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Indigeneity, Gender, and Resistance: Critique and Contemporaneity of Bolivian Anarchism in the Historical Imagination of Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui

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For Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, Evo Morales, President of the Plurinational State of Bolivia from 2006 to 2019, was 'the façade of the Indian' who 'usurped the symbolic added value of all the social struggles' of the years leading up to his election.[1] In January 2020, his right-wing successor Jeanine Añez, a white representative of the oligarchical restoration that followed the military coup against Morales, proposed a bill that would declare the '*chola*' to be an emblem of the country's national heritage. To mark the occasion, she staged a parade of fashion models posing as the urban indigenous/*mestiza* migrant women whom Rivera Cusicanqui had identified as the driving force behind the Bolivian anarchist movement of the 1920s to the 1940s. The scene was criticised by Aymara journalist Yolanda Mamani of the anarcho-feminist collective *Mujeres Creando* as a 'catwalk' that excluded '*cholas* who sell their wares in the street or work the land', an electoral ploy designed to 'whitewash the racism of her government'.[2] Both Rivera Cusicanqui's critique of the Morales government and Mamani's denunciation of the Añez regime's ploy emanated from an anarchist perspective on Bolivian history. It is fitting that Álvaro García Linera, the former *Katarista* guerrilla and Marxist theorist turned Vice President of Bolivia, had warned against what he called 'a kind of non-statehood dreamed of by primitive anarchism'.[3] When the socialist government collapsed, the spirit and legacy of anarchist critique (and years of popular mobilisations) appeared vindicated,[4] even as the right's appropriation of multiculturalism demonstrated that the question of indigeneity as a core component of Bolivian history had made irreversible strides. Rivera Cusicanqui has been both a protagonist and a scholar of these trends. She views the marches, blockades, the taking of hills and corralling of cities, and resistance to the centres

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of power that characterised popular mobilisations leading up to Morales' election, and which continued under his rule, as manifestations of the 'collective memory' of 'insurgent multitudes' since the rebellion of Aymara leader Julián Apasa (Túpac Katari) in 1781.[5] This perspective informs a recent well-documented book by Benjamin Dangl, published by AK Press. In it, he argues that the more recent *Katarista* movement, which challenged state hegemony and racist power through independent rural trade unionism and the vindication of communal rights, spearheaded Bolivia's indigenous awakening from the 1970s onward.[6] Dangl's rendering, however, makes no mention of anarchism as a relevant precedent to these developments, despite his extensive analysis of the *Taller de Historia Oral Andina* (Andean Oral History Workshop – THOA) in which Rivera Cusicanqui played a key role. Yet the THOA spurred a rediscovery, early in the *Katarista* period, of the powerful indigenous-anarchist alliance forged by anarchists prior to the nationalist revolution of 1952. Rivera Cusicanqui's scholarship and activism nurtured subsequent social movements by joining the history of indigenous resistance and anarchist struggles against both bureaucratic trade unionism and the erasure of ethnic majorities from the memory of the neocolonial state.

Dangl's oversight is not new. A long Marxist and liberal historiographic tradition dismissive of anarchists affected the erasure of their polysemic expressions and radical credentials. Eric Hobsbawm famously described Spanish anarchism in Andalusia as a spontaneous, millenarian peasant movement guided by irrational and theoretical primitive representations of social change, unable to grasp the complexities of the modern, industrialising world.[7] George Woodcock's classical history of anarchism, published shortly after Hobsbawm's *Primitive Rebels*, likewise described its appeal to 'evangelically minded people', and 'intellectuals and artists (who) could [...] accept it as a kind of working myth around which their own fantasies and speculation might crystallize'.[8] From these beginnings of the movement's historiography, a vast literature has since disqualified such generalisations. In Italy, Spain and France, from which many of the American continent's early anarchist leaders hailed, historians have shown that during the early decades of the twentieth century anarchists were coordinated locally and regionally through decentralised networks linking rural localities and urban neighbourhoods to each other across borders. They fuelled, through their traditions, an anti-statist subculture of artisan, peasant and working-class resistance that permeated other strands of socialist movements, in their countries and all over the world.[9] Benedict Anderson estimated that anarchists generally spread more rapidly in heavily rural societies than in more industrialised ones, and were less contemptuous of peasantries and rural workers than many of their Marxist rivals.[10] A path breaking volume edited

by Lucien Van der Walt and Steven Hirsch highlighted the vast and variegated influence of anarchism on peripheral and semi-industrialised areas throughout the colonial and post-colonial worlds, where they developed 'supranational connections and multidirectional flows [...] often built upon migratory diasporas [...]'.[11]

Latin American expressions of anarchism were diverse and regionally influential, and represented far more than a late-coming or peripheral strand of this transnational movement;[12] in 1929 Max Nettlau estimated that 'in no other place, with the exception of Spain, have anarchist ideas been as much in the forefront of movements as in South America'.[13] For Carlos Rama and Ángel Capelletti, Latin American anarchism 'produced, from the point of view of organization and praxis, forms that were unknown in Europe'.[14] The apprenticeship and exercise of freedom through direct action and the weaving of networks of communication, linking workers' movements, women's collectives, ethnic societies, circles of artists and intellectuals, engendered specific forms of social interaction, class identification and representation of identities. These took root in the experience of everyday anarchist militancy, of its shared stigmatisation with popular movements and the repression they both invited, of its support of direct action and autonomy from the state; notwithstanding the mostly clandestine organisations' frequent doctrinal 'orthodoxy' or their inability to endure over time. As was also the case in Europe, Asia and elsewhere, the sources of anarchism's support, its internal contradictions, its responses to local challenges and the transformations of society differed from one region to another, as did their degree of cooperation and convergence with other movements.[15] Thus, it did not seem entirely illogical for Latin America's most influential anarchist organisation, the Argentine *Federación Obrera Regional Argentina* (FORA) to organise the *Asociación Continental Americana de Trabajadores* (ACAT) with the goal of federating movements throughout the hemisphere. During a conference held in Buenos Aires in 1929 in which Bolivian activists participated, it envisioned a regional and supra-national constellation of movements defined by the federalism and autonomy of its component parts.[16] Rama and Capelletti, authors of the first thorough survey of Latin American anarchism in 1990, asserted that while the movement began with European immigrants, it ultimately 'took root among indigenous workers much more deeply and extensively than Marxism [...]'.[17]

Inclined to resist the atavistic and race-centred representations of belonging promoted by their nationalist detractors, anarchists battled republican states born of colonial divisions and civil wars, which preceded the emergence of political communities generally defined as 'nations'; foundational ideologies or myths of cultural unity remained incipient or non-existent throughout the continent in the

late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[18] Resistance to models of territorial exclusion, neo-colonial economic structures, popular disenfranchisement and the repression of dissent was never the exclusive domain of anarchists, but they left their mark on its history. Their diverse, reactive and transnational movements ignored the constraints of formal political (parliamentary) participation or national borders. Persecuted and mobile, nested in movements of workers, artisans and intellectuals, active in cultural and educational fields, they rode powerful waves of transatlantic and regional migrations, articulating their tactics and interventions with locally invented forms and idioms of resistance that accompanied the delayed and tentative emergence of the 'people' as actors and subjects of political and social life in the twentieth century. The anarchist contribution to anti-authoritarian culture in Latin America left its imprint on societies where the movement was able to influence early labour movements, particularly in cases where they were able to overcome divisions between city and country and connect with regional movements, as well as with oppressed social and ethnic communities. This was the case in the landlocked nation of Bolivia, which has heretofore been virtually absent from existing overviews of Latin American anarchism in English. Jason Adams' essay *Non-Western Anarchisms: Rethinking the Global Context* made no mention of either Bolivia or Peru, Andean regions where arguably the best case can be made for the immersion of twentieth century anarchists in the struggles of indigenous societies against colonial structures of domination.[19]

