Translator's note:
The following is a translation of Fabiola Escárzaga's chapter on Bolivia's indigenist guerrilla force in the 1990s, the EGKT, of which now ex-vice-president Álvaro García Linera was a principle figure. Readers hoping to consume a pithy analysis of the current situation in Bolivia following Evo's sudden exit in November of 2019 will be disappointed here. The essay does, however, offer insight into the balance of forces in the andean nation, the principal groups and ideologies that determine its relations of power. While the peasants and indigenous people at the heart of this struggle may seem to have no corollary in contemporary Western politics, their struggle to overcome the stasis of their conferred identity positions and differences produced radical lessons for confronting a reactionary 'deep state' and intransigent capitalist forms elsewhere.

I would caution readers against reading too much into the subsequent splits of alliances that had pertained around the FLN in earlier times. It would be preferable, I think, to supplant this reading with the debate in the pages of *Plural Editores* between García Linera and leftist scholars like Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui.[1] Furthermore, while Escárzaga describes Felipe Quispe's fate under the MAS years as no longer significant, he was seen to rebound in this decade at the lead of major blockades at Achacachi in the highlands between La Paz and the Peruvian border, resuming the region's legend as an eternal bedrock of Aymara resistance. The kataristas of El Alto have in fact offered repeated challenges to MAS's direction and it is of a different class character than that of urban opposition groups like Mujeres Creando. A telling detail is found in the writing of one leading young Katarista, Abraham Delgado Mancilla, whose most damning complaint of MAS's long decade in government was its crushing of an indigenous officers' protest against the segregation of the upper and lower military schools. This de facto racialized system helps to perpetuate a national inequality where the military represents one of the revolution's major obstacles, a base of wealth and power preceding and alterior to the indigenist government. According to Mancilla, all of the over 100 petition signatories were summarily discharged by the MAS leadership, who refused recognition of their demands. Despite these criticisms, without some reconstitution by these same core groups into a revolutionary bloc, it is difficult to imagine now (as it would have been in 2017 and earlier moments of Washington sabre-rattling) any advance against the oligarchy and military elite, for whom Evo's exit was cause for Kusillo-like festivity.

In 2018, I wrote from Bolivia to Professor Escárzaga, who was a colleague of Raquel Gutiérrez at the UNAM in México, to express appreciation for her book and that an english translation would have an eager readership among at least some sections of the US left. Due to illness I have been unable to complete the project, but hope this excerpt is nonetheless useful at this time. Taken from a chapter of "La comunidad indígena insurgente", Escárzaga's larger thesis investigates three countries in the Americas to experience indigenous insurrections during the 80s and 90s: Peru, Bolivia, and Mexico. The work compares the various strategies and theories that influenced each movement, connecting them spatially, as with Mexico City's polaric effect upon 20th Century radical thought, and genetically, in light of Mariátegui's legacy and the enduring debates over peasant communism and indigeneity.

[1] See for example GL's *Valor y comunidad: reencuentro marxista y boliviano* (var., Plural Editores, 2016) and SRC's *Mito y desarrollo en Bolivia: el giro colonial del gobierno del MAS* (Plural Editores, 2015).

I have chosen to keep the spanish word mestizo that is familiar in english, rather than the other candidate, 'white'. I suspect the meaning and function of light skin will be summarily apparent within the story, while the foreign term will remind readers of the particular racial regime that it operates within. Similarly, the spanish word for peasant, campesino, is sometimes left in its original to connote the specific identity and worldview this group constitutes. Escárzaga's original historical account is direct and informative, a style I have made efforts to replicate.

The EGKT (Tupac Katari Guerrilla Army) -- Bolivia's Aymaran insurgency

The following is an overview of the struggle of the EGKT during the 1980s and 90s, from its central role in Bolivia's indigenous resistance to its 2006 integration into the new government of MAS.

Introduction:

The EGKT formed out of a meeting in 1986 between two militant groups that had each separately proposed the creation of an armed organization. One was made up of aymaran and quechuan peasants and the other by young middle-class mestizos and workers. Their shared premise was to combine the proletariat, especially miners, and the indigenous peasantry, Bolivia's majority population that since the last decade had shown a growing capacity for organization and mobilization. Given their significant overlaps they decided to establish a functional alliance with a clear division of labor for a trial period: the young mestizos would take on urban work, Marxist theory and logistics; the group of aymara and quechua peasants would organize the rural force, inheritors of ancestral rebellions and the National Indigenous Project, in addition to their authority and prestige among aymara and quechua communalists and their presence in the peasant unions. With these resources they set out to develop in Bolivia the worker-peasant alliance envisioned by Lenin.

However, the EGKT was broken up within a few months of launching its armed campaign, between March and August of 1992, and the neoliberal governments tried to erase the rebellion from popular memory; its biggest threat, in the eyes of power, having been the discovery of a proven interethnic alliance. To annul this they rolled out a packet of constitutional reforms that recognized the multicultural condition of the country and indigenous rights to education, agrarian property and municipal decentralization (viz. popular participation), in tune with that dictated by international policies. The *multi-plural* discourse and reforms, as they are

known, took as interlocutors and beneficiaries the eastern indigenous, a very small sector of the population far from the political center of the country, while the quechua and aymara majority was practically ignored. Those measures sought to alienate the indigenous population from any initiative of radical struggle but took few effects to satisfy indian and peasant demands.[2]

Therefore, in 2000 an uncontainable rising began from multiple indigenous social movements. The most radical sector of these was led by the CSUTCB (central workers union of peasants) and was headed by the aymara campesino Felipe Quispe, founder of the EGTK. These movements' battering of the fragile equilibrium established by the local mestiza elite accelerated the crisis of neoliberalism in the country and brought about the fall of two presidents: Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada (2003) and Carlos Meza Gisbert (2005), and the arrival of the first indigenous president in January 2006, the cocalero leader Evo Morales Ayma. His Vice-president Álvaro García Linera was also a founder of the EGKT. The governing formula constituted policies and discourse owing much to its experience in the EGKT and its forces aligned ethnic and social groups traditionally opposed thanks to prevailing racism. The preservation of the experience of the EGKT as part of the process of indigenous self-realization as autonomous political subjects in Bolivia seems to us fundamental, and to that we dedicate these pages.

The EGKT indigenous insurgency is only one significant episode in a long-accumulating process and builds upon past social and political events in the indigenous base of Bolivia. Unlike other formations of armed struggle in Latin America, the Tupakatarista project was not alien to the idiosyncrasies and convictions of the indigenous base it organized, it is its own creation. That which survives of this experience, despite the swift dissolution of the group, is the ability for autonomous mass action by the aymara and quechua peasantry and its heightened organizational capacity for a project of radical political transformation.

