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"*We are the seed from which Bolivia was born*": Indigenous politics and the environmental question in highland Bolivia, 1920-1990

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Figure 1. Map of Bolivia. Source: UN Geospatial Information Section
http://www.un.org/Depts/Cartographic/map/profile/bolivia.pdf

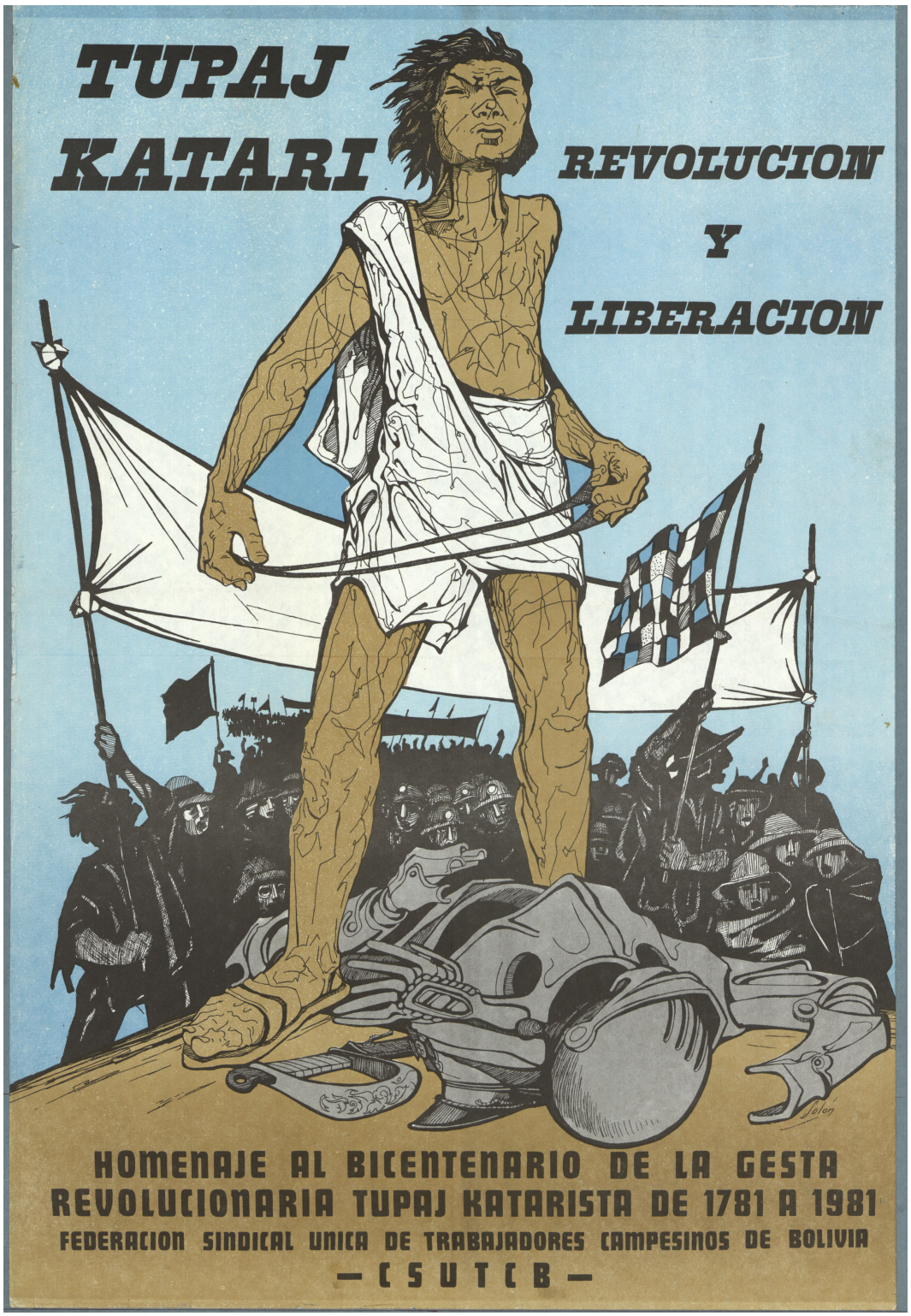

Figure 2. CSUTCB poster commemorating the bicentenary of the 1781 uprising. Source: Bolivia Social and Political Developments Collection, IISH (Amsterdam).

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List of Abbreviations

Central Obrera Boliviana, Bolivian Workers Central

CIDOB — Confederación de Pueblos Indígenas de Bolivia, Confederation of Indigenous Peoples of Bolivia

CIPCA Centro de Investigación y Promoción del Campesinado

CONAMAQ — Confederación Nacional de Ayllus y Markas del Qullasuyu, National Confederation of Ayllus and Markas of Qullasuyu

CSUTCB — Confederación Sindical Unica de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia, Unified Sindical Confederation of Peasant Workers of Bolivia

EGTK — Ejército Guerrillero Tupaj Katari, Tupaj Katari Guerrilla Army

MAS Movimiento al Socialismo, Movement toward Socialism

MNR Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario, Nationalist Revolutionary Movement

MRTK Movimiento Revolucionario Tupaj Katari, Revolutionary Movement Tupaj Katari

MRTK-L Movimiento Revolucionario Tupaj Katari – Liberación, Revolutionary Movement Tupaj Katari - Liberation

ORAT Ofensiva Roja de los Ayllus Tupakaristas, Red Offensive of Tupakatarista Ayllus

PMC Pacto Militar-Campesino, Military-Peasant Pact

POR — Partido Obrero Boliviano, Bolivian Workers' Party

THOA El Taller de Historia Oral Andina, Andean Oral History Workshop

TIPNIS Territorio Indígena y Parque Nacional-Isiboro Sécure, Isiboro Sécure Indigenous Territory and National Park

UDP - Unidad Democratico y Popular, Democratic and Popular Union

UMSA — Universidad Mayor de San Andrés, University of San Andrés

Glossary

Achachila: Aymara word denoting spirit, grandparents and ancestors.

Alcaldes Mayores Particulares (AMP): Term outlined by Waskar Ari (2014) in reference to the network of indigenous leaders who promoted 'Indian law' in the early twentieth century.

Altiplano: the high, dry plateau in Andean Peru and Bolivia, also known as the *puna*.

Apacheta/ apachita: Cairns; piles of stones which mark sacred, liminal spaces in the mountains.

Ayllu: Andean socio-territorial units based on kinship, comprising households grouped into communities which share social and economic relations of reciprocity.

Ayni: Andean pre-Columbian concept of reciprocal exchange

Cacique: Title of colonial-era origin for an Indigenous authority figure who acted as an intermediary between Spanish officials and Indian societies.

Cacique apoderado: Indigenous representatives which mobilised in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to lobby authorities on behalf of their communities.

Camba: a colloquial term for a person from the eastern lowland areas of Bolivia, particularly Santa Cruz.

Ch'ixi: Aymara concept of cultural mixture developed by Silvia Rivera (2012), conjuring the coexistence of multiple, overlapping, complementary social differences.

Colla/kolla: A colloquial, and in some usages, pejorative, term for a person from the western regions and highlands of Bolivia

Creole (*criollo*): Colonial era term denoting a person of Spanish descent born in Latin America. In the Republic era, it was used to refer to elites of predominantly Spanish descent.

Forastero: a colonial category denoting Indigenous people living outside their ayllus or original communities without guaranteed access to land.

Indianismo: Twentieth century ideology of Indigenous-led revolution, connected with *katarismo* (see below).

Indigenismo: A paternalistic cultural and political movement across Latin America in the early twentieth century which steered debates around Indigenous peoples, state and society.

Katarismo: Movement for Indigenous self-determination beginning in the late 1960s, deriving its name from the Aymara leader Tupaj Katari who led a rebellion against the Spanish in 1781.

Kuraka/curaca*:* the Quechua-language equivalent term for a cacique, see above.

Mallku: Quechua and Aymara word for condor, and a title denoting supreme authority. Felipe Quispe, former leader of the CSUTCB, was known as El Mallku.

Marka: a territory composed of many *ayllus.*

Mestizaje: assimilationist theory of racial mixture in Latin America, proposing racial homogenisation in order to transcend racial and cultural difference.

Mestizo: A person of mixed Indigenous and European heritage in Latin America

Mita/mita: A system of enforced Indian labour introduced under Spanish colonial rule, with origins in the Inca Empire.

Originario: Historical category denoting indigenous people living in an ayllu and subject to the authority of the kuraka. In contemporary usage, *pueblos originarios* refers to Indigenous peoples.

Pachamama: Andean sacred Mother Earth deity

Qillqiri: Aymara word meaning scribe, or one who writes.

Reducciones: Settlements created by Spanish colonial administrators and ecclesiastical authorities to enable the exercise of control over Indian communities.

Wak'a: Andean deity which take the form of stones

Willka: Prestigious title meaning sun in Aymara

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Abstract

This thesis asks what the natural world means to those who work and live in it, by surveying the rise of ecological consciousness and its connections with insurgent Indigenous-*campesino* politics in twentieth-century highland Bolivia. Despite the abundant literature on contemporary Indigenous movements in Latin America, the scholarship fails to address Indigenous perspectives on the more-than-human in historical perspective. This thesis examines the extent to which radical Indigenous politics in Bolivia repurposed the environment as a sphere of political contention and addresses the question as to why and how discourses on the other-than-human and the natural world become so important for Indigenous movements across the highlands in the twentieth century. In doing so, it builds on existing scholarship to centre understandings of the environment in histories of anti-colonial struggle and accommodates the non-human in historical approaches to Indigenous politics. Combining insights derived from decolonial theory and social anthropology, this thesis uses historical methods to trace the role and function of natural resources and ecology in Indigenous mobilisation for land rights and cultural integrity across the twentieth century. It is based on extensive archival research in Bolivia and the UK and draws on peasant union documents, political pamphlets, audio recordings and legal petitions. This thesis concludes that highland peasant-Indigenous politics in Bolivia shaped new understandings of the non-human as both a political actor and a political issue in twentieth century Bolivia. It reveals the ways in the environment and non-human emerged as a vehicle by which Indigenous movements made wider contestations against state, capital, and imperialism. The findings of this thesis therefore contribute to a burgeoning global scholarship on peasant movements, Indigeneity and the role of the other-than-human in anticolonial movements.

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And finally, an eternal thanks to Mary Arigho for her endless help and wisdom since the day I was born.

Chapter One: Introduction

"If you are not their slaves, you are rebels."

C.L.R James, The Black Jacobins, 1938

Mother Earth is a living, dynamic system formed by the indivisible community of all life systems and living beings, which are interrelated, interdependent, and complementary, sharing a common destiny….

Mother Earth is considered sacred in the worldviews of peasant indigenous peoples and nations.

Article Three, Law of the Rights of Mother Earth, Bolivia, 2012

In April 2010, Indigenous groups, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and officials from across the world assembled in the crisp sunshine of Cochabamba, a small city in Bolivia. Held at the behest of President Evo Morales, this World People's Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth would culminate in the announcement of a new global vision for humanity's relations with the natural world: the Universal Declaration for the Rights of Mother Earth. The preamble of the document explicitly connects the climate crisis with capitalism and colonial legacies, recognising 'that the capitalist system and all forms of depredation, exploitation, abuse and contamination have caused great destruction, degradation and disruption of Mother Earth, putting life as we know it today at risk through phenomena such as climate change'(2010: 1). Bolivia thus in the twenty-first century emerged as the vanguard of Global South struggles around climate change, Indigenous rights and anti-neoliberalism. This thesis traces the twentieth-century origins of this phenomenon, linking it with longer histories Indigenous-peasant led struggles for land rights and social liberation in

the Andes. This is a story which extends far beyond Bolivia. In the age of the Anthropocene, climate change and planetary collapse are the prevailing anxieties of the twenty first century in both Global North and South. However, as my research shows, ecology and the environment have been at the heart of struggles for land rights and self-determination by peasant-Indigenous movements in the Global South, long before the post-war environmental movements of the Global North recognised them as such. Looking at this historical period can fruitfully inform discussion of movements for climate justice in the twenty-first century. This project contributes to debates around the Anthropocene in Latin America by showing the varied ways Indigenous actors in Bolivia articulated claims to natural resources as part of an Indigenous politics of decolonisation. The findings of this thesis are therefore of relevance to scholars and activists working on global histories of climate change, anticolonial struggle and the other-than-human. If, as historian Dipesh Chakrabarty has contended (2021: ix), a history of the modern cannot be separated from histories of European powers' domination over the non-human, this thesis seeks to bring to the fore the important ways in which colonised peoples understood the non-human within their struggles for land, life and freedom.

Since the 'Indigenous awakening' of the 1990s across Latin America (see Albó, 1991; Postero and Zamosc, 2004; Brysk, 2000), there has been a plethora of studies devoted to Indigenous organising, ethnic politics and political transformations in Latin America. The ascendancy of political parties and social movements devoted to Indigenous concerns has led to new questions being asked about the relationship between Indigenous peoples and the state, as well as the ways in which indigeneity is constructed and experienced.

In addition, the rise of these Indigenous movements in the 1990s has been closely linked with an environmental agenda (e.g., Murray Li, 2004). The UN Declaration on the Rights of

Indigenous Peoples makes explicit the connection between Indigenous cultures and 'lands, territories and resources' for example (2007: 5). This is especially noticeable in Bolivia where a strong connection between international stances on climate change and the highly successful 'Indigenous politics' of ex-President Morales clearly exists. Bolivia thus offers a compelling case study for exploring this powerful nexus between Indigenous and environmental politics.

In the Andes, anthropologists have consistently argued that 'nature' – understood as comprising non-human beings including mountains, rivers and animals - is integral to Andean worldviews (e.g., Teijero, 2007; Allen 1988; Bastien 1978; Canessa, 2012). Moreover, there is no meaningful divide between human and non-human societies in many non-Western cultures (Descola, 1994). But in both academic literature and popular consciousness, this argument has a tendency to produce essentialised perceptions of Indigenous peoples as 'Wardens of the Jungle' (Descola, 2005b: 32). Few studies of Bolivia have attempted to trace back the genealogy of the 'Indigenous awakening' and its attendant environmentalist agenda prior to the 1990s. Scholars have neglected to historicise the evolving purpose and importance of 'nature', ecology and environment in these earlier years, and have failed to explore the crucial connections between Indigenous movements across the twentieth-century.

It is a major argument of this thesis that, within the political programmes of the historical protagonists I explore here, ecological questions were not abstracted from wider debates led by Indigenous and peasant protagonists around political economy and culture. This forces a departure from Eurocentric conceptualisations of environmentalism which, although encompassing a broad spectrum of ideas, has tended to rest on an assumed cleavage between 'green' and material politics. Through the struggles of highland Aymara movements in Bolivia between 1920 and 1990, I show that the natural world was framed both as 'political'

and as a political actor in itself. In applying insights drawn from social anthropology and environmental history, I intend to unsettle distinctions between the 'political as human' and 'nature as non-human', opening a space to incorporate the other-than-human within social histories of left-Indigenous struggles. As Chakrabarty argues, connecting human and non-human scales calls into question existing ways in which 'the political' as a category has been understood (2021: 8). It forces historians to contemplate how both human and non-human life are part of historical processes unfolding at local, national, and planetary scale. In the Andean case, there has been little attempt by historians to grapple with the question of other-than-human beings and nature *as* historical actors. These anthropological approaches could allow historians to accommodate non-humans within historical narratives as actors with agency. From a human-centred historical perspective, applying these insights serves to enrich the human stories under scrutiny by giving full scope to the plethora of relations with non-humans that mark the human life. Two questions I explore here, then, is it possible to accommodate the non-human in historical approaches to Indigenous politics in Bolivia? How might we reframe social histories to include both human and non-humans as actors?

Figure 3. Family harvesting, La Paz, c.1934-1969. From the American Geographical Society Library, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Libraries.

In this section I outline the key strands of literature informing my research project. I also identify key gaps in the literature and explain how my project addresses these. In the data chapters which follow, I elucidate in more detail how this literature informs the interpretation of my findings.

Explaining the rise of 'Ethnic' Parties

The focus of this research is the period 1920-1990 but much of the key literature informing approaches on Bolivian Indigenous social movements and the state takes the 1990s as its starting point. It is therefore important to dwell on these debates in the literature because they continue to inform wider approaches to the question of Indigenous politics, the state and capitalism in historical perspective. The 1990s saw the formation of new Indigenous political parties across Latin America amid a crisis of traditional political representation in the neoliberal era (Van Cott, 2008). The emblematic examples of the Pachakutik Movement of Plurinational Unity in Ecuador and the Movement Towards Socialism (*Movimiento al Socialismo,* MAS) in Bolivia, for example, both oriented themselves around demands for a plurinational state based on principles of participatory democracy and ethnic pluralism.

In Bolivia this development was greatly facilitated in the mid-1990s when President Gonzalo "Goni" Sánchez de Lozada ushered in a range of decentralising reforms which enabled new Indigenous electoral parties to form, including the 1994 Law of Popular Participation which granted greater rights of representation to Indigenous communities. Unlike the disparate *katarista* parties of the 1970s which I cover in Chapter Six, the MAS under Evo Morales was able to transform itself into a party with a broad, cross-sectoral popular support base. By

katarista parties, I am referring to the assemblage of political groups, intellectual projects and *campesino* (peasant) organisations of highland Bolivia which arose from the late 1960s as part of an anti-capitalist movement for Indigenous self-determination. The movement is the focus of Chapters Four and Five in this thesis. These major constitutional and political developments outlined above, combined with the upsurge in grassroots protest from the 1990s has been the focus of an extensive literature in political science and anthropological disciplines (see Yashar, 2005; Van Cott, 2005; 2008; Webber, 2011; Postero, 2007). Linking these works is a concern with the meanings of citizenship in post-dictatorship Latin American societies and the relationship between grassroots movements and state structures.

The political economy of natural resources: The Pink Tide years

The development of new ethnic parties coalesced with what has been labelled in English as the Pink Tide, or the centre-left turn in Latin America in the early 2000s which saw successive left wing regimes take power firstly with Hugo Chavez in Venezuela in 1998, followed by Brazil (2002), Argentina, (2002) Uruguay (2003), Bolivia (2005) and Ecuador (2006). In Bolivia, Evo Morales was elected President in 2005 after a cycle of mobilisation between 2000 and 2003 by social movements including peasant union confederations, urban sectors and miners, who joined forces to oppose the neoliberal policies enacted by Sanchez de Lozada. In 2000-01, the 'Water Wars' in the city of Cochabamba saw a massive uprising against the privatisation and subsequent price-hike of water by US firm Bechtel which ultimately resulted in the rescinding of the company's contract. In 2003 tensions spiked again in the Gas Wars which saw blockades and marches steered by the CSUTCB against the privatisation and export of Bolivia's natural gas to Chile and the US. The common aim uniting the disparate social actors in the protests was the conviction that natural resources

were a social good to be nationalised, rather than a commodity to be sold to benefit foreign capital (Webber 2012: 148–161).

Connected with these cycles of struggle were a number of organic activist intellectuals associated with el Grupo Comuna, an intellectual assemblage which formulated critical Marxist analyses in response to this decisive period of state crisis and social mobilisation in Bolivia (Kanahuaty, 2015). The group comprises scholars Luis Tapia, former Bolivian Vice-President Alvaro García Linera, Oscar Vega Camacho, Raúl Prada and Raquel Gutiérrez Aguilar, and latterly Marxa Chávez and Patricia Costas Monje. The group build on the earlier Bolivian intellectual tradition spearheaded by the Gramscian sociologist René Zavaleta Mercado, re-interpreting his key concepts such as '*sociedad abigarrada*' (motley society) which emphasise the heterogenous social and temporal features of Bolivian society.

Indigenous cosmovisions and the emergence of 'buen vivir'

The protests of 2000-2003 also brought into motion demands for a new Constituent Assembly to re-craft the Bolivian state along communitarian lines. After Morales was elected, he convened a Constituent Assembly which eventually resulted in the new Plurinational Constitution of 2009 which enshrined plurinationality, the rights of nature and the principles of *buen vivir* based on values of harmony and reciprocity *(*Bonilla-Maldonado, 2019). It sets out a state which is decentralised and founded on political, cultural and linguistic pluralism, with 36 languages officially recognised. *Buen vivir* is perhaps the most important political, philosophical and legal development to emerge from Latin America in the twenty-first century. My research is testament to the long intellectual genealogy of this concept, and accordingly, provides a useful contribution to contemporary debates around its legal and political application.

Buen vivir, or *sumak kawsay* and *suma qamaña* in the Quechua and Aymara languages respectively, loosely translates as living well in harmony with nature and with one another, enabling 'life in fullness' (Huanacuni, 2010). It has been advanced in the post-2000s in the policy and political space by Indigenous organisations, intellectuals in conjunction with NGOs and the academy as a response to the perceived broader crisis of Western modernity. David Choquehuanca, an Aymara intellectual and current Vice-President of Bolivia, defines *buen vivir* as 'recovering the experience of our peoples, recovering the Culture of Life and recovering our lives in complete harmony and mutual respect with Mother Nature, with the Pachamama, where everything is life, where we are all *uywas* [living animals], children of nature and the cosmos.' (2010). *Buen vivir* thus represents an epistemological challenge to the Western capitalist model of development which prioritises economic growth and consumption at the expense of the environment and society (Gudynas, 2011). It calls into question the ideology of progress embedded within modernity, which it connects with poverty, climate change and other social and ecological harms. *Buen vivir* repudiates individualism and stresses the interconnectedness of life, between human and non-human beings. Accordingly, among Bolivian thinkers, there is a large focus on agriculture and rural livelihoods as components within *buen vivir*. Aymara intellectual and politician Maria Eugenia Choque, for example, connects the practice of *suma kamana* with 'eating well', achieved through agricultural production regulated in the *ayllu* (2006: 5). *Ayllu* is a word in the Quechua and Aymara languages which refers to the Andean socio-spatial units based around kinship. *Ayllus* comprise families, spirits and other-than-human beings who reside within a common territorial space and share economic relations of reciprocity and exchange (Yampara: 1992: 143). The anthropologist Marisol de la Cadena quotes an interlocutor, Justo Oxa, a bilingual Quechua-Spanish elementary school teacher who summarises the ayllu as "like a weaving, and all the beings in the world— people, animals, mountains, plants, etc.—

are like the threads, we are part of the design" (2015: 44). *Buen vivir* therefore is an important framework for understanding how Indigenous moral philosophies can be applied in the constitutional sphere, and the ways in which Indigenous organisations in Latin America have negotiated their relationship with the state. My research complements the scholarship on *buen vivir* by revealing the antecedents to these twenty-first century political developments and situating its rise within a broader historical context of Indigenous perspectives on development.

Neo-extractivism and approaches to the environmental question

In the twenty-first century, behind *buen vivir* lies the spectre of neo-extractivism. The election of the MAS with core support from *cocaleros*, (coca growers) and peasant-Indigenous groups heralded the transformation of the relationship between the state and Indigenous- *campesino* sectors, who had long been marginalised and excluded from state structures. Morales' promptly embarked on an ambitious programme of social spending, making vast reductions in poverty and illiteracy rates within several years. His redistributionist agenda was buoyed by the commodity boom of the noughties, which until the mid-2010s enabled large social spending programmes by Pink Tide governments as a result of high prices commanded by hydrocarbons.

The ecological question has been central to left critiques levied at Morales and other Pink Tide regimes. This argument suggests that Morales et al perpetuated extractivist and developmentalist paradigms under an updated economic model of neo-extractivism (Gudynas, 2011; Webber, 2017). By predicating growth on the increased extraction of natural resources, Pink Tide states remained commodity-dependent and failed to break with the capitalist logic at the root of their social and regional inequalities. In Bolivia, others have argued that the

continued electoral success of the MAS was achieved through a rapprochement with conservative, agri-business sectors associated with the expansion of the agricultural frontier in the eastern regions which further presented tensions with its social movement constituency (Farthing, 2018).

There is a glut of works examining the supposed contradictions between the extractive model and a discursive commitment to the rights of Mother Earth and Indigenous peoples adopted by governments such as Bolivia and Ecuador (Gudynas, 2011; Svampa, 2019; Artaraz and Calestani, 2015; Burchardt et al., 2014). Recent works have probed the fissures that have emerged in leftists movements as a result of the extractive question and its possible incommensurability with Indigenous rights (see Riofrancos, 2019 on the Ecuadorian context). Others have contested the thesis adopted by Gudynas et al, pointing out that governments such as Ecuador did make meaningful attempts to circumvent the extractive model of economic growth, but were thwarted by the greater power of transnational corporations and the rules-based system of the world economy to dictate the terms of their development (see Forero, 2021). The purpose of this research project is not to contribute to the field of extractivism studies in Latin America. However, the key questions that this literature has thrown up –particularly, the tensions between resource exploitation and Indigenous and ecological rights - provide a useful tool for contextualising earlier environmental discourses.

Colonialism initiated from the fifteenth century by European powers saw the birth of extractivism as a new mode of accumulation in the world. The violent pursuit of territory, natural resources and raw commodities was central to the European colonial project in the Americas. As Frantz Fanon observed, ‘In a very concrete way Europe has stuffed herself inordinately with the gold and raw materials of the colonial countries…there has flowed out

for centuries toward that same Europe diamonds and oil, silk and cotton, wood and exotic products' (1963: 81). Similarly, Aimé Césaire acknowledged the profound ecological harm generated by colonialism in his stinging rebuke of European colonialism; 'I am talking about natural economies that have been disrupted - harmonious and viable economies adapted to the Indigenous population - about food crops destroyed, malnutrition permanently introduced, agricultural development oriented solely toward the benefit of the metropolitan countries, about the looting of products, the looting of raw materials.'(1972: 7). Bolivia is one of the richest countries in the world in terms of its natural resources but throughout its five hundred year history, it has been blighted by what has been called the 'resource curse'; the paradox that despite resource richness it has extremely high levels of poverty and underdevelopment. This orthodoxy that a large supply of natural resources can be economically harmful is also known as 'Dutch disease', after Holland's sudden discovery of natural gas in the North Sea which resulted in decreasing value of exports and an appreciation of the exchange rate. The legacy of this colonial resource extraction shows up in the residual polluted waters from mining, poisoned earth and deforestation that plague the Bolivian landscape today (Moore, 2010).

Addressing the longer history of debates over natural resources, historian Kevin Young argues that popular 'resource nationalism' – the idea that natural resources should be used for the benefit of all Bolivians rather than foreign elites – was the dominant force in Bolivian political life in the twentieth century (2019). 'Resource nationalism' in mid-century Bolivia became a defining ideology uniting a diverse array of political tendencies and social groups around the belief that natural resource extraction should benefit the domestic population rather than foreign capital. This quest for ownership over oil and tin generated powerful popular coalitions which culminated in the 1952 revolution. Complementing Young's use of natural resources as a lens of enquiry, anthropologist Bret Gustafson hones in on natural gas

as a commodity which equally decisively shaped Bolivia in the twentieth century (2020). Young and Gustafson's work suggests that competing visions of energy models were a fixture of the labour and social movements operating over this period. I discuss Young's resource nationalism analysis in detail in Chapter Five. In short, it is my position that 'resource nationalism' as Young describes, was a way of articulating a vision of natural resources in political life that was accommodated but also challenged by Indigenous-*campesino* movements from the 1970s. As I discuss later, the rise of *katarismo* marks a rupture with resource nationalism as the predominating ideological current in plebeian attitudes towards natural resources.

Environmental history in Latin America and beyond

Environmental histories, like all histories, are shaped by the cultural exigencies of those that write them. The 1970s saw the growth of environmental history as a sub-discipline in the United States as part of the rise of popular environmentalist movements. Although the increasingly vocal environmentalist movement from the 1970s put pressure on nation states and international bodies to address the perceived ecological crisis of advanced capitalism, this manifest itself primarily in discourses of 'sustainable development' which were largely promulgated at an institutional level, without dialogue with grassroots ecological movements from the Global South or North.

Latin American environmental history remains something of a nascent field. As historian Mark Carey observes (2009), environmental histories of Latin America have on the whole, tended to embrace declensionist approaches, with Shawn Miller's defining work *An Environmental History of Latin America* (2007) a paradigmatic example. 'If environmental history has an important role to play', Miller proclaims, 'it is to remind us of what once was,

what has been lost, and whether or not it was worth the price.' (2009: 203). Carey points out that the predominating themes of interest to environmental historians have coalesced around colonialism and its attendant destruction, commodity extraction and conservation (2009: 224). This is an approach seen in Alfred Crosby's pathbreaking *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492* (1972), which reveals the dramatic ecological transformation as a result of the arrival to the New World of new foods, animals, microbes and fauna through European conquest. He declares this exchange 'one of the most important aspects of the history of life on this planet since the retreat of the glaciers.' (1972: 3).

The singular focus on environmental destruction is something recent works such as John Soluri, Claudia Leal, and José Augusto Pádua's edited collection, *A Living Past: Environmental Histories of Modern Latin America* (2019) has attempted to rectify, offering an expansive corrective which draws out intersections with labour, food and urban histories. However on the whole, Latin American environmental history has been slow to incorporate in its remit relevant developments from other disciplines, notably, the 'other-than-human', and the 'ontological turn' within anthropology. The works within Soluri et al's contribution do not problematise nature-culture dualism nor seek to decentre the human from historical enquiry in any way. My project departs from this approach by seeking to accommodate pathways for the inclusion of the non-human in historical approaches to human and non-human relations in the Andes. I draw on concepts derived from the Latin American anthropological canon which has widely noted that Indigenous movements that mobilise around the natural world often do so in terms that exceed Euro-modern conceptualisations of land and territory (see Escobar, 2007; Viveiros de Castro 2014; Descola, 2005; Yampara, 2011; Teijero, 2015; Rappaport, 1998; de la Cadena, 2015; inter alia).

When thinking about how to incorporate the other-than-human, the burgeoning field of animal histories in Latin America provides a helpful reference point, particularly over the question on 'agency' which emerges as a central concern in this literature. It is a core argument in my project that the Indigenous-*campesino* movements I cover mobilised in recognition of the agency of non-human beings and recognised them as political actors with the capacity to think, feel and act. These movements explicitly recognised the relationship between coloniality and the environment, and acknowledged that colonialism had deprived both humans and other-than-humans of agency. In making this point, I engage closely with the rich body of research into animal-human histories, and particularly Philip Howell's work on 'ascribed agencies' in relation to animal history (2019: 202). Howell makes the point that the question is not whether nonhuman animals have agency - because they certainly do - but what form this takes in historical scholarship. Ascribed agencies are characterised for example, as narratives written *by* humans *about* named animals which imbue them with character and personality (2019: 210). Accordingly, my focus is about human actors speaking *about* non-human beings in terms which explicitly recognise their agency as historical subjects.

In addition, environmental histories beyond Latin America have proven useful in informing the design of this research project. There is, for example, a well established school of South Asian scholarship which since the 1980s has historicised the relationship between peasants and Indigenous, or tribal, peoples and the natural world (Guha, 1989; 1999; Damodaran, 1997; 2014). This school takes culture, ethnicity, and identity firmly under the purview of environmental history. Of particular note is historian Vinita Damodaran who contributes invaluable studies on the connection between protest movements and environment imaginaries in the Chotanagpur plateau in eastern India. Her work explores the linkages between images of the landscape, the construction of ethnic identities and cultural resistance in South Asia. Damodaran chronicles the rise of groups such as the *Jharkhand Mukti Morcha*

(JMM), a radical organisation which evolved out of agrarian struggles in the 1960s. The JMM sought the cultural revival of *adivasi* (Indigenous) rituals related to the land and evoked the land as a symbol of protest against ongoing deforestation and *adivasi* dispossession. This project will build on Damodaran's work to explore the importance of landscape and territory for Bolivian movements such as the *kataristas* which were explicitly aligned with larger radical projects of state transformation. With its array of civil society coalitions and long history of Indigenous mobilisation, Bolivia offers a propitious context to draw out transnational parallels and to test the approaches within South Asian environmental historiography.

Colonial perspectives on nature

In an age of new anxieties over climate change and looming planetary collapse, relations between humans and the non-human world can be considered the most important problem of the twenty-first century. It is amply documented that the colonisation of the Americas by Europeans transformed Indigenous societies and ecologies. Colonial modernity heralded the reorganisation of societies into discrete categories – man, woman, Black, Indian – and affirmed a central dichotomy of human and non-human (Lugones, 2010). In Bolivia this was accompanied by a violent re-ordering and division of space and territory (Barragán and Durán , 2003: 26-28). Scholars have noted that the unsettled boundaries — or 'leaky' distinctions to use Donna Harraway's term from *A Cyborg Manifesto* — between other-than-human and human in Latin America has been central to colonial grammars of thought (Dopico Black, 2010). Interactions between humans and animals, and indeed other non-human beings were an abiding preoccupation in early Latin American histories (Few et al, 2013). The sixteenth century Spanish Jesuit missionary José de Acosta, for example, extensively chronicled relations between people and animals in South America, noting that the inhabitants of then-

Peru ‘worship bears, lions, tigers and snakes to prevent them from harming them.’ (2002: 262). Acosta was baffled by the ascribing of agency to non-human beings by the Indigenous peoples he encountered; ‘They make another offering that is no less absurd, which is to pull out their eyelashes or eyebrows and offer them to the sun, or to the hills, and *apachitas* [piles of stones constructed on mountains], to the winds or other things that they fear.’ (2002: 262). The existence of non-human agency and natural space is thus an important historical dimension to decolonial struggles in Latin America.

Climate justice

My historical research owes much to the urgent debates in contemporary political discourse around climate justice and planetary collapse. It is my aim to challenge the notion that twentieth century human relationships with nature, and environmentalist struggles can be abstracted from wider contentions over political economy and imperialism in Bolivia and the Global South. These are arguments which have increasingly come to the fore as a result of the contemporary climate justice movement globally which has contributed to awareness of the linkages between race and ecological destruction. This school of thought proposes that solving what has been called the ‘climate crisis’, or the Anthropocene, or Capitalocene, is tightly imbricated with social and economic inequalities, and crucially, those generated by imperialism.

In recent years this has given rise to projects such as the Green New Deal (GND), a policy oriented response arising in the global north which broadly aims to achieve an transition away from fossil fuel dependency through clean technology. Marxist agrarian scholar Max Ajl has offered a challenge to dominant approaches to the GND in his work, the People’s New Deal which criticises the GND for being Eurocentric, failing to challenge global inequality and

inattentive to the needs of the world's poorest (2021: 46-47). Ajl's critique centres on the GND but it holds relevance for the environmental thought and policy arising from the Global North more broadly. Ajl centres anti-imperialism and agricultural transformation. These ideas have proven invaluable for thinking about the trajectory of ecological struggle in Bolivia. In the movements I address here, struggles for land in the early twentieth century, and for Indigenous rights in the late twentieth represent profound socio-ecological confrontations between highland Indigenous nations and the state. An awareness of environmental crisis is certainly not new, as both my project and the works outlined here illustrate.

