2006/05/ubicacion-geografica.html>)

Vector Stock (<https://www.vectorstock.com/royalty-free-vector/bolivia-map-vector-1605158>)

### Interviews

La Asociación de las Víctimas de la Massacre de Septiembre-Octubre de 2003. October 14, 2016

An anonymous resident of El Alto. September 27, 2016

Apaza, Tomasa. January 22, 2017

Callisaya, Felipe. February 24, 2017

Cárdenas, Sarah. November 24, 2016

Chino, Carlos. September 20, 2016

Choquehuanca Quispe, Gonzalo. November 18, 2016.

Flores Gómez, Enrique. January 11, 2017

Kastaya Quispe, Kawi J. October 23, 2016

Lima Chávez, Constantino. November 14, 2016

Limachi Yapaco, Ángel. January 23, 2017

Mamani Alvarado, Edwards. November 14, 2016

Pacosillo Hilari, Roberto. October 12, 2016

Pinto González, Inés. January 11, 2017

Quisbert, Rodolfo. November 19, 2016

Quisbert Choque, Genaro. September 20, 2016

Ramos Pajarito, Benigno. October 5, 2016

Rivera, Issac. January 19, 2017

Rojas, Wilfredo. October 5, 2016

Rojas Choque, Braulio. February 13, 2017

Solis Mamani, Sixto Justo. January 23, 2017

Villca Gavincha, Luis. October 12, 2016

### Newspapers

Agencia de Noticias Fides (<https://www.noticiasfides.com>)

El Alteño

El Deber (<http://www.eldeber.com.bo>)

El Diario

eabolivia (<https://www.eabolivia.com>)

El Imparcial

Página Siete (<http://www.paginasiete.bo>)

El País (<http://www.bolivia.com/noticias>)

La Prensa

La Razón (<http://www.la-razon.com>)

Red Voltaire (<http://www.voltairenet.org>)

Shorthand Social (<https://social.shorthand.com>)

Los Tiempos

Ultima Hora

### Private Notes of Journalist Edwin Mamani Luna

“Bolivia despertó en Caracollo”

“El Alto puso los muertos por los hidrocarburos”

“Pasión y Gloria de octubre 2003”

“El último día de Goni en el poder empezó a correr en Patacamaya”

### Public Events

“Conmemoración de la Guerra del Gas,” Carrera de Sociología de la UPEA, October 19, 2016

“El Homenaje y el Balance Político a los 13 Años de la Guerra del Gas del 2003.” Carrera de Historia de la Universidad Pública de El Alto, el Instituto de Investigación “Fausto Reinaga,” and the Colectivo Movimiento Indianista-Katarists. October 17-18, 2016

### Social Network Services and Websites

Center for Constitutional Rights (<https://ccrjustice.org/home>)

Constitute (<https://constituteproject.org/>)

Felipe Callisaya’s Facebook Page (<https://www.facebook.com/people/Felipe-Callisaya/100009371097469>)

Yacimientos Petrolíferos Fiscales Bolivianos (<https://www.ypfb.gob.bo/es/>)

### Statistics

Instituto Nacional de Estadística del Estado Plurinacional de Bolivia (<http://datos.ine.gob.bo>)

### Theatrical Work

*Arriba El Alto*. Presented by Teatro Tronco-Compa at *Red de la Diversidad-Fundación Wayna Tambo*. February 11, 2017

### Youtube

Observatorio Boliviano de Opinión Pública. “Yo no voy a renunciar-Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada [Octubre 2003].” Uploaded on September 24, 2012 (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wme2O0vYObg>)

### Secondary Sources

Absi, Pascale. *Los ministros del diablo. El trabajo y sus representaciones en las minas de Potosí*. Fundación para la Investigación Estratégica en Bolivia; Instituto de Investigación para el Desarrollo; Instituto Francés de Estudios Andinos; Embajada de Francia en Bolivia, 2005

Aguilar L., Nelson and Alison Spedding P. *Historia de la rebeldía yungueña, 1771-2003*. Editorial Mama Huaco, 2005

Alberti, Giorgio and Enrique Mayer. *Reciprocidad e intercambio en los Andes peruanos*. Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1974

Albó, Xavier. *Achacachi, medio siglo de lucha*. Centro de Investigación y Promoción del Campesinado, 1979

Albó, Xavier. *Desafíos de la solidaridad aymara*. La Mirada Salvaje, 2010 [1985]

Albó, Xavier and Amalia Anaya. *Niños alrgres, libres, expresivos: la audacia de la educación intercultural bilingüe en Bolivia*. Centro de Investigación y Promoción del Campesinado; United Nations Children's Fund, 2003

Albó, Xavier and Josep M. Barnadas. *La cara campesina de nuestra historia*. Unión Nacional de Investigación para el Trabajo de Acción Social, 1985 [1984]

Albó, Xavier and J. Fernando Galindo. *Interculturalidad en el desarrollo rural sostenible. El caso de Bolivia*. Centro de Investigación y Promoción del Campesinado, 2012

Albó, Xavier, Tomás Greaves, and Godofredo Sandoval. *Chukiyawu: la cara aymara de La Paz. I. El paso a la ciudad*. Cuadernos de Investigación; Centro de Investigación y Promoción de Campesino en Bolivia, 1981