Aymara hegemony across the rural-urban divide

The city of La Paz, capital of the Bolivian government, is seated in the aymara highlands and its working population is dominantly aymaran. La Paz is invaded daily by the aymara workforce and the local mestiza lives out this invasion as an intimate threat. The conflict is intensified by a constant brushing past, aggravating

[2] Escárzaga; 2005

the tacit segregation. El Alto of La Paz, the city's servant dormitory, with more than 800 thousand inhabitants, is today the largest indian city of the Americas. The migrant aymara population in La Paz and El Alto does not break with the world of the indigenous countryside from which it emerges and periodically returns, and as a strategy for urban survival this allows self-affirmation of its differentiated identity.

The centrality of the Aymara population in Bolivia is beyond dispute. Although they are not the majority among the present indigenous population, they inhabit the central political seat of the country, are the most culturally and politically articulated ethnicity and the most resistant in their identity. Because they occupy an unproductive space, the frigid high plains, the aymaran peasants did not participate under the Colonial and Republican eras in the circuit of foreign trade, they only participated internally, which allowed them to maintain their productive and cultural autonomy. Their oppressors were the landowning latifundia. Most politically and economically reactionary, most precapitalist and racist, this was the weakest of the dominant groups, yet the most oppressive, and their relations with the peasantry were the most violent.

Katarista Indianism

One decisive element in the construction of autonomy for the indian peasantry in Bolivia is the indianist ideology formed by Fausto Reinaga (1906-1993).[3] A political project for transforming the daily conditions of oppression and exploitation exacted on the indian majority by the white and mestizo elites, it affirms the protagonist role of the indians in Bolivian history and their ability to struggle for their own demands beneath their own program, leadership and organization. It represents the term 'indian' as self-denoting by the original population to invert the stigmatized connotation given by the oppressors.

Indianism defines itself in contrast to indigenism, the ideology elaborated by mestizos as a political program, governing policy, and/or artistic tendency in literature and plastic arts in the countries with significant indigenous populations since the 1920s. This tried to represent indigenous interests to integrate them as subordinate in the mestiza hegemony, culturally assimilate them to a mestiza

[3] Inscribed in the works published in 1970: *La Revolución India* and *The Manifesto of the Indian Party of Bolivia.*

nationality, and politically inscribe them in the mestizo project of constructing an anti-oligarchic nation-state; in short, to make them mestizos.[4]

(Raquel Guitiérrez)

Indianism proposes that indians constitute themselves as an autonomous political actor in place of the ideologies of the left and center mestizo political parties: the Nationalist Revolutionary Movement's (MNR) nationalism and the left parties' Marxism, whether the Bolivian Communist Party (PCB) or the POR (Revolutionary Workers Party - troskyist), which used indians as a subordinate social base for their respective projects without considering specific indian interests and conditions.

Reinaga's indianist discourse was renewed by the Aymara campesino movement and turned into Katarismo, a movement and ideology that laid claim to the figure of Tupak Katari, the Aymara caudillo that lead the anticolonial Qollasuyo

[4] Escárzaga; 2005

rebellion across the andean highplains in 1781-83. Katarismo was initiated in 1969 by Aymara students in La Paz that took on organization, education and cultural outreach in rural areas. It constitutes a bridge between the urban indigenous and the aymara communities around La Paz's highplain, and later spread to other regions, manifesting in radical actions like land occupations. The Katarista movement had its first mass explosion in La Paz on Jan 1, 1971. On July 30 of 1973, the Manifesto of Tiahuanacu stated:

> "We, the quechua and aymara peasants, just like other autochthonous cultures in the country… We feel economically exploited and culturally and politically oppressed. Bolivia has had not cultural integration but a juxtaposition and domination, keeping us in the most exploited bottom strata of this pyramid.
>
> We peasants want economic development but according to our own values. We don't want to lose the noble virtues of our ancestry via a pseudo-development… They have not respected our virtues nor our own view of the world and life… Campesino participation has not been accomplished because its culture has not been respected and its mentality has not been comprehended." The manifesto concludes by saying: "We are foreigners in our own country."[5]

In October 1973 two differing ideological tendencies within Katarismo began to express themselves: one indianist that posed the indian as subject and another syndicalist that posed the campesino as subject. The first received support from international indigenous organizations. The syndicalists were supported by progressive church groups. In 1974 the government unleashed an intense repression and committed the Massacre del Valle with almost one hundred deaths, provoking mass indignation among the indigenous peasants and destroying what remained of the Military-Campesino Pact,[6] while sowing the seeds of Katarismo in the field of peasant syndicalism.[7]

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[5] Rivera, 1986: 177-186

[6] Established in 1963 by the government of General Barrientos, it politically subordinated, through the CNT-CB, the campesino population benefitted by the 1953 Agrarian Reform, and it was confronted by the opposing proletarian miners and the COB.

[7] Caravantes García, 1991

In 1978 the two Katarista tendencies became dual political parties in order to participate in the presidential elections. The indianist tendency founded the Tupaj Katari Indian Movement (MITKA) and the syndicalist tendency founded the Tupaj Katari Revolutionary Movement (MRTK). The former, its base in the Pacajes province, was led by Constantino Lima, Luciano Tapia and Julio Timiri. The latter was seated in the province of Aroma and had as leaders Jenaro Flores, Macabeo Chila, and Víctor Hugo Cárdenas who was linked to the mining unions. The indianist MITKA held that not only peasants but also workers and in general the oppressed in Bolivia are indians that confront a colonial situation. Drawing on the pre-hispanic past, they organize in councils of amautas and mallkus (ancient Incan education levels and traditional indian authorities) and propose the reconstruction of the communitarian Ayllu without social classes or oppression of the indian majority by the white minority, reclaiming the term 'indian' and its political autonomy from the mestizo parties that misuse it.

The class-based MRTK recognizes the transformations brought by the revolution of 1952: the spread of unions in the communities that coexist with ancient aymaran organizations, they see cultural demands and class demands as compatible, they adopt the union organizational forms and employ the term campesino/peasant. They paint the MITKA as racist and archaic.[8]

As with the factionalizing and weakening of the indian parties, thanks to cooptation by the local mestizas, an indigenous autonomous campesino union is formalized in 1979 with the creation of the CSUTCB under the patronage of the COB and the predominant influence of the MRTK, through which Jenaro Flores becomes Executive Secretary of the confederation. Its first action was a road blockage in November and December of 1979, whose bluntly wielded force terrified Bolivian society.

At its first extraordinary Congress, the CSUTCB consolidated two base positions that brought the factions expressed in the indian parties to the union terrain: 1) self-determining Katarismo that makes the self-determination of indian nations a goal, to create independent states of aymaras and quechuas; and 2) the *multi-plural* proposition that accepts the existing State, even while questioning its exclusive and colonial character (demanding the recognition of cultural identity, claiming the right to be part of the Bolivian nation and seeking a negotiated inclusion in it).