Zulema Lehm Ardaya and Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui published the first comprehensive study of Bolivian anarchism, an outgrowth of their work in the THOA in the 1980s.[20] In more extensively documented experiences elsewhere in Latin America, port cities generated hubs of transnational anarchism with the strong input of European immigrants and exiles. In land-locked Bolivia migrant workers or '*pampinos*' returning from northern Chile in the late 1910s and 1920s, many of them artisans who alternated between work in the mines and self-employment, disseminated anarchist literature and began organising 'circles' of study and propaganda alongside activists from neighbouring Argentina. The *La Antorcha* movement in particular, founded by Luis Cusicanqui, Jacinto Centellas and Domitila Pareja in 1923, worked closely with anarchists from Argentina such as Tomás Soria, Armando Triviño and Antonio Fournakis. The latter, an organiser in Buenos Aires of an *Unión Anarquista Balkánica Sud-Americana* which explicitly aimed to abolish national borders and federate anarchist groups throughout the continent, travelled from La Quiaca to La Paz on foot in 1927 and subsequently organised a campaign to finance *La Antorcha*'s newspaper, *La Tea*, from the Argentine city of Córdoba. Anarchists had organised in the border city of

Turpiza as early as 1906. Between 1912 and 1918, Bolivian artisans affiliated with the *Federación Obrera Internacional* (FOI) formed trade unions out of mutual aid societies, some of them with anarchist leanings. Its successor, the *Federación Obrera del Trabano* (FOT), within which anarchist and socialist tendencies initially coexisted, launched the first modern Bolivian trade-union movement, the Oruro section of which was led by anarchists, and would later become a powerful force in the national movement. Its leaders Jorge and Gabriel Moisés had belonged to the International Workers of the World (IWW) in Chile, and Luis Gallardo to the Argentine FORA.[21]

From the onset, anarchism in Bolivia was thus a transnational Andean movement rooted in artisanal trades and spearheaded by migrant workers whose cultural, educational and social activism reflected a mosaic of influences from older organisations in neighbouring countries. International solidarity campaigns for the liberation of Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti in the United States and Simón Radowitsky in Argentina occurred throughout Bolivia in this period, as a means of galvanising support for anarchist cultural and trade union entities. They were primarily led by the *Federación Obrera Libertaria* (FOL), created in 1927 in La Paz at the same time as its most active autonomous member union, the women's *Sindicato Femenino de Oficios Varios* (SFOV) founded by Rosa Rodríguez de Calderón, Susana Rada, Felipa Aquize and Catalina Mendoza. The FOL established a workers' university, promoted direct democracy and adopted a flexible organisational structure that helped it adapt to the travails of constant state repression. In its first year Bolvian anarchists participated alongside socialists in a workers' convention that adopted, under their influence, an apolitical stance for the labour movement, and resolutions supporting women's and indigenous rights; and in 1929 the SFOV challenged the reformist agenda of the National Convention of Women, advocating for plebeian and working-class women from an anti-statist perspective.[22]

As early as 1924, the movement entered into contact with Aymara organisations engaged in mass mobilisations against the expropriation of their lands, which would result in durable alliances between indigenous and anarchist leaders. Rómulo Chumacero was a founder in 1922 of the Francico Ferrer School in Sucre, and an early organiser of anarchist networks in support of the land claims of a network of *caciques apoderados* (indigenous leaders) in Potosí and Sucre. These networks resulted in the participation of indigenous leaders in the Third Workers' Congress of 1927, and subsequent anarchist participation in the indigenous Chayanta rebellion that same year.[23] In 1930, the recently created anarchist *Federación Obrera del Trabajo de Oruro* (FOTO) led by Gabriel Moisés, Luis Salvatierra and Luis

Gallardo contributed to the popular movement that precipitated the overthrow of the liberal government of Hernando Siles. A short-lived effort was made by anarchists in Oruro, Cochabamba and La Paz to federate the movement along the lines of the Argentine FORA. While this effort was interrupted by the coup, anarchists throughout Bolivia were sufficiently strong to dominate the August 1930 Workers' Convention in Oruro. They resolved to join the ACAT in Buenos Aires and to form departmental workers' federations within the *Confederación Obrera Regional de Bolivia* (CORB) from which they fought conscription into the Chaco War and a governmental Social Defense Law aimed at cracking down on popular and labour organisations.[24] During these early years, Bolivian anarchists cooperated extensively with autonomous indigenous and communal movements, a trend which continued following the First Indigenous Congress in 1945. In 1946, anarchists stepped up their organisation in the countryside, spearheading the creation of a *Sindicato de Campesinos* (SC) which joined the FOL in 1947 in the midst of a wave of anarchist-supported regional indigenous uprisings in La Paz, Oruro, Cochabamba, Sucre, Potosí and Tarija.[25] The indigenous-led *Federación Agraria Departamental* (FAD) worked in close alliance with the FOL during this period. Kevin Young, who studied this movement's advocacy for unionisation rights, the abolition of forced labour, popular education, women's emancipation, and urban-rural cooperation among workers, has underscored the power of its federative structure to create autonomous and self-organised collectivities in the provinces of Los Andes and Pacajes, where large *haciendas* (rural estates) prevailed.[26]

The Bolivian experience is therefore a distinctly revealing case from which to evaluate the engagement of Latin American anarchists with the indigenous majorities in the transnational Andean space where they lived. Steven Hirsch contends that early twentieth-century anarchists in nearby Peru, far from dismissing indigenous societies or ignoring their cultural diversity, incorporated anti-racism, acknowledged indigenous traditions and languages, and supported their agency by advocating autonomous spaces and intercultural solidarity, most notably in the rural highlands of the south of Puno, Cuzco and Arequipa.[27] Anarcho-syndicalists in the cities of Lima and Callao also defended the interests of women and of indigenous organisation in the countryside. They were not 'pre-political' and divorced from Peruvian popular culture, as Marxist intellectual José Carlos Mariátegui (who was indebted to them) claimed in his later years.[28] Nor were they 'millenarian' in their idealisation of pre-Columbian Inca traditions, as Wilfredo Kápsoli argued in his seminal *Allus del Sol*.[29] Rather, these movements translated anarchist principles into a language of class informed by the lived ethnic and labour configurations of artisans, miners, and *braceros* (rural workers). They were led by such 'popular

intellectuals' as the mulatto stevedore Julio Reynaga Matute, founder of the *Liga de Artesanos y Obreros del Perú* in 1898; and *mestizo* carpenter and printer Manuel Uchofen Patazca, who founded the newspapers *La Protesta Libre* (1906-1909) and *La Abeja* (1909-1922). Some anarchists, such as the intellectual Gilseria Tassara, expressed, in the wake of the abstract theoretical anarchist *indigenismo* of Manuel González Prada, a belief in the 'civilizing' impetus of European libertarian ideals. Others, notably B.S. Carrión and Manuel Carraciolo-Lévano, later translated their militant relations with indigenous organisations into a critique of the doctrine's universalist precepts, in what Gerardo Leibner calls a 'process of Andeanization of anarchism'.[30] In Peru anarchist ideas circulated across the Andes from Buenos Aires, aided by the presence of European (especially Italian) activists from Argentina and Chile,[31] and in La Paz from northern Chile via the Bolivian *altiplano* in the second decade of the twentieth century. There is evidence of transnational solidarities between the two nations and throughout the region. The Peruvian and Chilean movements were influenced early in the century by the Italian anarchist activist from Argentina Inocencio Pellegrini Lambardozzi, who was expelled from Mendoza under the Residency Law of 1902. Bolivian and Peruvian workers laboured in the nitrate mines of Antofagasta and Tarapacá in northern Chile, many of them returning to their home countries as seasoned anarchist activists (especially in Bolivia); and in Arequipa, Peru, Bolivian textile worker Manuel Rodas was deported after playing a prominent role in anarchist labour mobilisations between 1916 and 1922. Peruvian anarchist Paulino Aguilar, a one-time secretary of the predominantly indigenous *Féderación indígena obrera regional peruana* (FIORP), was deported to Bolivia where he became involved in the Bolivian FOL.[32] Such connections were common throughout Latin America. José Aricó defined the typical Latin American anarchist 'mobile agitator' as 'able to swim in the current of proletarian struggles, moving from one end to another of country or even the continent, possessing a sharp intuition as to where the next latest conflict would break out, not recognizing national borders [...]'.[33]