Conceptualising the peasantry

The problem of the Indian is rooted in the land tenure system of our economy.
—José Carlos Mariátegui, 1928

I use the terms peasant and *campesino* interchangeably in this dissertation. In the period I address (1920-1990) not all campesinos were Indigenous, and not all Indigenous people were *campesinos*. In the Peruvian context de la Cadena has observed that the term peasant was never truly a racially-blind or purely socio-economic category because it was infused with traces of Indianness (2000: 325). This project is concerned with Indigenous *campesino* movements and their relationship with landscape and territory. It thus is in dialogue with a rich historiography on peasant movements in Latin America, exemplified in Eric Wolf's *Peasant Wars of the Twentieth Century* (1969), as well as José Carlos Mariategui's work on Andean Indigenous Marxism*, Siete Ensayos de Interpretación de la Realidad Peruana*

(1928). In the turbulent years of the mid twentieth century, as armed struggle against imperialism arose across the 'Third World', increased attention was focused on the revolutionary potential of the peasantry which had hitherto been considered conservative, or pre-political (Hobsbawm, 1959). In contrast, a new generation of scholars such as Wolf sought to show the ways in which peasants were in fact, revolutionary subjects who operated across local and national political worlds. A number of notable studies reappraising the revolutionary potential of the peasantry appeared from the 1960s (see Vanden, 1978: Migdal, 1974). These studies centred peasants within the global revolutionary uprisings of the twentieth century and sought to understand under which conditions peasants become revolutionary subjects. Adhering to Marxian paradigms, they tended to opt for de-ethnicised approaches which stressed the primacy of class as a mode of analysis. Wolf's anthropological interest in folklore and culture provides something of an exception to this. The point here is that study of Bolivia's subaltern populations was initially approached by the academy primarily through the duplex categories of miner or peasant, meaning exploration of ethnic differences or wider identities were occluded. Less still was the environment considered a propitious site of enquiry in studies of peasant mobilisation.

Adopting a postmodern approach influenced by the Subaltern Studies group which I discuss below, Florencia Mallon (1995) has charted a contribution of peasant movements to nation state formation in Mexico and Peru through discourse, an approach I partially emulate in this thesis. Comparing the differing political outcomes of postcolonial Mexico and Peru, Mallon argues that peasants constructed their own nationalist projects in the late nineteenth century, drawing out the community level differences which defined peasants' relations with the state.

Highly important when thinking about the revolutionary peasant is the writings of Peruvian Marxist José Carlos Mariátegui (1894-1930) which had a noticeable influence on twentieth century Bolivian radical tendencies (Webber, 2017). Labelled a 'Romantic' Marxist (Lowy, 1998), Mariátegui was a heterodox figure in the Marxist wing of the *indigenista* movement in Peru which flourished in the 1920s. In 1928 he was a founder and general secretary of the Peruvian Socialist Party, which later became the Communist Party. In his magnum opus *Seven Interpretive Essays on Peruvian Reality* (1928) he made crucial contributions to the theory of uneven and combined development of capitalism in peripheral countries and was a pioneer in applying Marxist theory to the Latin American reality. I argue that of crucial importance for the *Kataristas* decades later was Mariátegui's invocation of the Indian as a revolutionary subject. The avant-garde magazine *Amauta,* which he edited between 1920 and 1930 (the title translates as 'teacher' in the Quechua language), frequently contained articles with telluric references to Andean landscapes and Indians, as well as trenchant critiques of land ownership iniquities in Peru.

The presence of large but marginal Indigenous populations which did not fit neatly into European-derived social categories had long presented a theoretical conundrum for Latin American Marxists. Mariátegui argued that the socio-economic improvement of Peru could not be extricated from improvement in the conditions of its Indigenous populations. In a 1924 essay he centres the Indian in the discourse of Peruvian development, lamenting, 'by postponing the solution of the Indian problem, the republic has postponed the realisation of its dreams of progress. A policy that is truly national in scope cannot dispense with the Indian; it cannot ignore the Indian. The Indian is the foundation of our nationality in formation.' (Vanden and Becker, 2011: 141). In this way, the Indian was identified as a potentially disruptive social force that could form the antidote to European-derived capitalist modernity.

Rather than being a marginal demographic, Mariátegui locates Indians at the very centre of the revolution yet to come.

Similarly to the *Kataristas*, Mariátegui drew on a long history of Indigenous social practice to evoke a counter-hegemonic Andean tradition. In a thesis to the Latin American Conference of Communist Parties in Buenos Aires in June 1929, he writes, 'The [Indian] "communities," which have demonstrated truly astonishing capacities of resistance and persistence under the harshest oppression, represent a natural factor of socialisation of the land. The native has deep-rooted habits of cooperation…' (Vanden and Becker, 2011: 323). He aimed to vindicate Indigenous traditions, stating 'We believe that of the "backward" populations there is none so much as the Indigenous population of Incan origin that presents such favourable conditions for primitive agrarian communism.'(Vanden and Becker, 2011: 323).

Theorising Indigeneity

The ethnohistorian Forrest Hylton notes that 'indigeneity' has acquired hegemonic status as a concept of enquiry in Anglo-American anthropology from the 1980s, at the expense of 'peasant' which carries the full force as a category tied to historical materialism (2020: 189). Hylton argues that the category of *indigeneity* has insufficient explanatory reach and serves to ossify culture from class politics within analysis of *campesino* movements (2020: 189-191). For Hylton, Anglo-American anthropologists who have taken 'Indigeneity' as their starting point have failed to understand the material role of history in the complex array of alliances that characterises Bolivia's recent 'insurgent politics', including Indigenous peasant communities in the highlands, lowland Indigenous groups, landless migrants from the highlands, urban Indigenous people, trade unions, and non-Indigenous peasants and workers, professionals, and students (2020: 200). *Vis-a-vis* the MAS in the twenty-first century, Hylton

argues that its overwhelming support in highland rural areas cannot be explained by discursive appeals to 'indigeneity' but requires a firmer attention to the historical dynamics of class formation amongst the Indigenous and non-Indigenous peasantry. It is in this spirit that I intend my research to show that the connection between environmental politics and Indigenous-campesino movements cannot be explained through the concept of 'indigeneity' alone, but through processes of class and racial identity formation in rural and urban worlds in the twentieth century. Movements which operated as peasant struggles in the twentieth century were simultaneously Indian - or Indigenous - due to the twin axes of economic exploitation and racialised oppression experienced by their protagonists.

Nonetheless this thesis looks at Indigenous histories and so it is important to be clear on how I deploy the term 'Indigenous'. Language within historic Latin American discourses on race and ethnicity is notoriously difficult to unpick given that terms such as 'Indian' and 'Indigenous', as well as 'Black', have changed over time and varied in meaning according to territorial and legal context. The ways in which the Bolivia state post Independence has understood the category of Indigenous has shifted considerably for instance. In the 1881 La Paz census in Bolivia, occupations were indexes of race. To be a rural labourer for example, meant one was *ipso facto* an Indian (Gotkowiz, 2011: 125. A law was later passed in 1921 which stated that an 'Indian' was a person from the 'Aymara, Quechua, or Guarani race' who lived in the countryside or worked the land. However the 1950 census in Bolivia took the speaking of native languages as the indicator of Indian-ness (Gotkowitz, 2007: 13). In marked contrast, in the 2001 census, indigeneity was recorded through self-definition alone, allowing participants to assert their own preferred identities.

Gotkowitz locates the 1940s as a turning point in how debates around who was an Indian and who could speak for Indians were articulated in Bolivia. In 1945, as the dictatorial regime of Gualberto Villaroel tried to win favour with *campesinos*, the first Indigenous Congress took place in Bolivia following similar congresses held in Ecuador and Peru. Shortly after this, prominent *Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario* (MNR) politician Hernan Siles Zuazo proposed a measure by which to establish Indigenous juries to conduct oral trials in native languages. Siles used the term Indian (*indio*) and *indigena* interchangeably in order to refer to "the man who works … and lives in the countryside' (Gotkowitz, 2007:137) However the measure was ultimately unsuccessful because the political elites and the Indigenous movement itself could not decide for whom the measure was intended. 'Indians? Peasants? Indigenous peasants? The Indigenous race? Indian and *mestizo* peasants? A race, or a class? The National Congress could not agree on its terms.' (Gotkowitz, 2007: 148).

There were a variety of terms applied by, and to Indigenous peoples in the Andes. *Indio* is the colonial term; *Indígena* began to be used in Bolivia in Simon Bolívar's early nineteenth century decrees (Gotkowitz, 2011: 130). Whereas the term 'Indigenous' is now positively associated with an emancipatory human rights agenda, 'indian' is conversely burdened by tainted histories of exclusion and exploitation linked to colonial and neocolonial paradigms. As Canessa observes, 'Indigenous appears as a much more neutral descriptor and erases the power relations that are inescapable when talking about indians' (Canessa, 2012: 7). Indian is often used by historical protagonists as an evocative political term which conjures the centuries long struggle against colonial forces by Indigenous peoples. This is exemplified in the revolutionary thinker Fausto Reinaga's work. He proclaims; 'The Indian is not a social class, s/he is a race, a Nation, a history, a culture. The Indian is an oppressed and enslaved people. The Indian does not have to integrate or assimilate to anyone. The Indian has to free

himself. And the liberation of the Indian will be the work of the Indian himself' (2010: 75, translation my own).

In Chapter Two I use the terms employed by historical actors in the *expedientes* documents. These also include *'indio' 'indigena' 'indigena originario'* and *'indigena contribuyente'*. As I outline in more detail within that chapter, these terms are important because they have both racial and fiscal implications as historically only Indians contributed tribute to the state. They also denote differences in land ownership; the term *originario* came to refer to Indigenous community members who possessed more sizeable plots of land for example (Thomson, Barragán, Albó et al: 167). By the twenty-first century, this distinction was largely nullified and '*pueblos originarios'* is used interchangeably with '*pueblos indigenas'*. In the 1970s, the *kataristas* and the campesino movement more commonly refer to themselves through the language of nation, ie 'Aymaras' 'Quechuas' etc, although the term '*pueblos indigenas'*, or Indigenous peoples is in wide usage. In the twenty-first century, '*indígena originario campesino'* (Indigenous-original-peasant) was the tripartite term adopted by the decolonising state in the 2009 Plurinational Constitution.

Moreover, in recent decades, the ways in which such terms have operated in local settings has converged with the rise of a transnational discourse on the rights of Indigenous peoples globally. Since the 1980s, immense international attention has been paid to the concept of 'indigeneity' and the rights of Indigenous peoples by academics, activists, NGOs and policy practitioners (see Canessa, 2006; Albó, 1991; Brysk, 1994; inter alia). The United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Populations (UNWGIP) was established in 1982 by the United Nations Economic and Social Council, for instance. Much of this international attention has

served to create a universal (and sometimes essentializing) language of indigeneity which stresses connection to nature and 'Mother Earth', unique spiritual practices and traditional knowledges (cf Valdivia, 2005). There are strong similarities between the demands made by Indigenous groups organising in the international policy spheres (Muehlebach, 2001: 421). These tend to coalesce around demands for political autonomy, self-determination and cultural recognition. This is strongly connected with parallel international discourses on environmental protection. In the world of international NGOs, there are ubiquitous references to Indigenous peoples and their role in safeguarding environmental 'sustainability'. Survival International, one of the most prominent and long-standing NGOs advocating for Indigenous peoples states, for example, that 'tribal peoples… are the best conservationists and guardians of the natural world.' (2019).

Anthropologists Antonio Lucero points out in the Peruvian case this means that discourses on indigeneity can be 'janus faced' in the way they exist on two levels; one is directed towards (inter)national external audiences which can 'have little to do with the lived "social fact" of indigeneity at the local level' (2013: 195). Anthropologist Tania Li coined the notion of the 'tribal slot', or the space in which marginal social groups in Indonesia articulate political concerns through the new language of indigeneity (2000). She builds on Stuart Hall's work on identities to argue that identification as 'Indigenous' can be understood as 'a *positioning* which draws upon historically sedimented practices, landscapes, and repertoires of meaning, and emerges through particular patterns of engagement and struggle (2001: 151). Li's hypothesis finds echo in the work of political ecologist Gabriela Valdivia (2005) in the Latin American case. Taking the case study of two communities in Amazonian Ecuador, the Secoya and the Cofán, Valdivia compares how the two groups have strategically adopted the 'Indigenous' signifier to advance claims around land rights. Valdivia contrasts the

performance of 'authentic' and 'inauthentic' indigeneity, examining how international discourses on indigeneity become locally articulated in discourses that can constrain as well as empower. Elsewhere, anthropologists have also pointed out that indigeneity may be expressed in the 'small spaces of life', as Andrew Canessa observes. He points out, 'Indigenous identities are to be found in marches and banners, but they also emerge as sweat falls from the brow onto a wooden plow, through the smoke of my *comadre'*s kitchen, in the doll strapped to a little girl's back, in the disputes between married couples…' (Canessa, 2012: 26).

Joan Martinez Alier and the 'environmentalism of the poor'

A major strand of thought I draw on in this project is the 'environmentalism of the poor' thesis advanced by environmental economist Joan Martinez-Alier, which is preoccupied with widening the field of what constitutes 'environmentalism'. With historian Ramachandra Guha (1997), he addresses the assumption that environmental movements were the preserve of the affluent 'lifestyle' politics of the global north, instead drawing to the surface the fight of poor peoples in the global south and north for environmental justice. Guha and Martinez-Alier are not alone in making this argument. Recent years have seen greater sensitivity to the intersections of class, race and gender within environmental movements. Referencing Rachel Carson's landmark work 1962 'Silent Spring' which highlighted the slow toxic horrors of the US chemical industry, Chad Montrie offers a study on environmental protest spearheaded by the US labour movement, and particularly Black and Mexican workers (2018). Recent scholarship newly emphasises how struggles for jobs, for workers' rights - for social justice in short - overlapped onto the environmental.

It is in the spirit of Martinez-Alier et al, I too am interested in broadening how historians might understand an ecological struggle *avant la lettre*. This is assisted within my research by bringing environmentalism into dialogue with decolonial theory. Ecological movements arising from subaltern actors often do not adopt language readily identifiable as scientific or even, ecological, in the Euromodern sense. The argument underlying Martinez-Alier's work is that subaltern environmentalism has existed, but historians have been blind to it because it has not conformed with hegemonic understandings of environmentalism.

In Chapter Four on the *caciques apoderados*, my argument that their efforts represent an ecological struggle perhaps 'not yet discovered' (Martinez Alier, 1991). That is to say, a movement who did not employ the language of environmentalism but whose efforts to retain control of communal lands and to protest encroachment and abuses on community lands had a profound ecological importance in the rejection of market-driven land management and the defence of the *ayllu*. Martinez Alier's makes possible the idea of 'retrospective' environmentalism within social history, in other words, social struggles which did not use the language of environmentalism, but often come in later years, be understood as such. He uses the example of the massacre in 1888 of miners and *campesinos* at the British owned Rio Tinto mine in Huelva, Andalucía (Spain) after they protested against sulphur dioxide pollution. This historical moment was re-framed in public consciousness as an explicitly environmental conflict in the aftermath of a campaign in the 1990s against a toxic dump in the same region, in Nerva, Andalucía (2002: 61-62). When in placed in the context of later Indigenous movements which referenced the *caciques apoderados* and which I argue did mobilise explicitly around the environment, such as the *kataristas*, historians can see generational threads which bind these movements together.

Bolivia: a selective historical overview

The pre-Conquest Andean world was home to a numerous array of powerful and complex civilisations. From the seventh century the Tiahuanaco empire extended across the Andean coast and highlands with its epicentre in the Altiplano. From the end of the twelfth century, Aymara and Pukina-speaking peoples exerted control over the central highlands, and especially the fertile shores of Lake Titicaca where they organised themselves in complex hierarchical social structures (Klein, 2011: 13). By the fifteenth century, the rise of the Quechua-speaking Inca Empire in Cuzco led to the incorporation of the Aymara within a vast imperial territory known as Tawantinsuyo, stretching from present-day Colombia in the north to Chile in the south. At this time, 'Andean chiefdoms', historian Brooke Larson notes, 'inhabited a world of constant flux, tension, and transformation during the dizzying expansion of the Inca empire Tawantinsuyu' (2004: 21). The Incas allowed the ethnic groups it conquered to remain intact and derived their imperial power through an enforced labour tribute system known as the *mita*, a more exploitative version of which would be later re-introduced in the Spanish Empire.

The arrival of Europeans to Latin America heralded a series of catastrophic changes to the social worlds of the peoples they conquered. The Spanish arrived in Upper-Peru, now present-day Bolivia around 1532. Spanish colonization of Bolivia from the outset was bound up with a profound re-ordering of natural space and land use (Barragán and Durán , 2003: 26-28). The Andean economy was oriented away from agriculture towards intensive silver mining, with the proceeds funnelled towards the Spanish Crown. This was accompanied by the enclosure of land for *haciendas* (large estates), heralding a catastrophic loss of land and disrupted way of life for Indigenous communities (Barragán and Durán , 2003: 26-28). In the 1570s Viceroy Francisco de Toledo, under direction from the Spanish Crown, initiated a series of major

fiscal reforms to rationalize and streamline Spanish colonial domination over land and people. These reforms principally involved the organisation of Indian peoples into new spatial units known as *reducciones*, the regularisation of taxation and the re-introduction of the pre-colonial *mita* system to extract Indian labour for the mines at Potosi and beyond (Klein, 38-40). Indians who lived in *reducciones* were known as *originarios*, and were subject to tribute and *mita* obligations and had guaranteed rights to land. Another sub-category was the *forastero* who in some cases, did not participate in the *mita* and paid less tribute, but had fewer rights to land (Albiez-Wieck, Gil Montero, 2020). A further sub-category of Indian was the *yanacona*, who paid tribute but was not subject to a native authority such as the *kuraka* (Albiez-Wieck, Gil Montero, 2020) It is important to note that there is often significant local variation in how these categories were deployed.

The labour regime in the mines such as Potosi was hellish and lethal. One estimate suggests the life expectancy of the miners at nearby Huancavelica's mercury mines in Peru was six months (Goldwater 1972: 47). Silicosis, respiratory diseases from dust and the use of poisonous mercury led to the deaths of as many as eight million people, while the attendant deforestation and contamination of the water supply and land killed many more through 'slow violence' (Nixon, 2013). Workers in the mines had to contend not only with toxins infecting their bodies, but collapsing mine shafts, flood water, freezing temperatures and malnutrition (Brown, 2001). The residues of historic mining continue to scar the Bolivian landscapes. The founding of the mines at Potosí is accordingly identified by political ecologist Jason Moore as a defining moment in the rise of capitalist world-ecology, or in other words, the transformation of nature through the accumulation of capital (2010). The mining regimen also exemplifies the twin processes of ecological and human destruction which defined the

colonial process in Latin America. Despite major rebellions by Tupaj Amaru II (1780) in Peru and Tupaj Katari (1781) in Upper-Peru, Spanish colonial power would endure for centuries.

In the early decades of the nineteenth century, wars for independence from Spanish rule raged across the Latin American continent. After sixteen years of struggle, Bolivia finally won its independence from Spain on August 6, 1825. Its economy was in tatters after the protracted conflicts and it remained depressed for close over half a century. Unable to access credit easily or engage in exports and foreign trade, until the 1860s, the Bolivian state was overwhelming reliant on the tribute tax paid by Indian communities. Herbert Klein points out that many rural Indian communities in the early nineteenth century encountered greater levels of prosperity as the absence of colonial *mita* obligations meant that revenue from agriculture and internal trade with urban centres grew (2011: 104). In contrast, as I explore at length in Chapter Four, this changed in the 1860s when the export boom in Bolivia unleashed a series of economic shifts which would prove disastrous for Indian landholdings.

1920-1960: From rupture to reaction

In Chapter Three I discuss the economic and political shifts in the first decades of the twentieth century which I argue are significant in explaining the rise of ecological consciousness in urban and rural worlds. I will mention here the Chaco War (1932-1935) which marked a profound rupture in the Bolivian state, bringing to the surface simmering grievances around the economy, labour and the rights of Indigenous peoples (Klein, 2011: 177). The War was fought between Bolivia and Paraguay over territory in the Gran Chaco, a dry and inhospitable desert region which was thought to contain oil deposits. Both countries were extremely poor and lacked effective military capacity, although Bolivia entered the war

better equipped than Paraguay. In 1930 Bolivia was largely agricultural with 80 percent of the population engaged in subsistence farming in the Altiplano and valleys (Farcau, 1996: 17). Most of the Bolivian soldiers were Aymara and Quechua-speaking campesinos from the highlands, who struggled in the torturous heat of the desert. Bolivia was eventually forced to concede defeat, with the war having exposed the shaky foundations of its national consensus and its perilously weak economic model. It would be in the aftermath of the war that demands around labour and Indigenous rights would come loudly to the fore, decisively shaping the social and political landscape leading up to the Revolution of 1952.

I discuss in greater detail to the effects of the Bolivian National Revolution in later chapters, but I will here sketch an outline to provide context. The revolution took place on 9-11 April 1952 and was steered by the left-nationalist and anti-imperialist MNR (*Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario*) party which sought to violently displace the stranglehold of domestic oligarchs, corrupt politicians and foreign capital, known as the '*rosca'*. Framed as a 'national-popular' revolution (1986) by the Gramscian theorist Rene Zavaleta Mercado who served as Minister of Mines and Petroleum in final MNR government in the early 1960s, the revolution is comparable in scope with the Mexican and Cuban Revolutions but has received less critical attention from global scholarship. It initiated a triad of transformations; the nationalisation of the mines, agrarian reform and universal suffrage which swelled the electorate from 150,000 in 1951 to almost a million in 1956 (Dunkerley, 2013: 329). The revolutionary process came to fruition through the mass mobilisation of urban working and middle classes, miners and the peasantry, and resulted in the creation of the Central Obrera Boliviana (Bolivian Workers' Central, COB) in 1952 as a powerful, miner-led trade union confederation. The state appointed the newly created semi-autonomous Mining Corporation of Bolivia (*Corporación Minera de Bolivia*, COMIBOL) to run the state-owned mines.

Meanwhile educational reforms expanded the reach of Spanish-language education in the countryside and would play an important role in peasant organisation in the post-revolutionary era. In the cultural realm, the state additionally promoted a series of cultural initiatives including murals, popular radio programmes and an interest in national heritage and literature.

However, from the mid 1950s under Hernán Siles Zuazo (1956-1960), the MNR veered to the right and began to accept increasing amounts of US aid in the face of rising food shortages. In 1957 the United States, in the grips of Cold War anti-communist fervour and fearing the spread of the revolutionary left in Bolivia, subsidised more than 30 percent of the Bolivian government's central budget (Dunkerley, 1984: 81). Bolivia would soon become the largest recipient of food aid per capita in the world (ibid). The subordination of the middle class faction of the MNR to US interests ultimately served to defang the trade union and leftist elements within the party. As Stephen Nunes concludes, in doing so the United States was able to overthrow the Bolivian revolution without having to overthrow the government (2001: 47).

Chapter Two: Methodology

The theoretical framework I make use of draws principally from two source**s: i) anthropological literature on human and 'other-than-human' relations;** and **ii) the modernity-coloniality paradigm arising out of critical theory**. I will address here these two fields and will outline their relevance as a framework for my research project.

Insights from anthropology: human and 'other-than-human' relations

In recent decades, the Latin American ethnographic record has been clear on the far-reaching relations between humans and non-human being and has problematised the nature-culture divide embedded in dominant western epistemologies (see Vivieros de Castro, 1998; Descola 2005; 2013; Escobar, 2008; de la Cadena and Blaser, 2018; de la Cadena, 2010; 2015; Dransart, 2013; Santos, 2014). An attendant strand in this approach has coalesced under what has been called the 'post-development' paradigm. This scholarship challenges the neoliberal-capitalist premise of development which it sees at rooted in earlier colonial discourses that emphasise the civilisation of the Global North against the backwardness of the Global South (see Escobar, 1995; 2009). Much of this literature has explored how environmental conflicts over extractive projects which accelerated in the neoliberal era, have given new visibility to Indigenous perspectives on the natural world (Escobar, 2008). As Escobar argues, Indigenous movements, or, these "worlds and knowledges otherwise' have the potential to de-naturalize the hegemonic distinction between nature and culture on which the liberal order is founded' (2010: 39). There is thus a close link posited between indigeneity and the natural world. These anthropological studies also share parallels with the theories of human-nonhuman relations based on 'relational' ontologies arising from the 1980s from a field known as Sciences and Technology Studies (STS), exemplified in Bruno Latour's Actor-Network Theory, for example (2005), or Isabelle Stengers' 'cosmopolitics' (2010). ANT de-privileges the human as a site of enquiry to dwell on the dynamic connections between entities, living and material.

An important aspect of ANT, and indeed in many anthropological and decolonial analyses, it the unsettling of dominant understandings of time. This project is historical in focus and is interested in change over time. In Andean cosmovisions, landscapes are sacred and do not correspond to the temporal or material boundaries assigned in western modernity. As José Teijero argues, 'For the Aymara, nature is part of themselves, that is, the communion between nature and man becomes the synthesis of life' (2007:122). Inge Bolin meanwhile highlights

the role of animism, noting 'the Andean people ...believe that, like animals and people, all elements of nature live, feel, and breathe. *Pachamama*, the *Apus*, lakes, rocks, springs, and animate and inanimate beings — all aspects of nature need food and drink, love and consideration' (2010: 43). Constantin von Barloewen invokes temporality, noting that in Inca times 'Notions of the sacred stood side by side with the development of agriculture: the earth was situated at the midpoint of *indio* cosmology and could not be summarily subjugated or technologically exploited.' (1995: 65).

Elsewhere, anthro-linguistic approaches to the Andes have pointed out that in Quechua and Aymara languages there exists no single term for the zoological category of 'animal' (Dransart, 2013: 3). This echoes the concept of 'ontological instability' which Tristan Platt has identified in his work with the Macha ayllu in Northern Potosi (2009). In the Andes, Platt argues boundaries between animals, humans and spirits are rendered indistinct, especially during ritualistic encounters such as warfare or celebrations (ibid). Clear-cut divides between humans and animals, or indeed other natural beings such as trees and plants, do not possess resonance in Andean cosmovisions. It thus may be considered a European peculiarity to posit a radical difference between the human and non-human world. Nature instead, in these anthropological readings, is a site of multiple but connected communities comprising human and other-than-human (Adamson, 2014: 176).

Accordingly, we must understand Andean geographies as marked by animism. Stones, rivers, mountains demarcate the world; *apachetas*, piles of stones in sacred mountain sites, mark points of transit between the physical terrain and worlds otherwise. Cultural historian Carolyn Dean points out how natural objects provided outlets for interactions with sacred beings by both the Incas and contemporary Andean people 'Mountains, rivers, lakes, boulders, outcrops, caves, and springs were (and still are) kratophanic. They were sacred

places where humans encountered and interacted with powerful numina.' (2015: 8). Writing on the *Paez* culture of the Colombian Andes, Joanna Rappaport has employed the concept of 'sacred geographies', asserting that, 'the people of Tierradentro have encoded their history of struggle in their sacred geography, so that past meets present in the very terrain on which they live, farm and walk. Memory has built upon memory, connecting events of the distant past, the more recent past and the present in the topography of Tierradentro (2012: 8). In the vein of these studies, a core argument in this project is that Indigenous movements developed a politics of the environment which explicitly recognised the relationship between coloniality and the environment, with all of its attendant life forms. It reveals that movements such as the *kataristas* for example, argued that colonialism had deprived both humans and the environment of agency, and served to invalidate the non-material relationships between humans and the natural world in which they lived.

These anthropological approaches allow historians to accommodate non-humans within historical narratives as actors with agency. From a human-centred historical perspective, applying the insights of social anthropology and post-humanist theory serves to enrich the human stories under scrutiny by giving full scope to the plethora of relations with non-humans that mark the human life. A question I explore here is, then, is it possible to centre the non-human in the discourse and activity of the organised *campesino* movement in Bolivia and how could this enrich understanding of the trajectory of peasant-Indigenous politics in the region?

To address this I apply the insights of the anthropological work by Marisol de la Cadena to an historical analysis of the peasant movement in highland Bolivia. Her work is particularly propitious for the purposes of this study because it is situated at the porous margins of organised peasant politics and highland Peruvian Indigenous worlds. She argues that in

positioning non-human entities as political actors, ecological struggles waged by Indigenous peoples (such as in mining disputes concerning the sacred mountain Ausangate, Peru for example) hence have the potential to 'exceed the notion of politics as usual' (2010: 334). De la Cadena explains, 'In the story I am telling, land was "not only" the agricultural ground from where peasants earned a living—it was also the place that *tirakuna* [other-than-human beings] with *runakuna* [Quechua speaking people] were... As the convergence of both, land was the term that allowed the alliance between radically different and partially connected worlds. The world inhabited by leftist politicians was public; the world of the *ayllu*, composed of humans and other-than-human beings, was not' (2015: 110-111). In doing so, de la Cadena's work complicates approaches to peasant movements which if seen through a Eurocentric gaze, may find them belonging to a solely material arena, or would find incommensurate the presence of non-human political actors such as mountains. The task, therefore, is not to essentialise Indigenous/Aymara formulations on the natural world, or to see them as free-floating or existing outside of history. Rather, this thesis expands these studies to unpack the changing ways in which ecology became imbricated with insurgent anticolonial politics across the twentieth century.

Modernity/coloniality

The field of studies relating to decolonisation has a long heritage which spans the countries formerly constituting the colonised world. Postcolonial scholarship accompanied the wave of anticolonial transformations of the mid twentieth century, as European colonial regimes were overthrown across Africa, Asia and the Caribbean. In Latin America, writing in the early twentieth century, Mariategui was a pioneering Marxist theorist of the economic and racial dimensions of Peru's colonial condition. This project situates itself in conversation with the

decolonial and postcolonial scholarship which had its genesis in the 1970s, initially in the field of Middle Eastern and South Asian studies (Nandy, 1983; Spivak, 1988; Chakrabarty, 2000). In particular, I draw from the body of Latin American scholarship which coalesced around the coloniality/modernity paradigm. Decolonial theories are deployed within this project in two key ways: in an approach to Indigenous epistemologies, and approaches to the environment and the other-than-human. In Latin America, ideas of decoloniality were taken up in the wake of the 'epistemic turn' from the 1990s by the scholars Enrique Dussel (1995; 2000), Maria Lugones (2007), Gloria Anzaldúa (1987), Arturo Escobar (2010), Aníbal Quijano (1988; 2000; 2007), Walter Mignolo (2007; 2009; 2011) and Catherine Walsh (2018). The body of scholarship shares some relation with the theories of economic dependency taken up by Latin American intellectuals in the 1960s which assessed Latin America's underdevelopment through its unequal incorporation into the global economy (see Baran, 1957; Amin, 1976; Cardoso and Faletto, 1979; Arrighi, 1978; *inter alia*). The crux of these analyses was that imperialism had distorted the development of colonised countries and led to enduring systems of dependency and underdevelopment.

Although transdisciplinary in scope, decolonial scholarship applies concepts acquired from critical theory to analyse the temporal, racial and spatial dimensions of modernity. A key concept which emerged from the decolonial group's intellectual orbit was 'coloniality of power', a term introduced by Peruvian sociologist Aníbal Quijano (2000; 2007). The concept describes how modernity and capitalism/colonialism are mutually constitutive forces. Quijano argues that two historical processes defined the arrival of modernity; the construction of race; and the exploitation of labour and natural resources within global networks of capital (2000). Coloniality exists as a system of power established under formal colonialism and its enduring socio-racial classifications. It refers to the hierarchies of cultural, racial and epistemological domination which endure after formal colonialism has ended. Coloniality as a

cultural condition, is therefore analytically distinct from colonialism as an economic arrangement. Quijano's echoes the thesis of postcolonial theorist Ashis Nandy who describes 'a colonialism which survives the demise of empires' in his seminal work *The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self Under Colonialism* (1983: 11).

Decolonial thinkers such as Anibal Quijano have intimated that the question of Indigenous movements is tied up with the historical structuring of Latin American states along a racial axis of colonial origin (2005; 2000). As Latin America's post-independence states came into being in the early nineteenth century, their architects were confronted with the problem of Indigenous peoples who had been designated 'inferior races' under colonial rule. Indigenous peoples could not be incorporated into the new states as Indigenous peoples because this category was antithetical to citizenship of new political systems still tied to this colonial matrix of power (Quijano; 2005).

This formal process of decolonisation occurred across Latin America in the early nineteenth century as mestizo and creole elites wrestled control over South American territories from the Spanish crown. In Bolivia for example, independence was attained in 1825. However this political change belies the fundamental continuity which, decolonial scholars argue, links colonial and postcolonial Latin American societies (Quijano, 2000). As semiotician and cultural theorist Walter Mignolo argues, 'postcoloniality is not the end of coloniality but its re-articulation, its new face' (2002; 3).

Above all, decolonial theorists highlight the epistemological dimensions of colonialism, or what knowledges are produced or suppressed by the European colonial project and its constitutive knowledge systems (Mignolo, 2009; Wallerstein, 1997). They delineate the limits to Western thought and seek to expand the epistemic horizons by engaging with 'border

thinking', that is to say, subaltern epistemologies which lie at the edges of the colonial apparatus (Anzaldúa, 1987; Mignolo, 2000). As Mignolo states, the 'limit of Western philosophy is the border where the colonial difference emerges, making visible the variety of local histories that Western thought, from the right and the left, hid and suppressed.' (2002: 66). In *The Darker Side of Modernity* (2011), Mignolo outlines how a core matrix of colonial power is the subjugation of Indigenous knowledges, which are frequently non-literate ways of communicating and producing knowledge such as folklore and myth. This echoes the earlier Foucauldian theory of 'subjugated knowledges', or ways of knowing that western modernity categorises as 'naive knowledges, hierarchically inferior knowledges, knowledges that are below the required level of erudition or scientificity.' (Foucault, 2003: 7). This concept possesses especial pertinence in relation to the Indigenous movements explored in this project, such as katarismo, which, in part, were epistemological projects which aimed to recover subaltern knowledges marginalised by the state (Sanjinés, 2002; Rivera, 2012). Such movements did not just contest their exclusion from the nation state, but the exclusionary structures of modernity in Latin America.