[8] Rivera, 1986

The second, more easily assimilated by the power of the dominant creole-mestizo political forces, therefore receives their sponsorship.

The heterogenous universe of the indian peasantry found a unifying force in the growing CSUTCB, calling attention to one seemingly contradictory fact: Katarismo, the indianist ideology, adopted the union format as a method of national articulation, permanence and legitimacy, and the indian peasant bases made it their own, because beyond the political differences of the leadership the peasant bases found the most appropriate form of organization to be this deeply rooted union militancy — much as, at the same time, it was the restoration of communal networks that the 1953 agrarian reform sought to abolish and substitute with the union. In other words, Bolivia's peasant syndicalism turned to strategies and forms of struggle nourished by the two cultural traditions within reach: the communal and the union. The organization embarked from the communities and enveloped the entire country, under the cover of which persisted the traditional authority systems pertaining to local custom. Where the ayulla system predominates, the traditional authorities flourish, sometimes in confrontation with the union and other times dividing lines of responsibility in harmony.[9]

The CSUTCB is not entirely dominated by a single tendency, but is rather a space where diverse political projects, ideological nuances and strategies of struggle are exchanged and considered by the peasant masses in a cyclical manner. According to their will, the orientation of its political power remained in accordance with a diversity of tactics.[10]

The Indian Vanguard

The aymara campesino leader Felipe Quispe Huanca is the most visible person of the indian component of the EGTK. His personal trajectory allows insight into a collective political agent, the aymara peasant that found expression in the armed group's indigenous vanguard. His adhesion to indianist-katarista ideology, his experience struggling in the campesino unions for more than 15 years, his formation as a combatant with mestizo groups in the 70s and 80s and his conviction in the inevitability of the armed path – all this sustained the project of an armed indian rising and brought him to take on the urgent need of forging

[9] Patzi, 1999
[10] Escárzaga, 2005

alliances with mestizo elements to gain access to necessary technical and material resources for their battle.

Felipe Quispe was born in Ajllata in 1942, an aymara community in the Omasuyos Provence in the Department of La Paz. Son of peasants, he was the youngest of 6 brothers. He claims descendance from Diego Quispe Tito, colonel in the army of Tupak Katari. His community was bonded to a rich landowner who employed several generations of his family as servants. His process of 'urbanization' and forced incorporation in the spanish speaking world began with primary school, and continued in military service with the Air Force of Cobertura in Riberalta in eastern Bolivia, where he left in 1963 as a corporal. He then returned to his community to work the land and became a campesino leader, participating in the union movement. As representative of his community he attended conferences of the old campesino central, where he received his political education. At the 6th Congress of the CNTCB in Potosí in 1971, he met the indian theorist Fausto Reinaga and the aymara leaders Raimundo Tambo, Constantino Lima, and Jenaro Flores Santos. Following the coup by Bánzer in 1971, Quispe was identified as a communist and fled prison to Santa Cruz where he worked as a peon for 5 years in the court of cane, rice and cotton.[11]

In 1975, invited by Jaime Apaza Chuquimia, Quispe joined the group that would form MITKA, attracted by the proposal of armed struggle formulated in their Policy Thesis, which aligned with his own project. In April 1976, Apaza introduced him to Aejandro Rodríguez Salas (alias Miguel) a non-indigenous element that ran with the indian movement as a militant in the ELN (National Liberation Front).[12] [13] In 1977 with Jaime Apaza, he began political work in the

[11] Quispe, 1996

[12] The ELN had 4 stages. The first was the guerrilla band of Che Guevara that ended with his death on October 8 1968. The second was the Teoponte guerrilla initiated by Inti Peredo (survivor of the first) who returned to the mountains and was killed in September of 1969; the group was then exterminated between June and October 1970. One participant, Néstor Paz Zamora, died October 8 1970, not from combat but hunger. Osvaldo (Chato) Peredo, another member, was rescued by the popular mobilization and Catholic Church during the government of Torres. A third stage was the urban guerrilla resistance to the government of Bánzer that between 1971 and 1975 was also exterminated. Jaime Paz Zamora, a seminary and student of Lovaina, was recruited in Europe by the PC-ML (Maoist Party). He came to build a 'popular war' that supposedly Oscar Zamora Medinacelli had organized (his uncle and Minister of Labor in the previous government), but arrived to find a scenario distinct from what was imagined. So he launched the creation of a new revolutionary party together with elements from other tendencies like the Revolutionary Christian Democrats (Araníbar, Kuajara and Ferrufino), the Sparticists (Pablo Ramos and Dulfredo Rúa), a faction of the MNR (among others René Zavaleta) and the dissidents of the PC-ML. They founded the clandestine MIR (Left Revolutionary Movement) on September 7 1971, two weeks after the coup of Hugo Bánzar. Their beginnings were completely wound up with the ELN. See “Historia del ELN: Jaime y Néstor Paz Zamora 20 años después”. Semanario Aquí, La Paz, 12/15/90, p. 5

aymara communities within the Department of La Paz, making recordings for Radio San Gabriel of autochthonous music and interviewing the commoners about their conditions of life. At night they seized the chance to chat in aymara with the community and spread the indianist line, to 'de-westernize' the consciousness of the peasantry, mixing into these 'consciousness-raising councils' coca, llajt'a[14] and alcohol. Quispe helped draft the Manifesto of the MITKA with Jaime Apaza, José Aramayo, Nicolás Calle, Fidel Jarro and Alejandro Rodríguez, the latter being the only non-indian of the group, but who signed as a Mapuche from Chile. In the same year the FDTCLP-TK was founded (Federation of peasant workers in the La Paz Department – Tupac Katari), demonstrating the expansion of the aymara campesino unions.

In 1980 the internal dispute between the candidates and the resources that the indigenous leaders received from international organizations provoked the division of two factions in the MITKA. Luciano Tapia led the MITKA and Constantino Lima the MITKA-1. The military coup of García Meza unleashed an intense repression and suspended parliament. Quispe worked in the MITKA as secretary to Luciano Tapia until 1980, when the repression forced him to leave Bolivia, and with the support of the organization visited Perú, México, Guatemala, El Salvador, and finally Cuba, where he receives military instruction for one year. Quispe returned to Bolivia in 1983 and in 1984 was selected as leader of the FDTCLP-TK, from then on advancing the preparation for armed struggle from within the campesino union. The internal disputes of the MITKA led to its practical disintegration in 1985, with various organizations severing ties.

On the 26th of February, 1986, the CSUTCB developed its 8th extraordinary expansion in Sucre, the delegates including: Quispe, Fernando Surco, Calixto Jayllita (José Aramayo) and his wife Camilla Choqueticlla, the meeting declaring the suspension of MITKA and founded the movement of Red Ayllus, conceived as the political arm of the mass peasant organizations, a revolutionary Katarismo to escape the manipulation practiced by both the left and right indian political parties of the mestizo creoles. “I discovered that the indigenous movement cannot establish itself in the margin of the union organization, it is the organization that gives a social base to the movement,” said Quispe.[15]

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[13] Quispe, 1996

[14] A mixture of ash and batata that is used in the chewing of coca.