Albó, Xavier, Tomás Greaves, and Godofredo Sandoval. *Chukiyawu: la cara aymara de La Paz. II. Una odisea, buscar pega*. Cuadernos de Investigación; Centro de Investigación y Promoción de Campesino en Bolivia, 1982

Albó, Xavier, Tomás Greaves, and Godofredo Sandoval. *Chukiyawu: la cara aymara de La Paz. III. Cabalgando entre dos mundos*. Cuadernos de Investigación, 1983

Alegría, Ciro. *El mundo es ancho y ajeno*. Merlin Press, 1983 [1945]

Alexander, Michelle. *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. The New Press, 2010

Alexander, Robert J. *Bolivian National Revolution*. Greenwood Press, 1958

Almaraz Paz, Sergio. *Petróleo en Bolivia*. Editorial Juventud, 1957

- Almaraz Paz, Sergio. *Requiem para una república*. Ediciones “Los Amigos del Libro”, 1980 [1969]
- Alonso, Ana María. *Thread of Blood: Colonialism, Revolution, and Gender on Mexico’s Northern Frontier*. The University of Arizona Press, 1995
- Andrade, Víctor. *My Missions for Revolutionary Bolivia, 1944-1962*. University of Pittsburgh Press, 1976
- Antezana, Luis. *La revolución campesina en Bolivia*. Empresa Editora “Siglo Ltda”, 1982
- Antezana, Luis and Hugo Romero Bedregal. *Historia de los sindicatos campesinos: Un Proceso de Integración Nacional en Bolivia*. Consejo Nacional de Reforma Agraria, 1973
- Aqarapi Wanka, Pachakuti. *Macha. Políticas de descolonización del Estado Plurinacional de Bolivia en la perspectiva de 500 años de Guerra anticolonial*. Centro Multidisciplinario Wiñaypacha “CEMUWI”, 2016
- Arguedas, Alcides. *Pueblo Enfermo*. Ediciones Puerta del Sol, 1986 [1936] [1909]
- Arguedas, Alcides. *Raza de bronce*. Editores Gisbert&Cía S.A., 1979 [1919]
- Arguedas, José María. *Yawar Fiesta*. Translated by Frances Horning Barracough. University of Texas Press, 1985 [1941]
- Arguedas, José María. *Los ríos profundos*. Catedra, 1995 [1959]
- Arguedas, José María. *Todas las sangres*. Editorial Horizonte, 2014 [1964]
- Ari, Waskar. *Earth Politics: Religion, Decolonization, and Bolivia’s Indigenous Intellectuals*. DukeUniversity Press, 2014
- Arias, Juan Félix. *Historia de una esperanza: los apoderados espiritualistas de Chuquisaca 1936-1964. Un estudio sobre milenarismo, rebelión, resistencia y conciencia campesino-indígena*. Aruwiwiri, 1994
- Arnold, Denise Y. and Alison Spedding. *Mujeres en los Movimientos Sociales en Bolivia, 2000-2003*. Centro de Información y Desarrollo de la Mujer, 2005
- Arze Aguirre, René Danilo. *Guerra y conflictos sociales. El caso rural boliviano durante la campaña del Chaco*. Centros de Estudios de la Realidad Económica y Social, 1987
- Barragán, Rossana. *Espacio urbano y dinámica étnica. La Paz en el Siglo XIX*. Instituto de Historia Social Boliviana, 1990

- Barrios de Chungara, Domitila, with Moema Viezzer. *Let Me Speak!: Testimony of Domitila, a Woman of the Bolivian Mines*. Monthly Review Press, 1978
- Bedregal, Guillermo. *COMIBOL: una historia épica*. Fondo Editorial de los Diputados, 1998
- Bessire, Lucas. "The Rise of Indigenous Hypermarginality: Native Culture as a Neoliberal Politics of Life." *Current Anthropology* 55, 3 (2014)
- Bridikhina, Evgenia. *El 12 de Octubre revisado y revisitado*. Universidad Mayor de San Andrés; Facultad de Humanidades y Ciencias de la Educación; Carrera de Historia; Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas; Instituto de Estudios Bolivianos, 2017
- Burke, Melvin and James M. Malloy. "From National Populism to National Corporatism: The Case of Bolivia (1952-1970)." *Studies in Comparative International Development* 9 (1974)
- Cajías de la Vega, Magdalena. *El poder de la memoria. La mina de Huanuni en las luchas sindicales y políticas del movimiento minero boliviano: 1900-2010*. Plural Editores; Departamento de Investigación Postgrado e Interacción Social; Instituto de Estudios Bolivianos, 2013
- Calderón, Fernando and Jorge Dandler. *Bolivia: La fuerza histórica del campesinado. Movimientos campesinos y etnicidad*. United Nations Research Institute for Social Development; Centro de Estudios de la Realidad Económica y Social, 1984
- Canelas O., Amado. *Mito y realidad de la reforma agraria*. Editorial "Los Amigos del Libro," 1966
- Canessa, Andrew. *Natives Making Nation: Gender, Indigeneity, and the State in the Andes*. University of Arizona Press, 2005
- Canessa, Andrew. "Todos somos indígenas: Towards a New Language of National Political Identity." *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 25, 2 (2006)
- Carnero Hoke, Guillermo. *Nueva teoría para la insurgencia*. Editorial Amerindia, 1968
- Castells, Manuel. *City, Class and Power*. Translated by Elizabeth Lebas. St. Martin's Press, 1978 [1977] [1976] [1975] [1972]
- Centro de Investigación y Promoción del Campesinado. *Por una Bolivia diferente. Aportes para un proyecto histórico popular*. Centro de Investigación y Promoción del Campesinado, 1991
- Céspedes, Augusto. *Sangre de Mestizos. Relatos de la guerra del Chaco*. Editorial Capibara, 2004 [1965] [1936]
- Céspedes, Augusto. *Metal del Diablo. La vida del Rey del Estaño*. Librería Editorial "Juventud," 1998 [1946]