Decolonial theory is explicitly liberatory in objective, seeking to 'delink' from the logic of coloniality it identifies as core to modernity. It places itself in dialogue with hemispheric struggles from Indigenous, Afro-descendant, labour and feminist struggles in the Americas, or, Abya Yala, and beyond. Abya Yala is the pre-Columbian name given to the land of the present-day Americas by the Guna peoples of Panama and Colombia, which translates as 'land in its full maturity'. The Bolivian Aymara Indianista Takir Mamani helped spearhead its use in 1992 during commemorations of the 500 year anniversary of the 1492 invasion of the Americas by Europeans. Decolonial theory speaks to the historical struggle by Indigenous peoples in Bolivia to articulate their aims in ways beyond the restrictive language and

concepts provided by colonial systems of thought. As Nandy summarises, 'the west has not merely produced modern colonialism, it informs most interpretations of colonialism.' (1983: 12).

Indigenous epistemologies, or knowledges from the margins, thus challenge the West's domination of knowledge. This proposal developed principally out of the Indian Subaltern Studies group, or the circle of interdisciplinary scholars of South Asia which emerged in the 1980s who adopted the Gramscian category of the 'subaltern' as the basis of their work as part of a global postcolonial framework. Their work crystallised in the three volumes of essays published as *Subaltern Studies:Writings on South Asian History and Society* which first appeared in 1982. An offshoot of the group, the Latin American Subaltern Studies group formed in 1992, standing with 'one foot on Gramsci's shoulders… and the other on Foucault', according to Fernando Coronil (2005).

The project has been strong influence in my approach to social history in this thesis. In its earlier years, the Subaltern Studies operated in dialogue with Marxist historiographical tendencies in India, seeking to recover Marxist approaches from Eurocentric reductionism (Chakrabarty, 1993). Historians such as Ranajit Guha, Sumit Sarkar and Dipesh Chakrabarty take seriously the methodological challenge for (Marxist) historians in accommodating what they call, the non-secular within history – gods, spirits and the non-human – which Eurocentric approaches to history would label simplistically as 'religion', ignoring the 'horizons of radical otherness' which these beings represent (Chakrabarty, 1993).

Chakrabarty's work *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (2000) aims to subvert Eurocentrism by repositioning (or 'provincialising') European

civilisation as one site of knowledge amongst many. In doing so, it repudiates the universalism of the knowledge Europe has historically produced. This project builds on Chakrabarty's thesis to suggest that environmental consciousness in Bolivia is tied to a longer histories of Indigenous thought and organisation, supplying evidence to counter Eurocentric imaginaries of environmentalism as a concept born in the Global North. If the history of environmentalism in general continues to privilege the single-issue campaigns of the United States and Europe, here I outline a more complicated vision of environmentalism from the Global South, revealing how Indigenous-peasant struggle for land was imbricated with an epistemological challenge to the borders of European thinking. As Paul Nadasdy has pointed out, the concept of 'environmentalism' is itself embedded with Eurocentric cultural assumptions that rarely prove adequate in capturing the relationship between Indigenous peoples and the environment (2005).

Nandy describes how the colonial drive 'for mastery over men is not merely a by-product of a faulty political economy but also of a world view which believes in the absolute superiority of the human *over the nonhuman and the subhuman*…' [my emphasis added]. The colonial project hence dismisses or denies the agency of actors from spheres such as the sacred (gods and spirits) and the ecological (mountains, lakes) which are often powerfully rooted in subaltern world views and praxis (Chakrabarty, 2000). Those who believe in them, namely peasants and subalterns, are labelled as anachronistic and confined them to what Chakrabarty gloomily calls, 'the waiting room of history' (2000: 10-16). By legitimising the environment and the non-human as sites of historical enquiry, this project seeks to develop and contribute to the expansion of the political.

Silvia Rivera, in tandem with the THOA, above all, has led global debates on decolonisation rooted in Bolivian intellectual traditions. Her work on *katarista* movements , *Oprimidos pero no vencidos*, (1984) which I explore in more detail in Chapter Five, was a groundbreaking piece of scholarship rooted in her own involvement with the movements in question, resulting in her exile to Mexico. Today she oversees an anarcha-feminist project dedicated to collective discussion and permaculture in La Paz know as the *tambo*, which I visited during my fieldwork in November 2019. Rivera argues that decolonisation is inextricably linked with material political struggle, arguing that there can be no 'discourse of decolonisation, no theory of decolonisation, without a decolonising practice' (2012: 100). She is sharply critical of Mignolo and fellow adherents of the modernity/coloniality school. She argues they have profited out of political struggles in the Global South, both materially through grants and salaries, and intellectually via the knowledges produced. Without contributing to these movements, they instead remain ossified in the elite universities of the Global North, or what Rivera calls, the 'palaces" of empire', far removed from the subaltern peoples and epistemologies which their work ostensibly concerns (2012; 2020).

Rivera's criticism carries an important message that academics must be attentive to the geopolitical dimensions of their location. This relates to both the privileges and opportunities higher education institutions in the Global North bestow, as well as the methodological problem of theorising decoloniality at vast geographic distance from decolonising movements in the Global South. On the former, in my meetings over the years with academics and organic intellectuals, I have been struck by the material difficulties many encounter when doing research in Bolivia; the dearth of institutional funding for study and research, and the border regimes of Europe and the US which make travel even more costly and onerous. As

Rivera argues, knowledges and discourses of decolonisation are produced and shaped through ongoing struggle against the material straitjacket of coloniality.

"nuestra política es la tierra, nuestra política es la Pachamama" – Waskar Ari and the AMP

Undoubtedly the major influence in this research project is the work of pioneering Aymara historian Waskar Ari. I draw on Ari's work both conceptually and historiographically. In Chapter Three I outline in more specific detail how Ari's work informs my work on the *caciques apoderados*. Here I provide a general overview of how I apply the thesis advanced by Ari within the overall project. In *Earth Politics: Religion, Decolonization, and Bolivia's Indigenous Intellectuals* (2014), Ari addresses the *Alcaldes Mayores Particulares* (AMP), or autonomous Indigenous leaders, a diffuse political network of Indigenous leaders active between 1920 and 1960 across 489 cells in five regions in Bolivia (2014: 4). Ari focuses on the activities of five men: Santos Marka T'ula, Gregorio Titiriku, Melitón Gallardo, Toribio Miranda, and Andres Jach'aqullu. Ari departs from the existing historiography in employing the term *Alcaldes Mayores Particulares* to describe the network of Indigenous leaders. The title *alcaldes mayores* derived from colonial and nineteenth century terminology for town authorities and Indian leaders. I address the implications of these colonial titles appearing in the early twentieth century in more detail in Chapter Two. He argues that the AMP emerged from a network of *apoderados* and *caciques* led by Santos Marka T'ula in the 1920s. At first the AMP was only one of many factions in the network; only in 1936 did it become a completely different group and take the name *Alcaldes Mayores Particulares*. (2014: 6). Ari states that in 1936, two *alcaldes mayores*, Titiriku and Miranda added '*Particulares'* to their assumed titles so as to deviate themselves from a parallel movement of Indigenous activists who were campaigning for state sponsored schools in rural areas at that time (2014: 53). In contrast, Titiriku sought education run by and for Indigenous communities themselves.

Ari argues that a central component of the AMP's programme of decolonisation was the 'Indian law' which essentially advocated for two separate republics: one Indian and the other white and Spanish-descendant. This reproduced the colonial-era *Republica de Indios* and the *Republica de Españoles,* but held a particular appeal within the 'subaltern nationalism' advanced by the AMP (Ari, 2005). Ari's thesis is that the AMP linked the Indigenous socio-spiritual concepts of Pachamama and the Achachilas [ancestral spirits] to a political struggle to overturn the colonial structures that subjugated Indigenous people in twentieth century Bolivia. Ari's concept of 'earth politics' refers to the importance attributed by the AMP to earth, nature and the Aymara belief system. I build on Ari's work to apply his insights to the *caciques apoderados* operating around La Paz, whose efforts I address in Chapter Two. I also draw on the 'earth politics' thesis within my work on the *kataristas* and the peasant union confederation, the *Confederacion Sindical Unica de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia* (CSUTCB), which explicitly invoked Indigenous concepts such as Pachamama as part of their struggles. I therefore expand Ari's thesis to address the ecological and agrarian issues developed within the mobilising efforts of the *caciques apoderados* and the political programme of the *kataristas*.

Methods

In this section I will outline the methods used in this interdisciplinary research project. It is informed by literature from anthropology, history and the environmental humanities and is grounded in qualitative historical methods.

The findings of this research project derive from five months fieldwork undertaken between September 2019 and February 2020 in Bolivia, which built on the shorter period of fieldwork

I conducted in La Paz in 2018 for my Masters programme. This was structured as three months in La Paz and two months in Sucre. In La Paz I drew on physical materials housed in MUSEF, the Archive of La Paz, the Archive of the Vice Presidency, the Municipal Library as well as interviews conducted with Bolivia based scholars. In Sucre I drew on physical collections housed in the National Archive and Library of Bolivia (ABNB). In addition, I spent several months using collections based within the UK. I also sourced a small number of prints from the digital collections at the Institute of Social History in Amsterdam.

As I outlined in the Introduction, this project addresses the question as to how the environment and 'nature' was understood by highland Indigenous political actors in twentieth century Bolivia. It will trace the role and function of the environment in Indigenous politics from the early twentieth century until 1990, examining the environment as a vehicle by which Indigenous movements made wider contestations around state, race, and class. To answer these questions, this project uses historical methods and draws on periodicals, pamphlets, trade union reports, audio recordings and written petitions produced by Indigenous movements between 1920-1990, as well as state and regional government reports and published literary works. One of the major challenges prior to undertaking fieldwork was lack of prior knowledge regarding the collections that existed and how far they could prove useful in achieving my research aims. Although I initiated contact with a large number of scholars to obtain information in advance, I had a limited amount of information to work with. Like many other researchers, I came across materials in the archives which although highly interesting, were not strictly relevant to this project.

In Chapter One I assess elite constructions of race and space, using the published texts of non-Indigenous writers which I accessed in the British Library and translated myself. I also used texts which I accesses in the UMSA university library in La Paz. I use textual analysis to explore the ways in which these writers constructed the altiplano as an 'Indian' space.

The findings in Chapter Two on the *caciques apoderados* derive from primary sources retrieved from the collection entitled *Expedientes de la Prefectura* housed in the Archive of La Paz. I took photos of these documents on my phone where possible and later typed up these documents with the invaluable help of a research assistant, Helga Cauthin in Bolivia. I translated these myself.

For my chapter on the CSUTCB, I assess audio recordings of CSUTCB national and regional congresses between 1984 and 1989 housed in the Museo Nacional de Etnografía y Folklore (Museum of Folklore and Ethnography, MUSEF) in La Paz. The congresses were a forum in which internal proposals were debated, grievances aired, and strategies adopted. They were central to the functioning of the union and to the dissemination of its political programmes. The recordings of these meetings are invaluable in answering the questions posed in this chapter because they offer extensive insight into the CSUTCB's political and organisational priorities within the 1980s as well as a record of internal frustrations and viewpoints which do not always appear in the official publications of the CSUTCB. They thus are a useful addition to the printed materials disseminated by the CSUTCB, which I also examine in this project.

I listened to sixteen separate recordings of CSUTCB congresses dated between 1984 and 1989 which total around two hundred hours of audio time, and many of the meetings spanned several days. There were no available recordings of meetings prior to 1984. I compiled

focused transcripts for eight of these recordings. The passages I quote in this paper are drawn from these selected transcripts. The purpose of the transcripts is not to enable a detailed linguistic analysis but to capture key points arising from these meetings, and especially those that touch on questions of ecology, environment, or ethnicity. The transcripts themselves can therefore be considered subjective and interpretive. I am grateful to my funder, CHASE, for providing an invaluable training session in winter 2018 on Transcription which foregrounded my approach to producing transcripts.

The majority of the recorded meetings are conducted in Spanish, but the Quechua and Aymara languages occasionally feature, especially in the departmental meetings. I draw my findings from speeches made in the Spanish language only. In many of the recordings it is difficult to discern what is said due to poor audio quality, background noise and music or vocalisations such as whistles and shouts. In others, attendees begin to speak without introducing themselves or with their introductions cut off. Any errors in comprehension, transcription or translation are my own.

In addition to these recordings, within my chapters on the CSUTCB (Four) and *katarismo* (Five), I also make extensive use of pamphlets, published interviews and documents from the wider peasant movement throughout the 1970s and 1980s derived from archival research in the Archivo y Biblioteca Nacionales de Bolivia (National Archives and Library, ABNB) in Sucre as well as from public collections located in the British Library, Senate House Library, London, and the Bodleian Library, Oxford in the UK. These include documents published by the CSUTCB, as well as non-governmental organisations such as the Centro de Información y Documentación de Bolivia (Bolivian Centre for Information and Documentation, CIDOB). For material relating to agrarian reform I made use of papers in the Walter Guevara Arze

archive at the ABNB as well as newspapers from the period. I assess *katarista* press titles including *Boletín Chitakolla, Collasuyo, Katarismo* and assorted other titles published between c.1970 and c.1990 retrieved from the ABNB. In using recordings of the CSUTCB meetings, I draw partly on decolonial methodologies derived from oral history, in other words, a collective approach which aims to centre the voices of historical protagonists themselves and embrace the subjectivities which emerge through oral testimonies (Rivera, 1987).

Wider difficulties in pursuing research aims

This is a dissertation which has been realised during a coup d'etat in Bolivia and a global pandemic. These two major developments impacted the research in different ways. In late September 2019, I arrived in La Paz to complete interviews and undertake archival research. After the presidential elections on October 20 showed Morales had won by a narrow margin, right-wing opposition forces, known as '*pititas'* in reference to their blockades made of string, took to the streets to protest. Morales was eventually forced to flee in exile, the MAS government was toppled, and a period of protracted upheaval ensued. I witnessed daily protests by opposition and pro-MAS social forces and was tear-gassed when I attended a funeral march in Plaza San Francisco for victims of protestors massacred by the police in in Senkata, near La Paz under orders of the coup government led by President Jeanine Áñez.

The initial lack of international media presence in the country, combined with the Bolivian state's closure of borders meant that my testimony was suddenly solicited by foreign media organisations. I wrote numerous articles on these political developments for international progressive, and left-aligned press outlets such as Novara media, Jacobin, Counterpunch,

Telesur and NACLA as well as other foreign broadcasting outlets. Fortuitously, a few months before leaving for Bolivia I had attended a Broadcast Media Training with the BBC journalist Rachel Shabi, organised by my funder CHASE.

However, aside from a foray into live television, the coup generated a number of significant difficulties for the delivery of my research plan. For many weeks, the Archivo de La Paz and the library at UMSA were shut as daily protests paralysed the city. The road blockades meant travel around the city was extremely difficult except on foot and there were food and gas shortages in La Paz which added further complications. I found it impossible to arrange interviews with academics, activists and with the individual contacts in the CSUTCB that I had obtained from my colleague Sue Iamamoto, to whom I very grateful. It was my intention, for example, to speak with those involved with the THOA in order to enquire about archival materials and possibilities for conducting interviews with key protagonists from the group. The THOA was a ground-breaking oral history project launched in the 1980s in La Paz. Its work is discussed throughout this dissertation. I made contact with Roberto Quispe from the THOA, who graciously met with me at the THOA building in San Pedro, La Paz, alongside two other members, where we discussed my project aims. This initial meeting took place shortly after the first round of elections. After this meeting I did not hear from Roberto again, and my messages to arrange a follow-up meeting went unanswered as the protests against Morales intensified. I can only assume that the upheaval made people reluctant to meet with strangers as well as logistically difficult due to the disruption of roads and public transport.

In January 2020 the political situation had calmed so I travelled to the city of Sucre to access materials in the archives. I decided to postpone my interview collection in order to prioritise archival research, and made plans to return to Bolivia later in 2020. However, the other major

disruption was, of course, the Covid-19 pandemic. In practical terms, my plans to return to Bolivia after the coup to complete a round of interviews in summer 2020, and then in 2021 were repeatedly shelved due to lockdowns and travel restrictions. The physical spaces of university and public libraries in the UK were also closed meaning I was left without access to printed resources for months. And not least, like many others, the uncertainty, gloom and social isolation generated by successive lockdowns greatly affected my life in an unforeseeable way. Conferences, seminars and training sessions were cancelled, including my own plans to organise a large three day international conference at my university.

To circumvent the loss of access to physical collections presented by the pandemic and its lockdowns, I devoted more time to seeking digital resources. The Bolivian grassroots intellectual collective Jichha has amassed a huge online collection of books, videos, podcasts and articles covering Bolivian politics and history on its website, which proved invaluable. Moreover, an unexpected upside of the universal lockdowns in the Covid-19 era was the flurry of Zoom events and online lectures in Bolivia and the world which suddenly made academic and activist discussions newly accessible when thousands of miles away. For example, with a small group of colleagues in the UK, I co-organised a major international symposium, "*Processes of Change in Bolivia: The Legacies of La Comuna and Future Pathways for Bolivian Left Currents*" in April 2021. The event brought together scholars and activists from Bolivia for a critical discussion on the theme of political crises in Bolivia which centred the contributions of the *Grupo Comuna* intellectual project (see p.17). Additionally, in November 2020 I chaired a fascinating panel discussion for NACLA on the Bolivian elections with scholars Marxa Chavez, Gabriel Hetland, Carwil Bjork-James and Kathryn Ledebur. I also regularly participated in Zoom events hosted by Alborada, the progressive media outlet

on Latin American politics for which I am a contributing editor. The insights I have gleaned from these collaborations have been an important part of this project's trajectory.

Training

Prior to the pandemic, I benefited from a number of doctoral training opportunities offered by CHASE and by the University of Essex. I mentioned above the Broadcast Training event which unexpectedly proved so helpful. In addition, I attended a particularly illuminating course on 'Transcribing Interviews and Focus groups' in November 2018. The session impressed upon me that transcripts of conversations and interviews do not represent neutral, uncomplicated sets of data but are better considered as a stage in analysis in themselves. In effect, a transcript is a partial attempt to reconstruct, rather than preserve, an interview or conversation. The session made me reflect, therefore, on what information is captured in a transcript and what may be omitted by me the transcriber either unconsciously or by design. In light of this, I suggest that the transcripts that I produced of the CSUTCB meetings which form the basis of Chapter Four must therefore be considered subjective and partial.

Secondly, the UK Oral History Society's Spring School in April 2019 was extremely rewarding, introducing me to key debates and themes within the oral history sub-discipline. I draw indirectly on the methodology of oral history in my approach to the CSUTCB audio recordings.

Thesis outline and research questions

The central problem that my research project addresses is the need to historicise the changing purpose and importance of 'nature', ecology, and environment within highland Bolivian Indigenous movements in the twentieth century. Specifically, my dissertation aims to

accommodate the presence of the non-human within human worlds. In order to develop this argument, I draw on recent debates in from the anthropology discipline surrounding Indigenous cosmopolitics (de la Cadena, 2010; 2015: Blaser, 2013) and scholarship on decolonisation in the Americas (Rivera, 1984; Quijano, 2005; Escobar, 2008; Mignolo, 2012; Santos, 2014). This project examines the influences which shaped the environmental politics of Indigenous movements across the twentieth century in highland Bolivia and therefore addresses the following questions:

- How did non-Indigenous and Indigenous protagonists in twentieth century Bolivia frame land, landscape, and ecology as a political problem?
- What was the relationship between ecological discourses and the insurgent Indigenous politics of the twentieth century?

This dissertation addresses these questions through the following structure:

I begin in Chapter Three by analysing elite perspectives on race and space. I argue that in the early years of the twentieth century, Bolivian elites identified the unforgiving landscape of the *altiplano* as decisive in shaping the psychology and social conditions of Indigenous peoples. In this way, the highlands became reimagined as a distinctly 'Indian' space. I therefore reveal that Indigenous-peasant movements in the twentieth century were forced to contend with pre-existing discourses linking specific types of natural space with indigeneity. It addresses my first research question because this cultural context is vital to understanding the ways in which Indigenous movements such as the *caciques apoderados,* whom I discuss subsequently, mobilised in defence of their lands. It also shows the origins of the intellectual milieu in which the environmental discourses of the CSUTCB and the *kataristas* emerged.

Chapter Four explores the network of Indigenous leaders known as *caciques apoderados* operating in the highlands in the Department of La Paz between c.1910-1930. I draw on petitions and documents from the *caciques apoderados* which testify to the problems of land usurpation and persecution facing Indigenous communities in the highlands in this period. I use this chapter to introduce my interpretation of Joan Martinez-Alier's and Ramachandra Guha's 'environmentalism of the poor' thesis to argue that the resistance of the *caciques* represent an environmental struggle 'not yet discovered'. This chapter addresses my first research question by showing that struggles for territory in the early twentieth century were not framed as explicitly environmental, but historians can nonetheless frame their defence of land and ways of life as profoundly ecological.

Chapter Five analyses the environmental politics of the CSUTCB, the major peasant union confederation. Using audio recording and printed materials I show how ecology and the other-than-human was identified as central to the political programme of the *campesino* movement. My findings are crucial in showing that ecology was an important facet of the movement's emergent focus on indigeneity, and that this came to fruition under the parameters of organised labour. Chapter Six builds directly on Chapter Five to look at the *katarista* movement more widely, encompassing its intellectual and electoral dimensions. This chapter places emphasis on the environment and the non-human as an under-explored facet of *katarismo*. *Kataristas* were acutely aware of the ecological dimensions of imperialist commodity extraction, and the importance of other-than human beings - mountains, glaciers, animals, plants- within Indigenous-*campesino* ontologies. The CSUTCB and the wider peasant movement articulated a role for these other-than-human beings, and implicitly contested the erasure of non-humans from the political by other actors such as the miner-

dominated trade union confederation, the Central Obrera Boliviana (Bolivian Workers' Central, COB) and national government.

Chapter Three: Children of the Altiplano: Elite constructions of race and space in Bolivia 1900-1950

The land was not only Pachamama. The sayaña *[land] is the requirement of personal independence.*

- René Zavaleta Mercado[1]

Introduction

In this chapter I focus on the first half of the twentieth century when the natural world became the locus of analysis for reformist politicians and intellectuals in Bolivia. By drawing on a register of political and cultural writings from Bolivian creole intellectuals between 1920 and 1950, I explore how conceptualisations of geography were marshalled within the racial ideologies of twentieth century Bolivia. I attempt to address the question as to why geography - and specifically, the Andean highlands - became so important to elite understandings of race in early twentieth century Bolivia. Understanding this development is important because as evidenced in subsequent chapters, this would become the context in which Indigenous peoples articulated their own discourses on the environment and land rights. Through this chapter I show that Indigenous-peasant movements in the later twentieth century were forced to contend with pre-existing discourses linking specific types of natural space with indigeneity.

[1] Zavaleta Mercado, René. 2009 (1983). p. 240.

Theories linking the natural world and racial characteristics circulated in Europe and the Americas from the Enlightenment. In his 1748 work *The Spirit of Laws,* French philosopher Montesquieu developed a hypothesis that climate was the determining factor in political and social life. He posited that, 'great heat enervates the strength and courage of men, and that in cold climates they have a certain vigour of body and mind, which renders them patient and intrepid, and qualifies them for arduous enterprises.' (2006: 291). From the nineteenth century, as eugenicist theories of racial improvement circulated across the world, the ideas of French biologist Jean Baptiste Lamarck (1744-1829) garnered immense traction with Latin American scientific community (Stepan, 1991). Lamarck pioneered a theory of heredity which emphasised the role of environmental factors on genetic inheritance; environmental change, including in the physical environment, could result in an improved genetic stock.

At the same time, the doctrine of environmental determinism - the belief that the physical environment dictates societal development - became increasingly popular across the Americas. Geographer Stephen Frenkel has highlighted how US authorities overseeing the Panama canal construction in the early twentieth century drew on theories regarding the suitability of different races to specific climates to rationalise the underpayment of black West Indian canal employees relative to whites, for example (1992). Historical geographer David Livingstone similarly identifies what he calls a 'moral discourse' of climate in the scientific geographical conversations of the nineteenth century, whereby the vocabulary of climate was enlisted to substantiate judgements around racial difference. As he puts it, European geographers believed races had their proper places (Livingstone, 1991). Environmental determinism would have a decisive impact in the nation building projects undertaken by Bolivian elites in the pre-revolutionary years. I follow historian Marta Irorozqui in defining the Bolivian elite as a diverse group broadly united by a common ethnic background as

European descendants, shared cultural values and the possession of commercial, property and mining interests (1994: 13).

The modern state of Bolivia is arranged into three ecological zones across nine departments; the mountainous highlands, the temperate valleys and the tropical lowlands. However it was the Andean highlands which became central to racialised imaginaries of the nation in the twentieth century. That telluric expressions in politics and literature emerged at the same time as land and its ownership became an increasingly potent issue in Bolivia requires consideration. Creole elites imagined Andean space as vast, timeless and barren; an impediment to a modern, productive nation. In this chapter I use creole (*criollo*) to refer to persons of predominantly Spanish descent in Bolivia.

Concurrently, Indigenous rebellions and state massacres across the altiplano in the early twentieth century showcase how the rural world was also a space of violent contestation and racialised struggle. By the 1940s, at the end of the period explored here, demands from peasants and Indigenous communities for land reform were building which would eventually be addressed in through Agrarian Reform in 1953 as part of the Bolivian National Revolution. Indigenous communities were mobilising across the altiplano to petition regional authorities for land titles. Land formed the nexus of debates on modernisation and nation-building that were therefore far from esoteric. By examining this elite discourse I open questions as to the relationship between elite and Indigenous discourses on the environment in Bolivia. In doing so, this chapter frames a question I explore later; how did elite telluric evocations of the 'Indianised' natural space impact Indigenous movements' thinking on earth and landscape? By telluric, I am referring to the tendency to evoke land and landscape through a romantic and spiritual lens which is often applied to analyses of social phenomena.

Historical background: changes to land policy 1870-1900

By the end of the nineteenth century, a series of economic shifts profoundly changed the relationship between the Bolivian state and Indian populations. In the 1870s, around seventy percent of Bolivia's population of 1.4 million were Indigenous (Hylton and Thomson, 2007: 57). Until the mid nineteenth century, a major source of state revenue was the tax known as tribute that Indian communities were required to pay to the state. Tribute was originally imposed in the colonial period when Indians were governed under separate legal systems. Paying tribute was thus a marker of Indian status as a separate fiscal category. In a pioneering work, the ethnohistorian Tristan Platt characterised this relationship as a 'pact of reciprocity' in which Indian communities paid tribute as a guarantee that they would retain corporate rights to the land (1982). It ensured Indian communities could retain their lands because the state could not expropriate the land while it relied on the tribute income. However in the mid nineteenth century Latin American economies were transformed by an export boom facilitated by the rise of long distance railroads which allowed for greater domestic and international trade. As a result, the importance of tribute to the national economy was overtaken by taxation accrued from trade and silver exports (Jackson, 1994: 93). This meant the payment of tribute ceased to be a stable guarantee of land rights for Indian communities, paving the way for encroachments of Indian land. By 1869 the government had sold 600,000 hectares of community lands in the highland provinces of Omasuyos, Sicasica and Pacajes in the Department of La Paz (Jackson, 1994: 73). I explore this process in further detail in the following chapter.

This process escalated following the passage of the *Exvinculación* (Disentailment) Law of 1874 which precipitated the loss of extensive Indian lands by opening them up to privatisation and sale. The law attempted to abolish forms of communal land tenure and initiate the individualisation of land titling. To implement it, the government sent officials knows as *revistadores* to measure the land with a view to creating individual parcels, a practice which was resisted by most Indigenous communities. Nonetheless in the 1880s, one third of community lands were alienated, most of them in the department of La Paz (Hylton and Thomson, 2007: 53). This led to revolts by affected communities which were met with state-sanctioned repression. In 1891 hacienda owners petitioned the Conservative government to deter Indigenous revolt by stationing cavalry troops in highlands to suppress revolt, and to capture Indigenous leaders accused of agitating rebellion (Choque, 2017: 24). The 1874 law hence heralded an escalation of assaults on Indigenous lands which had begun in earnest in the 1860s.

The Federal War 1898-1899

This pattern of land conflict would emerge as an important factor in the Federal War of 1898-1899, also known as the Civil War. The Federal War merits brief discussion here because it was instrumental in shifting the relationship between Indian communities and the state in the early twentieth century. The war pitted Conservatives against Liberals in a conflict over the political direction of the state, and ultimately resulted in a conclusive change in the balance of power. The Conservatives wanted political power concentrated in Sucre, whereas the Liberals advocated a federal model centred in La Paz, close to the new lucrative tin mining industry. In political terms, the War is particularly important for the large-scale involvement of Indigenous Aymara forces who were allied with the Liberal army under General José Manuel

Pando. As war broke out, the Liberal-supporting propertied interests around La Paz realised they needed additional support from Indian communities to win victory against the more militarily-powerful Conservatives.

Recent historiography has identified Aymara participation in the Civil war as instrumental in the formation of separatist Aymara political consciousness (Hylton and Thomson, 2007). Aymara peoples from territories across the highlands, in Oruro, southern La Paz and northern Potosí, joined forces with Liberals under the leadership of Aymara military-political commander Pablo Zarate Willka, (the prestigious title *Willka* means sun in Aymara). Aymara involvement in the war arose in the context of escalating conflict between hacienda owners and Indigenous communities in the highlands following the Disentailment Law (Choque, 2016). In return for their participation, Aymara peoples hoped first and foremost to achieve the restitution of the status of the *tierras de origen,* the community lands which had been usurped (Irurozqui. 2000). However following their victory, the Liberals distanced themselves from their erstwhile Aymara allies citing Aymara plans to enact a 'race war' (Kuenzli, 2013). A letter from Pando to the Conservative Severo Fernández in 1899 demonstrates this. He writes, "For no one is unaware of the evils that the current internal war is producing; To these may be added, as an inevitable result, those of the war of races, which already occurs on the impulse of the Indigenous race' (Cajías et al, 2001: 603)

This fear reached its apogee in the Mohoza trial (1901-19040 following a massacre of 1899 in which Aymara soldiers killed an allied contingent of Liberal soldiers as a reprisal for abuses committed against them (Gotkowitz, 2007: 37; Hylton and Thomson, 2007: 55). In the trial, Aymara Indians were accused of looting and murdering townspeople. This was touted by creoles as evidence for Aymara savagery and their desire to enact a 'race war'. 'Liberals',

argue Hylton and Sinclair, 'had betrayed, then crushed their Indian allies in the name of civilisation and national consensus' (2007: 59). The war had given rise to new Indian-creole alliances but ultimately re-affirmed the exclusion of Indians from full citizenship in the eyes of elites, both Conservative and Liberal.

How to interpret Aymara participation in the Federal War has divided historians. The (possibly limited) role that an Indian political project played within the national uprising also speaks to a wider debate about Indigenous peoples and their relationship with the postcolonial state. Historian Gabrielle Kuenzli argues that Aymara peoples' involvement in the Federal War arose from a sense of national belong and their aim for inclusion in the state, rather than a rejection of it (2013: 54). In this she departs from much recent historiography which has identified Aymara participation in the Civil war as instrumental in the formation of separatist Aymara political consciousness (Hylton and Thomson, 2007). In particular, Roberto Choque stresses the separatist elements within Aymara mobilisation and argues that they were motivated primarily by a singular desire to abolish the 1874 law which had proven catastrophic to Indian land holdings and autonomy (2017: 58). In this way the involvement of Indigenous communities in the War should be seen as the continuation of historic actions against dispossession, economic exploitation and enforced labour known as *pongueaje* (Choque, 2017: 15).

The War irreparably broke the influence of the traditional elites and the silver mining aristocracy known as the 'patriarchs of silver' associated with the Conservative party under President Severo Fernández Alonso. It ensured the ascendancy of the Liberals whose support came from the new bourgeoisie accumulating wealth from trade and tin. In spatial terms, the locus of economic power shifted from the city of Sucre and towards the city of La Paz in the

north because silver mining was concentrated in the Conservative-dominated cities of Sucre and Potosi with the tin mines in the Liberal highland north around La Paz and Oruro. As I discuss later, this redistribution of spatial hegemony is important in understanding why elites became so interested in understanding the highland space which surrounds La Paz.

The War also resulted in new attention paid by elites to Bolivia's Indigenous peoples. Following the war, the Liberals may have condemned Aymara combatants as 'savages' but some degree of Indian rehabilitation was needed to ensure that their own victory was not tainted by association. Kuenzli outlines how at the same time that fears of an Aymara race war abounded in the press, Liberal intellectuals became interested in the pre-conquest history of Aymara peoples. Specifically, intellectuals devoted their time to recovering a noble - but firmly distant - Aymara past centred in the ruins at Tiahuanaco near La Paz. This served to sanitise the figure of the vengeful, violent Aymara which was circulated by Conservative supporting newspapers during the war (Kuenzli, 2013: 56-59). Seemin Qayum elsewhere notes that the emphasis on Tiahuanaco as a site of pre-Inca history allowed creole elites and the burgeoning archeology community in Bolivia to invoke a distinctly Bolivian ancient past, circumventing the Cusco-based Incas in Peru (2012: 160-161). In this way, Bolivian creole intellectuals fashioned a Bolivia-specific *indigenismo* as the basis of a cultural nationalist project.

Forging a spatial politics of progress 1900-1920

The dawn of the twentieth century in the aftermath of the war heralded a 'collective exercise of national introspection and moral self-critique' for Bolivian elites (Larson, 2005: 201). The nineteenth century was blighted by political turmoil, *caudillismo* and factionalism. Meanwhile

Bolivia's defeat to Chile in the War of the Pacific in 1884 had resulted in the catastrophic loss of its coastal territory. The task for the twentieth century was hence to craft a unified and modern Bolivian nation. In 1900 Bolivia had a population of around 1.6 million; half were Indian and almost three quarters lived in the countryside (Zulawski, 2000). Andean elites identified the large population of Indians who dwelt at the economic and spatial margins of the nation as the primary obstacle to this endeavour. As I argue here, for reformists a related obstacle lay more fundamentally in the territory itself due to the perception that it was intimately connected with the Indian.

However while elites in the twentieth century occupied themselves with formulations on the ancient Aymara civilisation, rebellions amongst contemporary Indians were spreading across the Altiplano, notably in the provinces of Ingavi, Omasuyos, Los Andes, Pacajes, Murillo and Sicasica in the Department of La Paz. Major uprisings in Jesus de Machaca in 1921, and in Chayanta (Northern Potosi) in 1927 arose in part out of Indigenous communities' frustration with encroachments on to their land as a result of Exvinculación Law of 1874. But between 1900 and 1920 the Liberal party continued enacting policies which undermined communal land tenure. As I explore in the subsequent chapter, as a result this period saw the rise of community appointed representatives known as *caciques apoderados,* who petitioned local authorities to restore land titles and mobilised over wider issues such as Indigenous education and political rights, building on a longer history of colonial and Republican-era organizing by Indigenous leaders. It was in this context of escalating rural conflict that elites devoted close attention to the connections between race and rural space.