[15] Interview with FQH, Felipe Guaman, 2001

We must highlight two elements in Quispe's trajectory. The first, identity with the communal base and the political formation acquired in building the peasant's union networks, recognizability within the organization's base, moving up the ladder from representing his community to gradually working through the union pyramid structure; from the communal to the provincial, departmental (Bolivia's super-municipalities), and the national. The second element, his exile in the country's east and then abroad permitted a vital widening of his experience and political horizon without separation from the base. Regarding this communal-syndicalist structure, he would seek to develop the political work from the perspective of armed struggle, seeking to give reality to the aspiration of the armed struggle that all the peasant leaders were in agreement on without being able to make concrete.

The Mestizo Vanguard

In 1982 a group of young Bolivian students in Mexico began the political and military preparation for organizing an insurrectional front in Bolivia. Their revolutionary resolution was in consideration of the intense economic and political crisis being felt in the country, expressed in the masses rising first in 1979 with the indigenous insurrection led by the CSUTCB and maintained by the popular resistance headed by the COB (Bolivian Workers' Central) against the dictatorships that had followed in recent years. The group consisted of Álvaro and Raúl García Linera, Juan Carlos Pinto Quintanilla, Carlos Lara Ugarte[16] and two of their girlfriends, mexican students Raquel Gutiérrez Aguilar and Fiorela Calderón.

The young Bolivians in Mexico were inspired by the Central American revolution underway in those years and, of the many revolutionary schools to learn from, they followed the FPL (Salvadoran Popular Liberation Front) that formed part of the FLMN (Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front). The FPL was a Maoist affiliated political military group, created by Salvador Cayetano Carpio (Comandante Marcial) in 1969, following his break with the Salvadoran Communist Party. They foresaw a conjunction of the mass line with armed

[16] We assume the self-identification as mestizos proposed by Álvaro García, although the mestizo condition in Bolivia doesn't exist under this term: to the creole elites from which they come and to the indians with whom they allied they are whites. Pinto identifies the group as middle class. The three hail from Cochabamba (a city and department more mestizo and with less ethnic segregation than La Paz) and studied at the same confessional denomination private school. The Garcías came from a fallen aristocratic family and Juan Carlos from a middle class family, he and his parents spoke in Quechua.

struggle, which should be launched not by a guerrilla foco as in the 60s but by the masses.[17]

To the Salvadoran revolutionaries Mexico was its rearguard, offering material and logistical support with official political forces because the Mexican government sought to consolidate its political and economic hegemony in the Central American region, within the new correlation of forces brought on by the revolutionary wave. For this reason the presence of salvadoran insurgents in Mexico City was something normal, not too mention at the UNAM (central Mexican university), where the majority of those Bolivians studied. The UNAM was a special place for the radicalization of the young middle class Bolivians and their girlfriends.[18]

Each of the youths began their political activity uniquely in different Salvadoran cells active in Mexico – Juan Carlos Pinto and Fiorela Calderón met in the Comité Romero, Raquel Gutiérrez worked in the Frente Sindical Revolucionario. During 1983, along with participating in the different Salvadoran groups they created a Marxist study circle with other Bolivians, Salvadorans and Argentines.[19] Their founding political theory consisted in the writings of Marx and Lenin, the study of Bolivian history and following current events in their country in the press.[20] Their engagement with the Andean indigenous question came about through the thought of Mariátegui, according to Raquel, through Wankar[21] according to Álvaro García. [22] They also did physical training under Carlos Lara in the Iztaccihuatl peaks.[23] They intentionally kept distance from the resident Bolivian communities in Mexico, militants in the various left parties whose activity regarding the situation in their country consisted mainly of information and analysis.[24]

The youths and their Mexican girlfriends arrived in Bolivia between the end of

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17 Guttiérrez, 1995

18 Álvaro García and Raquel Gutiérrez studied Mathematics, Raúl García and Carlos Lara studied Engineering, Fiorela Calderón Economics and Juan Carlos Pinto Sociology.

19 Juan Carlos Pinto indicates that the group's participants were two argentine exiles from the ERP, a Peruvian of the Sendero Luminoso and two Salvadorans of the FMLN. (Interview with Juan Carlos Pinto in Revista Quincenal, March 10, 2011).

20 Raquel Gutiérrez and Álvaro García were Marxist-leninists, Juan Carlos Pinto and Fiorela Calderón were christian socialists and Carlos Lara was an anarchist.

21 Ramiro Reynaga (Wankar), *Tawa Intin Suyo. 5 siglos de guerra kheswaymara contra España,* 1980, a text inspired by the indianista ideas of his father Fausto Reinaga.