- Céspedes, Augusto. *El Dictador Suicida*. Librería y Editorial “Juventud,” 1968 [1956]
- Céspedes, Augusto. *El presidente colgado*. Editorial Jorge Álvarez S.A., 1966
- Chakrabarty, Dipesh. *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*. Princeton University Press, 2000
- Chambilla Mamani, Beatriz. *Percepciones de los “SIN VOZ.” Acerca del Proceso de Cambio*. Taller de Historia Oral Andina; diakonia, 2012
- Choque Canqui, Roberto. *La masacre de Jesús de Machaca*. Ediciones Chitakkolla, 1986
- Choque Canqui, Roberto. *El indigenismo y los movimientos indígenas en Bolivia*. Unidad de Investigaciones Históricas, 2014
- Choque Canqui, Roberto and Cristina Quisbert Quispe. *Educación indigenal en Bolivia. Un siglo de ensayos educativos y resistencias patronales*. Unidad de Investigaciones Históricas, 2006
- Condarco Morales, Ramiro. *Zárate El “temible” Willka. Historia de la rebelión indígena de 1899*. Editorial El País, 2011 [1983] [1966]
- Cornejo S., Alberto. *Programas políticos de Bolivia*. Imprenta Universitaria, Cochabamba-Bolivia, 1949
- Crespo, Carlos. *Anarquismo en Bolivia, ayer y hoy*. Centro de Estudios Superiores Universitarios, Universidad Mayor de San Simón, 2016
- Dandler, Jorge. *El sidicalismo campesino de Bolivia. Los cambios estructurales en Ucureña*. Instituto Indigenista Interamericano, 1969
- De la Torre, Carlos. *The Promise and Perils of Populism: Global Perspectives*. University Press of Kentucky, 2015
- Delgado Mancilla, Abraham. *Poder y masacre en El Alto. La Mafia Sindical Alteña*. Viejo Topo, 2016
- Delgado Mancilla, Abraham. *Descubrimiento, conquista, invasión, 1492-1532. Desmontando y desmitificando la historia y el pensamiento colonial*. Laboratorio del Pensamiento Indianista-Katarista, 2017
- Dunkerley, James. *Rebellion in the Veins: Political Struggle in Bolivia, 1952-1982*. Verso, 1984
- Dunkerley, James. “Evo Morales, the ‘Two Bolivias’ and the Third Bolivian Revolution.” *Journal of Latin American Studies* 39, 1 (2007)

Egan, Nancy. “‘Una lucha de razas, secular y honda’: The Proceso Mohoza, Bolivia 1899-1905.” MA Thesis. University of California, San Diego, 2007

Farthing, Linda and Benjamin Kohl. “Social Control: Bolivia’s New Approach to Coca Reduction.” *Latin American Perspectives* 37, 4 (2010)

Fernández J. Javier, Pablo Pacheco B., and Juan Carlos Schulze M. *Marco de interpretación de la cuestión agraria en Bolivia*. Centro de Estudios para el Desarrollo Laboral y Agrario, 1991

Fernández Rojas, Johnny. *Así nació El Alto*. Centro de Formación y Capacitación para la Participación Ciudadana, 2015

Flores Galindo, Alberto. *In Search of an Inca: Identity and Utopia in the Andes*. Translated by Hiatt Willie, Charles F. Walker, and Carlos Aguirre. Cambridge University Press, 2010 [1988] [1986]

Fonseca, César and Enrique Mayer. *Comunidad y producción en la agricultura andina*. Asociación Peruana para el Fomento de las Ciencias Sociales, 1988

Fox, Richard G. *Recapturing Anthropology: Working in the Present*. School of American Research, 1991

Galindo, María. *No se puede descolonizar sin despatriarcalizar. Teoría y propuesta de la despatriarcalización*. Mujeres Creando, 2013

García Jordán, Pilar. *Cruz y arado, fusiles y discursos. La construcción de los orientes en el Perú y Bolivia, 1820-1940*. Institut Français d’Études Andines, 2001

García Linera, Álvaro. “Indianismo y Marxismo: El desencuentro de dos razones revolucionarias.” *Revista Donataria* 2(2005)

García Linera, Álvaro. *Las tensiones creativas de la revolución. La quinta fase del Proceso de Cambio*. Vicepresidencia del Estado Plurinacional; Presidencia de la Asamblea Legislativa Plurinacional, 2011