Historiography of race and space

The concepts of race and space have increased attracted attention in Andean scholarship in recent decades, but largely in the Peruvian rather than Bolivian case. In an influential paper, Peruvian historian Cecilia Mendez attempts to account for why a clear cut division had emerged by the twentieth century in Peru between coast and *sierra* (mountains), the former imagined as belonging to white-*mestizos*, the latter to Indians (2011). She argues that the connection between race and geography in Peru - which sees 'Indian' as equivalent to the pejorative term '*serrano'* (a person from the hills or mountains) - can be traced back to the nineteenth century rather than to the colonial period as argued in existing scholarship (ibid).

The conceptualisation of mountain areas as backward, poverty-stricken, and thus an obstacle to liberal notions of progress emerged in the postcolonial period as Peruvian elites were confronted with changing economic imperatives. The nineteenth century reorientation of the economy 'from silver to guano', or in other words, away from mining centres in the mountains to commodity exports from Lima and the coast meant that many rural mountain areas fell into economic decline and their inhabitants became associated with poverty.

Mendez draws heavily on the work of Benjamin Orlove whose 1993 article explores what can be described as the spatialisation of the Indian in Peru. He points out that during the colonial period, (c.1542-1824) Indians were not considered by elites to reside in any specific region or place. The term Indian was a fiscal category so in theory Indians could be found anywhere (Mendez, 2011: 76). This changed in the Republican period when the colonial category of Indian was abolished and by the end of the nineteenth century a firm link was established between the mountains and Indians. A consequent effect was the erasure of Indians from coastal and jungle regions in geographical discourse. Orlove argues that whereas colonial ideas historicised racial differences between Andean peoples, postcolonial ideas about race

rested on naturalised differences according to place (1993). In representations of space, republican geographers depicted mountains as vast barriers, rather than integrating them with lower areas as in colonial era mapping. This was part of a reconceptualisation of Peruvian space as whole, reflected in an uptake in mapping, mountain exploration and an enthusiasm for modern science generally.

As part of this, Republican writers drew on theories of environmental determinism, believing that in the desolate landscapes of the highlands Indians were compelled to an isolated and melancholy existence. The result was that 'the Indians became the people of the highlands, the highlands the place of the Indians.' (1993: 325). A discourse that spoke about integrating the highlands into the nation thus became an implicit way of talking about integrating Indians in an era in which Indigenous peoples were nominally citizens rather than Indians.

It is for this reason that, as art historian Natalia Majluf argues, in contrast with Europe, landscape as a visual and literary representation only took hold in the Andes in the late nineteenth century and never became more than a marginal element in aesthetic tastes. She notes that 'the idea of an inherent beauty existing in nature was not applied to the specificity of Andean geography', which instead was perceived as an obstacle to economic development (2000).

In Bolivian historiography, Brooke Larson identifies the early years of the twentieth century as a pivotal moment in the creation of a new political culture, as elites distanced themselves from European racial theories in their attempts to visualise a modern liberal state (2005). Larson suggests elites repudiated a racial policy in the social Darwinist tradition which dictated that Indians must either disappear, or assimilate into the white-*mestizo* population.

Instead, for intellectuals the Indian was in fact, as a 'necessary fixture of the rural landscape' because in the absence of large scale immigration, production depended on a mass of Indian labour in rural areas and in mines (2005: 232). Improving, rather than eradicating, the Indian rural labour force in the interests of agrarian capitalism was therefore the priority for reformist elites in the early twentieth century (ibid). I argue that a similar process took place in relation to Andean landscape, as elites formulated ideas about increasing its economic productivity on the one hand, and re-habilitating it as a site of cultural and historical value on the other. Both of these ideas were tied up with racialised notions of progress because they related to the land's fundamental connection with indigeneity.

It should be pointed out that the connection between the highlands and Indians did not conform to an obvious demographic reality because a diverse number of Indians were understood to be present in lowland areas. Indeed, Indigenous groups such as the Moxo Indians formed a large part of the labour force coerced into rubber extraction during the rubber boom of the late nineteenth century for example (Vallvé, 2010; Van Valen, 2013).

Cultural theorist Javier Sanjines has explored the connection between telluric literary expressions and discourses on race and nation in the works of Alcides Arguedas and Franz Tamayo (2016: 2005). He places this within debates around *mestizaje* in Bolivia and Latin America around the turn of the century. By *mestizaje*, I am referring to the theory of racial and cultural mixture between African, Indigenous and White/Europeans which permeated Latin America from the nineteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries. The ideology had both assimilationist and appropriative dimensions, and was intimately connected with nation building projects across the continent. Tamayo is most associated with initiating a discourse of national *mestizaje* in his 1910 work *Creación de la pedagogía nacional* (Creation of a National Pedagogy) which locates a moral energy in Bolivia's Indigenous population but a

superior intelligence in its white citizens (Sanjines, 2004). Sanjines argues that thinkers linked with *telurismo* (telluric tendencies) in the 1920s drew on Tamayo's political vision (2004: 69). But whereas Tamayo focused on *mestizaje* as an analytical starting point for thinking through race, these writers centred the geographic environment. Cultural historian Ximena Soruco has also extensively addressed the literary texts of the period 1910-1930 through the lens of the '*cholo*'- the racialised historical protagonist who migrates fron the countryside to the city in order to engage in commercial trade (2011). I build on Sanjines and Soruco's work by focusing my analysis on less appraised *modernista* intellectuals and by connecting *telurismo* with a racialised politics of landscape which in some instances, provided a tacit justification for further land dispossession.

In this chapter I additionally complement cultural historian Michela Coletta's work on the role of the natural environment in the racialised nation building projects undertaken in Argentina. In the nineteenth century, the Argentine interior territory was understood to constitute an obstacle to civilisation with the 'hostile solitude' of the empty *pampa* juxtaposed with the civilised metropolis of Buenos Aires. Populating the interior, preferably with white European settlers, was therefore framed as a civilising endeavour tied up with nation building. In doing so, Coletta argues the territory itself came to acquire a racial character in elite imaginaries (2019).

Historian José Luis Roca addresses regionalism by framing the history of Bolivia as a struggle between regions - east and west- rather than opposing classes, for example (1999: 39). In particular, Roca argues that regional struggle between east and west (or c*ollas* and *cambas*, in other words) acquired a racial dimension in the later years of the twentieth centuries (2008:

81). In this article I suggest that this racialised regionalism has a genealogy stretching to the earlier twentieth construction of the altiplano as a uniquely Indianised space.

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The rise of La Paz and highlands as the hegemonic site of economic power sparked new interest from Bolivian elites in conceptualising the Andean space. It was in this context that geographic societies were established in Sucre in 1886, and 1889 in La Paz, by urban intellectuals. The Societies devoted themselves to the dissemination and discussion of scientific ideas, history and the natural world, particularly in relation to Bolivia's geographic environment. Both societies included geography in their names, indicating the importance attached to region and space at this time. Geography was perceived as central to efforts to understand the Bolivian national psyche, and to connect its physical environment with its historical origins. The uptake in scholarly interest by individuals associated with the Geographic societies is evident in a number of self-consciously scientific studies devoted to the highlands. One of the most prolific authors was statesman Manuel Rigoberto Paredes, who published a large number of his observations on the folklore, culture and geography of the altiplano provinces, notably in works such as *La Altiplanicie; Descripción de la Provincia Omasuyus* (1914), a 'scientific' text in which Paredes dissects the geology, climate and topology of the altiplano in careful detail. Born to a prosperous *mestizo* landowning family in Carabuco, Camacho province, Paredes is distinguished from the other writers examined here in that he spoke Aymara fluently and came from a long line of *caciques*, or Indigenous authorities (Larson, 2005). He would later become the Head of the Chamber of Deputies in the 1940s and head of the Supreme Court in the early 1940s (Thomson, 1987: 8).

In addition to Paredes, Alcides Arguedas and Franz Tamayo were the two most prominent Bolivian essayists of the early twentieth century whose works have been well documented in existing scholarship. I here focus primarily on a sub-set of modernist intellectuals, drawing on selected political and cultural writings by Bolivian *ensayistas* (essayists) Jaime Mendoza, Pastor Valencia Cabrera, Daniel Peréz Velasco and Arturo Vilela. These thinkers conform to a telluric tendency that emerged in Bolivia in the early twentieth century which Bolivian intellectual Guillermo Francovich later described as '*la mística de la tierra*' —mysticism of the earth (1956: 103) The texts penned by these *místicos* arose in the context of elite debates around the Indian problem, or in other words, the role that Indigenous peoples should play in the modern nation state. Their writings reveal a pervasive concern with the natural world and its inhabitants as an obstacle to nation building and political reform in the early twentieth century.

Jaime Mendoza (1874-1939) was a Sucre-born *ensayista,* politician and medical doctor who practiced with impoverished people and miners living on the altiplano. He helped to found hospitals and schools in the Uncía, Llallagua and Catavi mining centres and served as a senator for the Department of Chuquisaca. Mendoza's writings, which were widely disseminated by the Geographic Society of Sucre, epitomise the *geograficista* tendency in Bolivian intellectual history, that is to say, the idea that geography is central to explaining social reality. His writing is characterised by moralistic urgency; as writer Fernando Diez de Medina declares, 'Mendoza overcomes the despondency of the sociologist with the intuition of the dreamer' (2004: 7[2]). For Mendoza, all Bolivian history could be traced to its geographic

[2] *'Mendoza supera los desalientos del sociólogo con la intuición del soñador'.* Fernando Diez de Medina. *Franz Tamayo. El Hechicero del Ande.* (La Paz, Libreria Editorial "Juventud", 2004*).* https://jichha.blogspot.com/2020/02/franz-tanayo-hechicero-del-ande-de.html *7.*

environment; 'The environment was behind everything. It was behind all those motives that seem to explain human actions[3]'.

In examining the telluric influences on nationality, Mendoza repudiated the overt racism of contemporaries such as Alcides Arguedas. His tract *El factor geográfico en la nacionalidad boliviana* (1925) reflects on themes relating to the Andean cordillera, Bolivia's different eco-regions and Andean geology. Mendoza would expand on these ideas within his later work *El Macizo Boliviano* (1935). Both works can be seen as attempts to shake off the fetters of internalised Eurocentrism and understand Bolivian reality on its own terms. As cultural critic Maria Medieros Anaya notes, 'He does not sing to the Greek Olympian or to European muses'[4]. Political theorist Pablo Stefanoni has characterised Mendoza and similar writers as 'physical nationalists' (*nacionalistas fisicas*) (2010: 62). But it is specifically the Andean space, the altiplano, which is the primary basis of Bolivian nationhood; thus all Bolivians are 'children of the altiplano' (2016: 109) Mendoza rescues the altiplano from marginality and centres it as the basis of a future Bolivian nationhood.

Mendoza begins *El factor geográfico en la nacionalidad boliviana* by tracing the history of Bolivia from its ancient civilisations, through to the republican founding of the modern state. In what Sanjines calls the 'aestheticisation of politics' the Andean landscape is appropriated the basis of a new politics on race and nation (2004). Mendoza invokes the altiplano as a site of transcendental beauty, repudiating the language of sterility and harshness associated with

[3] *'El medio estaba detrás de todo. Estaba detrás de todos esos motivos que parecen explicar las acciones humanas'.* Jaime Mendoza. *El factor geográfico en la nacionalidad boliviana.* (La Paz, Biblioteca del Bicentenario de Bolivia, 2016) 82.
[4] *'No canta al Olimpio griego ni a musas europeas.',* Maria Teresa Medieros Anaya*, El hombre y la Tierra de Bolivia en dos Novelas de Jaime Mendoza,* (La Paz: Editorial "Los Amigos del Libro", 1969), 53

Arguedas and Vilela, who I discuss below. He affirms that it exerted a powerful metaphysical impact on the development of the pre-Columbian inhabitants who lived there.

> '[The Altiplano] is also beautiful, wildly beautiful. It has a sovereign majesty. .. There, so high up and in front of such distant horizons, ideas of infinity are awakened. It looks like one is going to fly. And this impression of the landscape … must have aroused in the primitive inhabitants of the Altiplano, tendencies towards the excessive, being reflected in the emblematic gestures of physical and mental greatness that still exist today, reproduced in the symbols of the megalithic monuments of Tihuanacu. (2016: 144)

A recurring theme is the reappraisal of the Bolivian altiplano as a centre of Inca civilisation in addition to Peru. Mendoza notes, 'the main centre of Inca power shifted towards the Andean city of Cuzco, but it is no less true than the great Massif continued being the fundamental pillar of the new empire (2016: 72)'[5]

Mendoza argues that this Massif gave rise to glorious ancient civilisations such as the *Tiwanakenses* (Tiahuanaco peoples), and therefore could be the basis of civilisation in the future, not least because the architectural achievements of Bolivia's pre-Inca civilisation is attributed to the propitious effects of their environment. Discussing the ruins of Tiahuanaco,

[5] *el centro principal del poderío incásico quedaba desplazado hacia la ciudad andina del Cuzco, pero no es menos cierto que el gran Macizo continuaba siendo el sustentáculo fundamental del nuevo imperio'.* Mendoza, *El Factor geográfico,* 72.

Mendoza notes that 'And these same monuments are also telling us another thing: that the environment in which that race acted, was not small to induce it to perform those wonders.'[6] Tiahuanaco stands as the abiding example of Bolivian achievement 'demonstrating how, since time immemorial, man has already found favorable conditions for his development in this land'(2016: 143). Mendoza certainly was not the first to locate Tiahuanaco as a site of profound national importance, a place connecting the modern Bolivian nation to a distant Indian past (Qayum, 2012). The Austrian born archaeologist Arthur Posnansky was a lauded thinker associated with the Geographic Society of La Paz. His works adhere to the scientific racism commonplace at the time (see his 1943 text '*Que Es Raza?'* for an emblematic example), but his magnum opus concerned the origins of the archeological site of Tiahuanaco, entitled *Tihuanacu, the Cradle of American Man* which was published in 1945 (Sammells, 2012; Qayum, 2012). Posnansky claimed that the site was originally built by American native peoples, but not by the Aymara, who Posnansky dismissed as a 'disgraced race' (1911, 46–49). In contrast, Mendoza sees a genealogy between the contemporary Aymara and the faded glory of Tiahuanaco, speculating 'and, around those ruins, other men arise, other peoples, other races. Who were they? We do not know. The only thing we know is which, before the advent of the Inca Empire, was nestled in the high Peruvian massif the race of the Quechuas and Aymara who to this day he survives here.' (2016: 70-71).

A reflection on the Andean space thus leads Mendoza to consider the position of Indians in Bolivian society because it is through them that Bolivia retains a connection with these past civilisations. He ponders whether the 'vitality' of the ancient civilisations endures in their Indian descendants for instance. who 'by the very fact of being enslaved, is a sad race today'

[6] *'Y estos mismos monumentos nos están diciendo además otra cosa: que el medio en que actuaba esa raza fue parte, y no pequeña, para inducirla a realizar esos prodigios.'* Mendoza. *El Factor geográfico,* 68-70.

(2016: 135) . By the standards of his time, Mendoza was empathetic to the plight of Bolivia's Indian population, noting that Indian '"uprisings", however much they are driven by legitimate motives, we crush them with sticks or bullets'[7]. He condemns genocidal actions enacted under the guise of civilisation by Bolivian creoles against Indians. 'More guilty is the civilised one who, knowingly and acting against his own principles of morality, mistreat and exterminate the Indian.'(ibid) [8]Ultimately, therefore the project of national unity is presented as both a geographic and a racial project. Mendoza concludes that 'if the Bolivian homeland can finally accomplish its geographical reintegration, it will not be that it does so thanks to the brilliance of its statesmen, but by leaning on the weather-beaten backs of its Indians (2016: 121) [9]'.

Daniel Perez Velasco's *La Mentalidad Chola en Bolivia*

If Mendoza focuses on the transformative power of the Andean landscape, the overlap between anti-miscegenation discourse and environmental determinism is evident in Daniel Perez Velasco's *La Mentalidad Chola en Bolivia* (The *Cholo* Mentality in Bolivia) which was first published in 1928. Perez Velasco was a relatively well known *literato* in his own time but has garnered less attention in the scholarship than contemporaries Alcides Arguedas and Franz Tamayo.

[7] '*Sus "alzamientos", por mucho que se produzcan al impulso de motivos legítimos, los aplastamos a palos o a bala.*' Ibid, 120.
[8] *'Más culpable es el civilizado que, a sabiendas y obrando contra sus propios principios de moralidad, maltrata y extermina al indio.'* Ibid, 120.
[9] *'cuando la patria boliviana pueda al fin marchar a la conquista de su reintegración geográfica, no será que lo haga precisamente merced a las luces de sus estadistas, sino apoyándose en las espaldas curtidas de sus indios.'* Ibid, 121.

Perez Velasco argues that the natural world has shaped the psychology of Indians who live in closer proximity to it than urban creoles. He notes, 'The American race has been, in principle, one which has taken different characteristics according to natural factors, climate, topography, diet, etc., where it has lived.'[10]. Like Mendoza, he believes the geography of Bolivia impedes national unity. 'And who would deny it, that these factors - race and geography - are the basis that justifies the natural reason of the nations. Bolivia, in truth, has lacked these two factors'.[11]

La Mentalidad Chola en Bolivia argues that as the metaphorical mixture of Spanish conquistador and Indian, the *cholo* is the basis - albeit undesirable - of Bolivian society. The term 'cholo' refers to mixed-race Bolivians or to Indigenous peoples who have relocated to urban environments . While both *mestizos* and *cholos* are mixed race, '*cholo'* implies a closer connection with indigeneity and is more pejorative (Soruco, 2011; Sanjines, 2004). In racial taxonomies, *cholos* are inferior to *mestizos* but superior to Indians. Alcides Arguedas considered the cholo 'the worst representative of the mestizo caste' for example (Soruco, 2011: 42**)**. In contrast with Peru, in twentieth century Bolivia it was not common for *mestizos* to be portrayed as the nucleus of a new mixed Bolivian nation in political and literary expressions. The mestizo was usually a 'corrupt and upstart' individual and routinely connected with both racial and political degeneracy (Soruco, 2011: 623). Enrique Finot's work *El cholo Portales* (1926), associates the mestizo with political despotism and duplicity for example (ibid).

[10] *'La raza en la America ha sido en principio, una sola, que ha tomado características diferenciales según los factores naturales, clima, topografía, alimentación, etc, donde ha vivido.'* Daniel Perez Velasco, *La Mentalidad Chola en Bolivia.* (La Paz, Editorial La Paz, 1928), 34.
[11] *!Y quien se atrevería a negarlo, que estos factores - raza y geografía - son la base que justifica la razón natural de las naciones. Bolivia, en verdad, ha carecido de estos dos factores',* Ibid, 45*)*

The influences of Alcides Arguedas are evident in the *La Mentalidad Chola en Bolivia.* Arguedas was perhaps the most prominent Bolivian creole *letrado* (man of letters) at the time although his theories of racial degeneration works received significant criticism from his contemporaries. Indianista thinker Fausto Reinaga describes him as a 'nazifascist', an 'idolater of white skin' who refused to accept his own 'copper face, for not looking in the mirror' (1960: 35). His essay *Pueblo Enfermo* (A Sick People), first published in 1909 is a polemic against *mestizaje*; for Arguedas the pathology at the heart of Bolivia arises from the displacement of Iberian influences through '*cholofication*', that is to say, the debilitating effect of racial mixing. Arguedas believed the racial mixing by Spanish conquistadores and Indians devalued the racial stock of both. In his study on Alcides Arguedas, the author Edmundo Paz Soldan frames Arguedas' thesis in *Pueblo Enfermo* as one of national degeneration arising from an irreconcilable 'ethnic problem' (1999). For Arguedas, geography, racial identity, and ethnicity were intimately connected in the collective psychology of the nation. Originally published in 1909 but revised twice further, *Pueblo Enfermo* was a noticeable influence on the texts explored here. 'The physical configuration of this solemn and desolate region has impressed, I repeat, hard features on the character and constitution of the Indian' (1979: 42). This contrasts with the more forgiving climates of the valleys where peoples have lighter skin and friendlier appearances (ibid). Whereas Mendoza for example emphasised *regeneration* through the spiritual vitality of the landscape and its effect on the Indian, Arguedas argued that the environment compelled Indians to be lazy, duplicitous and uncivilised. He described the Aymara people as 'wild and aloof like a forest beast, devoted to his pagan rites and to the cultivation of that sterile soil in which, no doubt, his race will soon end.' (Arguedas, 1979: 9) 'Note the hardness of character in the man of the high plateau, the dryness of sentiments, the total absence of aesthetic inclinations ... his character has the hardness and aridity of the wilderness' (ibid).

Whereas Arguedas developed a discourse of degeneration, Mendoza for example emphasised *regeneration* through the spiritual vitality of the landscape and its affect on the Indian. The environment compelled Indians to be lazy, duplicitous, uncivilised. He describes the Aymara people as 'savage and skittish as a wild forest animal, given to his pagan rites and to cultivating the sterile soil where, undoubtedly, his race will soon meet its end' (in Sanjines, 2016: 275) 'Note the hardness of character in the man of the high plateau, the dryness of sentiments, the total absence of aesthetic inclinations ... his character has the hardness and aridity of the wilderness. (ibid).

'selective determinism'

A pervasive idea that developed within the texts examined here was the notion that the influence of the environment affected some social groups more than others. Arturo Vilela (1913 - 1995), a *paceño* journalist and diplomat published a long essay entitled *Bolivia Intima* (Intimate Bolivia) in 1940. He advances the idea that Indians were more susceptible to climatic influences because they lacked 'civilisation'. 'The geographical factor plays a preponderant role in the life of the people. Its influence is decisive, especially in those who have not reached a higher level of culture and civilisation[12]' . The effects of climate could logically be off-set, therefore, by attaining higher standards in human development. In this way, a connection between proximity to the natural world and an absence of civilisation is created. For Vilela, the inhospitable surroundings of the Andes was a serious impediment to social progress. The 'forces and material elements [of nature] still constitute serious problems

[12] *'El factor geográfico juega un rol preponderante en la vida de los pueblos. Su influencia es decisiva, sobre todo en aquellos que no han alcanzado un nivel superior de cultura y civilización.',* Arturo Vilela, *Bolivia Intima*, (La Paz, Biblioteca Indoamerica, 1940), 41.

that hinder social development'[13] In this he is implicitly referring to the Indian as a fixture of these natural elements.

It should be pointed out that the racialised construction of uncivilised landscapes has a long history in colonial thought. In brief, modernity held that human progress entailed a severance from the wild and uncultivated natural world. In the Enlightenment English philosopher John Locke evoked North America as a wild, empty and unproductive space with barbaric peoples residing in uncultivated nature, for example (1988, II para. 37). Moreover, existence in uncultivated land was the very earliest stage in human development. The Italian philosopher Giambattista Vico reflected in 1710 that the linear passage of progress went as follows; "First the woods, then cultivated fields and huts, next little houses and villages, thence cities, finally academies and philosophers: this is the order of all progress from the first origins." (Smith, 2015: 1978). In this sense, the wild and hostile Andean natural space represented the country's failure to fashion a 'civilised' landscape in the European model. But for this same reason, for elites it could also form the aesthetic basis of a uniquely Andean modernity.

For Vilela, both the land and people of the altiplano were timeless, unmoving and ossified from civilisation. 'In these regions, social life, if it is not primitive, is little evolved. The vast fields of the Altiplano, inhospitable and cold, scarcely offer any production.'[14] He observes that the Indian populations did not utilise modern science to extract surpluses from the land. 'The agricultural regime has not emerged from colonial systems and uses. There is no machinery and no scientific methods are applied. Composting and watering are expected as

[13] *'Sus fuerzas y elementos materiales constituyen, todavía serios problemas que dificultan el desenvolvimiento social.',* Ibid. 42

[14] ' *En esas regiones la vida social si no es primitiva es poco evolucionada. Los extensos campos del Altiplano, inhóspitos y fríos, apenas si ofrecen menguada producción.*' Vilela*, Bolivia Intima,* 43.

miracles from heaven.' [15] Here, the construction of landscape as wild and uncultivated is part of a discourse on land productivity which castigates Indian communities for failing to use their lands productively.

The idea that Indians were not using their land productively was ever-present in the pre-revolutionary context. An article entitled '*Bolivia se Indigeniza*' (Bolivia is Indigenised) by Rafael Cruenta Tudela in the November 1944 bulletin of the Sucre Geographic Society observed, for instance, 'There is much talk there of love for the Indian and the need to remove him from the state of semi-savagery in which he vegetates in the fields dedicated to barbarian myths, alcohol and a reduced cultivation of his lands carried out in a primitive way.[16]' It contributed to a paternalistic discourse which suggested that Indians needed to be rescued from the land in order to civilise. But crucially, also suggests that the land needed to be rescued from Indians if it was to be fruitfully used.

However this discourse on land productivity was in many senses, Janus-faced. Pastor Cabrera Valencia's work *Pensemos en el Indio* (Let us think of the Indian) was published in 1945, the same year as the first National Indigenous Congress took place amid intensifying demands for land reform from peasant and Indigenous communities. In a section entitled, *Hacia la incorporacion del indio a la vida nacional* (Towards the incorporation of the Indian into national life) he theorises the role of Indigenous peoples in the nation. In contrast with many reformists of the time, Pastor Cabrera Valencia argued that Indians had a sui generis right to the 'vast, mysterious and untamed land' they lived on by right of their Inca ancestry and

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[15] *'El regimen agrícola no ha salido de los sistemas y usos coloniales. No existe maquinaria ni se aplican metodos científicos. El abono y el riego son esperados como milagros del cielo.*' Ibid.
[16] *Mucha se habla allí de amor al indio y de la necesidad de arrancarlo del estado de semisalvagismo en que vegeta en los campos dedicado a los mitos barbaros, al alcohol y a un reducido cultivo de sus tierras realizado en forma primitiva',* Rafael Cruenta Tudela, *'Bolivia se Indigeniza',* (Sucre, Boletín de la Sociedad Geografica 'Sucre', 1944), 27-130.

'tireless labour of centuries'[17]. He states 'there is no doubt that…land belongs to whoever works it first, … the Indian, for this reason, in addition to his ancient Inca heritage, is the only absolute owner of the land.'[18] In this, he echoes the rallying cry of the socialist and peasant movements which were mobilising to demand agrarian reform at this time; *La tierra es de quien la trabaja* (the land belongs to those that work it). But he deviates from these materialist arguments to invoke a telluric, mystical relationship between Indians and the landscape as the moral basis for land rights. 'The Indian grasped the deep sense of the earth better than we do, he is currently the only owner of it, the only one who owns it even by right of love…by law of Inca heritage'[19].

A common literary and artistic trope in the Andes compared Indians to rocks, with the affect of rendering them immobile, passive and timeless (Orlove, 1993: 325). Cabrera Valencia reproduces this in his observation that the Indian has 'a rough and strong soul like the Andean rocks… he lives from time immemorial next to [the land], like the withered ivy to the high wall that supports it.[20]' . More than being shaped by their environment, Indians are presented as features of the landscape in themselves. By this same process, the land itself becomes associated with Indian-ness.

However in contrast to Arguedas, Vilela et al, Pastor Cabrera takes the position that Bolivia's Indians were in fact, a positive resource for the nation as whole because they were uniquely well suited to life in the harsh conditions of the altiplano. This builds upon Tamayo's

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[17] Pastor Cabrera Valencia*, Pensemos en el Indio*, (La Paz: Editorial Fenix Comercio, 1945), 121.
[18] *'Mas no cabe duda que…la tierra pertenece a quien la trabaja primero… el indio, por tal razón amparadora, ademas, de su antiguo acervo, incasico es el único dueño absoluto de la tierra',* Pastor Cabrera Valencia*, Pensemos en el Indio*, (La Paz: Editorial Fenix Comercio, 1945), 128.
[19] *Ibid, 121.*
[20] *'de alma aspera y recia como las rocas andinas… vive desde tiempo inmemorial junto a ella, cual la mustia hiedra al alto muro que la sostiene'.* Ibid, 125.

emphasis on the muscular prowess of the Indian, imagined as male in this instance (Sanjines, 2016). In contrast, Cabrera Valencia argues that *mestizos* and whites lacked the lung capability for high altitude living. He observes, 'the racial factor, that in no case is an insuperable obstacle to social and political progress, is in certain regions, rather a favourable element[21].' Race hence is reified in bodies but also through the physical environment.

For Alfredo Jáuregui Rosquellas (1879 - 1952), writing in 1946, the physical environment provided the explanation for the highland Indian's physical and psychological condition; his 'clumsy face, his apathy, his toughness with all, and his eternal discontent[22].' Rosquellas was a prolific historical writer and member of the Geographic Society of Sucre. In an article published a year later entitled 'Reflections on the Indigenous Question', he calls for the distribution of uncultivated land to peasants with the aim of creating a 'class of small rural landowners who would soon become factors of production and support for the State, within order and harmony, and by virtue of their own land work[23]'. Agrarian reform for Rosquellas, is here envisioned as a process of rural 'embourgeoisement', that is to say, realised through the creation of a productive landowning class adhering to bourgeois values. Making the land more productive was therefore tied up with a process of de-Indianisation, with the ultimate objective of turning Indians into peasants.

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[21] *'el factor racial que en ningún caso es obstáculo insuperable para el progreso social y politico es un ciertas regiones mas bien elemento favorable',* Ibid, 128.
[22] Alfredo Jauregui Rosquellas, '*La cuestión indigenal',* (Sucre, Boletín de la Sociedad Geográfica 'Sucre', 1946) 118.
[23] *'la clase de los pequeños propietarios rurales que a poco andar se convertirían en factores de producción y de sostén del Estado, dentro del orden y la armonía, y por virtud del trabajo de tierras propia'.* Alfredo Jauregui Rosquellas, *'Reflexiones sobre la cuestión indigenal',* (Sucre, Boletín de la Sociedad Geográfica 'Sucre', 1947), 523.

Conclusion

A reading of these documents shows that a multi-faceted discourse connecting the Indian with the natural world and vice versa operated in the first half of the twentieth century. The writers examined here all believed that Indians absorbed the qualities of their mountainous environment, but some, such as Mendoza and Cabrera Valencia, interpreted this more positively than others. On the one hand, the majesty of the altiplano could stand as a visual metaphor for the new Bolivian nation steered by *paceño* elites, drawing on this historical legacy of ancient Andean civilisations. But on the other, it was a space inextricably associated with the contemporary Indian, and hence backward, uncivilised and requiring intervention from authorities. Indians were portrayed as more susceptible to climatic influences because they resided in closer proximity to the land, and because they were perceived to share an innate connection with it. For some writers, this meant that Indians had a moral right to ownership over land. But others texts suggest that the degeneracy of Indians meant that the frigid altiplano too, was not sufficiently productive or civilised under Indian ownership. Geography was thus central to racialised understandings of modernity in pre-revolutionary Bolivia. As I discuss further in the next chapter, this shows that Indigenous movements which mobilised for land rights in the early twentieth century were confronted with a pre-existing discourse which connected them with Andean space. This would come have a decisive impact in shaping approaches to environmental politics by both elites and Indigenous movements in the later twentieth century.

Chapter Four: "*seizing our lands with a thousand deceptions*": The caciques apoderados and the origins of ecological struggle in Bolivia 1900-1940

Introduction

> "In Bolivia, a thousand families of white *criollos* or *gamonales* imposed their laws, stripping the *originarios* of all rights, protected by the government of that time. They humiliated, mistreated and stole from the Indian what little they had, the little of their animals that they raised, their few products, and above all they stripped them of their land to make it a *hacienda*, and the more land they had, the better."[24]
>
> --Don Justo Llanque (descendant of *cacique apoderado* Faustino Llanque), 1990

> "For a colonised people the most essential value, because the most concrete, is first and foremost the land: the land which will bring them bread and, above all, dignity."
>
> — Frantz Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth

In the previous chapter I discussed how race and space were integral to the nation building projects of elites in the *altiplano* in the early twentieth century. In this chapter I explore the *caciques apoderados* and the *alcaldes mayores*, a generation of Indigenous representatives and organic intellectuals which emerged across highland Bolivia in the early decades of the twentieth century to demand land rights, contest abuses and mobilise for education for Indian communities[25]. Land was at the heart of the political demands of Indigenous society in twentieth century Bolivia (Irurozqui, 2000). Perhaps this is unsurprising given that in 1900, 73 percent of the Bolivian population lived in the rural space (Klein, 2003: 147). From 1874, as successive waves of state policy enabled an escalating land grab of Indigenous lands,

[24] Cited in (Ticona, 2002: 94).
[25] I would like to thank the PILAS (Postgraduates in Latin American Studies) work in progress group for their helpful comments on a draft of this chapter.

communities devised new mechanisms to defend their lands which drew on older forms of political authority in the Andes. *Caciques apoderados* operated nationally across almost all provinces in La Paz, highland Cochabamba, Oruro, Northern Potosí, and some areas in Chuquisaca. I draw on their petitions, letters and legal documents which formed the basis for a struggle which was litigious in design. I focus on the 1920s, a decade of deepening political crisis which was initiated when the Republicans seized the presidency in a coup, dramatically ending two decades of Liberal rule. At the same time, armed Indigenous uprisings swept the highlands with rebellions in Jesus de Machaca in 1921, and Chayanta in 1927 (Klein, 2003: 165; Choque, 2011).

Historians have traced the twentieth century emergence of the *caciques apoderados* to the uptake in communal land sales and seizures between 1905 and 1915, as a result of the Liberal expansion of railways across the highlands (Gotkowitz, 2007: 46). Communities in the highlands faced a new onslaught on their lands owing to the railways increasing the value of surrounding land. Between 1900-1920, the years of the Liberal ascendancy, communal lands were increasingly expropriated. This led many Indigenous communities to ally with Bautista Saavedra and the new Republican party in 1920, hoping they could safeguard their lands from Liberal *hacendados* (owners of *haciendas*, or landed estates*)*. In Pacajes province alone, approximately 44,687 hectares of land were sold from 1901 to 1920, as against 33,401 hectares sold during the 20 previous years (Rivera, 1978b: 106 in Rivera, 1987: 18-19). This was the continuation of processes underway from the late nineteenth century when communal landholdings were deemed economically unproductive and incommensurate with the market-based values of the modern Republic.