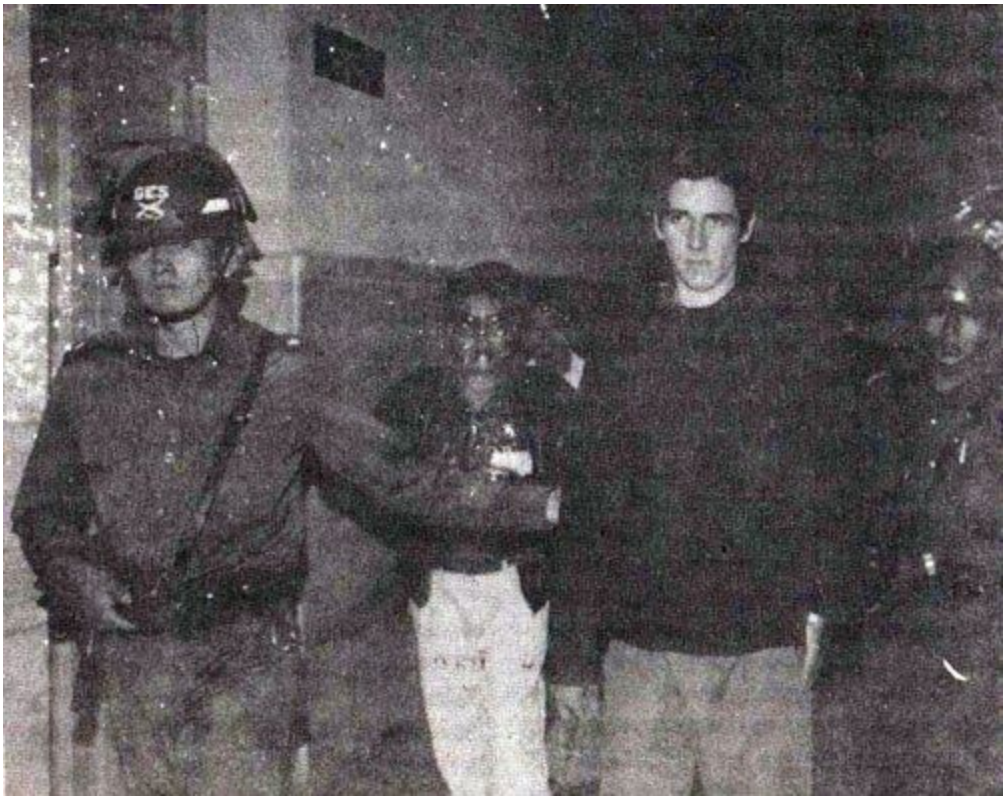
22 Interview with AGL, Escárzaga, 2004

23 Interview with CLU, Escárzaga, 2009

24 In Mexico exiles could perform these activities with relative freedom on the condition of avoiding local politics.

1983 and the end of 1984, between 22 and 25 years old. They did not join any existing political organizations, but created their own, Cells from the Mining Base. The first years were very difficult, they organized small discussion groups about the country's political conditions and the preparation methods of armed struggle. They wanted to be ready for the outcome of the military confrontation they saw as close by.[25] One part of the group worked with miners in Potosí and Oruro and the other in the cities of La Paz and Cochabamba with manufacturers, turning to music, theater and puppet shows to open dialogue with the workers.[26] They sought to excite and animate the workers while developing a global analysis of the country's political and economic situation.

(photo of Álvaro García, alias José, during the trials)



They were able to embed themselves among the most radical sectors in the prevailing environment of intense social and political mobilization. Months after their arrival, an indefinite general strike occurred in March of 1985 and 10,000 miners marched on La Paz. The group took the opportunity to do political work in the striking industries, offering what they knew best, political theory. They

[25] Interview with AGL, Escárzaga, 2004

[26] Carlos Lara adapted works by the Mexican group of popular theater CLETA (interview with JCPQ, Escárzaga 2006) and they used the Mexican protest music of José de Molina and Gabino Palomares (interview with CLU, Escárzaga 2009).

organized company schools and dispersed their proposals and reflexions through small pamphlets aided by the mining unions.

Interethnic Meeting and Sirviñaku Trial Marriage

July 1985 saw the meeting between the young mestizos and Felipe Quispe and other Katarista militants. Quispe describes it as such: "Our three indigenous members had the idea to organize an armed branch of indigenous villages in the aymara region. We sought to join the union syndicate and from there prepare our brothers for the armed struggle, which is when the García Linera brothers and a miner showed up – we were three and three. But they didn't fall from the sky, there was a contact, a comrade in the struggle, an eastern indigenous Juan Rodríguez Guagamas[27] that was like a deputy. He knew the Garcías and suggested that there were some youths who thought like we did, and we agreed to speak with them. Juan facilitated the meeting, we exchanged manifestos, reports they'd drawn up, we had no money to publish. We decided to test whether it helped us for the armed struggle, we made a group fund to work more closely together, and learned that we were capable of fighting together, uniting with the non-indigenous; it worked like a sirviñaku.[28] The struggle would combine us with the non-indigenous brothers, we came to agreements and maintained relations. They launched Ofensiva Roja (Red Front) and we the Ayllus Rojos. We took on recruiting, organizing and preparing the indigenous community and they took the cities and mines. The Decree 21060 was made and the miners were resettled and were without their militants. All of the campesino communities came out. The proletarian revolution had begun!"[29]

Firstly, the mestizo group prepared the armed struggle with their subject being the workers, which would culminate in urban insurrection following the earlier preparation and radicalization of the labor movement's marches, strikes, and occupations of worker centrals. But they assumed this could occur in concert with armed mobilizations of peasants, agrarian and communal sectors. Between 1984 and 1986 they centered their forces in the work with the miners and manufacturers. The indigenous counterpart also recognized that at this moment in the struggle urban and workers' position was fundamental, Quispe having

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[27] A member of the MPLN (Popular Movement for National Liberation), deputy from 1982 to 1984, who participated in coalition with the UDP. (Ayar Quispe, 2005: 34)

[28] This is a trial marriage traditional to andean societies.

[29] Interview with FQH, Escárzaga, 2003

participated in the COB and its mobilizations. The Katarista peasants linked with the mestizos to work in the mines, helping to edit leaflets and flyers, to organize courses in the mining union, and to manage film teams and project movies.[30]

The formation of a joint indian-mestizo organization with the aspiration for a horizontal, intercultural relation between both parts, is one of the breakthroughs of the EGKT (further on we will point out some of its limits), and can be explained by various factors. One we find fundamental is the Mexican experience of the Bolivian elements, including Felipe Quispe who it affected, although he stayed even longer in Cuba. This was reinforced by the participation of the two Mexicans that in addition to the ethnic balance inserted a gender perspective. The cosmopolitan idiosyncrasies of Mexico City and in particular the university environment, where the initial group formed and lived for four years, offered the influence of a more open and equal society, with less discrimination against indigenous and workers than in Bolivia (where challenges to racism had a stronger history). Observing from Mexico, it was easier to criticize the oppressive racism of Bolivian society, see the independence of its members, and to imagine non-hierarchical relations across difference as part of the radical transformation of society: this was no doubt one of the important lessons in the formation of the future Tupakataristas. Another key is the organizing, political and ideological capital that the indian group carried, without which the mestizo contingent would have had a difficult time translating their theoretical elaboration into political convocation. The generational difference between the two groups also facilitated the openness of the mestizos to being integrated.

Change of Subject//Change of Program

On August 29, 1985, in his third term of government, the aging president Víctor Paz Estensoro, the same that nationalized the mines in 1952, signed Supreme Decree 21060 to privatize the tin industry and relocate (terminate) 23,000 miners from the Bolivian Mining Corporation (Comibol), the state business developed after the nationalization. The party that designed, executed, and legitimated the structural adjustment in Bolivia was the MNR (Revolutionary Nationalist Movement), the same which in 1952 steered the anti-oligarchic, anti-imperialist revolution. Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada, minister of Planning and Coordination and one of the captains of the Latin American mining industry, was tasked with

[30] Interview with AGL, Iturri, 1996

the privatization of mining and implementing the program of structural adjustment and monetary and financial stabilization – the neoliberal program known as New Political Economy (NPE).

The governing elite consolidated the now exhausted cycle of tin mining by laying off the powerful mining' proletariat, with whom it had alternatively co-governed or battled politically; in this way it eliminated its historic adversary, possessor of a class-consciousness affirmed by its existence as the generator of the country's richest export. The defeat and disappearance of the mining proletariat was a tragic event difficult to find paralleled in the history of Latin America.