Even in such a predominantly European-influenced arena as Argentina itself, a gateway of immigration and of anarchist organisation throughout South America, the anarchist leader Emilio López Arango would define internationalism as the opposite of the uncritical, mimetic and Eurocentric cosmopolitanism often ascribed to the movement. He advocated not only the inclusion of rural workers and peasants, representatives of the 'genuine physiognomy of American peoples', but also the 'elevation of the *g*aucho (*mestizo* transfrontiersman) and the Indian' by anarchist movements.[34] The cult of nationalism and heroes of the fatherland, López Arango argued in the 1920s, is a product of 'stupid pride'. The ruling classes,

he wrote, are themselves 'ashamed of their humble origins, of the Indian or African blood that runs through their veins; (they) even despise the native language, the habits and customs of the native-born, anything that might identify them with the *terroir* (*la terruña*, or the heartland)'.[35] Horacio Badaraco, founder of *La Antorcha* in Buenos Aires with long-time FORA activist Rodolfo González Pacheco, wrote in 1932 that Argentines were a 'people nourished by many streams: Indians, Blacks, *gauchos* and immigrants endowed with knowledge in the noblest sense of the word, armed over the years with creativity from below, their own means of expression, democratic and combative memory [...]'. For him indigenous cultures 'remain alive in so many parts of our land, and are present in the struggles and the dreams that we share as libertarians [...]'.[36] Anarchists of Badaraco's *Antorchista* movement in the 1920s were notably anti-colonial and anti-imperialist in their outlook, developing contacts and correspondence with the movements of Augusto César Sandino in Nicaragua, Emiliano Zapata in Mexico and Julio Antonio Mella in Cuba. José Carlos Mariátegui in Peru wrote him a personal letter agreeing with the group's view that revolution was not the conquest of state power, but rather the real movement for changes in 'the way we produce, consume, feel, think and come to self-govern ourselves'.[37]

Piotr Kropotkin wrote in 1899: '(T)he more internationalist a man becomes, the greater will be his regard for the local characteristics of the international family, the more he will seek to develop local, individual characteristics'.[38] This principle, theorised in the anarchist concept of federalism, would, Pierre-Joseph Proudhon argued, preserve the reciprocal freedom of local, autonomous social forces to articulate their own visions of libertarian mutualism and egalitarianism without necessarily pursuing a synthesis or fusion of their plural traditions and forms of organisation.[39] Rudolph Rocker, whose writings on anarcho-syndicalism were influential in Latin America, stated that 'in every country there are special conditions which are intimately inter-grown with its historical development, its traditions, and its peculiar psychological assumptions', adding that federalism 'takes these important matters into account and does not insist on a uniformity that does violence to free thought [...]'.[40] It is bearing this principle in mind that Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui speaks of 'affinities' and 'mutual fertilization' between the 'basically anti-colonial' idioms of itinerant anarchists on the one hand, and Bolivian Aymara, Quechua, Guaraní and other peoples on the other. These groups' inheritance of struggles for land and equality infused urban-based unions and associations with a language of their own that resonated among anarchist men and women. Shared visions of struggle, autonomy, domination and oppression enabled an anarchist practice with roots in older forms of rural community and new experi-

ences of urban everyday life.[41] The writings of Bolivian anarchist Luis Cusicanqui reveal that he interpreted events in the 1920s through the lens of a 'long' memory of indigenous history, activated by direct contacts between anarchist leaders and indigenous authorities. These stories wove ancestral stories of dispossession and loss into appeals of cooperation with oppressed 'poor *mestizos*' who shared with them a common enemy. Their messages of autonomy and federalism, translated by anarchist activists into an anti-colonial worldview, in turn functioned as a catalyst for social protest and organised coexistence.[42]

> For Luis Cusicanqui, anarchist and Indian, the desired emancipation would not be embodied by a unique focal point or in a strict program. It would stem from the ordinary and extraordinary actions of concrete collectives, in the joint action of workers and manual laborers – indigenous artisans and farmers – for whom anarchism would be the most fitting expression of universality. It is a libertarian and indigenous philosophy that, decades afterward, would find expression in the slogan launched by the Zapatista movement of Chiapas in Mexico: 'one world in which many worlds fit'.[43]

Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui's original contribution to the discussion of women and gender in Latin American anarchism is densely rooted in her historical and experiential assessment of indigeneity. Carlos Taibó's discussion of contemporary anarcho-feminism, which is critical of the movement's classical inheritance, points out that the foundational relation between colonialism, patriarchy, poverty and marginalisation resulted in the emergence of internalised hierarchical expressions of systemic and symbolic violence against women within indigenous communities themselves. Thus, he argues, a feminist practice within anarchism challenging the interrelatedness of colonialism and patriarchy, as well as the state that sustains them, can no more afford to sidestep a critique of the communal institutions of indigeneity than of the masculinist traditions of organised labour.[44] On this question, Taibó joins Elizabeth Quay Hutchison, who analysed the marginalisation of women and their subordination to men in the Chilean anarchist movement's approach to female sexuality, love, family, work and militancy, in warning against dismissing outright the power of universalist anarchist appeals for equality and against authority to foster women's participation and cooperative movements.[45] In Mexico for example, Juana Belén Gutiérrez, founder in 1909 of the anarcho-syndicalist *Club Hijas de Anáhuac*, linked women's struggles to those of indigenous peoples and their legacy of anti-colonial as well as anti-capitalist resistance. Herself a descendant of *Caxcana* Indians, during the revolution she participated

in Emiliano Zapata's rebellion in Morelos, and later in Álvaro Obregón's literacy campaigns, joining the Secretary of Public Education José Vasconcelos' *Programa Educativo del Departamento de Educación y Cultura Indígena* in Jalisco and Zacatecas where she formed the indigenous *Consejo de los Caxcanes*. Her classic anti-clerical essay in defence of indigenous traditions, *¡Por la tierra y por la raza!*, published in 1924,[46] prefigures Rivera Cusicanqui's critique of the Bolivian left. She criticised the abstract universalism of Mexican revolutionary discourse on equality as a new form of conquest, and official patriotism as a usurpation of indigenous autonomy, denouncing Vaconcelos' rhetorical ambition of 'incorporating Indians into civilization'.[47] Recently, from a position of feminist dissent within contemporary Mexican anarchism, Guadalupe Rivera, founder of the *Ediciones La Social,* who like Rivera Cusicanqui is a student of past revolts and revolutions and reluctant participant in debates within university circles, echoed her Bolivian counterpart's interest in the ethical inheritance of anarchist traditions in *Apuntes para una ética libertaria* (2014).[48] In a subsequent essay, *¡Escucha Anarquista! Despensando el Anarquismo desde el Tercer Mundo* (2017), Rivera critically assessed, from an experiential and ethnographic perspective among communities and women with whom she worked in Michoacán, Chiapas, Oaxaca, Xochicuauhtla and Guerrero, the 'Western patriarchal rationalism' and 'ethnocentric chauvinism' of self-described contemporary anarchists. She described them as prone to the recitation of 'foundational' fathers of classical anarchism out of context: 'Imported from Europe, anarchism had an impact on workers' struggles in other countries. But never, never, has it been the other way around'.[49] Even when women played a protagonist role in anarchist movements, they remained, she argues, relegated to a supportive role; such was the case, for example, of María Talavera Broussé, the anarchist companion of Ricardo Flores Magón.[50] Rivera joins her Bolivian counterpart in insisting that the long, complex and creative history of indigenous insurrections and struggles for land and freedom preceded Mexican anarchism and continues to inform contemporary struggles for decolonisation and autonomy.[51]

In this context of ongoing revision and critique of the anarchist inheritance and its relevance to indigenous and women's contemporary struggles in Latin America, Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui's lifelong commitment to the narration and revival of both in Bolivia acquires relevance and urgency. For her, the Western 'civilizing' invention of citizenship in modern Bolivia has entailed a constant dismantling of the autonomy of rural and urban communities, linking feminist and anti-colonial praxis to larger questions of how anthropocentric domination and political authoritarianism could be undermined. She maintains that struggles against capitalist alienation have deep roots in local histories and idioms of

resistance, which at once informed and preceded the anarchist organisations of the 1920s that infused Bolivian anarchism with indigenous and women's voices, such as the *Sindicato Femenino de Oficios Varios* and the *Federación Obrera Femenina*.[52] In her study of anarcho-feminism in La Paz, Ivanna Margarucci, who like all scholars of Bolivian anarchism is heavily indebted to Rivera Cusicanqui's work, recounts how Petronilla Infante, Catalina Mendoza and other activists combined ritualistic demonstrations of anarchist martyrology with Catholic rites rooted in indigenous colonial traditions to mobilise *chola* market women against the institution of the Church. They created 'an ideological abyss' not just with European anarchists, but also between ethnicised working-class and mainstream white Bolivian feminism in the first half of the century.[53] Macarena Gómez-Barris writes that the contemporary Bolivian anarcha-indigenous feminist movement *Mujeres Creando*, founded in 1985 by Julieta Paredes, María Galindo and Mónica Mendoza, explicitly traces its heritage back to the anarchist women's movement of the 1920s. It 'asks anarchic feminisms to challenge indigenous traditions while asserting how indigenous cosmopolitics help decolonize and rearrange the meaning of liberal feminism. In other words, anarcho-Indigenous feminisms create new transfeminist models that are appropriate to local and regional conditions, linking back to a genealogy of radical dissent, but reaching toward utopic potential'.[54]