The ‘new’ generation of caciques operating in the twentieth century most certainly drew on a longer tradition of organising which began, at least, in the late nineteenth century by figures such as Luciano Wilka and Pablo Zarate Willka for example, which itself drew on a history of legal struggle by Indians in the colonial period (Gotkowitz, 2007; Ari, 2014; Mendieta, 2006). These figures took on the titles of *apoderados* or *caciques*, or *alcaldes mayores* to protest the appropriative policies of the state and particularly the *Exvinculacion* Law of 1874 (Ari, 2014 :31). As discussed in the previous chapter, the 1874 *Exvinculacion* (Disentailment) Law had a devastating impact on communal land holdings (Gotkowitz, 2007). To implement the law, a legal process was initiated through what was known as the *revisita de tierras* (fiscal commissions), which required land dwellers to prove they possessed land titles, otherwise the land would be put up for sale to private bidders. The mobilisation of the *caciques* in pursuit of land titles was a direct result of this law because the law allowed Indian communities to be represented by *apoderados*, or representatives of legal age (Choque and Quisbert, 2010 : 27). These figures were often chosen by community members and were frequently the descendants of previous *caciques*, or a *mallku,* an Indigenous authority (THOA, 1986: 15-16).

The title deeds issued by the Spanish Crown thus were re-established as the basis for the property rights of the communities well into the twentieth century. Many have also pointed out that appealing to colonial laws allowed Indigenous leaders to evoke older corporate rights and protections established under Spanish colonial rule, as opposed to the individual rights espoused by the liberal Republic (Ari, 2014).

This chapter therefore addresses the following question: what can the documents produced by the *caciques apoderados* tell us about how Indigenous communities mobilized around the natural world in the twentieth century? Sinclair Thomson notes that historians of Indigenous

rebellions always run up against their own limitations when trying to understand the cultural vision of the historical actors involved (2019: 24). My argument is that while the territorial struggles waged by the *caciques apoderados* related to land titles, they can also be understood as having an ecological significance. As such, this chapter intends to question the omission of ecology from social histories of early twentieth century Bolivia. In this I bring together two lines of thinking; the 'environmentalism of the poor' thesis advanced by Joan Martinez Alier, (1991; 2002) with Ramachandra Guha (1997) and Waskar Ari's work on what he terms the 'earth politics' of the *Alcaldes Mayores Particulares* (2014). The *caciques apoderados* that I assess here did not describe themselves as 'environmentalists', nor did they discuss the natural world in ways which might be immediately recognisable as environmental, but it is my argument that their efforts nonetheless represent an ecological struggle perhaps 'not yet discovered' (Martinez Alier, 1991). That is to say, a movement who did not employ the language of environmentalism but whose efforts to retain control of communal lands and to protest encroachment and abuses on community lands had a profound ecological importance in the rejection of market-driven land management and schema of social domination in the rural world. Martinez Alier's makes possible the idea of 'retrospective' environmentalism within social history, in other words, social struggles which did not use the language of environmentalism, but often come in later years, be understood as such. He uses the example of the massacre in 1888 of miners and *campesinos* at the British owned Rio Tinto mine in Huelva, Andalucía, Spain after they protested against sulphur dioxide pollution. This historical moment was re-framed in public consciousness as an explicitly environmental conflict in the aftermath of a campaign in the 1990s against a toxic dump in the same region, in Nerva, Andalucía (2002: 61-62).

In addition, I draw from the concepts advanced by Waskar Ari, notably in his book *Earth Politics* (2014). Ari focuses on the activities of five men; Santos Marka T'ula, Gregorio Titiriku, Melitón Gallardo, Toribio Miranda, and Andres Jach'aqullu. Ari departs from the existing historiography in employing the term *Alcaldes Mayores Particulares* (AMP) to describe the network of Indigenous leaders. He argues that the AMP emerged from a network of *apoderados* and *caciques* led by Santos Marka T'ula in the 1920s. At first the AMP was only one of many factions in the network; only in 1936 did it become a completely different group and take the name *Alcaldes Mayores Particulares*. (2014: 6). Drawing on sources derived from private archives belonging to *campesino* and Indigenous authorities in La Paz, Oruro and Chuquisaca, Ari proposes that the AMP developed a politics based of the earth and nature that was connected with Indigenous spiritual practices (2014: 8). He argues that the movement became less interested in recovering old land titles *in toto*, but more on promoting Andean religion and cosmopolitics. Similar to Choque, Ari thus emphasizes the AMP as a movement for the 'decolonisation' of the Bolivian state.

Methods

I draw on selected letters and petitions written in the Spanish language to the departmental authorities relating to the activities of *caciques apoderados* in the Department of La Paz and Oruro which are housed in the Archive of La Paz as part of the collection of 'Expedientes de la Prefectura'[26], including letters from non-Indigenous political authorities and elites. I focus on documents across the period 1900-1930. The *expedientes* are often difficult to decipher and translate owing to the idiosyncratic syntax employed by the authors, a feature also observed by anthropologist Alison Spedding in her translations of these documents (Thomson

[26] I am grateful to my research assistant Helga Cauthin for assisting with the transcription of these documents.

et al: 327-330). I draw additionally on a document of public history produced in 2019 by the National Archives and Library of Bolivia (ABNB) in Sucre to commemorate the life of *cacique apoderado* Santos Marka T'ola. It contains selected letters from *caciques apoderados* with standardised spelling. To supplement these, and to obtain contextual data, I also examined selected newspapers from the period 1910-1930, including *El Diario* and *El Hombre Libre*.

The documents provide evidence of the vexed interplay between political authorities, local townspeople and the Indigenous communities in the *altiplano* in the early twentieth century. It should be remembered that the Indigenous communities I refer to here were not homogenous or monolithic as frequent intra-communal conflicts attest, nor indeed were the 'elites' always ossified from the rural and Indigenous societies they interacted with. By elites, I refer to the landowners and capitalists of the twentieth century , as well as local, regional and national political authorities. In many cases, there is no distinction between these, because the political authorities were frequently major landowners. Indeed in the case of Bernardo Goytia who I discuss later, political authorities were the very same figures accused of usurping lands and ordering violent attacks[27] on Indigenous communities.

The protracted and undoubtedly arduous task of retrieving colonial-era land titles took the *caciques apoderados* on foot from their *ayllus* in the highlands to the cities of La Paz and Sucre. The author Jaime Mendoza who I discussed at length in the previous chapter, wrote in the Liberal newspaper *La Prensa*, on New Year's Day in 1931, describing Santos Marka

[27] Although I don't analyse the documents through the lens of gender, sexual violence against Indigenous women by soldiers and police, including the rape of a ten year old girl in one instance, are frequently denounced in the documents.

T'ula and others' journey in the following terms; 'from La Paz they came to Sucre on foot in many days, carrying in the classic "*qquepi*" just something to eat, and voluminous files in which there are innumerable testimonies, petitions, claims, pleas before judges, prosecutors, prefects, deputies, bishops , archbishops, presidents of the republic.' (ABNB, 2019 : 10)

The petitions were written by scribes because the caciques themselves could not read or speak Spanish fluently. The documents can therefore be considered as being 'co-created' by these intermediaries, imbued with additional layers of meaning and ambiguity (Ticona, 2003). Scribes were known as *qillqiri*, an Aymara word meaning 'one who writes', conferred on literate Indigenous people (Ticona, 2003). It is worth noting that in 1900, just 16 percent of the population were estimated to have received any schooling (Klein, 2003: 147). Shaky signatures by individual *apoderados* at the end of the documents are at times, a poignant indication of the difficulties faced by Indigenous peoples when they were forced to operate in the colonial language. How did the scribes and the *apoderados* co-create these letters? Focusing on one such scribe (*escribano*), Leandro Condori, Esteban Ticona has argued that the role of mediator made Condori a 'producer of truth', rendering the Aymara-Quechua Indigenous world intelligible to authorities and vice versa (Condori and Ticona, 1992; Ticona, 2003). These scribes occupied a role as interlocutor and mediator of the Indigenous experience, as well as an interpreter of the colonial state for the benefit of the Indigenous communities.

I use these sources to draw out how Indigenous leaders articulated a vision of their lands and landscape in the context of encroachment by *mestizo* townspeople and the state. I thus seek to accommodate land and space as a component of these political struggles. I also make use of letters sent by prominent landowners to authorities as evidence of elite fears around

Indigenous communities activities in the countryside. In my approach to these documents, I draw on the work of Australian ethnohistorian Bronwen Douglas regarding the ways in which the presence and agency of Indigenous people infiltrated the writings of sailors, naturalists and artists during scientific voyages to Australia in the nineteenth century. She argues they left 'countersigns' , or metaphorical imprints in the representations by colonial actors. Douglas' work speaks to the difficulty in recovering agency of colonised peoples within colonial documents. As historians have long pointed out (eg Langer, 1990), discerning the motivations and perspectives of partially or non-literate subaltern actors is fraught with difficulty. These letters shed light on the problems Indigenous communities faced in the early twentieth century, and offer a fragmentary glimpse into the wider power dynamics and normative conflicts shaping the rural world in which they operated. What these sources cannot tell us is the kind of dialogues that were taking place within the Indigenous communities themselves. The letters were directed at non-Indigenous political authorities and were therefore designed to appeal, or at least engage with the normative codes of the creole Republic. They are also marked by different mediators which renders their meaning many-layered. Firstly the *caciques* who led the movement to restore land titles were appointed representatives of their communities, but nonetheless, operated as a (male) authority figure perhaps in some way distinct from their communities. Secondly, the scribes who wrote the letters in the Spanish language, filtering and interpreting the claims of the Aymara and Quechua speaking caciques to make them intelligible to the political authorities. To this degree, we are left seeking the 'countersigns', or metaphorical imprints left by the natural world and its place in Indigenous political identities (Douglas, 2009).

Literature

I will synthesise here the key trends in the historiography of the *caciques apoderados*. In comparison with late twentieth century Indigenous movements in Bolivia which have been the subject of immense academic interest in recent years, there is a limited scholarship on the *caciques apoderados* and the *alcaldes mayores*. In part, this may well owe to the relatively sparse documentation of their work within state archives. Collections in public archives contain a partial record, but it is possible that a wider array of uncatalogued documents exist in private or community archives which are less accessible (Platt and Molina, 2018).

In 1986, the newly established Taller de Historia Oral Andina (THOA) published a pathbreaking booklet on the life of Santos Marka T'ula who is considered to be the most notable *cacique apoderado*. Santos Marka T'ola was especially active in the defence of *ayllus* against hacienda expansion in the La Paz region (Platt and Molina, 2018: 157). The THOA project was a collaborative intellectual endeavour which drew on oral histories by community members and surviving relatives of Santos Marka T'ula and other *caciques*. The booklet contains testimonies in both Aymara and Spanish and its stated aims suggest it envisaged the Indigenous-led decolonisation of national histories.

The THOA's work was disseminated on Aymara-language radio station Radio San Gabriel to a wide audience. That this document emerged in the 1980s, when the *katarista* movement was in full swing, shows the strong connections between Aymara political movements across the generations, and the deep importance of Indigenous histories to successive waves of Andean Indigenous political activists. As Derrida states, 'there is no political power without control of the archive, if not of memory. Effective democratization can always be measured by this essential criterion: the participation in and the access to the archive, its constitution, and its interpretation '(1995: 11).

In 1984, to mark the 39th anniversary of Santos Marka T'ula 's death, the THOA together with Federation of Peasants of the Guilberto Villarroel Province, department of La Paz and twenty-six *ayllus*, organised a tribute to his life in his birthplace of Ch'uxña de Ilata Baja (Ticona, 2002: 86). The recovery of Santos Marka T'ula , as well as other caciques' legacies, constituted a landmark moment in the recovery of a social memory of Aymara struggles in the twentieth century. Through the yearly commemoration, Ticona argues the memorialisation served as an act of 'collective psychosocial healing' (2002: 94). In this sense, we can see the historiography of the *caciques apoderados* has been tightly connected with later twentieth century Indigenous struggles.

Aymara historians Roberto Choque (1985; 1986; 1992; 1996) and Carlos Mamani (1991) pioneered study on caciques such as Eduardo Leandro Nina Quispe, Santos Marka T'ula , Prudencio Callisaya and Faustino Llanque. Choque's 1986 study of the massacre at Jesus de Machaca was a groundbreaking case study of 'history from below', which above all, framed the activities of the *caciques apoderados* as an anticolonial movement. Later scholars to contribute works directly on the *caciques apoderados* are Waskar Ari, Laura Gotkowitz, Esteban Ticona, and recently, Tristan Platt and Gonzalo Molina Echeverria. Historian Cecilia Wahren has contributed work on Eduardo Leandro Nina Quispe, a cacique who mobilised around education and Indigenous schools, framing his activities as a resistance to a paternalistic elite project which sought the cultural integration of Indigenous peoples into the nation (2015). In this she builds on Esteban Ticona's extensive work on Eduardo Leandro Nina Quispe's efforts to develop a decolonial education project for Indigenous communities.

In addition, as part of her work on pre-revolutionary histories of Indigenous organising in Cochabamba, Laura Gotkowitz addresses the efforts of *caciques* operating in the Cochabamba region. She frames the activities of the *caciques apoderados* in the context of liberal state building projects, tying the activities of the caciques to the struggle over the exercise of power at local level. Departing from Choque's emphasis on the separatist elements in Aymara political activity in the early twentieth century, Gotkowitz draws out the ways in which *caciques* participated in, and ultimately sought to shape key political debates in the nation state. She argues that the *caciques* used the framework of the liberal laws to defend community land rights, and more deeply, used the national authorities' own discourses on 'civilisation' to contest the abuses they experienced from local authorities. She argues that the caciques filed petitions and claimed rights to territory from authorities in ways that 'challenged the elite project to delimit and dominate the national space' (2007: 72). In this, Gotkowitz complements historian Marta Irurozqui's work which has framed Indigenous communities mobilization over land ownership to participation in a national project at the turn of the twentieth century (2000).

Origins of the term 'caciques apoderados'

The terms '*cacique apoderado'* and '*alcalde mayor'* require unpacking because they relate to an important history of power brokerage in the Andes. In the colonial period (c.1572-1825), *caciques* (or *kurakas,* the Quechua-language equivalent term denoting a chief) were Indigenous authorities who in rural areas, exercised authority over the community in which they were from, and acted as intermediaries between Spanish officials and Indian societies. They drew much of their authority and prestige from claims to being descendants of Inca

nobility. Caciques had privileged access to land and economic goods in return for ensuring local taxes and *mita* (labour) obligations were fulfilled on behalf of the Crown (Klein, 43). The Spanish regarded *kurakas* as a kind of equivalent of the European nobility; in contrast with those designated as Indians for example, *kurakas* were permitted to enter contracts without Spanish authority (Spalding, 1973). Indeed during the early colonial period, the *alcaldes mayores* were the highest positions that an Indigenous person could hold in the Andes (Platt and Molina, 2018: 157). These authorities enabled the exercise of political and fiscal control over Indian societies by the Spanish, but they also acted as legal defenders for their communities. They were responsible for maintaining the territorial integrity of their community's lands, settling disputes between members, and overseeing community rituals. Many were involved themselves in legal challenges against local colonial authorities, such as Tomás Katari, a Quechua-speaking *cacique* from Chayanta, Northern Potosi who was extrajudicially executed by the Spanish in 1781 after lodging petitions alleging abuses by the *corregidor,* or Spanish official. His name would then be assumed by the Aymara leader Tupaj Katari in his rebellion in La Paz of the same year.

During the struggle for Latin American independence in the early nineteenth century, Simón Bolívar issued the Trujillo decree on December 8, 1825 which attempted to abolish communal property as part of a liberal vision of doing away with the colonial-era status of Indians and transforming Indigenous people into individual citizens (Mendieta, 2006: 763). However the role played by the *caciques* remained important in the nineteenth century after independence, even while the status was nominally abolished. As Pilar Mendieta has shown (2006), the rural world in nineteenth century Bolivia encompassed a complex and mutable array of power structures governing the relations between elites, townspeople and Indigenous communities. She frames the activity of the *caciques* in the context of alliance building between elite factions of the state and Indigenous peoples. She argues that the caciques were 'political

managers' who as intermediaries, artfully negotiated the delicate relations of power connecting the state with local Indigenous communities in order to protect their community's lands and interests. This was exemplified in 1871 when Indigenous communities in the altiplano under the direction of *caciques* allied with the Liberal Agustín Morales, enabling the overthrown of President Mariano Melgarejo, notorious for his attacks on Indigenous lands, in return for promises relating to Indigenous land ownership.

It is perhaps curious that the term *cacique*, or *cacique apoderado* was adopted by representatives of Indian communities well into the twentieth century. The term cacique no longer had recognised juridical status in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries but was nonetheless used by Indigenous authorities to make claims for power in local political spaces and to leverage political rights for Indigenous communities. One explanation is that using these titles connected with a genealogy of power brokerage in the Andes and allowed the caciques to acquire legitimacy vis-à-vis the authorities. It also overlapped with contemporary forms of Indigenous governance. Not all *apoderados* acquired their power legitimately however. As Marta Irorozqui has pointed out, following the 1881 establishment of *revisitas* a number of non-Indigenous individuals appointed themselves *apoderados* and colluded with authorities to sign documents granting lands to the state without the knowledge of *communarios* (2000).

There were a variety of terms applied by, and to Indigenous communities in postcolonial Bolivia. I use the terms *cacique*, *cacique apoderado* and *alcalde mayor* more or less interchangeably in recognition of their broadly equivalent meanings and usage in the early twentieth century. Where referring to specific cases, I use the terms employed by historical actors in the documents. These also include *'indio' 'indigena' 'indigena originario'* and

'indigena contribuyente'. These terms are important because they have both racial and fiscal implications, because historically only Indians contributed tribute to the state. They also denote differences in land ownership; the term *originario* came to refer to Indigenous community members who possessed more sizeable plots of land for example (Thomson *et al*: 2018. 167).

Owing to the fact that land was at the heart of *the caciques apoderados'* struggle (Mendieta, 2006), I will sketch out here briefly the longer history of land ownership in Bolivia. When the Spanish arrived in Bolivia in the 1530s, highland Bolivia was incorporated in the Inca empire as Qullasuyo. Inca land use was characterized by a model of agricultural economy John Murra famously characterized as a 'vertical archipelago' which enabled Andean societies to make use of the highly varied ecological zones and allow an exchange of products from high to low elevations (1972). Land was divided into ayllus, or socio-spatial units based loosely around kinship. Spanish colonization of Bolivia from the outset was bound up with a profound re-ordering of natural space and land use (Barragán and Durán , 2003: 26-28). The Andean economy was oriented away from agriculture towards intensive silver mining, with the proceeds funnelled towards the Spanish Crown. This was accompanied by the enclosure of land for *haciendas* (large estates), heralding a catastrophic loss of land for Indigenous communities (Barragán and Durán , 2003: 26-28). In the 1570s Viceroy Francisco de Toledo, under direction from the Spanish Crown, initiated a series of major fiscal reforms to rationalize and streamline Spanish colonial domination over land and people. These reforms principally involved the organization of Indian peoples into new spatial units known as *reducciones*, the regularisation of taxation, and the reintroduction of a pre-colonial forced labour system known as the *mita* to extract Indian labour for the mines at Potosi (Klein, 38-40). One of the striking elements of the THOA booklet on Santos Marka T'ula is the presence

of ecological memory within the words of its participants. A core idea that can be discerned from the booklet is that Spanish colonization represented a profound assault specifically on the ecological arrangement of pre-Columbian Aymara society. Rufino P'axi for example states, "Our *Pachamama Aymara* is from the mountains, to the crystalline waters, to the islands, to the warm valleys and *yungas*, and of the mines and towns: all these places will be for those who inhabit them."

Findings

In this section, I dwell on key passages from the letters and petitions. The documents make abundantly clear the gravity of attacks on Indigenous community lands and the deepening conflict between Indigenous communities and encroachment of land by townspeople and urban capitalists. While these documents often protest specific abuses, they also display a marked emphasis on the role of history and its power to shape consciousness. They hence can be understood as a form of anticolonial 'narrative making' which is rooted in the land. In this I subscribe to the argument made by Waskar Ari, that the documents serve as both forms of memory-making and political denunciation (1994).

In their letter from December 1918, *apoderados* Prudencio Callisaya and Andres Caguana from the cantons of Jesus de Machaca and Guaqui respectively, representing the *ayllus* of Belen, Charapata, Urinsaya and Aransaya in Ingavi province, present the Prefect with their colonial title deeds. They remind him out that the 1883 law outlined that if a community could produce composition certificates issued by the Spanish Crown, the lands would be excluded from the *revisita*, and hence from sale. The letter condemns the 'gross aberrations that persist in the selfish hearts of some spirits [*espiritus*], eager to usurp what does not belong to

them, in a merely gratuitous title more often than not, and to be the most forceful in vilifying and harming our sad condition as Indigenous peoples, wanting to seize our lands with a thousand deceptions and frauds apparently before the public powers.' Prudencio Callisaya was active in the areas around Waqi and Tiahuanaco, in La Paz department, which, due to the expansion of *haciendas* in the early twentieth century had seen fresh outbreaks of conflict between the new landowners and Indigenous people (Choque and Quisbert, 2010: 131). For his activities, Callisaya would later be apprehended at the orders of the magistrate and *corregidor* of Waqi and extrajudicially murdered in a military compound (Choque, 2011).

Their letter begins by outlining the long history of property ownership and colonisation in the highlands, stating that 'the conquerors subdued the conquered under their power, imposing their will and arbitrariness on the Indigenous people that populate the Andean highlands until the monarchy, through the Viceroy Francisco de Toledo, established the communities or divisions of large tracts of land'. Situating their claims within a long history helped support Callisaya and Caguana's claims that the land titles they were presenting to the Prefect were 'authentic, of indisputable veracity, reliable because of have been formed from the time of colonialism'. They write; 'What I request, will prevent the Indigenous race of the Republic from disappearing, decimating itself under this or that pretext… This declaration is all the more necessary to grant all guarantees to agriculture that is attended to only by the Indigenous race in the entire Republic of Bolivia.' Callisaya here connects the struggle for the integrity of the *ayllus* to nothing less than the preservation of Indigenous life. Moreover, he ties this specifically to the Indigenous people's productive relationship to the land, given that Indigenous peoples were the sector of the population providing labour for agriculture. The purpose here may be to remind the Prefect that disruption to land ownership could have ramifications for agricultural supply. However it also underscores how the Indigenous

community were fighting not 'only' for land ownership rights, but for the preservation of long established socio-ecological systems of land management on the *altiplano*. In other words, their struggle encompassed what might be understood as ways of relating to the natural world.

For Indigenous communities in the 1920s, the landscape of the altiplano was a site of deepening conflict. A letter dated 13 March 1922 from the *cacique* Marcelino Ordoñez, Cacique, and the *alcalde mayor* Eugenio Coca, of the Quillacas community in Oruro pleading with the Departmental Prefect for help, outlines a turbulent vision of petty violence and ecological destruction. The documents suggest that the ecological violence inflicted by *vecinos* (townspeople) was a recurrent threat to the communities. Another letter, from Gregorio Patzi and Esteban Pajai from 1920 laments attacks on the property of the Indigenous peoples of the former Copajira community on the estate of Juan Perou, a major *paceño* landowner who in 1931 was also Director of the Bolivian Central Bank. They accuse Perou of having 'given his orders to attack our homes and take our entire existence.'

A letter from an *indigena* called Melchor Canaviri from Irpuma (La Paz) in 1921 reveal the despair of many Indigenous communities. Not only were lands being appropriated, but the spectre of Indigenous rebellion was invoked by the landowners to secure military support from state and departmental authorities. Canaviri claims that the landlords 'are the same oppressors of the Indigenous race, who invent supposed uprisings to surprise authorities and magistrates, who thus deceived, give them everything.' As Gotkowitz (2007) argues, this displays efforts to leverage the normative framework of the Republic. References to the Indigenous condition as 'slavery' counterpose the treatment of Indigenous peoples, suggestive of colonial-era excesses, against the professed liberal values of the modern Republic.

> ‘Under the pretext of an alleged uprising, Mr. Jose Antezana, the alleged acquirer also of our lands of origin in the ex-Irp [sic] community where November of last year he has used a whole system of machinations and schemes aimed at reducing us to the most humiliating slavery in Bolivia, a democratic and free country.’

Melchor Canaviri’s letter is firm in invoking the legal basis of Indigenous land rights in Bolivia.

> ‘The native race of Bolivia: the Indigenous, for the same reason that they have been the absolute owner of these lands, have the legitimate right to request that they be given efficient guarantees and true protection of their rights once their condition is wretched and their ignorance, at least even by reason of human solidarity, they are reasons enough to sympathise with that sad situation.’

Alluding to the subjugated position of the Indigenous peoples was perhaps intended to invoke the paternalistic protection nominally afforded to Indigenous communities from the state, as protectors of an ‘inferior’ race. This was a tactic deployed in numerous letters from *caciques*.

A letter from caciques from the provinces of Pacajes, Sicasica, Omasuyos, Larecaja led by Santos Marka T’ula , wrote to the Minister of Government on the 2nd October 1928 to request they be allowed to set up a society to be used for children’s education and the ‘advancement of our Indigenous race’. They explained to the Minister that they were Indigenous peoples who ‘love our homeland and who contribute a good sum to the national Treasury and who wish the advancement of our children’. In this reminder of Indigenous taxation we can see echoes of the ‘pact of reciprocity’ (Platt, 1982) from the nineteenth century. They were appealing to the Minister because local authorities and landowners had reacted with hostility

to the Indigenous communities' aims, labelling them a threat to civilisation, when in fact 'our only desire is that they do not enslave us or commit abuses'. Invoking the patriarchal protection of the state, they appeal to the Minister 'as a father', and as 'father of the country', to order the Prefects, Sub-Prefects and *Corregidores* to allow them to set up the society. They tell the Minister, 'we appreciate and recognize the attitude of the high authorities of this city who always protect us and their vigilant decrees are paternal and humanitarian, but in the provinces and cantons the same does not happen.'

Navigating the slippery threads of regional authorities was a difficult task for the caciques, given how asymmetrical the power dynamics were. On 24 October 1922 the landowner Benedicto Goytia wrote to the president of the republic, Bautista Saavedra. Goytia was a businessman with mining interests and a considerable landowner in the highlands and valleys of La Paz. He had acquired a vast amount of Indigenous communal land around La Paz through the successive Laws of Exvinculación in 1874, and in the 1880s (Medrano, 2018[28]). He was also a supporter of the Liberal party and held various political positions at local and national level between 1900-1920, including Mayor of the Departmental Council of La Paz and later Senator of the Department of La Paz (Medrano, 2018). The La Paz daily newspaper *El Diario* indeed described him as 'a capitalist of the first rank', who was moreover, the 'embodiment of democratic ideas' (1906: 3)[29]. Benedicto Goytia emerges in an earlier letter of complaint from 19 January 1920, sent to the Minister of State from Prudencio Callisaya in which he accuses Goytia's son-in-law, Julio Sanjines, of capturing and attempting to exile him (*desterrar*) in his efforts to protect lands of origin for his communities.

[28] For an analysis of Benedicto Goytia's financial exploits, see Daniela Nathalie Medrano's comprehensive 2018 study, *Biografía de Benedicto Goytia: miembro de la oligarquía paceña en un contexto señorial (1851-1925).*
[29] *El Diario*, 05 May, 1906, p3.

In this letter Goytia complained that the atmosphere of sedition on his lands was threatening 'the secular foundations of discipline and social peace in our Republic.'. He described the following incident, depicting a vision of collapsing property relations and ferocious Indigenous uprisings. Coming not long after the uprising in Jesus de Machaca in 1921.

> 'It is that the Indigenous people of the highlands, obeying the suggestions of perverse people who thrive in the shadow of deception and ignorance, have in fact appropriated the rural farms where they provided their services as settlers or workers and have expelled the true owners and administrators and representatives with violent dispossession of cattle, seeds useful for fields…'

Goytia concludes his appeals to the President by depicting a race war engulfing the altiplano. It is clear from Goytia's letter that racialised fears of Indigenous uprisings against white landowners coalesced with anxieties over anarchist and socialist doctrine permeating the altiplano in the 1920s. Goytia refers to the growing militancy as an 'echo of the great Indigenous upheaval' coming from Peru. The Peruvian communist party was founded by Jose Mariategui in 1928 not long after Goytia was writing, amid a wave of revolutionary activity in Peru.

> '…each day that passes is one more step towards the perpetration of this system of armed robbery and of this strange and criminal socialisation of agricultural property based on theft, fire and the threat of extermination of the white race.'

In addition to race war fears, it is evident that Goytia makes appeals to legitimacy based on the ways in which Indian communities used their land. As I argued in the previous chapter, the discourse of productivity formed a crucial part of the racialisation of highland space in the early twentieth century. The Indigenous communities apparent challenge to the imposition of market values in agricultural production rendered them an obstacle to the Liberal vision of state development. It is for this reason that attempts by the Spanish and elites after Independence to dissolve *ayllus* and reformulate them into plots of private property must be seen as more than attacks on Indigenous land ownership, but also as an attempt to dissolve an socio-agrarian system based on ecological reciprocity. From the nineteenth century there was a drive to utilise land in the valleys and highlands for large scale production of, rubber , coffee, sugar cane, coca and fruits and other products (Medrano, 2014).

> 'The Indian is content only to sow the most fertile lands to satisfy his scarce needs and those of his agitators … in the urban centres. The rest of the land remains without cultivation and therefore without a social function to meet the population's consumption needs.'

In the case of Goytia, the lack of productivity was used to justify further usurpation of lands of origin. The category of Indigenous is here perceived as one eliciting difference from, but also perhaps protection from, the state. It is a marker that invokes a different kind of citizenship. 'in which a fraction of Bolivians, invoking their title of Indigenous, do the law and justice at will [sic], and live in permanent sedition against the laws of the Republic.' To this degree, Goytia's remarks suggest the category of 'Indigenous' was antithetical to the values of the Republic. Goytia's letters suggest that a deeper conflict between the values of a colonial and a Republic remained markedly salient in the twentieth century. A conflict here

emerges between the colonial designation of Indigenous and the Republican and Liberal universalising vision.

Figure 4. Family and donkeys in yard of one room farmhouse in El Alto, 1930. From the American Geographical Society Library, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Libraries.

Conclusion

It is evident that while the documents discussed here show that *caciques apoderados* rarely deployed the explicit language of 'environmentalism', their struggle for land rights should nonetheless be understood as having an ecological dimension. This is because their claims and appeals to justice sought to uphold a system of socio-ecological agricultural management that defied the creole liberal extractive mission in the rural world. The abuses that the documents depict reveal a rural world defined by open violence, much of it sanctioned by, if not ordered by political authorities concerned with unrest in the countryside. Through these

letters the caciques sought to find openings in their dialogue with authorities – appeals to paternalistic notions of Indian guardianship, the normative values of the Republic, as well as their colonial-era land titles – which would allow them to contest the assault on their lands and livelihoods. The letters therefore reveal that it was not only community-specific conflicts against usurpations and abuses which were identified as problems, but an entire system of justice and power underpinning the place of Indigenous peoples in the modern Bolivian state. Who had the right to the land, and the uses it was put to, was at the heart of Indigenous peoples' negotiation of power and justice in early twentieth century Bolivia. But it wasn't simply land ownership, but the social arrangement of Indigenous life that management of the land entailed which can be seen as significant within the caciques' activities.

Chapter Five: Transforming peasant politics into ecological politics: The CSUTCB in Bolivia 1970-1990

Bolivia is entering a new stage of its political life, one of whose characteristics is the awakening of peasant consciousness.

-- Tiahuanaco Manifesto, 1973

'We the Aymara, Qhechwa, Camba, Chapaco, Chiquitano, Moxo, Tupiguarani and other peasants are the rightful owners of this land. We are the seed from which Bolivia was born and we are exiles in our own land. We want to regain our liberty of which we were deprived in 1492, to bring our culture back into favour and, with our own personality, be subjects and not objects of our history...'

— Declaration of the CSUTCB, 1979

Introduction

This chapter outlines the ways in which the emergence in Bolivia of the peasant union confederation, the *Confederación Sindical Única de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia* (Unified Syndical Confederation of Peasant Workers of Bolivia - CSUTCB) was integral to the development of an Indigenous politics of the environment in late twentieth century Bolivia[30]. In 1979 the CSUTCB arose as the syndical wing of the *katarista* movement and acted as a vital node between *katarismo* and the wider labour movement in Bolivia. As I explore in greater detail in the next chapter, *Katarismo* refers to a number of political groups and organisations which over the period 1960-1995, paid homage to the eighteenth century Andean rebel leader Tupaj Katari either explicitly in their organisational names or in their

[30] I would like to thank Dr Angus McNelly for generously providing comments on another version of this chapter.

political practice. *Katarismo* was the first movement in Bolivia to blend a critique of racialised oppression with class-based theories of exploitation. It was rooted powerfully in Aymara traditions of collective organisation in the Bolivian *altiplano* but came to fruition in the urban centre of La Paz through a cadre of Indigenous intellectuals. While the existing literature widely documents the CSUTCB's focus on class and ethnicity, I address its ecological politics which are a lacuna in the scholarship. Analysing CSUTCB activity and discourse through the lens of ecology brings new insights into the peasant movement's wider contestations of state, class and capital.

In making these arguments, I bring together decolonial scholarship with theoretical perspectives on peasant unionism to show how peasant unions and Indigenous movements in the Global South can interact as dynamic organisational forms characterised by hybridity. I argue that the CSUTCB is marked by a dialectic of peasant union and Indigenous movement structures. This was crucial in producing a distinct ecological politics within the CSUTCB from the 1970s which departed from resource nationalism (Young, 2017). The focus on ecology arose from the CSUTCB's emphasis on indigeneity, but the way in which it found tangible expression was determined by the confederation's imbrication with organised labour. I begin by providing an overview of the history of peasant unions in twentieth century Bolivia, briefly sketching the political context in which the CSUTCB operated as well as discussing theoretical approaches to peasant mobilisation. I conclude by analysing recordings from CSUTCB general meetings, as well as selected pamphlets and publications from the period.

In accordance with how historical actors employed the term, I use 'peasant' primarily to refer to those who engage in small-scale farming and livestock raising including landless

agricultural labourers. However it should be recognised that the Bolivian peasantry was not a homogenous class group and it did not always share common political goals, ethnic identity or economic interests. As the CSUTCB and other Indigenous-peasant actors emphasised, the term ‘peasant’ is more than a fixed analytical category but a fluid term that embodies other identities including ethnic, racial, sexual and regional.

Agriculture employed approximately 46 percent of the country's labour force in 1987 (Hudson and Henratty, 1989). The landscapes and topography in which Bolivian peasants worked varied considerably, with the bulk of agricultural production taking place in the central valleys around Cochabamba which are warm and fertile. The Bolivian *altiplano* meanwhile reaches heights of 4,000 metres and is prone to frosts and droughts meaning yields are often very low. Natural disasters made agriculture extremely challenging throughout the twentieth century. A severe drought in 1983 was particularly devastating for *campesino* agricultural production while across the valleys and highlands, soil erosion was a persistent problem (for discussion of *katarista* discourses on soil erosion see Zimmerer, 1993).