The young mestizos had formed numerous cells in the mines and factories coordinated by 15 full-time organization activists: for publicity, communications, acquisition and transport of arms. The closure of the mines caused the loss of this advantage. Their base evaporated in search of providing for their families' survival and the Miners' Cells lost the material support of the unions, which were left without members or resources.[31] Faced with such circumstances, at the close of 1986 the Tupakataristas were forced to reorient their organizing strategy from a base fundamentally mestizo, laborer, and urban to one fundamentally indigenous, rural, and peasant. According to Álvaro García, they didn't propose replacing the indigenous peasant for the working class as the revolutionary subject, but rather redefined the sector as "the central protagonist that is now capable of acting resolutely."[32]

As it stood, the Aymara territory became the highest priority. The peasants recognized that their turn had come. Both indians and mestizos deepened their theoretical reflection and called on the contacts that the indian members of the organization had held since the 70s, to cohere around a new perspective: organizing the communities for indigenous self-determination. The initial pact of interethnic alliance was unsettled and, in a natural way without perceiving it, the mestizos became subordinate to the indian vanguard. For the Ayllus Rojos it was the opportunity to invert the order of Bolivia's social poles, in some way a late revenge for 30 years of indian subordination and discrimination by the labor vanguards and petty-bourgeois mestizo intellectuals within the unions and political parties. Above all, it was the opportunity to reconstruct an indigenous identity and

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[31] Gutiérrez, 1995

[32] Interview with AGL, Iturri, 1996

unearth their own version of history, reclaim their radical inheritance, rejoin their culture and communal traditions, and formulate from these elements a projection of the future.

The mestizo vanguard was forced by these circumstances to accept the alliance with the indians in terms of parity according to their contributions: they were well intentioned and well prepared, but without prior contacts in either the traditional Bolivian Left or with other existing Bolivian guerrilla groups[33], and without international contacts[34]. Each half brought distinct and complementary elements, the relationship adjusting as necessary to function, so that for neither was the pact shady or opportunistic. It was an alliance between differences but not full integration. The mestizos learned the factional dynamic of communal relations and the indians' political practice, not only in the intervention by the indians in the workers and peasants unions but within their own armed organization. The factional dynamic is what allowed the stabilization of the fluid relationship between the indian and mestizo parts. The strong female presence of Raquel Gutiérrez worked as a pivot and mediator between the two camps headed by Quispe and Álvaro García.[35]

Quispe and with him the indigenous section recognized the utility of collaborating with the mestizos and the converging goals with the Marxists for the construction of socialism, that for the Aymaras signified the refoundation of the socialist system of ayllus that functioned prior to the Spanish conquistadors' arrival across the andean region and that persists in the countryside, broken down and denigrated by the capitalist economy. But Quispe never considered himself a Marxist; he was a katarista, an indianist. The access to the aymara communities made possible by Quispe brought the mestizos and in particular Álvaro García to almost obsessively study theory in order to comprehend this other that was their ally. The mediation of theory was privileged as an indispensable resource to grasp this complex

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[33] Armed Forces of Liberation – Zárate Willca (FAL-ZW, 1988) and the Néstor Paz Zamora Commission (CNPZ, 1990).

[34] They never imagined seeking support from external revolutionary groups or socialist governments as they didn't identify politically with any of them, but furthermore, in those moments the socialist nations were in no condition to offer material support to this type of initiative.

[35] By forming and participating in couples, the mestizo group with an important female presence won the acceptance of people in the aymara communities, where there is a strong identification with the symbols of andean power such as the highest original authority incarnated in Chacha Warmi, a unity of man and woman. This fact acquired relevance in relation to the pan-andean rebellion of 1780-1783. The couples were Raquel Gutiérrez and Álvaro García, Fiorela Calderón and Juan Carlos Pinto, later incorporating the Bolivian Silvia de Alarcón, wife of Raúl García Linera. She was born in Cochabamba to a military man and a social worker for the Police, studied philosophy at the Universidad Católica in Cocha and a Masters in Political Science at FLACSO, participated there in the Pastoral Juvenil and was the chair of the Sociology department at the UMSA.

reality, but also as if marxism were a sacred text, a defense mechanism in the process of being absorbed by the indian part of the organization. Their volition to the katarista cause and subordination to the indigenous vanguard had a limit, they were neither assimilated in the andean world nor recognized themselves as subordinate to the indian mission: "We only indianized them partially," said Quispe.[36] The mestizo counterpart sought to prevent the consolidation of authority in an indian leadership under Felipe Quispe.[37] The tension was never resolved, it would appear at various levels and in critical moments of the movement, and beyond into the endeavors launched by the protagonists upon completing the campaign.

The Work of the Peasant Union

The Red Offensive of the Ayllus Tupakataristas (ORAT) or simply the Ayllus Rojos were in fact a faction of katarismo and of the peasant union, whose strategy determined their forms of organization. The masses' work had to involve participating in the union organizations, worker or peasant, which, much more than the strategy of infiltration familiar among the armed groups in Latin America, made necessary assimilating and being assimilated by the forms of indigenous political work that dominated the peasant and workers' unions. For this reason, despite their semi-clandestinity, the ORAT sought to convince the rank and file of the necessity of the armed path, confronting other factions who espoused electoral methods. To this end they spread documents through both the national and provincial union congresses that were adopted by various rank and file congress resolutions, as we will see in the following.

In January of 1986, Felipe Quispe was president of the Political Commission of the 4th Congress of the FDUTCP-TK, representing the Omasuyos Province of his natal community, where he presented a Political Statement by the Red Offensive. Also relevant is the case of Sabina Choquetijlla, an organization militant elected the Executive Secretary of the Federated Union of Female Peasants in Bolivia – Bartolina Sisa (FSMCB-BS), at its first congress in Santa Cruz in December of 1987, launching a prolonged division within the organization.[38] Thus deputized, Quispe went to Potosí in July of 1988 for the 1st mass Congress of the CSUTCB, where his Political Thesis of the Red Offensive was one of the three most

[36] Interview with FQH, Escárzaga 2006
[37] Interview with RGA, Escárzaga 2006
[38] A situation similar to that which would bring Felipe Quispe to become Executive Secretary of the CSUTCB in 1998.

discussed documents of the Political Commission's debate. Observers opposed to his position saw it signifying a movement beyond a simple ideological tendency to becoming a directing force within the syndicates of the CSUTCB. These adversaries characterized them as "racist nationalists, fascists and nazis given this verbal necrophilia and distortion of history".[39]

The following year, from September 11th to 17th 1989, the 6th ordinary Congress of the CSUTCB was held in Tarija, where the Red Offensive presented a Declared Political-Union Proposition that launched the armed struggle and made a strong critique of the NGOs that "without working, live off of the name of the indian peasant community", and called to fight against them. The previous year, the document had proposed passing the NGOs into the hands of the workers in the countryside because the finance came in the name of indians while being managed by the whites. At the event, Miguel Urioste, a National deputy of the United Left and a member of the NGO CEDLA that was questioned by the Red Offensive, denounced the organization for introducing to the peasant movement the ideology of Sendero Luminoso (The notorious Peruvian guerrilla group, Shining Path). This claim brought the attention of the media and state intelligence services.[40]