The '*chola*' inheritance – a vernacular Andean designation for '*mestizo/a*' understood as a hybrid identity based on cultural rather than biological crossings – is of paramount importance to understanding Bolivian anarchism and its relation to gender and indigeneity. Aníbal Quijano referred to '*cholificación*' as a process, initiated with Spanish colonialism, of blending Western urban idioms and lifestyles into the lives of indigenous peasantries without thoroughly eliminating traditional ones.[55] Huáscar Rodríguez García, building on Rivera Cusicanqui's work, argues that in the nineteenth century the plebeian '*populacho cholo*' was stigmatised by Andean oligarchies as provincial, volatile, sexually and socially transgressive, disorderly and racially deviant. In the early twentieth century, it became identified with urban artisan intellectuals struggling to preserve their economic independence and cultural autonomy in the fledgling migrant city, as a liminal social position between traditional and modern cultures, which anarchists mobilised as a bridge between rural indigeneity and representations of working-class rebelliousness against the exclusionary racism of the liberal state.[56] He defines the Bolivian movement as '*anarquismo cholo*' precisely because of the unique protagonism of self-identified *chola* women in its configuration, notwithstanding the reluctance among many *cholo* men to embrace the term with all of its demeaning racist baggage.

Over time, these anarchist women explicitly acknowledged the role of colonial social relations in upholding the exploitation and discrimination of indigenous peoples, and popularised the identification of plebeian sectors of the urban working class with their discourses and practices.[57] Rodríguez García documents the leadership of the *Federación Obrera Femenina* and its over one hundred unions of seamstresses, florists, culinary workers, cigar makers, etc., in fostering autonomous women's activism and the mobilisation of gender-specific demands, and linking them to the larger anarchist labour movement from the 1920s to the 1940s. Ivanna Margarucci notes that when they opposed patriarchal domination, domestic violence, and the sexual division of labour within the family, they often did so not just as labour activists, but also as independent female heads of households.[58] 'This world of *cholas* and urban artisans', Rivera Cusicanqui wrote, '[...] recovered a certain Andean presence in form and gesture [...] *Cholaje* displays elements that are both plebeian and Andean, expressing a long corporeal memory of the occupation of urban spaces through trade, manufacturing and various services, particularly domestic ones, in a vast internal market with origins in colonial times'.[59] Having contributed decisively to the historical awareness of this unique inheritance, she calls upon present-day anarchists and feminists to question their engagement with gender and indigeneity. She notes that while urban domestic workers suffer discriminations as 'indigenous' women employed by '*misti*' (white) elites, they are frequently designated as '*mestizas*' due to their liminal '*chola*' status as migrant labourers. Thus, they are denied access to formal indigenous rights defined in territorial and multicultural terms by the Bolivian state.[60]

This raises the problematic nature of the term 'indigenous' itself, not just in the understanding of Latin American anarchist movements historically, but for students of Andean society in general. It points to the need for a more nuanced understanding of how racialised identities are defined in society, and the ways in which they are deployed discursively by revolutionary movements. In twentieth century Bolivia, as waves of rural migrants descended upon cities and became incorporated into 'de-indianization' schemes of ruling elites, '*cholificación*', a process of racialisation designating the urban plebe as the target of social control and civilising missions, provided anarchists with a language of resistance through which 'indigenous' identities and struggles could be reclaimed. However, the state and nationalist elites did not allow *cholos*, who were one generation away from being '*ch'utas*' or Indians, to retain their indigeneity as they entered the working and middle classes, particularly in the wake of the Chaco War and the 1952 nationalist revolution. The promotion of '*mestizaje*' was aimed at eliminating traditional forms of communalism and authority by separating urban workers from their ties to rural society. In

response, Waskar Ari argues, *cholos* adopted a dress code and fostered bilingualism as signifiers of their belonging to the 'republic of Indians' and resisting cooptation by white society.[61] Rivera Cusicanqui rejects discourses of '*mestizaje*'; however – and this is relevant to her assessment of the fluidity and complementarity of anarchist and 'indigenous' idioms of resistance – she also nuances the reification of 'indigenous' as an immemorial expression of atavistic retentions, or as a signifier of backward-looking, 'millenarian' representations of collective belonging.

The Andean region prior to European conquest in the early 1530s formed a vast multiethnic state known as Tawantinsuyu, where the present-day Aymara of Bolivia were one of many peoples, and not the ruling power – indeed, no such overarching category as 'Indian' existed. It was divided into five *audiencias* (Charcas, Lima, Quito, Cuzco, and Buenos Aires) and the captaincy general of Chile under the umbrella of the Spanish vice-royalty of Peru. During the wars of independence in the nineteenth century, this territory was again carved into six new states, three of which (Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia) contained within their borders the majority of Aymara and Quechua-speaking peoples. National divisions, however, were not the most significant. In the late seventeenth century the '*Recopilación de las Leyes de Indias*' gave birth to a jurisdictional division between two physically segregated 'republics' – one of Spaniards and one of Indians – which, even though it was designed to preserve and exploit the reproduction of a compliant labour force, anchored in indigenous memory the horizon of self-governance. A distinct, cohesive Aymara identity as we know it in Bolivia today, however, has 'modern' origins in late eighteenth century rebellions – the best known led by Túpac Amaru and Túpac Katari – during which the quest for '*pachakuti*', or the reinvention of a multiethnic indigenous space of sovereignty, reciprocity and historical lineage outside of colonialism, was popularised. It merged in opposition to the dispossession of indigenous lands and authority by centralising Bourbon colonial reforms, and later to the territorial and racial boundaries of modern Andean republicanism following the creation of independent states in 1810-1825.[62] According to Roberto Choque Canqui, for four decades following 1825 *ayllus* (indigenous communities, which comprised two-thirds of Bolivian territory) did not undergo significant transformations in their socio-economic and cultural organisation. '*Gamonales*' (large landowners) regarded indigenous populations as cheap labour and the state used them as a source of taxation. The violent extermination of the Indian 'race' became an aspiration of Bolivian ruling classes in the second half of the nineteenth century after the promulgation in 1874 of a law expropriating their lands.[63] The growing articulation of Bolivia with the world market signalled the domination of merchants in La Paz over the highlands. There the expansion of the

latifundios or large export-oriented estates put pressure on communal *ayllus* and culminated in the civil war of 1898-1899, as well as a rebellion led by the Aymara *cacique* Pablo Zárate Willka against the ascendant liberal order, in demand of a separate indigenous state. Its defeat resulted in efforts by Aymara leaders known as '*caciques apoderados*' to seek urban allies within Bolivia in their struggle for the preservation of communal authority. It was an extended political struggle to define indigeneity as an oppressed identity within the modern nation that exploded into violent uprisings in 1918, 1921, 1927 and 1930-31, and later in 1947 following the First Indigenous Congress of La Paz in 1945.[64] Bolivian anarchists in the province of Sucre first connected with the leaders of the 1927 rebellion in Chayanta, recognising the 'indigenous question' and demands for the restoration of communal lands, rural schools and local autonomy. In the context of ongoing mobilisations of workers in La Paz and El Alto, Max Nettlau reported that during this period one group began translating classical anarchist texts into Quechua and Aymara languages.[65]