Figure 5. Woman with sheep and child on farm, La Paz. From the American Geographical Society Library, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Libraries.

Figure 6. Family harvesting, La Paz. From the American Geographical Society Library, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Libraries.

LITERATURE

In this section I outline the two strands of literature on (de)coloniality and theoretical approaches to peasant unionism which together underpin this article's conceptual approach. As I demonstrate, incorporating ideas derived from decolonial scholarship within theoretical approaches to the trade union model can enrich understandings of Indigenous-peasant movements in the Global South. I begin by outlining key contributions to literature on peasant unionism which, I argue, fail to satisfactorily account for why an ecological politics became so important in the CSUTCB's programme. To address this question, I turn additionally to decolonial scholarship which provides a useful framework for approaches to Indigenous social movements and Indigenous cosmovisions. Decolonial literature has brought new

attention to the epistemic implications of Indigenous struggles, particularly in the ecological realm. Indigenous and peasant mobilisations for land and territory, it is argued, often contain the potential to disrupt the nature-culture divide embedded within western modern paradigms. I connect these two literatures in my analysis of the CSUTCB's ecological politics specifically, where the overlapping Indigenous and labour movement forms are powerfully manifest.

Recent scholarship has pointed out the convergence between twenty first century trade unionism and environmental struggles in Latin America (Anigstein and Wyczykie, 2019). I show that this body of work could be enriched by historical analysis of the CSUTCB's focus on the environment in the 1980s. This article therefore seeks to contribute findings on the important relationship between peasant unionism and environmentalism in late twentieth century Bolivia. I argue that the CSUTCB's emergence as a key political player in Bolivian politics marked a rupture with what historian Kevin Young (2017) has termed resource nationalism - the ideology that natural resources should be extracted for the benefit of Bolivian people rather than foreign elites – as the dominant and unifying framework by which demands around natural resources were articulated in twentieth century Bolivia. Resource nationalism acquired especial vigour from the 1950s as the MNR party (Revolutionary Nationalist Movement, MNR) and a broad populist coalition rallied around a developmentalist agenda centred on the nationalisation of mining interests, agrarian reform and state-led economic development (Young, 2017). This united the urban working classes, miners and the middle classes, and reached a zenith in the MNR-steered 1952 Bolivian national revolution. However the economic vision presented by resource nationalism failed to account for the ways in which the environment was experienced by Indigenous-campesinos as a site of cultural and historical importance. This paper argues that the positions adopted by the

CSUTCB in 1979-1990 represent a crucial juncture in the formation of an ecologically-oriented left which saw Indigenous and environmental politics converge within the organised labour movement. In making this argument, the paper draws on decolonial and post-development scholarship as a theoretical underpinning. Decolonial thinkers such as Aníbal Quijano have intimated that the question of Indigenous movements is tied up with the historical structuring of Latin American states along a racial axis of colonial origin (2005; 2000). As Latin America's post-independence states came into being in the early nineteenth century, their architects were confronted with the problem of Indigenous peoples who had been designated 'inferior races' under colonial rule. Indigenous peoples could not be incorporated into the new states *as Indigenous peoples* because this category was antithetical to citizenship of new political systems still tied to this colonial matrix of power (Quijano; 2005). At the same time, post-development theorists have emphasised how the political struggles of peasant and Indigenous groups relate not only to rights of natural resources and territories, but to ways of being and knowing (Escobar, 2018), echoing the Foucauldian theory of 'subjugated knowledges'. This literature points out that while colonial regimes in Latin America pursed the exploitative appropriation of nature, they also marginalised Indigenous knowledge systems in an intertwined process. The ecological conflicts waged by Indigenous-campesino movements, in this case the CSUTCB, therefore acquire an important epistemological dimension because they challenged the erasure of Indigenous knowledge systems from state discourses on the environment (Leff 2001, 2012; Escobar, 2008).

Some of these debates focus on whether the CSUTCB should be considered a (peasant) union in the western tradition, or something more akin to an Indigenous 'new social movement' organisation. In the 1980s the rise of postmodernism in the academy shifted the debate away from economy and class, to culture. Subsequent 'new social movement' theories associated

with postmodernism emphasised 'resistance' to the state, rather than attempts at the capture of state power as the decisive element of peasant mobilisation (Brass, 2005). Meanwhile, in his examination of the CSUTCB which employs the theoretical framework of French Structural Marxist Nicos Poulantzas, Dwight Hahn argues that the CSUTB's adoption of ethnicity as the foundation of its analysis caused it significant political problems. Hahn argues that despite a commitment to ethno-cultural revindication derived from Indigenous values, the CSUTCB's structure was premised on 'Western principles' (1996). He thus identifies a contradiction in the CSUTCB's appeal to indigeneity, and the western model of organising (i.e the Trade Union) it adopted to advance this. Strobele-Gregor has made similar observations, positing a conflict between tradition and modernity in its approaches to political organisation (1996). As a Western political organisation, the CSUTCB 'was unable to incorporate the non-Western local political leadership based in the social relations of the Indigenous communities' (Hahn, 1996: 100). This was reflected in the aims of the union, which tended to focus on obtaining concessions from the capitalist state such as improved access to bank loans and farming equipment. The CSUTCB can be thought of, according to Hahn, as representing an Indigenous-led intermediary between the non-capitalist Indigenous population of the Bolivian Andes, and the capitalist state. Ultimately the politics of the CSUTCB, argues Hahn, were tied to the Bolivian capitalist state, meaning it could not adequately represent its 'non-capitalist' peasant members.

Hahn argues that by negotiating access to credit, infrastructure and such like, the CSUTCB was effectively advocating for the inclusion of 'non-capitalist' peasants into the capitalist system. However, he neglects to discuss where these differences between capitalist and non-capitalist peasants lie. Such a Manichean distinction I contend is artificial when in post-1953 Bolivia all peasants found themselves operating, more or less, within a system of agrarian

capitalism. By the 1980s peasants were well integrated into the domestic market economy. This does not mean that capitalism as system of commodified relations or exchange values was thus completely embraced by the peasantry. As recent scholarship has affirmed, peasant inclusion in domestic or foreign markets does not necessarily undermine traditional Andean peasant practices based on reciprocity and cooperation (for further discussion see Walsh-Dilley, 2013; Kerssen, 2015).

Secondly, typically a union is a vehicle for the extraction of concessions for workers, by workers, from capital. Adapting its mobilising strategy to contest the problems imposed by western-style governments does not necessarily mean that the CSUTCB itself was premised on these same 'Western principles'. Conceptualising the CSUTCB as a 'Western organisation' is both analytically unhelpful given the term's lack of clarity, and furthermore fails to account for the ways in which the CSUTCB at local level was embedded in traditional modes of highland Indigenous organizing. As erstwhile *katarista* (later Vice-President on a neoliberal ticket) Victor Hugo Cardenas points out, the trade union 'face' of the CSUTCB appears principally in its relations with the State (1989: 225). The CSUTCB itself was clear on its dual form; its 1983 *Political Thesis* states for example, 'we have embraced the trade union organization without forgetting our *mallkus, kurakas* and our own forms of organization.'(CSUTCB, 1983). Rather than a 'new social movement', in this period (1978-1990) the CSUTCB can be better understood as a hybrid organisation which incorporated elements of highland Indigenous organisation, as well as unionism implemented in the MNR-era. It was this hybridity which allowed a discourse on the environment to flourish, as it encompassed critiques based on both resource sovereignty and the revindication of Indigenous cosmovisions.

It is necessary to flesh out the relationship between the CSUTCB and the state in order to understand the context in which it developed its discourse on the environment and ethnicity. Although early Marxist scholarship is frequently criticised for characterising peasant movements as 'pre-political' and lacking in a wider political programme beyond seizing control of land in their own locality (Hobsbawm, 1959), there is a rich literature on peasant movements, state formation, and capitalism from Marxist perspectives which resist atavistic conceptualisations of the peasantry as an impediment within class-centred visions of social change (Harris, 1978; Vanden, 1982).

This literature points out that agrarian movements which orient their goals around political or economic autonomy ultimately run up against the power of the state which retains the power to determine the kind of economic relations peasants enter into. State capture, it is argued, is the singular means by which peasant movements may meaningfully realise the full scope of their aims (Brass, 2005). Certainly, the CSUTCB was pragmatic and at times vague in its approach to the state, recognising that as the central instrument of political power, a level of engagement was both desirable and unavoidable. The union's proposals stated, for example, 'We do not want a statist society, but we are not interested in economic liberalism either. We look for an adequate balance that allows us community and collectivist self-management.' (1989b: 29).

A class versus ethnicity (and by extension, culture) debate has structured much scholarship on recent agrarian movements in Latin America. In his study on the Zapatista peasant guerrilla movement in Chiapas in the 1990s, Tom Brass maintains that the movement's singular focus on ethnicity obscured intra-ethnic class divisions. Since *mestizos* (those with a mixed European-Indigenous heritage) can also be peasants and landless labourers, 'the

struggle for Indigenous empowerment is in effect a war between ethnically distinct components of the same class, and involves one set of workers and peasants pitted against another set'(2005).

Yet while ethnic revindication was central in CSUTCB discourse there is no evidence that this came at any neglect of analysis based on class, or that disagreements in the CSUTCB were refracted on class lines. The CSUTCB adopted the nomenclature of 'union', understood in the western tradition as a collective structure based on common interests among workers. Unions in Europe and the Americas have historically directed their efforts toward the protection of the social and economic rights of workers within the framework of productive capitalist relations (Anigstein, and Wyczykier, 2019). Adopting a *campesino* union structure evidently provided many institutional benefits for the CSUTCB but it was strongly influenced by traditional forms of highland Indigenous social organisation derived from the *ayllu,* the pre-Hispanic territorial social unit of the highlands. *Ayllus* are political bodies which differ from the nature-culture divide of the Western political tradition (Escobar, 2010) as they encompass not just families, but spirits and other-than-human beings who reside within the same territorial space and share relations of reciprocity (see Yampara: 1992: 143). The formation of peasant unions across Bolivia was a highly differentiated process. In effect, the CSUTCB was tasked with uniting regions with very different historical trajectories of peasant organisation in the post-revolutionary era. However its own origins in the Aymara-speaking highlands where traditional Indigenous social organisation retained considerable influence is reflected in the CSUTCB's structure and strategy.

To summarise, in this section I have outlined how connecting key concepts within the literatures on peasant unionism and decoloniality enables a more complicated vision of the

CSUTCB as a hybrid political entity, operating as Indigenous movement and labour union. As I will explain in more detail, this dynamic is exemplified in the distinctly ecological politics developed by the CSUTCB in the 1980s.

METHODS

I employ historical methods and use a combination of audio and printed materials as the basis of my findings. I assess audio recordings of CSUTCB national and regional congresses between 1984 and 1989 housed in the Museo Nacional de Etnografía y Folklore (Museum of Folklore and Ethnography, MUSEF) in La Paz, Bolivia. The congresses were a forum in which internal proposals were debated, grievances aired and strategies adopted. They were central to the functioning of the union and to the dissemination of its political programmes. The recordings of these meetings are invaluable in answering the questions posed in this article because they offer extensive insight into the CSUTCB's political and organisational priorities within the 1980s as well as a record of internal frustrations and viewpoints which do not always appear in the official publications of the CSUTCB. They thus are a useful addition to the printed materials disseminated by the CSUTCB, which I also examine here.

In using these recordings, I draw on decolonial methodologies derived from oral history, in other words, a collective approach which aims to centre the voices of historical protagonists themselves and embrace the subjectivities which emerge through oral testimonies (Rivera, 1987). I listened to sixteen separate recordings of CSUTCB congresses dated between 1984 and 1989 which total around two hundred hours of audio time, and many of the meetings spanned several days. There were no available recordings of meetings prior to 1984. I compiled focused transcripts for eight of these recordings. The passages I quote in this paper are drawn from these selected transcripts. The purpose of the transcripts is not to enable a

detailed linguistic analysis but to capture key points arising from these meetings, and especially those that touch on questions of ecology, environment or ethnicity. The transcripts themselves can therefore be considered subjective and interpretive. The majority of the recorded meetings are conducted in Spanish, but the Quechua and Aymara languages occasionally feature, especially in the departmental meetings. I draw my findings from speeches made in the Spanish language only. In many of the recordings it is difficult to discern what is said due to poor audio quality, background noise and music or vocalisations such as whistles and shouts. In others, attendees begin to speak without introducing themselves or with their introductions cut off. Any errors in comprehension, transcription or translation are my own.

In addition to these recordings, I also make extensive use of pamphlets, published interviews and documents from the wider peasant movement throughout the 1970s and 1980s derived from archival research in the Archivo y Biblioteca Nacionales de Bolivia (National Archives and Library, ABNB) in Sucre as well as from public collections located in Senate House Library, London, and the Bodleian Library, Oxford in the UK. These include documents published by the CSUTCB, as well as non-governmental organisations such as the Centro de Información y Documentación de Bolivia (Bolivian Centre for Information and Documentation, CIDOB)[1]. For material relating to agrarian reform I made use of papers in the Walter Guevara Arze archive at the ABNB as well as newspapers from the period.

From Dictatorship To Democracy: The Evolution Of The CSUTCB

The CSUTCB emerged out of a longer history of peasant mobilisation in Bolivia which included union, and non-union forms of organisation. Peasant unions began to emerge in the 1930s, with the first agricultural *sindicato* (union) officially founded in 1936 in Ucureña,

Cochabamba by peasant veterans of the Chaco War with the assistance of Eduardo Arze Loureiro, then Minister of Peasant Affairs and member of the *Partido Obrera Socialista* (Socialist Party) (Iriarte, 1974; Kohl, 1984). These unions were political and social organisations formed by communities to regulate internal obligations and external relations with regional authorities. The reformist elites associated with the MNR (Revolutionary Nationalist Movement, MNR) that had spearheaded the movement that overthrew the mining oligarchy in the Revolution of 1952 encouraged the development of peasant unions. Part of their motivation was the desire to incorporate the Indian into a modern political apparatus which could form part of a cross-sector coalition against oligarchical authorities (Ticona, Rojas and Albó , 1995: 101). In the late 1930s and the early 1940s waves of rural confrontations by peasants against landowners and state officials, particularly in the Cochabamba valleys, provided compelling evidence for reformist elites of the need to encourage unions to challenge the power of oligarch landowners, while mindful of the potential radicalism of these unions and that their challenge to social relations needed to be contained from above (Gotkowitz, 2007).

Unions acquired considerable significance in the years following 1953 agrarian reform. The Agrarian Reform Commission recommended that the government of the Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario party under Víctor Paz Estenssoro eliminate the *haciendas* (landed estates owned by descendants of Europeans) to address the extreme inequalities of land ownership in Bolivia. The activity of grassroots unions, especially in the Cochabamba valleys, gave significant impetus to this land reform. Prior to 1952, four percent of landowners possessed 82 percent of land (Eckstein, 1982: 108). The Indian population of the highlands was expected to fulfil labour obligations for large landowners in exchange for the

right to cultivate a small parcel of land. Prohibitions on the produce that peasants could sell meant that peasant families could not earn any significant cash income (Clark, 1968).

The agrarian reform was signed in Ucureña - symbolically chosen because it was the site of the first peasant union - in August 1953 and was the first major project of land distribution in Bolivian history, drawing inspiration from the agrarian reform passed in Mexico thirty-five years earlier. Through the dissolution of haciendas in the highlands and valleys, it distributed six million hectares of land which benefited 250,000 families and more than a million farmers (Iriarte, 1974: 46). It aimed to end the feudal relations endemic in the countryside by eliminating the system of bondage that accompanied hacienda production (Fontana, 2014). However, although agrarian reform contained plans to transform all rural areas into 'productive' spaces through state investment, in reality the state funnelled the majority of its available funds into new large capitalist agribusinesses in lowland colonisation zones that were largely unaffected by the Agrarian Reform (Iriarte, 1974: 46).

A major economic impact of agrarian reform was the integration of peasants into a market system with capitalist relations (Mendelberg, 1985). By the 1970s this process had led to heightened peasant differentiation. Many peasants, especially in the areas around Cochabamba and La Paz became semi-proletarianized as increasing numbers sold their labour in urban centres to supplement income from agriculture (Mendelberg, 1985). The variation in the impact of the Reform across the country was due to the fact that pre-Revolution land tenure patterns differed considerably within, and between the regions (Assies, 2006). Similarly, the trajectory of peasant union formation in the revolution's aftermath was far from uniform. Following agrarian reform, peasant unionism broadly followed three regional models (Ticona, Rojas and Albó, 1995: 36-37). In the highlands where traditional forms of

organisation were strong and haciendas weaker, peasant unions were accommodated by existing organisations; in effect, the union was in most cases, a mere re-naming of existing community organisation structures (Yashar, 2005: 161). In the valleys in Cochabamba and other productive agricultural areas such as around Lake Titicaca, the prevalence of haciendas meant traditional forms of Indigenous organisation had been largely displaced. In these areas, in the absence of Indigenous authorities or structures, ex-hacienda workers took more enthusiastically to the formation of new peasant unions as an organisational instrument that helped in the expulsion of landowners and the recovery of usurped land (Ticona et al, 1995: 103). Thirdly, in Northern Potosí, a more conflictual relationship emerged between peasant unions and traditional *ayllu* organisations. In this region, the *ayllus* successfully resisted the widespread penetration of state-sponsored unions (Ticona et al, 1995: 36-37).

Figure 7. Farmer working field with ox-drawn plough in west La Paz department, c.1934-1969. From the American Geographical Society Library, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Libraries.

Agrarian reform must be understood in the context of revolutionary state-building and a modernization project. While early scholars of agrarian reform, such as Richard Patch (1961) frame it as a popular process in which the peasantry played an active role, revisionist scholars were quicker to point to its top-down nature and co-optive implications (see Rivera, 1984; Ticona et al, 1995). Agrarian reform enabled the MNR revolutionary state to install itself within peripheral rural areas through its control over official peasant unions, which would come to impede the development of autonomous peasant organisations. In a dynamic of incorporation and co-optation, these unions were intended to replace traditional modes of Indigenous organisations such as *ayllus,* or communities. In areas where unions had existed prior, the dynamics of the post-revolutionary regime changed their structure and purpose and turned them into interlocutors between peasant and state via a rural bureaucracy loyal to the MNR leadership (Kohl, 1982: 610; Yashar, 2005:159). State appointed *dirigentes* controlled the votes of local *sindicatos,* and ultimately shored up the peasantry as a reliable constituency of the MNR. Peasants were thus freed from domination by *hacendados* but found themselves controlled by unions as the intermediaries of the post-revolutionary state. In this way, agrarian reform, according to Hurtado (1986: 222), for more than twenty years served as the most important instrument of state domination.

Figure 8. Farmer working field with ox-drawn plough in west La Paz department, c.1934-1969. From the American Geographical Society Library, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Libraries.

There was also a racial logic driving the state's drive to transform rural space and modernize Indigenous peoples. Reformist elites in pre-revolutionary Bolivia found in the natural world a persuasive explanation for Bolivia's deep racial divisions and political fragmentation. Expanding the reach of the state into the countryside was a way of civilising both the landscape and the Indian populations who lived in it, thereby addressing the widely perceived problem of Indian 'backwardness'. Accordingly, the term peasant (*campesino*) was officially adopted by the architects of the 1952 revolution as part of a homogenising *mestizaje* vision of Bolivian society which sought to expunge the nation's Indian elements (Rivera, 1987). The terms *indígena* (Indigenous) and *indio* (indian) were deemed feudal and pejorative, and so were replaced in state and popular discourse with the ostensibly modern, race blind label 'peasant' (*campesino)* in a process of *campesinization*. An article published under the alias

‘Huascar’ on 26 July 1953 in national newspaper *La Nación* (1953: np) declared that ‘agrarian reform is the policy of liquidating the Indigenous as Indigenous’. Agrarian reform would ‘destroy and eliminate forever the condition of misery, hunger and the condition of a colonial country’ (*La Nación*, 1953: np). The article went on to claim that it would boost productivity in the countryside, ‘elevating [the Indigenous] to the category of producer and consumer citizen’ *(La Nación*, 1953: np) Agrarian reform was thus part of a racial project which aimed to establish a system of agrarian capitalism and transform Indians into rural proletarians within it (Hurtado, 1986).

Although the Indian communities of the highlands benefited from the redistribution of land, the devaluation of *ayllus* and the privileging of individual landownership (which eventually led to excessive smallholding) were perceived to be culturally and economically damaging by peasants. Publications and recordings from CSUTCB general meetings in the 1980s show that agrarian reform continued as a problem for the peasantry, and indeed to this day due to its unequal application (Assies, 2006). Its 1983 Political and Syndical Thesis states that agrarian reform "culminated a long process of fragmentation of our communitarian organisational forms ….. our oppressors have advocated by various means a systematic dispossession of our historical identity. They tried to make us forget our true origins and reduce ourselves only to peasants without personality, without history and without identity. (CSUTCB, 1983 in Toranzo, 1987: 226)

Several speakers at the Third Congress of Peasant Unity in 1987 also raised agrarian reform in the historical context of peasant exploitation. An unnamed speaker criticised agrarian reform as both an attack against the livelihoods and value system of peasants. “Agrarian reform legalised dispossession, abuse and discrimination, created more individualised agrarian

labour, 'minifundised' our plots", the speaker states. "On the other hand, it strengthened new large landowners of the agro-industrial and rancher type in eastern Bolivia, who exploit a mass of sugar cane harvesters [*zafreros*], cotton pickers, farmers, etc, and are favoured with all kinds of advantages from the state. Agrarian reform has not even reached many areas."

Agrarian reform was placed in a continuum of colonial exploitation against humans and other-than-humans. The same speaker states, "Large landowners have continued to exploit Chiquitania, Guarani [lowland regions], etc under a colonial system and methods, *plundering and destroying the ecology of the tropical plains.*'' (my emphasis added), undergirding how the expansion of agrarian capitalism was perceived to be environmentally destructive. Another unidentified speaker asked, "What happened to agrarian reform? The redistribution of the land was limited, the fundamental problem of improving the living conditions of the peasant, *compañeros…*was forgotten." He continues, "It is a government in favour of big business, for the large businesses of this country and for the transnationals […] which have plundered this country's wealth." He concludes, "The peasant problem is a national problem."

In 1964 General René Barrientos seized power in a military coup which overthrew the government of Victor Paz Estenssoro and brought the post-revolutionary government of the MNR to an abrupt end. The Barrientos regime (1964-1969) introduced the Military Peasant Pact, which bound the peasant leadership to the right-wing military government in exchange for a promise to not undo the 1953 Agrarian Reform. The government sought to prevent an alliance between workers, miners and peasants and deployed clientelist practices to co-opt the peasantry and suppress struggles from organised workers and miners. State massacres of miners in 1965 and 1967 further crushed efforts to resist (Rivera, 1987: 105). In short,

through the Pact the peasantry became the social base that legitimised the power and counterrevolutionary aims of the post-revolutionary state (Hurtado, 1986: 222).

In the 1960s the peasant movement was dominated by the government sponsored union, the *Confederacion Nacional de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia* (Bolivian National Confederation of Peasant Workers, CNTCB). Another military coup in October 1970 brought the leftist General Juan José Torres to the presidency for less than a year. In this time, an *Asamblea Popular* (Popular Assembly) was formed from labour and peasant organisations, as well as parties from the radical left. This swiftly ended when the far-right military dictator Colonel Hugo Banzer Suarez (1971-1978) seized power in yet another coup in 1971.

By the 1970s, the Military Peasant Pact was fast breaking down following attempts by the Barrientos government to introduce a new rural property tax (Assies, 2006). This occurred at the same time as the government began to accelerate state expenditure away from the peasant agriculture of the highlands, towards the lowland areas which were dominated by large *latifundistas*. The share of loans invested in large lowland agriculture by the Bolivian Agricultural Bank (BAB), the state agency which administered funds to promote peasant agriculture, rose from 68 to 90 percent between 1968 and 1971 (Eckstein, 1982: 110). Exacerbating the effects of IMF-financed devaluation in 1972, Banzer introduced a decree in 1974 which meant food prices drastically increased. Thousands of Quechua-speaking peasants in the valleys joined forces with the Aymara peasantry in Aroma province in the department of La Paz to block roads in protest. Their efforts were met with violence, notoriously in the Massacre of the Valley in 1974 when state forces massacred at least 100 Quechua-speaking peasants in the Cochabamba valley (Albó, 1987: 398).

Between 1978 and 1980 there were a further three elections and four military coups (Rivera, 1987: 110). An alliance between workers and peasants crystallised during the 'cocaine coup' by drug trafficker-backed General Luis García Meza, on 17 July 1980. Shortly after seizing power, Meza sent troops into a COB meeting, arresting five leaders and brutally killing Marcelo Quiroga Santa Cruz, then leader of the Bolivian Socialist Party.

Meanwhile efforts were underway by *kataristas* at provincial level to prise control of the peasant unions away from *dirigentes* co-opted by the state. *Katarismo* emerged around La Paz in the late 1960s as a political expression of Aymara ethnic consciousness combined with class-based theories of exploitation (Albo, 1991: Rivera, 1984; Hurtado, 1986). The label offers a capacious umbrella for a number of syndicalist and intellectual currents which denounced the racialised oppression of Indigenous peoples and the colonial character of the Bolivian nation state (Macusaya, 2018). The *katarista* outlook was codified in a document known as the Tiahuanaco Manifesto in 1973 which confronted the creole-left's neglect of culture and ethnicity in the struggle faced by Bolivia's Indigenous peoples (Hurtado, 1986: 59-60). Although recent works have complicated the vision of the left as totally unreceptive to Indigenous issues in Bolivia (see Young, 2019), *kataristas* within and beyond the CSUTCB were confronted with a class reductionist left which gave little weight to Indigenous peoples as revolutionary protagonists, nor crucially, to the environment as a locus of Indigenous-peasant struggle. In contrast, the *katarismo* offered a radical rethinking of the past and the natural world in the formation of Bolivian society.

In 1970, *katarista* Aymara leaders Jenaro Flores Santos and Macabeo Chila were elected to the senior positions in the peasant unions in La Paz and Oruro departments respectively (Rivera, 1987: 112). Their arrival heralded a rupture with the officialist status quo. In

symbolic terms, they added 'TK' to the end of the union name in honour of Tupaj Katari (Albó , 1987: 392).

In June 1979, the *Central Obrera Boliviana*, (Bolivian Workers Central, COB) the national trade union federation, sponsored the First Congress for Peasant Unity in La Paz. The CSUTCB was founded during this Congress as the culmination of efforts by *katarista* peasants to build an autonomous peasant movement. From its founding, it was headed by Secretary General Jenaro Flores who came from Sicasica, La Paz, the birthplace of Tupaj Katari two centuries earlier. In 1980 he would also run unsuccessfully as presidential candidate with the *Movimiento Revolucionario Tupaj Katari* party, (Tupaj Katari Revolutionary Movement-MRTK). With the COB leadership murdered, in hiding or imprisoned following the coup by Garcia Meza between 17 July 1980 and 19 June 1981, Jenaro Flores became de facto leader of the COB, the first time that an Indigenous-peasant leader had ascended to the leadership (Rivera, 1983: 163). It cemented the link between the CSUTCB and the broader workers' movement. In an interview conducted shortly after the coup in 1980, Flores declared for example, 'they previously tried to alienate the workers from the peasants… But now there is a close relationship between mining workers and peasants, because ultimately they are also from peasant extraction.' (CSUTCB, 1980: 2).

That the CSUTCB was deeply imbricated in the COB was a landmark moment for the Bolivian labour and peasant movements after the historical antagonism between workers and peasants which was reified in the Military Peasant Pact (García Linera, 2014: 355). Even before the imposition of the Military Peasant pact, the relationship between workers and peasants in the labour movement was uneasy. Alvaro García Linera has characterised the Bolivian labour movements as historically having two organizational forms: the labour unions

grouped around the COB, the so-called 'union-worker' form, and the communal unions affiliated to the CSUTCB (2010). The COB tended to privilege the industrial working class, and especially the miners as revolutionary protagonists uniquely imbued with class consciousness. Indeed the first COB congress in 1954 provided seats for 177 'proletarian' delegates and only 50 from the peasant class for example (Young, 2017: 137). The COB remained part of the revolutionary government until 1957 (García Linera et al, 2010) and a major actor in the coalition of forces which buttressed the MNR and its resource nationalist ideology

Crucially, it was not only political self-determination that the new peasant leaders who arose in opposition to the Military-Peasant Pact sought. The CSUTCB is distinguished from earlier peasant unions and from the labour movement more generally, for its emphasis on ethnic identity in addition to class. In the 1980s this was encouraged by the ascendancy of neoliberal modes of governance in Bolivia and Latin America, which opened up space for a politics of multiculturalism and cultural recognition of Indigenous peoples (Van Cott, 2007). Central to the CSUTCB's aims was a desire to promote Indigenous-peasant issues within and beyond the COB. It used direct action tactics, such as in November 1979 when it instigated nationwide road blockades, together with the Departmental Federation of Peasant Workers of La Paz after a military coup by Colonel Natusch (García Linera, 2014: 355-356). In the period between 1979 and 1985 under the leadership of Flores, the CSUTCB made its greatest strides in developing peasant-led initiatives for rural development. It established the Corporación Agropecuaria Campesina, (Peasant Agricultural Corporation, CORACA), as its economic arm, to assist with community crop production, commercialisation and exports (Cárdenas, 1989: 225). In 1984 it presented the government with a preliminary draft of the Ley Agraria

Fundamental (Fundamental Agrarian Law, LAF) which espoused Andean communitarianism and sought to strengthen Indigenous peasant self-government.

A series of booklets published by organisation Centro de Información y Documentación de Bolivia (CIDOB) in 1978 as *Los campesinos opinan* (Peasants give their opinion) convey peasant perspectives on self-organisation. These booklets are not, of course, reflective of all peasants, not least because both peasants and Indigenous groups are class divided (Brass, 2007). However they give a helpful indication of issues being debated by the peasant movement in the 1970s. The October 1978 booklet on 'Syndicalism' states "Peasant unionism works only when it defends the interests of its members; but, as long as the union is manipulated and controlled by the government as it is currently, it does not fulfil its true functions." (1978: 13)

The booklet reflects on the connection between Indigenous forms of organisation and peasant unions. "To solve our economic, social, and political problem, organisation is important. But this organisation must go from the smallest level, which is the family, then the community, the *ayllu* and even at the *marka* level, to later acquire a provincial, departmental and national character" (1978: 13). It is clear from this statement that the peasant movement sees itself as operating within, and with, state structures. It also suggests that in some ways, the peasant union operates on two levels; at local level according to local norms, and secondly, according to national protocols. 'We have spoken of *ayllu, marka,* etc., because our social system is still in force and continues to be organized according to a system of work, and even to its own political system. This is very important to take into account, because, if we fight for our rights, we have to start from our own values'. The booklet espouses the importance of Indigenous forms of leadership in the peasant movement through a framing of democracy.

‘We know that there are still native authorities such as the *jilikata*. We also know that many times these *jilikatas* are named by a very small group; but traditionally, certain steps are necessary to assume these positions. It is in this sense that the election of these positions acquires a democratic character’. (1978: 13)

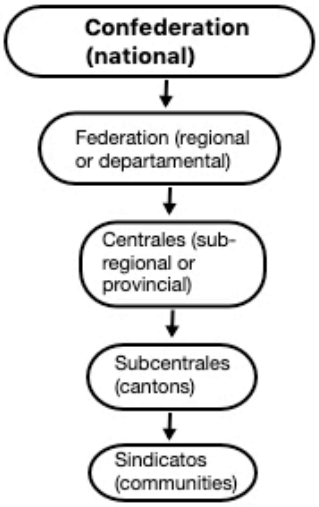


Figure 9. The structure of the CSUTCB (from Healy, 1989). Its federated structure replicates union structures established by the MNR from 1953. Adapted by author.

Figure 10. Poster of the Bartolina Sisas, the women's affiliate of the CSUTCB. Source: Bolivia Social and Political Developments Collection, IISH (Amsterdam)

THE CSUTCB AND THE ENVIRONMENT

As a peasant-Indigenous hybrid union, I argue that the arguments made by the CSUTCB around the spiritual and political importance of nature reflect the emphasis on indigeneity enshrined in its founding, as well as the enmeshing of peasant and Indigenous organisational forms. I also contend that it reveals the 'indigenisation' of debates over resource nationalism which had emerged earlier in the twentieth century (Young, 2017). Historian Ben Dangl

(2019: 59) has argued that CSUTCB organisational efforts were marked by the centrality of historical consciousness. This historical consciousness had a deeply ecological dimension. I use ecology here to refer broadly to ideas about natural space, landscape and the other-than-human, and the use and ownership of natural resources. The prevalence of *wiphalas* (flags representing Andean Indigenous peoples), Indigenous dress and ecology in CSUTCB discourse and iconography articulated the centrality of indigeneity in CSUTCB discourse. At local level, one of the functions of elected, rotating Indigenous authorities such as the *jilikata* is to be an intermediary between humans and other-than-human entities such as sacred mountains for example (Stroebele-Gregor, 1996). In this sense, a political model derived from Indigenous modes of organising may well involve a vision which includes the other-than-human. The CSUTCB's formation of what Susan Healey calls an 'ethno- ecological identity', reflects the way in which the environment was reframed as an area of ethnic, as well as agrarian concern (2009). Employing an ecological discourse rooted in appeals to indigeneity also helped the CSUTCB imbue demands for state assistance in a language amenable to NGOs and other potential non-governmental allies, which played a critical role in rural development projects in the 1980s and 90s (Freiherr von Freyberg, 2011).

Examining how and why the CSUTCB articulated a discourse on the natural world is crucial in understanding the importance of the environment for the peasant-Indigenous movement in Bolivia more widely. As I demonstrate, the CSUTCB's stance on the environment points to the coalescence of environmental and Indigenous politics within the organised peasant movement in Bolivia in the late twentieth century. It has been widely documented that the CSUTCB's focus on ethnicity arouse out of the *katarista* movement and the longer history of Aymara political mobilisation on the *altiplano* (Rivera, 1987). In the 1980s this emphasis on ethnic identity became especially pronounced. At the Third Congress of Peasant Unity in 1987, interviews were conducted on tape recorder prior to the main meetings apparently for

later dissemination on radio programmes. Javier Condoreno, the Executive Secretary of the Single Departmental Federation of Peasant Workers Tupaj Katari of La Paz states, "And that is why we have to become aware today more than ever *compañeros*, become aware of our own cultural identity as a people, as a nation, as a culture." He added, "[This Congress] marks a new historical milestone where nationalities, or oppressed nations, can consider a political thesis …and come together in this Third National Congress."