The Labor of Publishing and the Production of Theory

Both the indian and mestizo components of the group considered the written word a high value resource in the construction of a battle-ready political organization. Leaflets and books were instruments for the formation of cadres and the elevation of mass consciousness. Through reflection it was necessary to clarify the complex reality they sought to influence, as a point of departure for elaborating a revolutionary strategy adequate to it, as opposed to the dogmatism and application of general formulas that prevailed among the countries with a traditional left. The group's form of political existence involved publishing documents with strategic proposals and systemic interpretations of reality, to distribute among the peasant and worker unions rank and file, which was indispensable to influence the base and the political debate on the mestizo left. This is why so much time and resources were spent on the editorial work that, furthermore, was a cohering activity for the mestizos and indians. At first, the mestizos' editing abilities were the main attraction for the indigenous group who realized the necessity of this

[39] Calla, 1989: 65
[40] Ayar Quispe, 2005: 42-43

resource to which they lacked access.[41] The mestizos completed this intellectual work in the downtime provided by the agricultural calendar, while the peasants worked the land.

Radical Katarismo

In 1986 Felipe Quispe published the text *Revolutionary War of Ayllus 1871-1873,* [42] that shows Quispe's effort to infuse his aymaran worldview with the elements of the culture of the Marxist Left observed and acquired in his previously mentioned experience in the *q'ara*[43] world. There was utility and potential in collaborating with the non-indian world, from which he extended the branch of the Aymara worldview to launch the battle with his indian brothers. That is why his indianist discourse appears blended with terms from the leftist rhetoric of the period. Quispe's indianism, inspired by that of Reinaga, also departs from it in various places. It pivots on distinct arguments, using new historical materials and according to different motivations. Central to Quispe's Katarista vision is the symbol of Tupak Katari and the rebellion of 1780-83. He posits the rediscovery of the aymara anticolonial struggle developed through the long Colonial and Republican eras and expressed in successive rebellions, the military strategy employed there formulating a strategy of armed struggle proper to indians. This objective distinguishes his katarismo from others. For Reinaga this theme is secondary, not to mention that he never took on armed struggle. In his review of the great 1781-83 rebellion, Reinaga places the three indian leaders (Tupak Amaru, Tomás Katari and Tupak Katari) on equal plains and, although each one's programs and strategies are differentiated, draws no political consequences relating to the present. Reinaga categorizes Tupak Katari as an indian noble like the other two.[44] Quispe recovers the fact that he was not a noble but an indian commoner, making his program more radical in that he fought not only against colonial domination but the exploitation of the peasantry as well. Thus Quispe compares Tupak Katari with the commoners and posits his struggle as an example for this class.[45]

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41 Interview with FQ, Escárzaga 2003

42 In the Semenario Aquí of La Paz in 1987 he published an article about Tupak Katari titled “Mit'ayu que luchó por la liberación aymara”. In July of 1988 he published the book *Tupaj Katari vuelve... carajo* that includes the text of 1986 and the Political Theses presented at the union congresses by the Ayllus Rojos. It was prepared during a 7 month sentence in the San Pedro prison in La Paz, where Raquel Gutiérrez helped with the correction and material design.

43 A derogatory term the aymara give to the white-mestizos meaning bald and without clothes, “the european invaders came to our land without anything, without any property or wealth”. (Quispe, 1988)

44 Reinaga, 1970

45 Quispe, 1988

Quispe's katarismo projects a future society that takes as its organizing model ancestral communitarian forms that the elites without understanding tried to eliminate during the Colony and Republic. This battle strategy also makes use of each contender's geographic disposition, where the white minority is spatially encircled and laid siege upon by the rebellions and mobilizations of the indian majority. The indigenous community is a combat subject in addition to a form for organized countryside production and for reproduction of indigenous culture[46]. Mass violence is indispensable to take power and instate the central Aymaran position in society. The rebellion of Tupaj Katari is cast as a revolutionary war of ayllus, a war of the entire people at the level of the aymara nation as well as the "tawantinsuyano continent", covering not merely the Bolivia of today but the entire territory once included in the Incan Empire. The rebellion was raised through 10 prior years of political-ideological and military training by the caudillos Tupak Katari, Tupak Amaru and Tomás Katari. Quispe shows that Tupak Katari conducted the political-ideological work through many travels and connections with the principal kasikis, kurakas, regional leaders and types of bosses of the region, disguised as a salesman to not awake the suspicion of the spanish landowners.

For Quispe the war led by Tupak Katari in 1781 is the source of inspiration for a theory of communal violence, "from our communities against the cities," and in distinction from the Left-parties' proposals,

> "this armed struggle is not imported or foreign, it rises from the shining minds of our great military strategists (*amautas*). We must fully retrieve their program and maintain our revolutionary aymara language with the same position, just as is done in our labor congresses and assemblies where the peasants require aymara or quiswa to be spoken. We have to prepare for the revolutionary war of the entire people, whether from our communities outwards, that is to say, *to* the cities, or *from* the cities to the countryside. We have to combine our peasant and labor struggle up to the point of taking political power itself, and reclaim our beautiful expression of horizontal, collectivist socialism, of Ayllus, and return to that original Qullasuyu.[47]"

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[46] Despite its identification in Quispe's texts, this Aymara war strategy against the whites could not be applied during the period of the EGTK, but would be from 2000-2003 by the CSUTCB mobilizations.

[47] Quispe, 1988, p 121

The aymara-quechua nation he projects excludes “los q'aras”, the white and mestizo population. Indians do not see themselves as part of the existing Bolivia and propose the construction of an indian nation, *El Qullasuyu,* for which Quispe's critics accuse him of promoting anti-white racism. In practice his anti-white and anti-western impulses have been less extreme than other bolivian and andean indian militants. On this point Quispe's and the Aymaran's position varies according to circumstances. The alliance with whites and their political realism tempers this complaint: their anti-mestizo attitude is more a radical discourse without the possibility of following through on the threat, and is above all manipulated by their opponents and critics to obfuscate and isolate them from potential allies.

Taking Mariátegui's Road

The alliance's mestizo component gradually adopted its indian counterpart's katarismo and to the extent possible joined them. This project went beyond the Central American attempts that had initially inspired it, in which armed movements reclaimed figures like Sandino and Farabundo Martí -- labor leaders from the '20s linked to international anti-imperialist and Marxist groups. The engagement and rediscovery of Tupak Katari allowed young mestizos to join a traditional struggle and benefit from a long organizing experience that surpassed their own ends, and offered the challenge of learning and practicing the indian mold of politics.