In 1929, Luis Cusicanqui, after meeting with the legendary *cacique* Santos Marka T'ula, drafted a widely circulated manifesto entitled '*La Voz del campesino*'. A mechanic who spoke Aymara and sometimes signed his articles with the pseudonym '*Indio Aymara*', Cusicanqui had, like many Bolivian anarchists, worked in Iquique, Chile, where he was acquainted with militant unionism and the works of Bakunin, Reclus and Tolstoy. In Bolivia, he then became a founding member of the *Centro Obrero Libertario* and later (with Domitila Pareja) the group *La Antorcha*, as well as general secretary (in 1940) of the FOL, to which he belonged from 1927 onward.[66] Like many Bolivian anarchists he was a self-educated member of the *cholo* urban working class in the model of Steven Hirsch's 'popular intellectuals', who deployed a language described by Rivera Cusicanqui as the 'twisting crosshatch of *Castimillano* (Aymara-inflected Spanish), an intercultural *lingua franca* that permitted the anarchists to adapt and re-create libertarian and indigenous metaphors through a dense testimonial fabric'.[67] She calls Luis Cusicanqui a '*Ch'ixi*' (see below), 'an Indian spotted with white, transculturated in an agonizing, ambivalent and unruly manner'. *Ch'ixi* framed the social revolution as an 'anticipatory consciousness' of '*nanaka*' (or 'we') – a revolutionary subject that envisioned bridges (rather than unity in the sense of 'class') between the future and the past. It linked centuries of struggle against the minoritarian *misti* or *q'ara* (white) élite to the grievances of organised artisans and the urban poor in the years leading up to the Chaco War. Rivera Cusicanqui's analysis of her distant relative's prose notes that the egalitarian and anti-statist doctrine laid out in the manifesto does not idealize the pre-Columbian legacy, which was far from devoid of hierarchies and state struc-

tures. Rather, it denounces the ways in which 'civilization' as constructed by the nineteenth-century republican state confined indigenous peoples to 'degradation, disdain, and contempt', to perpetual dispossession and murder 'as beasts of burden and nothing more', corrupting in 'illegitimate, criminal and cynical' form the claims of the 'civilizing mission'. She continues: 'Here we see a new overlap between anarchist doctrine and the experience of Aymara communities: a vision of the law as a fictional and deceitful discourse, of judicial power as a tentacle of the state, and of official language as a duplicitous and immoral plot. This melds the doctrinaire notion of the existence of a moral law embodied by individual freedom with the action of the Aymara *caciques apoderados* movement, which also approached the linguistic and ethical contradictions of colonialism as a battle against an other who is "*pa chuyama*" or two-faced'.[68]

This analysis epitomises Rivera Cusicanqui's own approach to political intervention and scholarship. It is timeless in its range of subjects, ethical in its philosophy, mindful of a 'logic of *quipnayra*, an indigenous way of perceiving time and expressing it in writing'. And, most importantly, it is directed not at 'raising consciousness' among indigenous majorities who have their own forms of authority, agency and internal struggles for equality, but at their necessary allies: anarchists or artisans like Cusicanqui himself, 'those more westernized' who may be tempted to consider 'the Indian as an impediment to social progress'.[69] The manifesto proposed a 'universal' subject of decolonised human beings, 'equal in their rights as workers and free to construct their own destiny' trough a 'federative system respecting the independence and autonomy of every last village and citizen, and free expression of thought [...]'.[70] At the time of its writing elites routinely designated indigenous peoples and the labouring poor in general as 'savage' and prone to rebellion. Efforts by the state to promote their education intentionally confined them to their 'natural environment' of rural and manual labour through specialised schooling aimed at preserving 'Indianness' rather than integrating them as citizens. The 1919 'Statute of Education of the Indigenous Race' was a paternalist effort to modernise the skills afforded to them without empowering them with knowledge and tools to assimilate fully into Bolivian republican society as equals. The state-driven 'national regeneration' of what it called the 'sick fatherland' aimed to whiten and westernise indigenous elites without transforming the underlying economic and social structures of the racialised order. It brought visibility to the oppression of the 'Indian' and framed its cultural difference in essentialist and immemorial terms. For Françoise Martinez it prefigured the impending 'encounter' between indigenous and white Bolivians in the trenches of the Chaco War, which catapulted nationalism to the forefront of political discourse. It also foreshadowed discus-

sions of 'unity in diversity' framed by the 'multicultural' educational reform of the Gonzalo Sánchez de Losada presidency in 1994, and its 'multinational' reformulation by Evo Morales's socialist government in the first two decades of the following century.[71] Rivera Cusicanqui's evaluation of the Bolivian anarchist project in the 1920s is not just another assessment of the ability of advocates of a 'European ideology' to translate their message and practice into a language accessible to the indigenous masses. This theme continues to dominate anarchist studies in Latin America (and frames the critique of the movement articulated by Guadalupe Rivera in Mexico, as well as historians and 'decolonial' theorists in the academy of the Global North). What she proposes is a revision of the terms in which the 'indigenous' question writ large is habitually framed by intellectuals and the contemporary Bolivian state.

She sees the modern invention of the 'Indian' as the outcome of an ongoing colonial restructuring, homogenisation and fragmentation of the plural ethnic identities that constituted the Andean state of Tawantinsuyu. A 'motley society' ('*sociedad abigarrada*', a term she borrows from René Zavaleta)[72] emerged from this history, generated by resistance to the violence of the state and ruling white/*mestizo* elites, which often took the form of a defence of colonial expressions of ethnic autonomy, and their imagined genealogy in pre-conquest Andean culture.[73] The conceptual use of the term '*abigarramiento*' avoids essentialising class, ethnicity, or the territorial state as fixed, totalising representations of economically determined or unchanging identities. It considers 'how ethnic and racial discourse serves to legitimate expropriation and exploitation (and) situates these factors as a necessary consideration for any emancipatory political practice' by preserving heterogeneity and resisting the unification of social totalities. In short, it invites an abandonment of the illusion that the 'motley and incongruous' outcomes of the juxtaposition of colonial and post-colonial inheritances and temporalities can be overcome by any kind of state or ideological-driven motivation to simplify 'identity' or overcome its aporias, whether through class/ethnic reductionism or the imagination of national unity.[74] Rivera Cusicanqui describes *mestizaje* as a masculinist and state-centred representation of cultural assimilation that offers an evolutionary path out of 'Indianness' (but not the reverse). Its decolonisation does not imply, as the 'plurinational' project of the movement led by Evo Morales would have it, 'spicing up and airbrushing a supposed 'Bolivian identity' with a few touches of 'Indian' to capitalise on the symbolic surplus value of Indianness in support of a capitalist project'.[75]

In her work, this translates into the use of a hybrid term that is at once incommensurable with '*mestizaje*' and more flexible than 'indigenous', and designates not

just a form of descriptive identity, but a cultural, social and political praxis: *ch'ixi*. The term gives its name to the collective to which she belongs in the Tembladerani neighbourhood of La Paz, and evokes, in her own words, a parallel with 'affinity groups' of the anarcho-communist tradition.[76] The idea of '*ch'ixi*' is an open-ended exploration and radicalisation of the subjectivities, ethics and historical representations of the indigenous and European-derived parts of the fabric of community. It is neither a claim of autochthony nor a rejection of the foreign, and certainly not a fusion or 'blending' of both, but rather a space of dialogue and creative tension between linguistic, cosmological and ethical perspectives on everyday life, work and protest from different repertoires of experience in a spirit of cooperation, affinity, individual freedom and mutual aid.