Although it claimed to represent all Indigenous nations of Bolivia, the CSUTCB was dominated by Aymara speaking peasants of the *altiplano* with lowland Indigenous groups having an especially negligible presence. This was despite the sustained focus on uniting all Indigenous peoples of Bolivia by emphasising a common experience of colonisation. "The Aymara, Quechua, Cambas, Chapacos, Chiquitanos, Canichanas, Itonamas, Cayubabas, Ayoréodes, Guaranis, etc, peasants are the rightful owners of this land. We are the seed from where Bolivia was born but, even today, they treat us as exiles [*desterrados*] in our own land" (1983: 1). It is perhaps interesting to note here the CSUTCB's use of '*desterrados*' rather than '*exiliados*' to convey exile. *Desterrar* has roots in the Latin for land (terra), and therefore conveys a more visceral sense of being separated from earth and land, rather than from the formal boundaries of the state.

Ethnographic accounts of rituals practiced by Quechua speaking peasants stress the relations of reciprocity and mutual dependence between peasants and their physical environment. Ethnomusicologist Henry Stobart describes how peasants in Macha, Northern Potosí believe that their crops are sentient and will 'weep' (*waqay* in Quechua) if not cared for properly (2006: 27). Meanwhile John McNeish (2002) observes how the physical environment acts as a repository of history for the highland Aymara community of Santuario de Quillacas, Oruro. Mountains, hills, and even the weather and seasons, were understood to be intimately

connected with local people's daily life and to provide a tangible connection with ancestors. Agricultural rituals tied to the environment are integral to Aymara spirituality. Forecasting weather, planting and harvests reply on observations of stars, planets, flora and fauna as well as through interpreting dreams, reading coca leaves and relations with *achachilas* (mountain spirits) and Pachamama (Yampara, 1992: 160).

This belief in deep human-agricultural and natural environment interconnections is reflected in the political demands and criticism made by the CSUTCB in the 1980s. A proposal from a more militant *katarista* group, the Red Offensive of Tupakatarista Ayllus, (*Ofensiva Roja de Ayllus Tupakataristas* — ORAT) to the IV Ordinary Congress of the CSUTCB in 1988 exemplifies the belief in human-nature reciprocity as an integral part of the peasant's social world.

Figure 11. Family harvesting in La Paz. From the American Geographical Society Library, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Libraries

Their proposals include a sub-section entitled '*Pachamama o muerte'* (Pachamama or Death) in which the group proclaim, "since before Christ, we have been worshipping the hills, *Pukaras*, *Wak'as*, stones, *apachitas*, in the ceremonial and cosmic places, we are older than Western Christianity. Like our grandparents both in the time of Tiwanakinses [pre-Inca Tiwakanu civilisation] and the Incas, they made sacrifices with gold and silver, with coloured wool, coca etc, every year to our Tata Inti (Sun), moon, stars, and the Pachamama, which endure from generation to generation until this day." (CSUTCB, 1989b: 31) It continues, "For this reason, in our communities we live in "*mach'as*" [a communal unit comprising several *ayllus*], our crops no longer produce well, animals die, it no longer rains, and day by day we receive the punishments of our mother nature with hail, frost and drought, and fertile Pachamama becomes sterile, she no longer provides product to us as she did before to the native children." (CSUTCB, 1989b: 31)

The article goes on to imbue acts of agrarian labour with cosmological importance; "Another of the most important points that we must touch is to plow the earth with a cosmic consciousness, and to produce more and more, to accumulate and save that production in the *Pirwas* [storage barns], because for us, the discriminated and exploited, the most difficult days are coming, that is to say we are on the eve of the *awqa-pacha* or the *pachakuti*, that is what the birds, the stones, the rivers, the hills, the rains and the lightning announce to us." It continues by connecting transcendent social change with a politics of landscape; 'It is a necessity and an urgency that there must be the return of the last Inca tupak katari for a telluric transformation to our ancestral homeland."

Pachakuti is a well-documented concept in literature on Andean cosmovisions. *Pacha* refers to earth, time and space, and *kuti* refers to time or reversal but the concept can acquire

different meanings and is often used to refer to a shift in time, revolution or profound upheaval in the cosmos (Rivera, 1991).

At the CSUTCB general meeting in Potosí in July 1988 an unnamed speaker urged his *companeros* to defend their lands, stating 'We, as natives of these lands of Kollasuyo, have been usurped by people who came to these lands. We are the ones who were born in these lands and these *k'aras* [foreigners] do not truly reflect this position. And those who came from another place, with another form of reflection, another way of life, impose their ways and customs.' He goes on to make the following remarks: "There are two well defined interests; capitalism, although we should say colonialism. And feudalism — to exploit our riches, our lands, our Pachamama" (CSUTCB, 1988a). He goes on, "…and we have seen with our eyes them taking away the gold, silver, everything that exists in this country. This Andean country Bolivia, which was formerly Kollasuyo, was a rich country, as well as its inhabitants… [and now] we are beggars" (CSUTCB, 1988a).

By 1985 CSUTCB unity was greatly weakened by a series of internecine struggles over political allegiances, as the frequently combative meetings from around this time attest. At the Third National Congress in 1985, the *katarista* faction headed by Jenaro Flores clashed with the *Movimiento Campesino de Base* (MCB) headed by Victor Morales which was more closely aligned to the traditional left and the COB (Albó, 1994: 60). At the 1987 Third Congress on Peasant Unity in the city of Cochabamba in 1987, a *compañero* named Victor Mercado stated optimistically, "We believe that this Congress is going to come up with important solutions to lead the way, to seek the definitive liberation of our country. We consider this congress to be important, since it is in a difficult political moment." (CSUTCB, 1987).

As is evident from the appeals of an unnamed speaker at the CSUTCB General Meeting in 1988, landscape could serve as a lyrical metaphor of unity between the disparate Indigenous nations of Bolivia, cementing their common class position as peasants—"We are aymaras, quechuas, amazónicos, guarani, we are from Bolivia, *we are the air, water, we are the land … the pampas*" (my emphasis added). He continues, "We are the communitarian civilisation, we aymaras, quechuas, amazónicos, guarani. We are *campesinos*." (CSUTCB, 1988a). It also underscores how grassroots members of the CSUTCB perceived a close connection between peasant-Indigenous identities and the natural world. From its founding, the CSUTCB was anxious to downplay the class stratification within the ranks of its membership by highlighting the overarching enemy of capitalism for both landless labourers and land-owning peasants. The CSUTCB's 1983 Political Thesis states defensively, 'We are far from petty bourgeois because we own plots of land. The land is for us primarily a condition of production and an inheritance from our ancestors, rather than a means of production.' Land is here conceptualised as a spatial and historical entity, rather than purely as an economic resource.

The report of the outgoing Executive Committee to the IV Ordinary National Congress of the CSUTCB 1988-1989 contains a section on '*Tierra - territorio - libertad y poder*', (Land, territory- freedom and power) in which the CSUTCB demands, 'We want the preservation of the environment of the natural resources of flora and fauna, of the air we breathe, of the forests and jungle, because without them we cannot live.' (1989b: 29). They expressed the need to fight for communitarian land ownership rather than individual. Observations made in the October 1978 issue of *Los campesinos opinan* which focused on the 'Economic Situation of the Peasantry' reveal that extracting concessions from the state - in this case, an irrigation

system - was a priority for the peasantry. It states, “Climatological factors are the main problems of natural origin. In many places, especially in the highlands, it rains little and water is scarce. Hence the need for a good irrigation system; but unfortunately the State does not care about solving this problem.’(CIDOB, 1975: 6)

At least as early as 1978 climate change was articulated by peasants as a major ecological threat. In this case, it is attributed to an external cause, namely atomic bomb testing by the United States. Ecological degradation was thus, for peasants, tied up with US neo-imperialism. “Apart from the lack of water, [the land] suffers a lot from frost and hail that destroy the crops. These phenomena are natural, in recent years as a consequence of North American technology (atomic bomb, capsule launch), changes in the climate have been caused, even more bad weather settling. In the countryside we are aware of these climatic changes because we are increasingly harmed by them.” (1978:6) An additional ecological problem is related to pests, which the booklet expends little time on. “There are also phytopathological factors, that is to say, fungal pests, insects, against which we are prepared to fight” (1978:6).

Throughout the 1980s, the CSUTCB sought help from the national government to address hardship caused by environmental problems for peasants. A severe drought devastated the *altiplano* in 1984 which compounded a deep economic crisis. Half a million people were forced to migrate from the highlands to urban areas and to the lowlands seeking alternative sources of income, often in illicit coca production (McNeish, 2002; Do Alto, 2007). In the 1987 meeting, one speaker from the Commission on Natural Disasters declared “Our fellow farmers believe that international countries should consolidate with our common cause to overcome our problems of natural disasters. However, those of us who suffer, especially in

rural areas, do not receive any kind of help because the institutions are in the nation, the central government." (CSUTCB, 1987). The Commission on Natural Disasters also emphasised the need for the union to operate at national level to coordinate efforts from within the movement to alleviate the effects of natural disasters. "Peasants suffer first hand such as Aymara, Quechuas, Chipayas, Guarani, and other nationalities of the country… [Because] we in this territory are seriously affected by natural disasters there is an obligation on our part to create an organisation for the defence for our communities, provinces and departments at the national level to strengthen national peasant solidarity exclusively for natural disasters." (CSUTCB, 1987).

Conclusion

This article has argued that the CSUTCB understood ecology, environmental disasters and climate change to be important problems in the late twentieth century. This was not solely because land and ecology represent the means of production for peasants. A reading of CSUTCB discourse shows that the environment was centred as a site of cultural and epistemological significance within anticolonial struggle. In contrast with the earlier focus on resource nationalism by the COB, the state and assorted left actors in mid-twentieth century Bolivia, I show that a more complicated vision of natural resources emerged in CSUTCB perspectives on the environment by the 1980s. These heralded a new way of articulating an Indigenous vision of natural resources within the framework of organised labour. Embedded within the CSUTCB's critiques of US imperialism and internal colonisation was a recognition that ecological destruction was connected with modes of domination, both epistemological and material. Advocating for greater concern for planetary wellbeing thus reflected an Indigenous-centred critique of Euro-modernity developed by the CSUTCB, and suggests the natural world became a nexus of peasant-Indigenous political identities in the 1980s. It is

argued here that the renewed focus on ethnicity as an axis of oppression from the 1970s onwards opened up avenues for a discourse on the environment which departed from earlier discourses on resource nationalism. Ecological arguments corresponded to Indigenous cosmovisions, but they also provided a means for advancing anti-capitalist critiques through the language of culture which was more amenable to postmodern turn during the neoliberal era (Brass, 2007; 2005). The findings of this article are therefore important for two key reasons. Firstly, they show that the focus on ethnicity from the 1970s onwards opened avenues for a discourse on the environment that departed from earlier debates around resource nationalism. Secondly, this focus on the environment, taking form in 'communal' unions which formed part of the CSUTCB, came to fruition firmly under the parameters of organised labour. On the latter point, it can be seen that this article adds to the literature on the relationship between peasant unionism and environmentalism in late twentieth century Bolivia.

NOTES

1.The CIDOB referred to here should not be confused with the Confederación de Pueblos Indígenas del Oriente Boliviano (Confederation of Indigenous Peoples of the Bolivian East, also abbreviated to CIDOB) which was founded in 1982. The Centro de Información y Documentación de Bolivia (Bolivian Information and Documentation Centre), which published many of the documents referred to in this paper, was founded in the 1970s in La Paz. It operated until approximately 1980 until it ceased operations after being targeted after the Garcia Meza coup. Many of the CSUTCB's reports in the 1980s were published by an organisation called the Centro de Documentación e Información - Bolivia (Documentation and Information Centre - Bolivia) which used the acronym CEDOIN, which absorbed much of CIDOB's functions. A separate organisation, the Centro de Información y Documentación de Bolivia (Bolivian Information and Documentation Centre) CEDIB was set up in the 1970s in Cochabamba and also published many of the documents referred to in this paper. I would like to thank Ann Chaplin for providing helpful clarification on this point.

Chapter Six : Katarismo and the reinvention of landscape

"...national liberation is necessarily an act of culture."
Amilcar Cabral, 1970.

'INDIANS OF BOLIVIA, the Wiphala *and the* Pututu *call to us from the top of the Illimani to come together in struggle. They tell us that our hour of LIBERATION has come.'*

—Fausto Reinaga, The Indian Revolution, 1969

Introduction

In the previous chapter I explored how the CSUTCB as the syndical wing of *katarismo* was integral to the emergence of an ecological consciousness within the peasant movement. In this chapter I focus on the organised politics of the *katarista* movement in the period 1960-1990, that is to say, the political groups which devoted themselves to decolonial struggle by invoking the memory of eighteenth century Aymara rebel leader Tupaj Katari in their organisational names and political programmes. This chapter outlines the trajectory of these *katarista* tendencies and analyses their interactions with other sectors of the Bolivian political milieu. I locate *katarismo* as a turning point in the new articulation of Left-Indigenous ecological identities at the political level in late twentieth century Bolivia. I argue that *katarismo* was the first movement in Bolivia to frame the environment as an agent in an anticolonial struggle against racialised oppression and exploitation.

It is by teasing out the convergences and conflicts between the different *katarista* groups that historians can reflect on the variety of approaches towards the state within the revolutionary ideologies that characterised Indigenous movements of the late twentieth century. A tension between class reductionism and race is frequently articulated by *katarista* actors operating in the party political sphere in their manifestos and pamphlets. The organised Bolivian left as it existed in this period was perceived as gravely deficient by *kataristas*, who saw its neglect of race, culture and nation, indeed of class, as incommensurate with an adequate analysis of Bolivian society. Leftist parties in Bolivia, such as the Trotskyist POR and the socialist PS were characterised by 'ignorance, schematism, and rigid character of thought', according to former Bolivian Vice-President and EGTK militant, Alvaro Garcia Linera in an interview (2014). In response, *kataristas* from all stripes sought to assert the dual importance of political constructs such as class and race, and crucially, I point out, of the other-than-human. *Katarismo* thus heralds the birth of a distinctly new peasant/Indigenous-Left political current in Bolivia. *Kataristas* sought to transcend the epistemological confines of modernity but were confronted with the following problem: how to make the non-human intelligible within the secular world of electoral politics?

In contrast with the CSUTCB which I examined in the previous chapter, whose politics was rooted in the rural world, the strands of *katarismo* that I focus on here had a base among urban Aymara intellectuals and workers. Katarista environmental discourses in urban centres emerged at as part of a wider politics of anti-racism generated by the new forms of discrimination experienced by Indigenous peoples in the city in the closing decades of the twentieth century. I argue that *katarista* discourses on the environment acquired additional resonance precisely because they were tied to memories of place and communities that were for many urban migrants from *campesino* families, places partially left behind. I conclude that

the construction of environmental myth and memory helped Kataristas invoke a counter-modernity and build a politics that resonated across rural and urban spheres.

Methods

As a lettered movement which straddled rural and urban worlds, *katarismo* offers a rare lens through which historians can understand the unfolding politics of indigeneity in the Andes from the perspective of Indigenous actors themselves. If literacy had been a marker of elevated social status, signifying proximity to urban power (Ramos, 1996), the prolific written output of the *kataristas* marked a sea-change in who could speak and from where. In this chapter I draw on Katarista pamphlets, manifestos, periodicals and publications published in the Spanish language, principally, *El Katarismo, Boletin Chitakolla* and *Collasuyo*, as well as documents relating to cultural initiatives from the period, such as the booklet *Yatiñataki*. I also draw on pamphlets from Bolivian political parties including the Trotskyist *Partido Obrero Revolucionario* (POR) and the Movimiento Nacional Revolucionario (MNR), selected Bolivian national newspapers (*Presencia, El Diario, Presencia* and *Los Tiempos)* published at various points between 1960 and 1990, reports from the Bolivian trade union movement and published interviews with former *katarista* activists. All translations and errors are my own except where otherwise indicated.

'The theory of the two eyes': Historiographical approaches to *katarismo*

Katarismo emerged tentatively in the late 1960s and is the first movement in Bolivia to blend ethnic concerns with class-based theories of exploitation, rooted powerfully in traditions of collective organization in the Bolivian altiplano. Albó argues the *katarista* perspective can be captured in the theory of 'the two eyes' (1991: 311). In this way Katarismo recognised the

duality of class exploitation and racialised oppression, 'as peasants, along with all the exploited classes, and as oppressed peoples, along with all the oppressed nations of the country.' (Albó, 1991: 313). Katarismo was a repudiation of the class reductionism offered by the dominant leftist groups at the time, and the ethnic reductionism of the Indianistas, according to scholar-activist Javier Medina in an article in the June 1985 edition of *Boletin Chitakolla,*(1985: 5).

Katarismo represents more a bundle of tendencies than a coherent movement; it was multifarious and far from monolithic. The label offers a capacious umbrella for syndicalist, nationalist, ethnic and autonomist currents broadly aimed at the decolonisation of Bolivian society through the emancipation of Indigenous-*campesino* peoples. Their political programmes were oriented around an end to class-based exploitation and racialised oppression. In its party political manifestations, from the late 1970s *katarismo* can be broadly characterised as having radical and moderate camps. These diverged in their willingness to operate in coalition with non-Indigenous leftists parties, as well as their more fundamental understanding of the relationship between ethnicity and class in the Indian struggle (Sanjinés, 2002). Claude Le Gouill has further identified regional variations in *katarismo* (2013). He notes that around La Paz, *katarismo* was more imbricated in peasant politics and led to the creation of a new union organisation which took national form in the CSUTCB. However in Northern Potosí, *katarismo* broke with trade unionism to promote a the 'reconstitution of the ayllus' through cultural organisations (2013).

Kataristas sought to recover histories and epistemologies that transcended, and subverted the Bolivian nation state. When Tupaj Katari was executed by the Spanish authorities on 15 November 1781, his body was dismembered into four parts and scattered. Oral tradition holds

that Tupaj Katari's dying words were: '*Nayawa jiwtxa, nayjarusti waranqa waranqaranakawa kutanıpxa* — I die, but I shall return tomorrow as millions' (Canessa, 2000: 125). Tupaj Katari's execution became a mobilising myth, serving both as a vivid reminder of the brutalities of colonial rule which resonated in the present, and more intangibly, the fragmentation of Bolivia's many peoples. His quartered body has hence become a visceral signifier of (dis)unity. Álvaro García Linera opined during the commemoration act of Tupaj Katari's wife Bartolina Sisa in 2008, "Today, the unity of Bolivia is the unity of Tupaj Katari's body… Katari's body is united, Bolivia's body is united and consequently, victory is secured." (Burman, 2016: 9). As veteran Aymara militant, Felipe 'El Mallku' Quispe declared in a newspaper interview 'So, [Tupaj Katari's] memory, his sacred memory is in us, he has bequeathed us that thought of saying no to colonialism, no to capitalism, no to racial discrimination, no to westernism' (2013, np).

Scholarship on the origins of *katarismo* is dominated by two ground-breaking works from the 1980s by sociologists Silvia Rivera and Javier Hurtado, both of whom were politically active alongside the movement. In her work *Oprimidos pero no vencidos: luchas del campesinado aymara y qhechwa de Bolivia, 1900-1980*, Rivera unveils the notion of 'long memory' and 'short memory' as defining features of *katarismo,* drawing on French sociologist Maurice Holbwachs' earlier theory of social memory. The premise is that long memory refers to the cross-generational memory stretching back to colonial era repression and resistance led by Tupaj Amaru and Tupaj Katari in the eighteenth century. Conversely, short memory refers to the failure of the Bolivian revolution of 1952 to fulfil the liberal promises of reform and achieve meaningful social or political improvements for Bolivia's Indigenous peoples. The notion of long memory has also been taken up by Xavier Albó using the motif of the 'great arc' stretching from Tupaj Katari in 1780 to the *Kataristas* of 1980 (1987: 412).

Hurtado's *El Katarismo* (1986) traces the rise of Katarismo as a political, cultural and syndicalist movement. The work is rich in detail on the institutional development and electoral efforts of *Katarismo*. Throughout the 1970s Hurtado, along with fellow scholar Xavier Albó, was involved in the Centre for Research and Promotion of the Peasantry (CIPCA), a Jesuit-led NGO which promoted rural development, cultural initiatives and advocated the rights of Aymara and Quechua speaking *campesinos*. Additionally, sociologist Jean- Pierre Lavaud produced an early report entitled *Identité Et Politique: Le Courant Tupaj Katari En Bolivie* (1982) outlining the political trajectory of Katarismo. Lavaud downplays the revolutionary potential of Katarismo, noting that the groups 'are somewhat regressive, all turning towards a mythologised past from which they draw energy and assurance.' (1982: 53). The work received criticism from Rivera. In a footnote in *Oppressed but not Defeated*, she scathingly concludes, 'The ultimate purpose of Lavaud's article seems to be that of demystifying the Indian, who in the latest trends of European romanticism appears to have become an idealised solution to the ideological crisis of the younger generations.'(1987: 133).

In recent years, the election of Evo Morales and the MAS in 2005, in tandem with cycles of Indigenous mobilisation between 2000 and 2005, has compelled new interest in the study of *katarismo* and its influences on contemporary politics. This developing historiography is reflected in the 2016 work *El Indianismo katarista - Un análisis crítico* by Pedro Portugal and Carlos Macusaya, perhaps the most important work on *katarismo* in the post-2000 era. The authors are active in projects such as Periodico Pukara, a La Paz-based Indianista journal and the contemporary group Movimiento Indianista Katarista (MINKA). Portugal and Macusaya reject Rivera's notion of 'long memory' specifically. They lament, 'one of the most popularised and vulgarised ideas about the Indigenous movements of the Andes has its origin

in that book [Rivera's Oppressed but not Defeated]: the idea of 'long memory', which is very attractive for certain social strata distanced from the 'Indigenous'.'(2016: 31-32). They argue that notions of dormant memory are ahistorical and fail to account for the ways in which younger-generation Kataristas actively constructed a memory and language of past oppression unassisted by older generations.

Portugal and Macusaya also raise the question of the relationship between Indianismo and *katarismo* which are generally considered to be inter-related although operationally distinct movements (2016: 26). *Indianismo*, influenced by the works of Fausto Reinaga places primary emphasis on the racial oppression experienced by Indians and asserts an essential difference between Indian and non-Indian subjects (Pacheco,1992). Portugal and Macusaya conclude, 'Indianismo was a movement and a discourse that centred its criticism and struggle on the racialised character of the social structure in Bolivia; Meanwhile *Katarismo* was a movement which focused on the economic and cultural specificities of the peasantry.' (2016: 26). This in my view, overstates the degree to which *katarismo* was defined by peasant politics alone, and furthermore rests on an overly narrow conception of what peasant politics represents. Are we to assume that the 'cultural specificities' of the peasantry alluded to by Macusaya and Portugal encompass Indigenous nationhood, i.e. Aymara and Quechua cultural identities? If so these specificities are surely realised through contestations of racialised exclusion which go beyond the production of power in the agrarian setting.

Urbanisation and the reconfiguration of race and space

Relating to this point, it is worth pausing to discuss the urban space as it relates to *katarismo*. The city has loomed large in colonial schemas of thought. In a phenomenon famously described by Angel Rama as 'the lettered city' (1996), urban centres and their *letrados,* or

writers, were central to the reproduction of power in colonial and post-colonial eras. As I outlined in Chapter Three, in the early twentieth century the highlands were understood by Bolivian *letrados* to be a space defined by Indianness while in contrast, urban centres were configured as white-*mestizo*. However, by the late decades of the twentieth century, urbanisation on a mass scale occurred in Bolivia and Latin America (Roberts, 1978). From the 1980s, as neoliberal adjustment programmes led to increasing unemployment, Latin America witnessed the dramatic expansion of its cities through informal settlement without municipal oversight or regulation. Indeed today Latin America is the most urbanised region in the world (McKinsey Global Institute, 2011).

In Bolivia, from the late 1960s, rural migration to La Paz and the city of El Alto mushroomed. According to the 1976 census, 25% of the La Paz population was made up of Aymara migrants from the *altiplano* (Rivera, 1983: 139). Subsequently, the cluster of settlement known as El Alto where Aymara migrants were concentrated gained administrative separation from La Paz in 1985 and formal recognition in 1988 (Lazar, 2007: 30). This process served to unsettle the spatialised grammars of race established earlier in the century. Rural migrants expanded the margins of the city and the urban space became less distinctly *mestizo* and white. When Indians moved to the city, they were transformed upwardly into *mestizos,* or else *cholos,* a kind of liminal *mestizo*-Indigenous identity (Weismantel, 2001: 90– 98).

One factor contributing to the increased trend in urbanisation were the changes initiated by the Bolivian Revolution of 1952, many of which I outlined in the previous chapter. To avoid repetition I will briefly summarise and highlight the cultural facets of the revolution of relevance to *katarismo*. The cultural politics of the revolution were marked by a homogenising *mestizo*-nationalism, that is to say, defined by the conviction that a marker of

economic and social development would be the assimilation of Indians into a new national-popular state through the suppression of Indigenous cultural practices (Sanjines, 2004). In contrast, *Kataristas* and their *Indianista* siblings reclaimed the category of 'Indian' (see Reinaga, 1969) as an assertion of pluralistic cultural identity and resistance to the modernising directives of the state.

Katarismo arose in this context in the capital city of La Paz and El Alto among Aymara workers, grassroots intellectuals and students, most of whom had emigrated from rural areas and felt the loss of their rural origins with acuity. The parcelisation of land in the highlands as a result of Agrarian Reform in 1953 had led many de-territorialised Aymara peasants to seek work in the urban centres (Mendieta, 2008). Meanwhile the expansion of schooling and higher education in the aftermath of the revolution created new intellectual spaces for Aymara students in the city and new opportunities to recover their histories (Albó, 1980: 11).

These protagonists were radicalised by the racial discrimination they experienced in the city; 'more than anything else, this handful of students created an identity based on their own experience as peasants and Aymaras in the face of the city's challenges.'(Albó, 1987: 391). The culturally alienating effects of urbanisation for migrant Indians in the metropolis are conveyed in the 1969 film *Yawar Mallku* (Blood of the Condor), by the filmmaker Jorge Sanjinés and the Grupo Ukamau. The storyline follows Sixto, a de-territorialised *campesino* from the countryside who ekes a living in La Paz. His encounters with the racism of white-*mestizo* urban dwellers exposes the fault lines in Bolivian society; at a football match, a white man spits at him, '*indio*!" A shaken Sixto replies, "Indian? Do you know me? Did you see me being born? I'm not an Indian, dammit!".

Katarista political parties

Figure 12. Photo on the front page depicting the second anniversary of the MRTKL. El Katarismo, January 1987. No. 2.

The political currents of *katarismo* crystallised principally in two parties, the MRTK (*Movimiento Revolucionario Tupaj Katari*) and MITKA (*Movimiento Indio Tupaj Katari*). The MRTK emerged under the leadership of Macabeo Chila and veteran syndicalist Jenaro Flores, and it adopted a more pragmatic and conciliatory line when it came to partnerships with other political parties (Rivera, 1987: 136). In the 1978 elections it united with the left coalition of Hernan Siles Zuazo's *Unidad Democratico Popular* (UDP) for example (Albó, 1987: 402). In an interview published in *Collasuyo*, a monthly *Katarista* periodical, Macabeo Chila states that 'the MRTK understands that it must work in the aim of a firm alliance between both [peasant and worker] classes that definitively constitute the great motor of the National Revolution.' (1978: n.p). He envisioned MRTK to be 'the political instrument of the Bolivian peasantry' to win liberation from capitalist and imperialist exploitation (1978: n.p). The MRTK under the direction of Jenaro Flores would became enmeshed with the CSUTCB by the time the latter was founded in 1979 (Dunkerley, 1984: 215).

In contrast, radical *Katarismo*, sometimes elided with *Indianismo*, came to fruition under MITKA which was founded on April 27, 1978 in Pacajes, La Paz (Lavaud, 1982: 10). It was at various points led by Constantino Lima, Luciano Tapia, Julio Tumiri and Jaime Apaza. Felipe Quispe recalls in an interview, 'Constantino Lima arrived from Canada with money… I do not know where that money came from, he must know the origin…But, he arrived with money and we decided to found a political party, legally, in 1978.' (2013, np).

MITKA from the outset fused the defence of natural resources with the language of Indigenous cosmovisions rooted in the rural world. Its aim was to achieve 'ancestral socialism' through agrarian revolution (MITKA, 1978). Its 1978 manifesto declares that 'the immense human reserves of the Indian people and the potential availability of natural resources, once liberated, will become the determining factor of the real economic, social and political independence of our Pacha Mama.' (1978). Pachamama, the Andean earth goddess, is here invoked as a political force with agency, a substitute for the nation state.

Figure 13. Katarismo, November, 1986. No. 1. Source: ABNB. Photo by author.

Figure 14. 'The MRTKL does not need to be popular, it is the people themselves that begin to organise to march towards a more just society' - in Katarismo, November, 1986. No. 1. p7. Source: ABNB. Photo by author.

Internecine conflicts were rife, and are mentioned frequently in testimonies from protagonists of the era. ‘But, what we didn't like is that there were fights; Tapia, who was never happy, began to wage war against Lima.’, Quispe recalls of MITKA (2013, np). MITKA repudiated alliances with conventional political parties, arguing that none adequately represented the interests of the peasantry, and was far more visceral in its condemnation of the creole left, or the *q’aras (*foreigners), or the middle classes of predominantly Spanish descent. Anthropologist José Antonio Rocha argues that for MITKA, in contrast with the MRTK, ‘the left is as bad as the right; Both tendencies belong to the ‘white’ world. In its conception, Bolivian society is a world divided between whites and Indians, a society in which the white minority exploits and subjugates the majority of Indians.’ (1992: 260). For example, *Katarista* Felipe Quispe Huanca wrote in 1978, ‘The criminal act that the Bolivian Left has committed against the Indian is to divide it into social classes, without respecting its condition of people [*pueblo*] or nation. The Left thinks only of socio-economic improvements, which to the Indian means only basic palliatives to the true problem of liberation….The political tendencies of Right or Left in vogue are copies derived from Europe which do not accept that *Indianism* is the true Left, rather than this imported Left.’ (1978: 2).

In an interview with Luciano Tapia published in *Boletín Chitakolla,* a *Katarista* monthly periodical at points edited by Pedro Portugal*,* a founder and leader of MITKA is asked whether it is necessary to form political groups to advance Indian rights, or whether peasant unions such as the *Confederacion Sindical Unica de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivi*a (CSUTCB) could be a useful vehicle. Tapia was a former miner and agricultural worker who at the time of the interview was sixty two years old. He replies, ‘I think that trade unionism as a political alternative is not the right way. However, I do not discount the union as an instrument of struggle, if we consider that there is a capitalist system that has to raise the

claims of the exploited as a class. But the reality of the Indian People is not only a reality of social class, it can not be confused with that single dimension'(1986: 5). Tapia falls short of repudiating class struggle altogether, but couches his arguments in the language of ethnicity and nationhood. He states, 'We are first of all a concrete people, a Nation, [within…] the State of *Qullasuyu* [Bolivia] with the name of *Inka Atawallpa*. We have not stopped building our nation, with a thousand-year-old history and rights that date back to many civilisations. Our claim goes beyond a simple class struggle." (1986: 5).

Later in 1985 another of the more moderate factions, *Movimiento Revolucionario Tupaj Katari de Liberación* (MRTKL) formed as an off-shoot of the MRTK. Meanwhile, occupying the more militant end of the spectrum lay the rebel groups *Ofensiva Roja de los Ayllus Tupakataristas (*ORAT*)*. Yet despite this seemingly disparate array of *Katarista* tendencies, in many ways the professed differences between the groups obscures their essential similarities. Lavaud concludes for example that all the *Katarista* elements 'have in common the wish to exalt certain parts of history obscured or trivialised by official historiography. They highlight the achievements and heroic actions of the Indian resistance to Spanish colonisation, and magnify traits of the pre-Columbian era.' (1982: 13). In an opinion piece published in the run-up to the 1978 elections, MITKA leader Isidoro Copa Cayo states that 'the other Tupaj Katarist movements, if they are such, are flesh of our flesh and blood of our blood. The differences between us are not substantial and refer to tactics or strategy of struggle and to emphasise different positions. Indeed the many *Kataristas* movements reflects the sense of pluralism that animates our thinking and political action.' (*Presencia*, 1978: n.p). The viscerality of these linkages is conveyed in Copa Cayo's bodily metaphor, [*son carne de nuestra carne y sangre de nuestra sangre*]. Meanwhile in the same year, an article in the Mink'a/MRTK periodical *Collasuyo* states that although 'the Katarista movement must unify

definitively …public opinion considers the division [between MITKA and MRTK] circumstantial and…logical because the Aymaras, Quechuas and others that make up the 80% of the population used not to have any political base, while 20% of dominant caste had 50 parties and political fractions.' (1978: 8).

The core angles of the *katarista* programme can be discerned in the Tiahuanaco Manifesto. It was written in 1973 and symbolically unveiled at the ruins of Tiahuanaco, the pre-Columbian archeological site near La Paz. In essence, the Manifesto is a syncretic rallying cry on behalf of Bolivia's peasantry. It calls for their emancipation and freedom from exploitation, and condemns foreign and internal colonialism, economic under-development, corruption within the peasant movement and governing class, and defective rural education policies. There was increasing discontent with the post-revolutionary state's education policies in particular; in the 1970s schooling was delivered in Spanish and mainly confined to urban areas, reinforcing the exclusion of Indigenous languages and pedagogies (Iño, 2015). The Manifesto states for example, that rural school system, 'for its methods, for its programs and for its language is alien to our cultural reality and not only seeks to turn the Indian into a kind of *mestizo* without definition or personality, but also seeks their assimilation to Western and capitalist culture.' (1978). The product of a coalition of grassroots organisations, the document's signatories are the National Association of Peasant Teachers, The Peasant Students Association of Bolivia, the Túpac Katari Peasant Centre, MINK'A and the Puma Aymara Defence Union. On 23 January 1974, one year after the manifesto was unveiled, over one hundred campesinos protesting against price increases and food shortages under the Banzer regime were massacred by the army. The president went on to prohibit all leftist political parties and curtail trade union activities.

A preoccupation with ‘development’ is a defining feature of the Manifesto and indeed the *Katarista* movement more widely. The Manifesto proclaims, ‘We peasants want economic development, but it must come from our own values. We do not want to give up our noble ancestral integrity in favour of pseudo-development. We believe that the false "developmentalism" imported from abroad is not genuine and does not respect our deep values.’ (1973: n.p). The Manifesto does not eschew a materialist analysis of social relations, but it emphasises what it terms ‘culture’ as the vehicle of struggle. It states, ‘Economic and political power are the basis of cultural liberation. We must incorporate new technology and modernise while not breaking with our past.’ (1973: n.p).