García Linera, Álvaro. *El “Oenegismo”, enfermedad infantil del derechismo (O cómo la “reconducción” del Proceso de Cambio es la restauración neoliberal)*. Vicepresidencia del Estado Plurinacional; Presidencia de la Asamblea Legislativa Plurinacional, 2011

García Linera, Álvaro. *Geopolítica de la Amazonía. Poder hacendal-patrimonial y acumulación capitalista*. Vicepresidencia del Estado Plurinacional; Presidencia de la Asamblea Legislativa Plurinacional, 2013

García Linera, Álvaro. *Identidad Boliviana. Nación, mestizaje y plurinacionalidad*. Vicepresidencia del Estado Plurinacional; Presidencia de la Asamblea Legislativa Plurinacional, 2014



Garfias, Sandra and Hubert Mazurek. *El Alto desde una perspectiva poblacional*. Consejo de Población para el Desarrollo Sostenible; Institut de recherche pour le développement, 2005

Gerth, H.H. and C. Wright Mills. *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*. Oxford University Press, 1998 [1923]

Gobierno Autónomo Municipal de El Alto. *El Alto. Atlas Geográfico del Municipio de El Alto*. Gobierno Autónomo Municipal de El Alto, 2015

Goldstein, Daniel M. *The Spectacular City: Violence and Performance in Urban Bolivia*. Duke University Press, 2004

Goldstein, Daniel M. *Outlawed: Between Security and Rights in a Bolivian City*. Duke University Press, 2012

Golte, Jürgen and Norma Adams. *Los caballos de troya de los invasores. Estrategias campesinas en la conquista de la Gran Lima*. Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1987

Gómez, Luis A. *El Alto de pie. Una insurrección Aymara en Bolivia*. Textos Rebeldes, 2004

Gómez D'Angelo, Walter. *La minería en el desarrollo de Bolivia*. Los Amigos del Libro, 1978

Gotkowitz, Laura. *A Revolution for Our Rights: Indigenous Struggles for Land and Justice in Bolivia, 1880-1952*. Duke University Press, 2007

Gramsci, Antonio. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. Edited. Quintin Horace and Geoffrey Nowell Smith. International Publishers, 1971

Grindle, Merilee S. and Pilar Domingo. *Proclaiming Revolution: Bolivia in Comparative Perspective*. David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies, Harvard University; Institute of Latin American Studies, University of London, 2003

Gutiérrez Aguilar, Raquel. *Los ritmos del Pachakuti. Movilización y levantamiento popular-indígena en Bolivia (2000-2005)*. Tinta Limón, 2008

Harris, Olivia and Xavier Albó. *Monteras y guardatojos. Campesinos y mineros en el Norte de Potosí en 1974*. Centro de Investigación y Promoción del Campesinado, 1986

Hart, John Mason. *Revolutionary Mexico: The Coming and Process of the Mexican Revolution*. University of California Press, 1997 [1987]

Haya de la Torre, Víctor Raúl. *El antiimperialismo y el APRA*. Editorial-Imprenta Amauta S.A., 1972 [1970] [1936] [1935]

- Himpele, Jeff D. *Circuits of Culture: Media, Politics, and Indigenous Identity in the Andes*. University of Minnesota Press, 2008
- Holloway, John. *Change the World without Taking Power: The Meaning of Revolution Today*. Pluto Press, 2010 [2005] [2002]
- Horne, Gerald. *The Apocalypse of Settler Colonialism: The Roots of Slavery, White Supremacy, and Capitalism in 17<sup>th</sup> Century North America and the Caribbean*. Monthly Review Press, 2018
- Hurtado, Javier. *El Katarismo*. Instituto de Historia Social Boliviana, 1986
- Hylton, Forrest, Lucila Choque, and Lina Britto. *La Guerra de Gas contada desde las mujeres. Altupata warminakan sartasitapa lup'iwipampi wali ch'amampi. La fuerza y el pensamiento de las Mujeres Alteñas en el movimiento de octubre 2003*. Centro de Promoción de la Mujer Gregoria Apaza, 2005
- Hylton, Forrest, Felix Patzi, Sergio Serulnikov, and Sinclair Thomson. *Ya es otro tiempo el presente: Cuatro momentos de insurgencia indígena*. Muela del Diablo Editores, 2005 [2003]
- Hylton, Forrest and Sinclair Thomson. *Revolutionary Horizons: Past and Present in Bolivian Politics*. Verso, 2007
- Icaza, Jorge. *Huasipungo*. Stockcero, 2009 [1934]
- Instituto Nacional de Estadística. *Característicos de la Población*. Instituto Nacional de Estadística, 2015
- Joseph, Gilbert Michael and Daniel Nugent. *Everyday Forms of State Formation: Revolution and the Negotiation of Rule in Modern Mexico*. Duke University Press, 1994
- Justo, Liborio. *Bolivia. La revolución derrotada*. Juárez Editor S.A., 1971 [1967]
- Kaup, Brent Z. *Market Justice: Political Economic Struggle in Bolivia*. Cambridge University Press, 2013
- Kearney, Patrick Louis Williams Kearney. "Insurgent Legacy: Fausto Reinaga and the Indian Revolution." MA Thesis. University of California, San Diego, 2014
- Keith, Michael and Steve Pile. *Place and the Politics of Identity*. Routledge, 1993
- Klein, Herbert. "The Impact of the Chaco War on Bolivian Society." PhD Dissertation. The University of Chicago, 1963
- Klein, Herbert. *Parties and Political Change in Bolivia, 1880-1952*. Cambridge University Press, 1969