The *Colectivo Simbiosis Cultural* defined '*ch'ixi*' as follows in its 2011 'Manifesto':

> There is a *Ch'ixi* world, [...] something that is and is not at the same time, a heterogeneous gray, a motley mixture between black and white, which are contrary to each other and at the same time complementary. Our cities are formed and deformed into irreverent medleys which continuously strive to free themselves from what it means to be a city, a country or a society, even more so when (they) are designed to maintain status, where [...] the migrant feeling is an alien feeling, alien to those hierarchies [...] This is why we have decided to blend even more, to take this city and pervade it with these mixtures of alien and transformative senses [...] We declare ourselves *Ch'ixi* because we do not see ourselves as pigeonholed, because we want to escape from that necessity to be defined.[77]

Like the transnational anarchist imagination of an earlier era, it is a micropolitical site of engagement with the broader society, and resistance to its spatialisation by colonial empires and capitalist states, a vision of 'union and articulation not based on regions, municipalities, or nations, but basins, mountain ranges, hills, and forests, which all cross borders'.[78] Its relation to the reclaiming of the possibilities of uplift and empowerment embodied in the pejorative term '*cholaje*' – or urban migrant status combined with rural and highland connections – is conveyed in the memories of Bolivian anarchism. Rivera Cusicanqui documented, recorded, and disseminated them herself, in a spirit of collaboration and affinity within the *Taller de Historia Oral Andina* and a generation of scholar/activists over the past four decades. This is a compelling response to Guadalupe's Rivera's aforementioned admonition that anarchists recognise the centuries-old struggles of indigenous communities and competing twentieth-century discourses of social revolution

(an imperative also articulated by George Ciccariello-Maher in is contemporary critique of 'anarchist imperialism').[79] It is a reading of the Bolivian experience that also displaces the traditional naming of anarchism, and other expressions of revolutionary socialism, as 'Eurocentric' because they were first theorised outside of Latin America, and originally 'imported' (as their right-wing and nationalist enemies have always contended) by immigrants. Instead, it situates anarchist discourse and practice in the context of local social and cultural formations and sheds light on the inflections of the doctrine that contributed to the larger emergence of coded idioms of resistance and protest such as, in the case of Bolivia, *Indianismo* and its subsequent variations.

The 'twilight' of twentieth century Bolivian anarchism is associated with two momentous events: the Chaco War between Bolivia and Paraguay (1932-1935), during which over 50,000 people died, and the 1952 nationalist revolution led by the *Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario* (MNR). Anarchist anti-militarism was mobilised in 1932 by the *Federación obrera de trabajadores* of Oruro, unleashing a fierce campaign of police repression against its leaders as the military and landowners forcefully recruited soldiers throughout the province and the country.[80] The interethnic army mobilised by unprecedented campaigns for patriotism provoked, in Rivera Cusicanqui's words, a 'democracy of the trenches' in which seeds were planted for an enhanced nationalist consciousness among combatants. They drove the subsequent 'socialist' military government of David Toro (1936-1937) to nationalise Standard Oil, accused of contraband in favour of the enemy, to establish the country's first Ministry of Labor, and to decree the mandatory unionisation of all workers in the country, which also outlawed anarchist organisations.[81] In this context, the *Confederación Sindical de Trabajadores de Bolivia* (CSTB) was born, with the participation of dissident sectors of the anarchist FOL. New mass-based political parties emerged in the 1940s, all with connections in organised labour, such as the Trotskyist *Partido Obrero Revolucionario* (POR), the communist *Partido de la Izquierda Revolucionario* (PIR) and the MNR. Anarchism did not disappear from the scene, however, as it is often assumed in historical narratives of organised labour from the perspectives of Marxism and nationalism. Not only did anarchists spearhead the creation of the rural *Federación Agraria Departamental* (FAD), but the *Federación Obrera Femenina* (FOF), led by women who had been spared the slaughter of the war, became the most vital component of the militant anarchist FOL until 1946. Such organisations as the florists' *Union Femenina de Floristas* and the migrant women's *Sindicato de Viajeras del Altiplano*, which bought and sold goods on the Peruvian border, spread anarchist activism to urban *chola* market women and teachers against the arbitrariness and abuse of

state agencies, police and customs authorities, and also brought questions of the right to day care, divorce, gender equality and the dignity of women's work to the fore of the movement's demands. They participated in rural protests following the First Indigenous Congress of 1945 in La Paz, and incorporated women's demands into the platform of the FAD. Following mass indigenous uprisings in Ayopaya, Caquiaviri and Tananoca in 1947, where the FOL and FAD were both influential, the anarchist movement was violently repressed. When the state-sponsored *Confederación de Obreros Bolivianos* (COB) and *Confederación Sindical Única de Trabajadores Campesinos* (CSUTCB) were created by the MNR in the wake of the 1952 revolution, they absorbed and dismantled first the men's anarchist unions, then the women's ones, which lasted a bit longer.[82]

Thus two decades of federative networking and shared social activism between anarchists and indigenous associations culminated in the submerging of indigeneity into a class-based identity framework mediated by the state through bureaucratic client unions, nationalist in outlook, associated with the top-down modernising labour, agrarian and educational reforms of the government. In the 1960s and the 1970s, however, many labour activists and Aymara intellectuals incorporated for the first time into the political sphere began advocating for more indigenous-based claims, leading to the emergence of the *Katarista* movement in the late 1960s and early 1970s, authors of the *Tiwanaku Manifesto* in 1973 which declared indigenous peoples to be doubly oppressed by economic exploitation and cultural and political marginalisation. This movement, which Rivera Cusicanqui regards as the next most critical evolution in the history of popular protest in Bolivia following anarchism, produced leaders who would later lay the groundwork for government reforms claiming to address the legacy of internal colonialism through multiculturalism, such as Víctor Hugo Cárdenas, who would become the vice-president of Sánchez de Lozada in the 1990s, and Álvaro Garcia Linera, a one-time member of Aymara nationalist Felipe Quispe's guerrilla army who went on to become Evo Morales' vice-president in the 2000s. Rivera Cusicanqui sees the *Kataristas* as the product of a new generation of post-1952 workers, Aymara intellectuals and radicalised urban youth who, having rejected the assimilationist policies and bureaucratic trade-unionism of the nationalist state, as well as the corruption of political parties, established a continuity between the eighteenth-century movement of Túpac Katari, the nineteenth-century rebellion of Pablo Zárate Willka, indigenous and working-class uprisings of the first half of the twentieth century, and the new anti-colonial spirit of the 1960s.

Through anti-dictatorial resistance and a consistent demand for workers' empowerment and autonomy within the COB and CSUTCB of La Paz and

Oruro, and their anti-capitalist critique of the racialised inequalities that continued to plague Bolivia, the *Kataristas* articulated an ideologically flexible and culturally grounded critique of internal colonialism based on the 'long memory' of indigenous struggles and more recent failure of the assimilationist and homogenising agenda of the nationalist state, and the tendency of both its white minority elites and intellectuals of the 'creole' Marxist left to craft the 'Bolivian nation' in the image of Western progress.[83] Rivera Cusicanqui writes: 'The new ideological influence of *Katarista* interpellations regarding ethnicity is explained by their ability to capture the "unsaid", the silenced side of domination in Bolivia: the one that threatens the dignity of the person, the peasant or indigenous migrant, the urban working woman or man without schooling in cities, (all) condemned to a subaltern and diminished position, both in daily life and in practice'.[84] Faustino Reinaga, the most prolific ideologue of *Indianismo* in this period, an anti-Western movement opposed to the state-led policies or *mestizo*-written literatures of '*indigenismo*', was influenced by the Black Power movement in the United States, by Afro-Caribbean *négritude* and by the Franco-Martinican anti-colonial philosopher Franz Fanon. He strived to imagine the colonised subject as a radical alternative to the fragmented subjectivities and racialisation of regions through which '*campesino*' was associated with Indian, '*cholo*' with urbanised *mestizo*, Tupí-Guaraní peoples seen as outliers from remote forest Amazon regions, and Black Bolivians subsumed under the category of '*camba*' or lowland-dwelling Europeanized Indian as opposed to the '*colla*' or more 'Indianized' highland-dweller.[85] Referencing the power of the geographic and cultural Andean association with indigeneity, Xavier Albó studied the identification of African-descended migrants concentrated in the department of Sud Yungas not as Blacks but as 'the other Aymara'.[86] However, Reinaga defined identity not so much as a geographical or racial signifier but as a manifestation of political struggle against the colonial ideology of capitalism, and cultural rememoration of history as the invention of community by the oppressed: '*Indianidad*' was not an expression of multicultural folklore or millenarian autochthony, but of anti-colonial resistance based on a transformation of popular consciousness against internalised domination and the false option of a homogenous, *mestizo* 'Bolivian nation'.[87]

Paulo Drinot contends that in Peru, where racialised perceptions of society also conflated inequality and backwardness with non-white indigenous peoples, *mestizos*, Afro-Peruvian and Chinese minorities, the state developed a class-based language of cooptation of labour that implied overcoming rather than preserving indigeneity or promoting multiculturalism as a condition of modernisation;[88] in Bolivia, this effort broke down in the wake of the 1952 revolution.