In his interview in *Boletín Chitakolla,* Luciano Tapia reflects, ‘The Aymara-Quechua people are not only victims of Anglo-Saxon or Latin-American colonialist oppression. We suffer an oppression from outside and an oppression from within which is the reality of our people.’(1986: 6) Here Tapia refers to the processes of internal colonisation that informs the *Katarista* programme of social change. Internal colonisation was a term first coined by Pablo González Casanovas in 1965 to describe an enduring pattern of discrimination and exploitation in postcolonial Mexico. The concept refers to the pattern of social relations which developed when postcolonial elites supplanted colonial elites in the newly formed republics of Latin America. Indigenous populations remained subjugated as elites in postcolonial societies replicated colonial structures of social relations based on domination and exploitation (Casanovas, 1965: 33). The concept was re-interpreted by Anibal Quijano in his ‘coloniality of power’ thesis (2000), which I have discussed in Chapter Two.

Rivera affirms that within *Katarismo* ‘the cultural dimension and the political dimension appear …relatively undifferentiated’ (1983: 143). This was particularly evident in the growth

of urban-based cultural centres such as the *Taller de Historia Oral Andina* (THOA - Andean Oral History Workshop) founded in 1983 by a group of Aymara students under the direction of Silvia Rivera who met at the Universidad Mayor de San Andrés (UMSA) in La Paz. THOA produced books, and radio programs on hitherto sidelined stories of Indigenous resistance in the altiplano. It was a radical activist-intellectual project aiming to recover native epistemologies and challenge the erasure of Indigenous peoples from the Bolivia national imaginary. In later years, the September 1985 edition of *Boletín Chitakolla* announced the creation of a cultural centre in La Paz named '*Qullasuyo*'. Its general objectives are listed as revitalising the Aymara-Quechua music and dance among young people and promoting the spread of cultural projects among Aymara-Quechua immigrants to urban centres (1985: 3).

Prior to this, in the late 1960s, a group of Aymara students formed a study group known as the *Movimiento Noviembre 15* (Movement of 15 November), a reference to the date of Tupaj Katari's death, in which the ideas of *Indianista* writer Fausto Reinaga were debated. On May 27 1969 Aymara residents in La Paz created the Centre for the Coordination and Promotion of the Peasantry - MINK'A, which became a legal entity in 1971 (*Collasuyo*, 1978:3; Hurtado, 1984: 38). MINK'A promoted education and cultural activities for both rural and urban Indigenous peoples, as well as disseminating radio programmes in the Aymara language.

Katarista modernities and the other-than-human

The 1970s and 1980s were years of sustained insurgency by left-Indigenous activists in Bolivia even while protagonists risked exile and imprisonment under successive right-wing dictatorships. It was also in these years, I argue, that the environment and the natural world emerged as a new locus of thought and political concern. I discuss here the gobbets from articles and excerpts appearing in the *Katarista* press which illuminate this. It is evident that

kataristas were acutely aware both of the ecological facets of imperialism and the environment's importance within Indigenous identities. Likewise landscape was profoundly political but in ontologically different ways.

From the early 1980s, *Kataristas* increasingly proposed that neo-colonial modes of exploitation compelled a common cause between humans and nature. Indeed as Victor Flores, a *Katarista* union leader from Aiquile, Cochabamba put it, "Throughout the last 500 years we peasants have been stepped on by the wealthy, the mestizos, and the Spaniards; the trees and animals similarly have been abused and are being extinguished, and thus we share much suffering along with the environment." (Zimmerer, 1996: 119) Invoking the exploitation of natural resources in the language of conventional politics on the one hand offered an easily digestible metaphor for Indian exploitation within *Katarista* discourse. But the elision of human suffering with environmental suffering also departed from the merely symbolic or rhetorical. Over the period 1960-1990, *Katarista* discourse shifted from a preoccupation with control of natural resources, to one which additionally stressed the cosmopolitical facets of the natural world, in what might be termed the, 'partial connections' (Strathern 2004) between Indigenous cosmopolitics and the world of secular politics.

The February 1986 of *Boletín Chitakolla* edition features an excerpt from a Peruvian work entitled *Raiz y Vigencia de la Indianidad (*Origins and Validity of Indian ideology) by Virgilio Roel, published in 1980. The excerpt reads: 'That is why the stars, clouds, hills, seas, lagoons, rivers, valleys, trees, stones, condors, birds, butterflies, flowers, in short, everything which belongs to *Pachamama*, maintains a constant and mutual reciprocal influence' (1986: 3). Meanwhile in a pamphlet, the MRTK proclaims 'And the message of our leader Tupaj Katari continues to resonate in our valleys, ravines and mountains.' (1981: 3). Similarly, in an

earlier article published on 23 May 1978 in the national daily newspaper *Presencia,* Isidoro Copa Cayo, a Quechua-speaker from Potosí and a MITKA electoral candidate outlines the objectives of the party and advocates 'Life in communion with nature as a mode of civilisation and culture' (1978: np). He goes on, '[MITKA] emerges as a historical political response, as the shout of a wounded social body, as a cry of an oppressed people, like a voice crying in the altiplano, valleys and plains…' (1978: np). For both MITKA and the MRTK, the natural world is invoked as the carrier of Tupaj Katari's spirit. The social memory of past struggles is encoded within the natural surroundings of the Andes, a topography which connects past and present.

That Kataristas presented ecology and agriculture as arenas of decolonisation is evident in *Collasuyo (arsusipxanani)*, a monthly magazine produced in La Paz by MINK'A. The June 1978 edition runs a feature, '*Proyecto 'Anallajchi' en marca*', on proposals to intensively farm llamas and alpacas in Bolivia. It explains;

> 'the total transfer of technology will not be considered [in the proposals], but rather the re-evaluation of the ancestral technique which has allowed the survival of the roaming camelid outside the boundaries of legal protection…. in colonial times and in the republic [llamas and alpacas] were only used for the transfer of minerals, and today, the white-*mestizo* contemptuously considers its meat of little importance, fit only for the consumption of the Indian' (1978: 7).

The proposal to farm llamas and alpacas, can be understood therefore, as part of a broader *Katarista* philosophy which proudly asserted the value of Indigenous agricultural traditions in the face of modernisation. Similarly, the MRTK places great emphasis on the *ayllu* as a

political and economic model with links to past and present Andean society. A pamphlet from the MRTK declares, 'The community practice for example subsists in numerous *aillus* [ayllus] of *Kollasuyo* (today Bolivia). Its persisting practice is the umbilical cord that connects us with our historical past.' (1981: 3). As I discuss throughout this thesis, *ayllus* are not political assemblages along the lines of the nature-culture divide in the Western political tradition (Escobar, 2010). Yampara instead points out that 'To speak of 'economy', in addition to being a borrowed and inappropriate concept practiced by other cultures … does not explain the communal sense and development of the ayllu' (1992: 143). *Ayllus* instead are structured around the environment and the spirits and life-forces contained within nature, including humans. By invoking the ayllu, the MRTK was hence advocating a political structure that encompasses both humans and natural world in reciprocity.

Javier Medina, an intellectual associated with the *katarista* movement, writing in the June 1985 issue of *Boletin Chitakolla*, argues that Katarismo proposes 'a rupture of the state and civilization, with the current modes of production and, looking towards the past, has endeavoured to seek its own path towards a society that we will call … communal (2) [sic] ; in other words, towards a mode of production based on ecological balance'. (1985: 4) He argues that the ideals of communism and socialism will only be viable in Bolivia when realised through the Andean ayllu (1985: 5). Medina goes on to argue that 'Our ancestors, with these communal technologies, knew how to create self-sufficient societies. This would be a sensible and possible goal: to return and fight for Bolivia to be a self-sufficient country in food. (1985: 5).

Meanwhile the January 1986 edition of the MRTKL publication *El Katarismo* (a monthly publication from the MRTKL), featured an article by on the concept of (gender)

complementarity in the Andean world, using the case study of *Marka* Llica. The author Clara Flores notes that 'each thing in nature is dual: interwoven coexistence of plants, land, mountains, *pujyus* (springs) that are the productive-social wellbeing of the communities. Therefore, they are considered as human beings in nature because they coexist with us in us, giving us life. (El Katarismo, 1986: 5) She goes on to argue that 'The constitution of our family is our physical-spiritual-communal constitution. And this is the product of our climate, geography, experience, which is life and communication with the hills, mountains, salt flats and our arid but strong land (El Katarismo, 1986: 5). By the 1980s, it is clear that arguments around Indigenous rights were tightly linked with concerns around planetary wellbeing in *katarista* discourse.

As I also argued in the previous chapter, consistent throughout *katarista* political discourse is resentment at the perceived absence of rural development rooted in the needs and wishes of the peasants themselves. The economic exploitation of the peasantry is tied up with lack of control over natural resources and means of production in the rural setting. Nature represents therefore a profoundly contested terrain of political economy. Macabeo Avila, a leader of the MRTK, believed that development policies did little to remedy the overarching problem of capitalist penetration in rural areas. 'Backwardness and misery is another problem that can not be overcome with the development policy of so-called de-naturalised and Fascistic nationalists; happiness and prosperity can not be achieved through stopgap measures [*remiendos*], but through a total change of the system of capitalist exploitation by another system of community character.' (*Collasuyo*, 1978: 4).

It is clear that the exploitation of Indian labour under capitalism, for the MRTK is tied up with the exploitation of natural resources. In an interview published in June 1978 in Collasuyo,

Macabeo Avila explains, ‘Discrimination, either social or racial exists, but it exists as a pejorative means of exploitation and pillaging of our natural wealth. Consequently for the MRTK, there is no mere discrimination by discrimination, but as a phenomenon of humiliation wielded by the dominant circles of the financial oligarchy relative to the capitalist system of exploitation.’ (Collasuyo, 1978: 4). Here, the erosion of natural wealth, or natural resources, is understood to fall under the same colonial architecture as racial oppression. Avila goes on to express frustration with the existing state of land ownership and the cooption of the peasantry, professing ‘The problem is that land that was once communal, today, due to agrarian reform has passed into feudal ownership and has neutralised the combative spirit of the peasantry by turning them into private owners of pathetically small plots that are subjugated under the *minifundio* which is propped up by the legal system …’ (Collasuyo, 1978: 4).

Even within MITKA, a more Indianista and less class struggle-driven organisation, the issue of land distribution was profoundly salient. In an interview, Luciano Tapia explains, ‘The agrarian revolution is one of the main approaches of MITKA but for us, agrarian revolution is not ‘AGROPODER’, it is not 're-distribution of agrarian reform'. For us, the agrarian revolution is a political project.’(*Boletín Chitakolla,* 1986: 4) ‘*AGROPODER*’ was an MNR strategy to aid exports and agricultural development launched in 1985 and concentrated in the Santa Cruz region. President Victor Paz Estenssoro had won power on an MNR ticket in July 1985 amid a severe economic crisis, and promptly implemented a spate of unpopular austerity measures intended to curb Bolivia’s hyperinflation. In the same year tin exports collapsed resulting in catastrophic job losses and mass unemployment in Bolivia’s mining sector. In a World Bank report from 1986 for example, the AGROPODER programme was described as ‘the only feasible economic route open to Bolivia for the future’(1986: 4). The report

advocates the development of Santa Cruz soybean exports, which would require a drastic expansion of the transport network around Santa Cruz. This in turn, could reduce the sphere of influence of La Paz, the locus of the tin mines, a sector which historically was powerfully unionised. In 1980 the CIA noted that strikes by tin workers had caused a loss of $30 million in export earnings (CIA: 1980: 12). The report concedes that, 'The adoption of an agricultural export strategy is likely to have significant implications for the economic and political center of gravity of Bolivia.' (1986: 5). It muses over whether the government will 'take a long, cool statesmanlike look at the strategy' and adopt it in the face of popular disapproval (1986: 5). The report exposes the degree to the geopolitics of agriculture assumed great significance in Bolivia in the 1980s, with international institutions becoming increasingly invested in the agricultural policy direction of Bolivia.

Figure 15. Bolivia, miners in elevator at tin mining facility in Oruro.' (c.1934-1969). From the American Geographical Society Library, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Libraries

Indeed there is much evidence to suggest that 'modernity' in farming techniques became an overwhelming concern in Bolivia from the 1970s. In 1976, an Annual Report of Work on

Peasant Development Courses, an initiative from Tomás Frías Autonomous University in Potosi to promote the modernisation of agriculture in highland Potosí, concluded that 'More than 1,200 peasant leaders have been trained in agricultural education in the different targeted zones, and [the project] has successfully brought modern technology to peasant communities and production centres' (1976: 20). The report goes on to say that there was 'Interest in, and requests by all the communities assisted through the courses for the continuous provision of: seeds, pesticides, breeding animals and other materials of a modern technical nature, such as agricultural machinery equipment' (1976: 20).

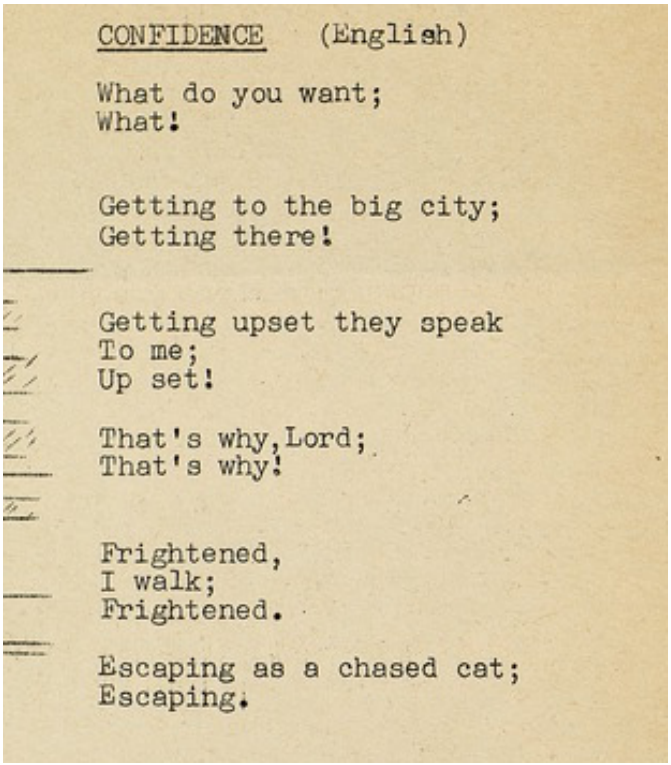
This generated new difficulties for the *Katarista* peasant movement which found itself required to enter to a dialogue on natural resources oriented around modernisation and development. This is the subject of insights by geographer Karl Zimmerer on social discourses on soil erosion in Cochabamba from the 1970s. Zimmerer's findings were based on observation and interviews conducted with *Katarista campesinos* in the agricultural regions of Cochabamba. Zimmerer cites figures showing that 64 percent of the land surface in Cochabamba was eroded, with annual soil erosion varying between 50 and 150 tonnes per hectare (1993: 313). At national level, up to 41% of the countryside in Bolivia suffered from moderate or extreme soil erosion (Zimmerer,1993: 313). Accordingly, from the 1970s soil erosion was identified by Bolivian *campesinos* as well as foreign non-governmental organisations (NGOs) as an alarming national problem. Zimmerer argues that divergent political perspectives on soil erosion arose from three sectors; governmental and NGOs, peasant communities and rural trade unions. (1993: 317). Both foreign NGOs and Bolivian development agencies ascribed soil erosion to the failure of *campesinos* to adopt 'modern' farming techniques, and to a belief in peasant backwardness more generally. But for the peasants, Zimmerer observes that wrath from supernatural deities and failure to complete

reciprocity rituals to *Pachamama*, are named by campesinos from both older and younger generations, as the causes of increasing soil erosion. Zimmerer argues that *Katarista* peasant unions skirted around the issue of soil erosion in their political programme because its cause could not be neatly blamed on extra-local political actors such as multinationals or neo-imperialist powers.

In contrast, soil erosion was considered by both peasants and development organisations, as attributable in different ways to the peasants' own actions. As much is evident in the report from IV Congress of the CSUTCB in 1988 which includes a suspiciously small section on the issue and phrases the solution in terms of improving *campesino* education. The authors state, 'We urgently demand awareness, through an education programme, to curb this disaster [of soil erosion.' Soil erosion therefore did not sit comfortably within the *Katarista* critique of ecological imperialism. Ecological problems were routinely used to augment broader critiques of imperialism and exploitation. Soil erosion's omission from widespread discussion in the CSUTCB hence reflects the degree to which agroecological issues were highly politicised in *Katarismo*.

Yatiñataki and the social world of *campesinos*

I draw this chapter to a close with final points deriving from a non-*katarista* source, an intriguing booklet entitled *Yatiñataki* (in order to teach) which was published by the Department of Native Languages in the National Institute for Linguistic Studies in the years 1979-1981. The booklet was part of a socio-linguistic project to compile a Spanish-Aymara dictionary, although many of the booklets contain testimony from Quechua speakers. It contains bi-lingual interviews with Aymara speakers of all ages in highland Bolivia, in which the speakers talk about their perceptions of life at local and national level, folk tales, weather and society in contemporary and previous generations. These interviews, although not explicitly with *katarista* activists, offer an invaluable insight into the perceptions and priorities of Aymara-speaking peoples in the altiplano in the 1970s and thus, the social world which *katarismo* spoke to. This poem, translated into English from Quechua in *Yatiñataki*, was written by Felix Gregorio from the Department of Potosí. It highlights how experiences how the urban space was experienced as a site of alienation, even violence for rural,



CONFIDENCE (English)

What do you want;
What!

Getting to the big city;
Getting there!

Getting upset they speak
To me;
Up set!

That's why,Lord;
That's why!

Frightened,
I walk;
Frightened.

Escaping as a chased cat;
Escaping.

Indigenous migrants arriving in the city. (*Yatiñataki*, 1975: 2).

In an interview conducted in 1978, 40 year old Aymara speaker man called Paulo Tintaya, of Umaquyo community, in Camacho province laments, 'besides [life] being expensive, it is not easy to get money. Neither are there sources of work, if there were sources of work we could provide for ourselves and be stable, but it is not like that.' (*Yatiñataki*, 1981: 5) The lack of support for agriculture in the highlands, as well as problems with production in some less fertile areas, compelled many to seek work in the cities. For Paulo Tintaya, the rural space is blighted by environmental difficulties. 'Agriculture is helpful, but it is not always enough. For example, on those sides there is no fertile land, it is very stony, it is the same for us, it is empty. It is pure stone, it is full of rocks, we buy land in this community but those hills are empty (*Yatiñataki*, 1981: 5).

In another edition, an anonymous Aymara-speaking resident, "XX", a 70 year old man living in Huacanapi, Sajama, Oruro Department recalls the past as a time when 'abuses were inflicted by the residents of the town; they were not the *patrones* (landlords), since in our community there was no hacienda. The town residents mistreated people like beasts. (*Yatiñataki*, 1980: 5). The more distant past however, is invoked as nostalgia. 'In ancient times our grandparents lived happily, they danced the *sikuri*; they climbed the highest hills with flags and the flute (*tarqa*). Young people today have forgotten all those things' (*Yatiñataki*, 1980: 8). The testimonies within *Yatiñataki* are illuminating for the sense of loss and hardship they invoke. They suggest a *campesino* world in flux, with Indigenous communities confronted with agrarian and economic difficulties that threatened their survival. It is through these encounters that historians can better understand the context in which *katarismo* arose.

Conclusion

I argue that in *Katarista* discourse, debates over natural resources reflected broader visions about how the economy and society should be arranged. As I argued in Chapter Three, a connection between the Andean space and Indigenous peoples had been powerfully installed at elite level since the early twentieth century. A reading of *katarista* documents here suggests that the movement leveraged this discursive connection between indigeneity and the natural word as part of a counter-hegemonic politics of Indigenous nation building. *Katarista* visions of the natural world and resources conjure not only critiques of state-led responses to environmental problems, but also the very epistemological terrain in which these claims were articulated. I conclude that claims to natural resources and discursive appeals to restore the highland *ayllus* are used to make wider claims for rights and justice in the post-revolutionary, neoliberal era.

The *katarista* currents explored in this chapter straddled both rural and urban worlds, and their discourse on the environment reflects how natural landscapes were encoded with memories of historic struggle over land rights and cultural practices. In contrast with the CSUTCB's focus on contemporary environmental problems, for the wider *katarista* movement, landscape becomes a metaphorical terrain connecting Indigenous identities of the past and present. It marked the first time that a self-consciously 'Indigenous' vision of natural resources, and the natural world more broadly, was articulated at the political level. In this way, *Katarismo* represented a major challenge to the ethno-assimilationist nationalism of the MNR revolutionary era. A close reading of *Katarista* discourses reveals that they centred other-than-human in their critique of the colonial dimension of the Bolivian state and the global economic system.

Chapter Six: Final conclusions

For whom do the polluted waters, the animal species cornered to extinction, the barren land, the dirty air, vote for? Where do we place the ballot of a dying world?

Zapatista communique, 2016

Acre by acre the prairies were broke, and acre by acre we will mend them.

Robin Wall Kimmerer[31]

This thesis has interrogated the ways in which the natural world informed and shaped the political demands made by Indigenous-*campesino* movements in highland Bolivia over the twentieth century. In doing so, I have addressed the absence of ecological considerations in the historiography of Indigenous social movements and have centred the environment in this history of Indigenous mobilisation. In their own way, each chapter contributes a differing perspective on what land and territory signified to the historical actors explored within. Across these chapters, I have told a story about how the natural world was understood by the peoples whose lives emerge in tantalising fragments from these letters, pamphlets and recordings.

A question I set out to explore initially is whether it is possible to centre the non-human in the discourse and activity of the organised *campesino* movement in Bolivia, and how this

[31] From 'Tallgrass' (2018) https://www.littletoller.co.uk/the-clearing/tallgrass-by-robin-wall-kimmerer/

could enrich understanding of the trajectory of peasant-Indigenous politics across the region. It is my conclusion that shifting attention to the non-human through the discourse of human-actors, compels an understanding of the full complexity of the social world - comprising human and other-than-human - in which these anticolonial movements operated. I believe that further ethnographic and interview-based research in the future could deepen this study.

In the introduction, I stated that this project addresses two key questions in relation to highland Bolivia between 1920 and 1990:

- *How did non-Indigenous and Indigenous protagonists in twentieth century Bolivia frame land, landscape, and ecology as a political problem?*
- *What was the relationship between ecological discourses and the insurgent Indigenous politics of the twentieth century?*

I have demonstrated that ecological discourses became explicit within insurgent Indigenous politics in the late twentieth century. This development is exemplified in the emergence of the CSUTCB in 1979. The focus of the CSUTCB on ecology corresponded with the parallel growth of discourses on ethnicity and Indigenous nationhood, which marked a rupture with the state-dominated *campesino* movement's privileging of a singular peasant status. The focus on ethnicity expanded the kind of political claims that Indigenous-*campesino* actors could make vis-à-vis the state, a process which intensified in the 1990s neoliberal 'multicultural' era, though this goes beyond the scope of this research project.

This thesis has addressed a methodological challenge: how to uncover Indigenous discourses on the environment where few documents were produced by a largely illiterate

population and virtually none have survived that address the issue. This challenge is compounded by the fact that profound power imbalances between Indigenous and nonindigenous people renders Indigenous discourses on the environment (almost) invisible since they are formed and articulated in ways that elites and Western discourses more generally many not even see, let alone understand. This work is thus as much archaeological as it is a work of history since it is piecing together fragments from different layers of history in order to uncover Indigenous perspectives that are not simply projected through the lens of Western discourse. As with all archaeological excavations it is inevitably incomplete but nevertheless worthwhile in challenging assumptions about the ways in which Indigenous peoples have been informed by an understanding of their place in an Andean ecology in the ways in which they have pursued political ends. Each chapter not only represents a different archaeological layer – a period in history – but different material sources to elucidate Indigenous perspectives on the environment.

So, for example, in chapter two I addressed my first research question (see above) and show that elite perspectives in the early twentieth century on the role of Indigenous peoples in the state crystallised in perceptions of the 'Indiannness' of the altiplano space. This chapter adopts a different methodological approach from the other chapters by drawing principally on literary and journalistic texts written by non-Indigenous elites. The chapter came to fruition when I was looking for evidence of early twentieth century c.1900-1940 Indigenous-*campesino* perspectives on the natural world in archives in the UK and Bolivia. I was not successful in finding evidence of Indigenous discourses on the environment in this time period specifically, but, in the process, I uncovered a number of texts penned by non-Indigenous intellectuals in the early twentieth century which detailed a common preoccupation with the *altiplano* and Indigenous peoples as obstacles to national

development. This led me to the realisation that the *caciques apoderados* and later Indigenous movements such as *katarismo* which I explore in this thesis were operating in a political and intellectual climate where there already existed powerful narratives linking the natural world with indigeneity. The works of Franz Tamayo and Alcides Arguedas and to a lesser extent Jaime Mendoza, have been amply explored in the Bolivian historiography but I place their works in dialogue with a range of lesser-known *letrados* whose works address the Indian question and the geographic factor in early twentieth century Bolivia. In this chapter I conclude that geography was central to racialised understandings of modernity in pre-revolutionary Bolivia. Elite narratives on landscape and Indigenous peoples must be seen as integral to the processes of land disentailment instigated by landlords, businesses and state actors which continued the catastrophic loss of Indigenous lands initiated in the late nineteenth century. Unpacking these narratives is, I argue, therefore highly important in understanding why the environment became a locus of contention for Indigenous political movements in Bolivia.

In Chapter Three, I build on the findings of the previous chapter by assessing the petitions and letters (co-)authored by the *caciques apoderados*, the network of Indigenous intellectuals and leaders in pre-revolutionary Bolivia. If decolonial and anthropological scholarship suggests that Indigenous social worlds are intimately connected with the environment, this requires historians to interrogate further what the *caciques'* demands for land and territory may mean, beyond a singular struggle over property rights. Although the *caciques apoderados* did not mobilise in explicitly environmental terms like the later *kataristas*, in this chapter I use the conceptual framework offered by Joan Martinez-Alier *et al*. to argue that their territorial struggle can nonetheless be understood by historians as profoundly ecological in scope. This chapter brings together two lines of thinking; the 'environmentalism of the poor' thesis

advanced by Joan Martinez Alier, (1991; 2002) with Ramachandra Guha (1997) and Waskar Ari's work on 'earth politics' (2014). My interpretation of the sources shows that land and territory were significant within the mobilising efforts of the *caciques apoderados* as they confronted the civilisational paradigms of the modern Bolivian state. I conclude that land rights were at the heart of Indigenous peoples' negotiation of power and justice in early twentieth century Bolivia; this was not only because land was the means of production for the Indigenous peasantry, but because protection of the landscape and its other-than-human beings was understood as vital to the preservation of the social and spiritual world of Indigenous peoples.

The fourth chapter lays out how the emergence in Bolivia in 1979 of the major *katarista* peasant union confederation, the *Confederación Sindical Única de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia* (CSUTCB) was integral to the development of an Indigenous politics of the environment in late twentieth century Bolivia. While the existing literature widely documents the CSUTCB's focus on class and ethnicity, this chapter addresses the organisation's ecological politics by engaging with key literature on 'resource nationalism (Young, 2017). The findings of this chapter are important in this thesis for two reasons. Firstly, they show that the CSUTCB's focus on ethnicity from the 1970s onwards opened avenues for a discourse on the environment that departed from earlier debates around resource nationalism, as well as elite-led discourses on the natural world in the early twentieth century. Secondly, this focus on the environment came to fruition under the parameters of organised labour. On the latter point, it can be seen that this chapter adds to the literature on the relationship between peasant unionism and environmentalism in late twentieth century Bolivia.

Whereas the previous chapter explored the CSUTCB as the syndical face of *katarismo*, Chapter Five assesses the political parties and groups associated with the *katarista* movement

in the late decades of the twentieth century. I argue that in *katarista* political discourse, debates over natural resources and ecology reflected broader visions about how the economy and society should be arranged. It marked the first time that a self-consciously 'Indigenous' vision of natural resources, and the natural world more broadly, was articulated at the political level. In this way, *katarismo* represented a major shift from the ethno-assimilationist logics and resource nationalism of the MNR era in the 1950s. In contrast with the earlier focus on resource nationalism by the COB, the state and assorted left actors in mid-twentieth century Bolivia, I show that a more complicated vision of natural resources emerged in *katarista* perspectives on the environment by the 1980s. This heralded a new way of articulating an Indigenous vision of natural resources. *Katarismo* remains an extremely live and animated area of discussion in Bolivia today, so it is hoped that the findings of this chapter can contribute actively to contemporary debates.

The findings of my research are important for two reasons. Firstly, they show that including the other-than-human within human social histories can enrich and bring new insights to the historiography of Andean political cultures and labour movements. Secondly, they show that Indigenous-*campesino's* concern for the environment is rooted in historical class formation, and tightly linked to anti-colonial struggles for land and freedom. By showing the varied ways in which Indigenous and non-Indigenous political actors framed the natural world as a political problem, my research forces us to broaden how scholars understand environmental politics and what it encompasses. I conclude that the demands of Indigenous actors associated with the *caciques apoderados* and *katarismo*, using Anzaldúa and Mignolo's articulations of 'border thinking', presented an epistemological and material challenge to the colonial matrix of power from the margins of the nation state. In asserting a place for the other-than-human within their struggles against exploitation and racialised oppression, the movements I explore

in these chapters sought to introduce their own cosmopolitics into the project of modernity in Bolivia.

Inspired by the work of Marisol de la Cadena and Joan Martinez Alier, one aim of this project has been to problematise what is considered an 'environmental' cause, which I consider necessary if scholars are to capture the full breadth of anticolonial resistances in the Global South which often mobilise in ways that defy Eurocentric conceptions of the political. I conclude that expanding what historians consider to constitute an ecological discourse – as in the case of the *caciques apoderados* – offers a more complex understanding of social movements which mobilise around land and natural resources. Expanding on Ari's 'Earth Politics' thesis (2014, I show that Indigenous movements framed land and landscape as a cosmopolitical and epistemological problem connected with colonial regimes of power which penetrated the rural world. As such, I conclude that Indigenous actors in the early twentieth century, like their *katarista compañeros* in subsequent generations, understood land and the natural world to be central to the defence of Indigenous life in Bolivia. The importance of these findings extends far beyond Bolivia and offers crucial insight into the dynamics of anticolonial peasant-Indigenous movements across Latin America and the Global South in the twentieth century.

Contemporary relevance of project

Finally, despite major shifts in the past generation, in large part connected with the decolonising initiatives of the MAS, Bolivia is a country still defined by racialised exclusions, gendered violence and economic inequalities. I was reminded of this visibly when I was in La Paz to complete fieldwork during the November 2019 coup in which President Evo Morales was ousted by opposition protesters. One morning I walked past the university to see 'Indians

out of UMSA' had been scrawled on the wall outside. Around the same time, footage circulated on social media showing anti-government protesters burning the *wiphala*, the flag representing Andean indigenous peoples. As the Aymara-*katarista* intellectual Jesús Humérez Oscuri wrote at the time, these incidents made many Indigenous peoples feel as if 'the Indian was being expelled from power'(2019, n.p; see also Mamani, 2020). Old cleavages between the 'two Bolivias' - one Indian, one creole – were suddenly resurfaced and inscribed afresh on the political terrain.

Not long after this incident, I attended the book launch in La Paz of the Aymara historian Roberto Choque Canqui's re-published work on the 1921 massacre of *campesinos* by federal troops in Jesús de Machaca. The audience comprised many people from Jesús de Machaca itself, including descendants of those killed by government forces during the massacre. The event was a poignant reminder that narratives of past struggles by Indigenous protagonists such as the *caciques apoderados* and the *kataristas* resonate powerfully within ongoing experiences of decolonisation. The racial discourses of the past which I have addressed here clearly continue to shape contemporary politics in Bolivia in a very real way. I hope therefore that this project will contribute to collective understandings of Indigenous histories which offer hope, knowledge and inspiration to ongoing contestations in Bolivia today.

This research thus opens a number of avenues for future research. One of these lies in the history of natural resources in the Andes at a more granular level. Histories of energy and natural resources in Latin America remain dominated by studies which look at businesses, elites, or international relations. My research has dwelt on the question of the natural and environment in the abstract, as it was broadly understood by the historical actors operating within organised Indigenous movements. The question I ask as to what landscapes mean to

those who work them, could be fruitfully applied in a contemporary setting to the expansion of the soy bean frontier by agribusiness in Bolivia's lowland areas in recent years, for example. The process has dramatically transformed the landscape of the lowlands and led to new regimes of labour exploitation which has gone largely unstudied in historical perspective. What historical processes underpin this transformation, and how were they shaped by Indigenous peoples, *campesinos* and workers?

Secondly, there remains scope to look at the social effects of the discovery of large oil fields in Santa Cruz in 1956. On a similar theme, anthropologist Bret Gustafson recently offered a compelling story of natural gas and its role in Bolivian political life (2021). Scholarship shows us that natural resources shape both political consciousness and the natural environment in which they are extracted (Coronil, 1997) and has highlighted how resource conflicts associated with dependency on fossil fuels are refracted along axes of race, gender and class. With regards to oil in Latin America specifically, the historiography is dominated by studies of Mexico and Venezuela as the two major producers in the region (Bucheli, 2010) so there exists scope to contribute work in the Bolivian context. Historical approaches to energy politics and fossil fuel dependency have much to add to collective understanding of natural resources and their impact on Latin American populations in the past century.

Finally, this project offers a propitious model for the recovery of subaltern memory and discourses on the natural world which can be applied by scholars to other geographies and temporalities. This has potential to greatly enrich the historical scholarship on anticolonial and anti-systemic movements in the Global South and corresponds with urgent debates on planetary futures. Nature is after all, the predominating site of ideological conflict in the twenty-first century. The rising sea levels, retreat of glaciers, desertification and species

extinction that accompany the age of the Anthropocene are amply documented. With these escalating environmental crises and capitalism-induced climate change, the world is confronted with multiplying narratives of ecological loss and devastation which test the limits of Euromodern postulates. As Escobar notably put it, 'we are facing modern problems for which there are no longer modern solutions' (2016: 15). As my research testifies, humanity's relations with the other-than-human can not be abstracted from wider contestations of power articulated through collective political struggle. I have shown that the Western concept of 'environmentalism' presents a limited toolkit for understanding the mobilisation of subaltern actors in pursuit of territory and life in colonised places. Instead, the methodological approach I adopt demonstrates the importance of giving voice to Indigenous perspectives on landscape found in the interstices of the historical record. My findings show that the environmental question historically can not be framed singularly in terms of spiritual or romantic connections between Indigenous peoples and nature, nor in the pragmatic legalistic sphere of land rights, but somewhere in their sinuous linkages.

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