- Kohl, James V. "Peasant and Revolution in Bolivia, April 9, 1952-August 2, 1953." *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, 58, 2 (1978)
- Kohl, James V. "The Cliza and Ucureña War: Syndical Violence and National Revolution in Bolivia." *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 62, 4 (1982)
- Kohl, Benjamin and Linda Farthing. *Impasse in Bolivia: Neoliberal Hegemony and Popular Resistance*. Zed Books, 2006
- Kokotovic, Misha. *The Colonial Divide in Peruvian Narrative: Social Conflict and Transculturation*. Sussex Academic Press, 2005
- Kuenzli, E. Gabrielle. *Acting Inca: National Belonging in Early Twentieth-Century Bolivia*. University of Pittsburgh Press, 2013
- Lagos, Maria L. *Autonomy and Power: The Dynamics of Class and Culture in Rural Bolivia*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994
- Langer, Erick D. *Expecting Pears from an Elm Tree: Franciscan Missions on the Chiriguano Frontier in the Heart of South America, 1830-1949*. Duke University Press, 2009
- Larson, Brooke. *Cochabamba, 1550-1900: Colonialism and Agrarian Transformation in Bolivia*. Duke University Press, 1998 [1988]
- Larson, Brooke. *Trials of Nation Making: Liberalism, Race, and Ethnicity in the Andes, 1810-1910*. Cambridge University Press, 2004
- Larson, Brooke and Olivia Harris with Enrique Tandeter. *Ethnicity, Markets, and Migration in the Andes: At the Crossroads of History and Anthropology*. Duke University Press, 1995
- Lazar, Sian. *El Alto, Rebel City: Self and Citizenship in Andean Bolivia*. Duke University Press, 2008
- Lehman, Kenneth D. *Bolivia and the United States: A Limited Partnership*. The University of Georgia Press, 1999
- Lewis, Tom. "The Politics of 'Andean-Amazonian Capitalism': State Ideology in the Bolivia of Evo Morales." *International Socialist Review* 83 (2012)
- Llanque, Jorge. "Qamiris aymaras. Nuevas elites en Oruro," *T'inkazos* 29 (2011)
- Lora, Guillermo. *Escritos escogidos sobre el problema campesino y nacional*. Edited by Masas. Ediciones Masas, 2016
- Lucero, Jose Antonio. "Fanon in the Andes: Fausto Reinaga, Indianismo, and the Black Atlantic." *International Journal of Critical Indigenous Studies* 1, 1 (2008)

- MacDougall, David. *Transcultural Cinema*. Princeton University Press, 1998
- Malloy, James M. *Bolivia: The Uncompleted Revolution*. University of Pittsburgh Press, 1970
- Malloy, James M. and Eduardo Gamarra. *Revolution and Reaction: Bolivia, 1964-1985*. Transaction Books, 1988
- Malloy, James M. and Richard S. Thorn. *Beyond the Revolution: Bolivia since 1952*. University of Pittsburgh Press, 1971
- Mamani Chipana, Patricio. *Fuerza y qamisa de Katari-Sisa. Movimiento Apiawayqui tumpa Katari-Sisa. Kataris y Sisvas volvemos siendo trillones como la flor de quinua*. Coca Chimpu, 2010
- Mamani Conde, Julio. *Octubre. Memorias de dignidad y masacre*. Agencia de Prensa Alteña, 2013 [2006]
- Mamani Condori, Carlos. *Taraqu, 1866-1935. Masacre, guerra y “Renovación” en la biografía de Eduardo L. Nina Qhispi*. Ediciones Aruwiwiri, 1991
- Mamani Condori, Carlos. *Los aymaras frente a la historia: Dos ensayos metodológicos*. Ediciones Aruwiwiri, 1992
- Mamani Ramírez, Pablo. *El rugir de las multitudes. La fuerza de los levantamientos indígenas en Bolivia/Qullasuyu*. La Mirada Salvaje, 2010 [2004]
- Mamani Ramírez, Pablo. *Microgobiernos barriales. Levantamiento de la ciudad de El Alto (Octubre 2003)*. La Mirada Salvaje, 2010 [2005]
- Mamani Ramírez, Pablo. *El Estado neocolonial. Una mirada al proceso de la lucha por el poder y sus contradicciones en Bolivia*. Rincón Ediciones, 2017
- Mansilla, H.C.F. *Una mirada crítica sobre el indianismo y la descolonización. El potencial conservador bajo el manto revolucionario*. Rincón Ediciones, 2014
- Mariátegui, José Carlos. *Siete ensayos de interpretación de la realidad peruana*. Biblioteca Era, 2007 [2002] [1979] [1928]
- Marof, Tristán. *La Justicia del Inca*. La Edición Latino Americana, 1926
- Marof, Tristán. *La Tragedia del Altiplano*. Editorial Claridad, 1935
- Massey, Doreen. *For Space*. Sage Publications, 2005