Rivera Cusicanqui's dialogue with Reinaga and her extensive commentary on the *Kataristas* is not just a critique of these models of national populism and cultural assimilation, but also of the 'plurinational' discourse developed later by the Bolivian state, which claims their heritage but distorts its significance for understanding anti-colonial resistance.[89] She is particularly contemptuous of the elites' ongoing efforts to portray '*culturas originarias*' as 'exotic minorities anchored in an immemorial and practically unchanging past', ignoring the actual history of indigenous peasantries 'with the perverse argument that in forging multiple streams of raggedy migrants, agricultural labourers and coca growers, they haven't known how to sufficiently preserve the "pure" and "original" features of their ancestral culture'.[90] Rather than understanding indigenous peoples as engaged in a dialogue with, and dispute over modernity, the dominant discourse, she argues, highlights only their essentialised alterity. This can be understood as a response to critics of anarchism who would like to have seen a more systematic and explicit language of indigeneity in the Latin American context. In Rivera Cusicanqui's work the decolonising critique of the Bolivian state, while grounded in an epistemology drawn from her understanding of the experience of Bolivian anarchism, also borrows from Fanon and Reinaga, in addition to the concept of 'internal colonialism' developed by Mexican sociologist Pablo González Casanova.[91] Through her testimonial research in the THOA, Rivera Cusicanqui built a bridge between the anti-colonial legacies of the *Kataristas* and voices of the pre-1952 period such as that of Eduardo Leandro Nino Quispe,[92] who, in her words, prefigured the generation of the 1960s in his libertarian vision of equality and intercultural conviviality through cooperation and coexistence among culturally plural communities engaged in anti-state resistance across regions and boundaries.[93]

The oral history workshop known as the THOA was created by Rivera Cusicanqui, Tomás Huanca, María Eugenia Choque Quispe and others in 1983, on the date of the commemoration of the death of Santos Marka T'ula, the aforementioned influential Aymara leader and activist during the 1920s and 1930s. Based in the *Universidad Mayor de San Andrés*, it became a unique source of testimonial documentation, radio and videograhic production on the history of popular struggles in Bolivia and their pedagogical dissemination. Rivera Cusicanqui's students were part of the first generation of Aymara intellectuals to reach the university; many of them were activists in indigenous mobilisations of the 1980s, through the *Movimiento Universitario Julián Apasa* (MUJA) and the Partido Indio de Bolivia founded by Faustino Reinaga. Countless activists, community leaders and scholars passed through the THOA as participants and teacher-learners. It was there that Rivera Cusicanqui developed her path breaking studies of anarchist history in

La Paz, and established a method for rebuilding '*comunalidades*' (communalities) inspired by their inheritance, 'in search for solutions to the crisis of organization and leadership that the country experienced with measures of neoliberal adjustment'.[94] The project gained access to the private and family archives of Petronilla Infante, José Orellana, Luis Cusicanqui and others, and associated, as full-fledged members of the research team, veterans of the anarchist *Federación Obera Local* such as José Clavijo, Max Mendoza, Juan de Dios Nieto, Teodoro Peñaloza and Lisandro Rodas, who not only recounted their experiences from the 1920s to the 1950s, but their life stories and experiences since; all of them contained in the seminal book edited by Cusicanqui and Zulema Lehm Ardaya, *Los artesanos libertarios y la ética del trabajo*, in 1988. The THOA produced numerous films, radio programs and accessible bilingual texts in its efforts to disseminate the knowledge obtained through oral histories. Subsequently, Rivera Cusicanqui, a pioneer of sociological studies of images and iconography, would incorporate the history of anarchist women's and indigenous *cholo* movements into an analysis of the *Album de la Revolución* produced by the revolutionary state in 1954. This collection of photographs exhibited the ways in which these subjects were stereotyped and their agency erased, illustrating long-term mechanisms of cultural and civilisational domination and their instrumentalisation by the nationalist project of subalternisation and control.[95]

From an epistemological standpoint the objective of the THOA was not just to document the past, but to overcome the asymmetric relationship between academics and left-wing militants, 'a "knowing subject" who essentially shared the world view of the dominant Western society, and an ethnic "other", whose identity was attributed from the outside, or forcibly and radically redefined to fit within the parameters of the perceived interests of the peasantry and the proletariat'. The conceptual and linguistic 'silence and untranslatability' to which the people studied were historically condemned, Rivera Cusicanqui argued, could only be broken by them.[96] In response to the extreme fragmentation of labour history and of the collective memories of resistance caused by decades of repression, clientelism and confiscation of power by the state, the workshop sought to establish a bilingual archive that would translate and continue efforts by ethnic and protest movements in the previous decade to generate vigorous anti-racist and non-dogmatic frameworks for understanding history within a participatory, egalitarian and ethical framework. Aymara intellectuals themselves solicited potential allies in this collective effort to reflexively evaluate not just explicit discourses of partisanship, affiliation and identity, but everyday experiences and subjectivies rendered invisible by *q'ara* (white) political theorisations. Testimonies recorded in the oral

history archive and audio-visual materials were subjected to discussion and criticism in public forums intended to foster inter-generational dialogue on the diverse historical rationalities that function to legitimise a variety of conflicting positions, on the role of myth and temporality in interpreting events of the past from the long perspective of colonialism and its manifestations in the present. At stake was the discovery of 'the complexity and richness of the modes of thought and visions of history generated by the actors themselves through their life experiences [...] Beyond the 'popularization of history', which reinforces the instrumental logics and ideological manipulations of the researcher, we seek to practice the dis-alienation and decolonization of history'.[97]

The activities of the THOA extended beyond scholarship, research and education into the field of community activism. One of its most notable achievements was to organise and promote, not on its own initiative but at the request of its leaders, the movement in the 1980s and 1990s to reconstitute the autonomous governance of Andean '*ayllus*'. These kinship-based, communally governed territories had historically been fragmented, dispersed and disempowered, but remained the core space of indigenous social and cultural practices rooted in nature and ancestry. When the government of Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada legally recognised the rights of indigenous peoples to territory and native forms of governance, the THOA assisted them through leadership workshops, archival documentation of colonial land titles and boundary surveys. It also established numerous regional associations, as well as the '*Primer Encuentro sobre Derechos de los Pueblos y Naciones Originarias*' in 1994 and the *Consejo de Ayllus y Markas de Qullasuyu* (CONAMAQ) a federation of *ayllus* from the La Paz, Oruro, Potosí, Cochabamba, and Chuquisaca in 1997. This movement exchanged, in collaboration with the THOA, experiences with transnational indigenous movements in neighbouring Andean countries.[98]

The experience of the THOA and its revelation of the history of Bolivian anarchism, as well as the community practices inspired by its inheritance in which the workshop engaged, continued to irrigate Rivera Cusicanqui's work with artisans, urban self-reliance groups, *qhatus* or indigenous markets, ecological and feminist groups, youth movements and campaigns against extractivism well after she left the university. In a 2014 interview with Bill Weinberg, she described her involvement in the *Colectivo Ch'ixi* in a language that recalls that of the anarchist movement before 1952:

> We are *mestizos*, but we have a strong Indian 'stain' in our souls. We are 'impure'. We are not 'pure' people. We have to recognize also that there is a European 'stain' in our bodies and in our subjectivities. The good part of that

> stain is the idea of freedom and individual rights. From the Indian part, we get the idea of community and of cycle, intimacy with the cycles of nature. However, we do recognize the value of individual freedoms and rights – sexual rights, the right to have a sexual identity that is different from the rest, or of abortion. All this comes from the best contributions of European civilization and the Enlightenment.