- Matos Mar, José. *Desborde popular y crisis del Estado. El Nuevo rostro del Perú en la década de 1980*. Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1986 [1985] [1984]
- Matos Mar, José. *Perú. Estado desbordado y sociedad nacional emergente*. Universidad Ricardo Palma; Editorial Universitaria, 2012
- Matto de Turner, Clorinda. *Aves sin nido*. Stockcero, 2004 [1889]
- McNeish, John-Andrew. "Extraction, Protest and Indigeneity in Bolivia: The TIPNIS Effect." *Latin American and Caribbean Ethnic Studies* 8, 2 (2013)
- Medina, Javier. *Mirar con los dos ojos*. La Mirada Salvaje, 2010
- Mendelberg, Uri. "The Impact of the Bolivian Agrarian Reform on Class Formation." *Latin American Perspectives* 12, 3 (1985)
- Mendieta, Pilar. *Entre la alianza y la confrontación: Pablo Zárate Willka y la rebelión indígena de 1899 en Bolivia*. Instituto Francés de Estudios Andinos; Plural Editores; Agencia Sueca de Cooperación para el Desarrollo Internacional; Instituto de Estudios Bolivianos, 2010
- Merrill, Heather and Lisa M. Hoffman. *Spaces of Danger: Culture and Power in the Everyday*. University of Georgia Press, 2015
- Mesa Gisbert, Carlos D. *La sirena y el charango. Ensayo sobre el Mestizaje*. Editorial Gisbert y Cia. S.A., 2013
- Mitchell, Christopher. *The Legacy of Populism in Bolivia: From the MNR to Military Rule*. Praeger, 1977
- Mollericona P., Juan Yhonny, Adriana Paredes Cruz, and Ninoska Tinini Maydana. "La Seguridad Ciudadana entre las fronteras de lo Público y lo Privado. Una indagación sobre la participación comunitaria en la prevención del delito." *Programa de Investigación Estratégica en Bolivia* (2006)
- Montenegro, Carlos. *Nacionalismo y coloniaje*. Librería Editorial "Juventud," 2003 [1943]
- Montoya Rojas, Rodrigo. *Multiculturalidad y Política. Derechos Indígenas, Ciudadanos y Humanos*. SUR Casa de Estudios del Socialismo, 1998
- Montoya Rojas, Rodrigo. *Porvenir de la cultura quechua en Perú. Desde Lima, Villa El Salvador y Puquio*. Coordinadora Andina de Organizaciones Indígenas; Confederación Nacional de Comunidades del Perú Afectadas por la Minería; Programa Democracia y Transformación Global; Fondo Editorial de la Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, 2010
- Moreno Valdivia, Antonio Edgar. "Violencia e inseguridad en la Ciudad de El Alto." *Revistas Bolivianas* 31 (2011)

Mowitt, John. *Re-takes: Postcoloniality and Foreign Film Languages*. University of Minnesota Press, 2005

Nash, June. *We Eat the Mines and the Mines Eat Us: Dependency and Exploitation in Bolivian Tin Mines*. Columbia University Press, 1993 [1979]

Nash, June. *I Spent My Life in the Mines: The Story of Juan Rojas, Bolivian Tin Miner*. Columbia University Press, 1992

Nohlen, Dieter. *Elections in the Americas: A Data Handbook. Volume II. South America*. Oxford University Press, 2005

Nugent, Daniel. *Spent Cartridges of Revolution: An Anthropological History of Namiquipa, Chihuahua*. The University of Chicago Press, 1994

Núñez del Prado, José. *Proceso de Cambio. Estafa y despojo neopopulista para un capitalismo salvaje*. Autodeterminación, 2016

Olcott, Jocelyn H. *Revolutionary Women in Postrevolutionary Mexico*. Duke University Press, 2006

Ortega, Araceli. "Goni y Sánchez Berzaín, entre los CORRUMPTOS ADINERADOS de EEUU." *Prensa Rural* 42 (2016)

Patzi Paco, Félix. *Insurgencia y sumisión: movimientos sociales e indígenas*. Ediciones Yachaywasi, 2007 [1998]

Pérez, Elizardo. *Warisata. La Escuela-Ayllu*. Ministerio de Educación 2015 [2013] [1992] [1962]

Pérez-Stable, Marifeli. *The Cuban Revolution: Origins, Course, and Legacy*. Oxford University Press, 1998

Picatto, Pablo. *City of Suspects: Crime in Mexico City, 1900-1931*. Duke University Press, 2001

Placencia, María E. "Inequality in Address Behavior at Public Institutions in La Paz, Bolivia." *Anthropological Linguistics*, 43, 2 (2001)

Platt, Tristan. *Estado boliviano y ayllu andino: tierra y tributo en el norte de Potosí*. Institutos de Estudios Peruanos, 1982

Poma Laura, Juan Manuel. *Fausto Reynaga. O la frustración del programa indio*. Textos marxistas, 2011

Portugal Mollinedo, Pedro and Carlos Macusaya Cruz. *El indianismo katarista. Un análisis crítico*. Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, 2016

Postero, Nancy. *Now We Are Citizens: Indigenous Politics in Post-Multicultural Bolivia*. Stanford University Press, 2007

Postero, Nancy. "Morales's MAS Government: Building Indigenous Popular Hegemony in Bolivia." *Latin American Perspectives* 37, 3 (2010)

Postero, Nancy. *The Indigenous State: Race, Politics, and Performance in Plurinational Bolivia*. University of California Press, 2017

Poupeau, Franck. "El Alto: una ficción política." *Bulletin de l'Institut français d'études andines* 39, 2 (2010)

Quispe, Ayar. *Indianismo*. Ediciones Pachakuti, Awqa, 2011

Quispe Huanca, Felipe. *La Caída de Goni. Diario de la "Huelga de Hambre."* Ediciones Pachakuti, 2013

Quispe Huanca, Felipe. "MALLKU", "CSUTCB: máxima instancia superior de las rebeliones." *AWQA* 5 (2014)

Quispe Villca, Marco Alberto. *De ch'usamarka a jach'amarka (De pueblo vacío a pueblo grande). Pequeñas historias contadas desde el alma misma de El Alto*. Plural Editores; Fundación Wayna Tambo, 2004

Reinaga, Fausto. *Mitayos y Yanaconas*. Imprenta Manuelo, 1940

Reinaga, Fausto. *Tierra y Libertad. La revolución nacional y el indio*. Rumbo Sindical, 1953

Reinaga, Fausto. *Belzu. Precursor de la revolución nacional*. Ediciones "Rumbo Sindical," 1953

Reinaga, Fausto. *El Indio y el Cholaje Boliviano. Proceso a Fernando Diez de Medina*. Ediciones Partido de Indios Aymaras y Keswas del Kollasuyu, 1964

Reinaga, Fausto. *La intelligentsia del Cholaje Boliviano*. Ediciones Partido Indio de Bolivia, 1967

Reinaga, Fausto. *El indio y los escritores de América*. Ediciones Partido Indio de Bolivia, 1969

Reinaga, Fausto. *La Revolución India*. Ediciones Fundación Amaútica "Fausto Reinaga," 2001 [1970]

Reinaga G., Hilda. *Fausto Reinaga: su vida y sus obras*. Vicepresidencia del Estado Plurinacional de Bolivia, 2011 [2004]

Rénique, José Luis. *Imaginar la nación. Viajes en busca del “verdadero Perú” (1881-1932)*. Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 2015

Rénique, José Luis. *Incendiar la pradera. Un ensayo sobre la “revolución” en el Perú*. Las sinietras ensayos, 2015

Reynaga, Wankar. *Tawa Inti Suyu. 5 Siglos de Guerra India*. Sexta Edición, La Paz, 2005

Ribeyro, Julio Ramón. *Cuentos completos*. Alfaguara, 1994

Rivera Cusicanqui, Silvia. *Oprimidos pero no vencidos: luchas del campesinado aymara y qhechwa, 1900-1980*. La Mirada Salvaje, 2010 [1986] [1984]

Rivera Cusicanqui, Silvia. *Bircholas. Trabajo de mujeres: explotación capitalista y opresión colonial entre las migrantes aymaras de La Paz y El Alto*. Editorial Mama Huaco, 2002 [1996]

Rivera Cusicanqui, Silvia. *Violencias (re) encubiertas en Bolivia*. La Mirada Salvaje, 2010

Rivera Cusicanqui, Silvia. *Ch'ixinakax utxiwa. Una reflexión sobre prácticas y discursos descolonizadores*. Tinta Limón, 2010

Rivera Cusicanqui, Silvia. *Mito y desarrollo en Bolivia. El giro colonial del gobierno del MAS*. Piedra Rota; Plural Editores, 2015

Rivera Cusicanqui, Silvia. *Sociología de la imagen. Miradas ch'ixi desde la historia andina*. Tinta Limón, 2015

Rivera Cusicanqui, Silvia and Zulema LehmArdaya. *Lxs artesanxs libertarixs: y la ética del trabajo*. Tinta Limón; Madreselva, 2013 [1988]

Rivera Cusicanqui, Silvia, Filomena Nina Huaracacho, Franklin Maquera Céspedes, and Ruth Flores Pinaya. *La Mujer Andina en la Historia*. Taller de Historia Oral Andina, 1990

Rodney, Walter. *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*. Bogle-L'Ouverture Publications, 1972

Said, Edward W. *Orientalism*. Pantheon Books, 1978

Sandoval, Godofredo, Xavier Albó, and Tomás Greaves. *Chukiyawu: la cara aymara de La Paz. IV. Nuevos lazos con el campo*. Centro de Investigación y Promoción de Campesino en Bolivia, 1987

Sandoval Z., Godofredo and Fernanda M. Sostres. *La ciudad prometida. Pobladores y organizaciones sociales en El Alto*. Editorial Sistema; Instituto Latinoamericano de Investigaciones Sociales, 1989



Saavedra, José Luis. "La Insurgencia del Poder Kolla. Una aproximación al pensamiento político de Fernando Untoja." *Reflexión Política* 14, 27 (2012)