She calls this a 'dialectics without synthesis', a perpetual, fluid expression of contradictions and complementarities between cultures and world-views in which 'the margins become the center'. Her anarchism is not doctrinaire or missionary like the one denounced by Guadalupe Rivera in Mexico, but 'anarcho-*ch'ixi*': 'Our anarchism is not pure. It is "stained" with indigeneity. It is "stained" with feminism. It is "stained" with ecology. It is even "stained" with religiosity, with spirituality'. Also bringing to memory the transnational networks of the Bolivian anarchist experience, she inhabits the plurality of regions that constitute the Andean space and celebrates the 'diasporic Bolivianness' of the over nine million people – almost half of the population – who live outside of the country, in Argentina, Chile, Spain, and beyond. She identifies as Jewish, Aymara, Quechua and Basque, but rejects what she calls 'blood talk': 'I think identity is constructed by living in the present. I have taken my love of the Aymara to such an extreme because I discovered the healthier aspect of my European side through the Aymara recognition of otherness. It is the Aymara side that helped me to discover the good parts of my European heritage'.[99]

For Rivera Cusicanqui these intertwining and overlapping subjectivities must not only be acknowledged, but also radicalised in action, through affinity as the exercise of freedom. She famously wrote: 'There can be no discourse of decolonization, no theory of decolonization, without a decolonizing practice'.[100] The two – ideology and action – are not necessarily dichotomous. In the metaphorical language that she affections the Aymara have two words for 'thought', one describing interpretation and rational thinking ('*lup'iña*', from '*lupi*' or the light of the sun), and '*amuyt'aña*' or reflexive thinking and memory, which is embodied, nourished through feeling and interaction, weaving community and affinity into the rhythms of everyday life and collective action.[101] What I have attempted to convey is that Rivera Cusicanqui's abundant scholarly production and numerous activist interventions are not separate endeavours; they intentionally blur conceptual boundaries between our understanding of anarchist history and thought, and their implications for a decolonising practice in the present. Carlos Taibó contends that with its emphasis on autonomy, decentralisation, egalitarianism, internationalism, freedom and reciprocity, anarchism, in spite of its European

genealogy, language of progress and canon of universalistic epistemology (often enlisted to discredit the movement's value for a transformative engagement with 'non-Western' peoples and cultures) has always been uniquely equipped to intervene in critiques of modernity. It challenges the underlying structures of colonial domination. Yet histories of anarchist movements tend to conflate the absence of textual evidence that their writings theorised colonialism beyond the general denunciation of capitalist oppression, with an alleged inability to integrate 'indigenous' and other communities into their practices of protest and resistance. Citing historian Huáscar Rodríguez García and Rivera Cusicanqui herself, Taibó recognises what the Bolivian example illustrates: that while the critique of all socialist traditions born of the Enlightenment and subsequent revolutionary movements is imperative, one cannot assume a clear 'rupture' between modernist, Eurocentric anarchism in the first half of the century and anti-colonial movements in the second. Moments and places of encounter between communities and traditions, grounded in solidarity, affinity, mutual aid, the defence of organisational as well as cultural autonomy, proliferated in the Andes from the 1920s through the 1940s. They influenced subsequent decolonising movements and practices in a myriad of ways, notwithstanding the perenneality of colonial and state structures, patriarchal and ethnocidal patterns, orthodox Marxist and liberal multiculturalist teleologies, and Eurocentric epistemologies in the second half of the twentieth century.[102]

For Maia Ramnath, who is in agreement with Rivera Cusicanqui, the anarchist tradition is continuously unfolding not just as a corpus of writings and rhetorics of emancipation, but also 'a body of practices and performative acts that seek collective liberation in its most meaningful sense, by maximizing the conditions for autonomy and egalitarian social relationships'. It is one locally contextualised, historically specific component within a broader galaxy of movements. Some of them converge with its ethics and aspirations, and engage in vital arguments over the 'proper balance between a whole constellation of key pairs: freedom and equality, liberty and justice, the individual and the collective, the head and the heart, the verbal and the sensual, power relations and economic relations'.[103] The often unrecognised resonance between decolonisation and anarchism, their affinities rather than sameness, is reflected, for example, in Argentine decolonial theorist Enrique Dussel's critique of the fetishisation of institutions and embrace of the theoretical horizon of the dissolution of the state.[104] Rivera Cusicanqui's excavation of the memory and continuing relevance of Bolivian anarchism would seem to fall within that intellectual tradition, insurgent in contemporary Latin American scholarship. It places systematic racism at the centre of social critique and explicitly acknowledges the colonial, racialised dimensions of inequality that

have been occulted in the past by Western universalist formulations of identity and civic participation. Bolivian philosopher Juan Bautista Segalés writes that 'once the materiality of original cultures was destroyed, the colonizer could impose a culture of domination as if it were the only one possible to this day [...] Coloniality consists in believing that this reality is the only one the colonised has, that beyond it there is nothing'.[105] As has been evident throughout this essay, before denouncing anarchist activists' misrepresentation of indigeneity, it is necessary to problematise what that notion actually meant to the subjects and how we represent them, to comprehend the function and experience of racialisation in the ways in which languages of affinity and practices of alliance were performed. Anarchism's vitality and ability to self-critically transform itself is evident in the history of its many-faceted movements, in their 'tendency to erode certainties and destabilize foundations', to paraphrase Uri Gordon. He also reminds us, however, echoing both Guadalupe Rivera's cautionary warning against anarchist orthodoxy and Rivera Cusicanqui's caveat with respect to academic theory, that it is 'in certain cases marked by privilege and can become an oppressive tool or an unreflective hindrance to solidarity'.[106] Herein lies the consummate anarchist Rivera Cusicanqui's quarrel with 'post-colonial' and 'decolonial' critiques and her exile from the English-language academic canon. 'We indigenous were and are, above all, contemporary beings and peers, and in this dimension (*aka pacha*), we perform and display our own commitment to modernity'. Prefixes such as 'pre-' and 'post-' reflect a linear and teleological vision of history, unlike the 'anticipatory consciousness' of a 'past-future' contained in the present, which she ascribes to the indigenous concept of time. She deploys it throughout her dense tapestry of pioneering scholarship on the intertwining horizons of conquest, rebellion, republicanism, resistance and populism in Bolivia over five hundred years. Twentieth-century recolonisation 'made the reproduction of feudal and rentier modes of domination possible, modes based on the privileged ascriptions granted by the colonial center of power'. Similarly, she contends, post-modern and post-colonial posturing by the Andean intelligentsia, theorists of the geopolitics of knowledge, stems from 'the US academy and its followers'. They have built 'pyramidal structures of power and symbolic capital, baseless pyramids that vertically bind certain Latin American universities and form clientelist networks with indigenous and black intellectuals', providing 'theoretical support for racialized and exoticized multiculturalism in the academies'. It is, she concludes, a form of mimesis, sustained by the political economy of capitalism, which imposes its codes, neologisms and institutional authority on communities with their own subjectivities and idioms of resistance – precisely the charge often levelled against 'European' anarchists who entered into relationships with 'indigenous' peoples in

the Americas. 'Without paying attention to the internal dynamics of the subalterns', Rivera Cusicanqui argues, 'cooptations of this type neutralize. They capture the energy and availability of indigenous intellectuals – brothers and sisters who may be tempted to play the ventriloquist of a convoluted conceptualization that deprives them of their roots and their dialogues with the mobilized masses'.[107]

The challenge, then, for scholars and proponents of a prefigurative revolutionary practice who envision, as she does, a decolonisation of knowledge and action, is to narrate the histories of anarchist and other emancipatory movements not through the detached objectivity of a theoretical lens, or in drawing dichotomies between 'foreign' and 'indigenous', 'class' and 'ethnicity', 'anarchist' and 'non-anarchist', 'modern' and 'decolonial'. Rather, these histories should be conveyed in the same spirit of dialogue and convergence, mindful of diverse repertoires and experiences, that motivated Luis Cusicanqui, 'the most Aymara of the anarchists', to join hands with 'the irreverent *cacique*' Santos Marka T'ula[108] in 1929.

> (The) power of words reigns supreme once the cycle of collective catharsis has closed. Those gestures and messages are encoded as 'folklore', as a photo album or as 'ethnic identity', ornamental data that dot the nationalist, patriarchal and conservative rhetoric of the literate elites. As in an artist's nightmares, the *q'aras* shape the state and politics by supplanting the Indians. It is their insidious languages and literate formalities about living well ('*buen vivir*') that smear and degrade the potential horizons of this *pachakuti*. In these times of revolutionary 'normalization' and speeches that are not based on practices, I have been hungry to strike. Now that strikes (hunger strikes and others) are carried out to address the problems of narrowly sectoral interests or get away with breaking the rules of republican coexistence, I feel hunger for a strike, hunger for memory, and hunger for collective cultural action.[109]

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