Schavelzon, Salvador. *El nacimiento del Estado Plurinacional. Etnografía de una Asamblea Constituyente*. Fondo de Naciones Unidas para la Democracia; Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales; Grupo Internacional de Trabajo sobre Asuntos Indígenas; Centro de Estudios Jurídicos e Investigación Social, 2012

Schilling-Vacador, Almut. "Indigenous Identities and Politico-Jurisdictional Demands of CSUTCB and CONAMAQ in the Constitutional Change Process of Bolivia." *T'inkazos* 4 (2008)

Schroeder Rodríguez, Paul A. "La fase neobarroca del Nuevo Cien Latinoamericano." *Revista de Crítica Literaria Latinoamericana* 37, 73 (2011)

Schroeder Rodríguez, Paul A. "After New Latin American Cinema." *Cinema Journal* 51, 2 (2012)

Scorza, Manuel. *Redoble por Rancas*. Penguin Books, 1997 [1970]

Scott, James C. *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Conditions Have Failed*. Yale University Press, 1999

Siekmeier, James F. *The Bolivian Revolution and the United States, 1952 to the Present*. The Pennsylvania University Press, 2011

Skocpol, Theda. *State and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, and China*. Cambridge University Press, 1979

Slany, William Z., N. Stephen Kane, and William F. Sanford Jr. *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954 Volume IV: The American Republics*. United States Government Printing Office, 1983

Smit, Lois M. and Alfred Padula. *Sex and Revolution: Women in Socialist Cuba*. Oxford University Press, 1996

Spedding Pallet, Alison and Abraham Colque Jiménez. *Nosotros los yungueños. Nanakax yunkas tuqinkiripxtw. Testimonios de los yungueños del siglo XX*. Instituto-Editorial Mama Huaco; Fundación para la Investigación Estratégica en Bolivia, 2003

Stern, Steve J. *Resistance, Rebellion, and Consciousness in the Andean Peasant World, 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries*. The University of Wisconsin Press, 1987

Taller de Historia Oral Andina. *Mujer y resistencia comunitaria. Historia y memoria*. Instituto de Historia Social Boliviana, 1986

Tamayo, Franz. *Creación de la pedagogía nacional*. Editorial América S.R.L. 1994 [1910]

Thomson, Sinclair. *We Alone Will Rule: Native Andean Politics in the Age of Insurgency*. The University of Wisconsin Press, 2002

Ticona Alejo, Esteban. *El indianismo de Fausto Reinaga. Orígenes, desarrollo y experiencia en Qullasuyu-Bolivia*. Producciones CIMA Editores, 2015

Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*. Beacon Press, 1997 [1995]

Universidad Mayor de San Andrés and Taller de Historia Oral Andina. *El Indio Santos Marka T'ula: cacique principal de los ayllus de Qallapa y apoderado general de las comunidades originarias de la República*. Ediciones del Taller de Historia Oral Andina, 1988 [1984]

Untoja Choque, Fernando. *Retorno al Ayllu. Una Mirada Aymara a la Globalización*. 2001 Edition. Accessed via *Enciclopedia y Biblioteca Virtual de las Ciencias Sociales, Económicas y Jurídicas* <http://www.eumed.net/libros-gratis/2011d/1038/indice.htm>

Untoja Choque, Fernando. "Economía de la Rivalidad y Poder Kolla." *Ayra* 147 (2016)

Van Cott, Donna Lee. *The Friendly Liquidation of the Past: The Politics of Diversity in Latin America*. University of Pittsburgh Press, 2000

Vargas Llosa, Mario. *La utopía arcaica: José María Arguedas y las ficciones del indigenismo*. Fondo de Cultural Económica México, 1996

Vaughn, Mary Kay. *Cultural Politics in Revolution: Teachers, Peasants, and Schools in Mexico, 1930-1940*. The University of Arizona Press, 1997

Wanderley, Fernando. *El desarrollo en cuestión: reflexiones desde América Latina*. Ciencias del Desarrollo-Universidad Mayor de San Andrés, 2011

Webber, Jeffrey. "Revolution against 'Progress': The TIPNIS Struggle and Class Contradictions in Bolivia." *International Socialism Quarterly Journal* 133 (2012)

Williams, Eric. *Capitalism and Slavery*. The University of North Carolina Press, 1994 [1944]

Zavaleta Mercado, René. *La caída del MNR y la conjuración de noviembre: historia del golpe militar del 4 de noviembre de 1964*. Los Amigos del Libro, 1995 [1964]

Zavaleta Mercado, René. *El poder dual en América Latina. Estudio de los casos de Bolivia y Chile*. Siglo Veintiuno Editores, 1974

Zavaleta Mercado, René. *Bolivia, hoy*. Siglo Veintiuno Editores, 1983

Zavaleta Mercado, René. *Lo nacional-popular en Bolivia*. Siglo XXI Editores, 1986

Zondag, Cornelius. *The Bolivian Economy, 1952-1965: The Revolution and Its Aftermath*. Praeger, 1966

Zulawski, Ann. *Unequal Cures: Public Health and Political Change in Bolivia, 1900-1950*. Duke University Press Books, 2007

Zunes, Stephen. "The United States and Bolivia: The Taming of a Revolution, 1952-1957." *Latin American Perspectives* 28, 5 (2001)