Among the EGTK mestizos, Raquel and Álvaro specialized in intellectual work[48], even though the other members also took part in discussions of theory. They avoided the trending Marxist tendencies and went through Marx, Engles and Lenin (the last of which only at first, before departing) and available Marxist literature, in addition to exploring Bolivia's history[49] and its and Peru's anthropology. Their radical critique, autonomous formation and theoretical creativity were all necessary at that time of deep questioning into the old certainties of the Latin American and worldwide Left, impacted by the failure of revolution and fall of the socialist bloc. They were opposed to the new order of the day, which included the restructuring of world-capitalism and its toll on living conditions and popular

[48] They sign texts from this period with Aymaran pseudonyms, Álvaro García Linera as Qhananchiri which means the clarifier, and Raquel Gutiérrez as Quantat-Wara Wara which means morning star.

[49] Bolivian ethno-history is a field that developed rapidly in those years with participation by Bolivians and foreigners, and reclaimed by the Tupakkataristas.

sentiment, that is to say, the ideological hegemony achieved by neoliberalism. In this way they approached a task long-neglected over decades by the left of the region: a deep reevaluation of marxist-leninism in order to realize the existence and outlook of other revolutionary subjects (indians) distinct from those considered by Marxism, and to formulate an armed struggle strategy adequate to this reality.

They held two major interests in the exploration of Marxist texts. On one hand, to clarify the major tendencies within the interpretation of history. We see this as referring to the need for a rational processing of the change brought about in the subject by practice. On the other side, to comprehend the attributes of the subject, the indigenous-cum-peasant, in order to master their environment for organizing, and to deduce strategic guidelines from these traces[50]. This may have been an effort to theorize the concrete strategy proposals formulated by Felipe Quispe in his earlier mentioned speech on the rebellion of Tupak Katari. Combining those elements, they launched a debate with the various leftist groups in Bolivia, their political rivals[51]. They published numerous books in those years (see the bibliography and appendix).[52]

Here are a few of their intellectual concerns. In Latin America and in particular the andean countries capitalist underdevelopment did not completely eliminate precapitalist relations of production such as servants and the commons, but rather preserved these within its logic. Especially relevant is the persistence of the indigenous community as a space of material and cultural reproduction for that population. The community adapts to the changing circumstances, whether as captive of the large latifundio estates or by maintaining autonomy, but remains congealed, disadvantageously, in the market. The result is the persistence of large concentrations of indigenous as a majority in relation to the white and mestizo population, all of which centrally places the indigenous peasant within the strategic battlelines for socialism, and ordains it with the task of national

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[50] These concerns remain central in the theoretical texts of Qananchiri (AGL): *The Conditions for Socialist Revolution in Bolivia (Concerning workers, Aymaras and Lenin),* 1988; and *Of Hidden Demons and Moments of Revolution: Marx and the Social Revolution in the extremities of the socialist body, Part 1,* 1991. In 1989 they edited Marx's work, *Tke Kovalevsky Notebook (*1879), one of the german author's ethnological notebooks that were retrieved from the Amsterdam Archive, including an introduction by Qhananchiri. The text is short yet extremely dense. It draws out guidelines for Marxist interpretation to apply to an analysis of Bolivia's indigenous community.

[51] This combination finds expression in several texts. From Qananchiri, *Critica de la Nación y la nación crítica naciente,* 1990. And from Quantat-Wara Wara (RGA) *Los Q'aras izquierdizantes ¿Una crítica al izquierdismo burgués,* 1988, and *Contra el reformismo. Crítica al "estatismo" y al "populismo" pequeño burgués,* 1989.

[52] For a detailed analysis of the content of these texts and of the political-military character see Escárzaga, 2006.

development.[53]

It is not always explicit or sufficiently recognized the degree of doubt that Mariátegui's program met with among the mestizo tupakataristas. There is a certain contempt towards Peru's philosopher (*Amauta*); perhaps because his theoretical discourse is not dazzling, or because he is Peruvian, or because he was appropriated by Sendero Luminoso as a reference in the 70s and this placed him among the adversaries of the Andean indianist movement's ideologues[54]. Nevertheless, there is a striking similarity between the questions formulated and answered with help from Marxism by the Peruvian *Amauta* and the insurgent kataristas from the 1960s onwards. In spite of great differences in the theoretical framework applied, their programs of research and struggle are often parallel.

The inquiry Mariátegui accomplished in the 1920s stayed inconclusive and was inhumed by the Peruvian intellectual's early death and by the altered path taken by his collaborators. The young tupakatarista intellectuals had a more favorable context, given their greater numbers, technical and intellectual resources, and with 50 years of documenting the liberal measures taken against the community and Bolivia's indigenous culture. During that time the indian subjects explored their possibilities and confronted their limits, while the *ayllu* form of communal production and reproduction failed to disappear.

Some of their problems which overlap with Mariátegui are the grasp of capital's domination of both andean countries and the full submission of their economies to capitalist globalization. In spite of the persisting forms of precapitalist exploitation, and the stunted colonialism of both countries' bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeoisie, those classes could not lead the anti-oligarchic struggle this would have suggested. The dominant ideology of anti-indigenous racism underwrites the oligarchy's power, assigns and legitimates persisting mechanisms

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[53] Qananchiri, 1991

[54] Álvaro García says that Mariátegui's ideas did not forcefully impact them (Interview with AGL, Escárzaga, 2004). But in his very own introduction to the Kovalevsky Notebooks, there is an extensive note recognizing Mariátegui's clarification of the role played by the indigenous community in the Andean societies (pp. XX). Elsewhere, Iturri refers to a text by Quispe titled “Everything began with Mariátegui”, (Iturri, 1992 – pp. 31 & 56). Raquel Gutiérrez, as mentioned, also affirmed *7 Essays Interpreting the Peruvian Reality* as one of the important readings done during their preparatory phase in Mexico (Interview with RGA, Escárzaga, 2003). These coincidences may be explained by Fausto Reinaga, whose theoretical development prior to the formulation of indianismo was strongly influenced by Mariátegui and remained within his conception of indianism (Reinaga, 1953), although his indianist texts distance themselves from the Peruvian Amuata (Escárzaga, 2006). Quispe influences and directs the mestizos in this sense. All the earlier indianists including Reinaga reject all Marxism as Western, Mariátegui included.

of precapitalist exploitation, and maintains the excluded conditions of the indian majority. The andean workers and peasants are recognized as social subjects doubly determined by class and ethnicity, in both their identities as well as their strategic praxis for an alternate society. The character of the current socialist transformation includes the indigenous population as a protagonist and important social producer, and the synchronicity of anti-capitalist measures with the democratization of society.[55]

Nevertheless, there are differences between the approaches to resolving the immediately ethnic national problem. The mestizo tupakataristas questioned what the most appropriate method is for Bolivia to exercise national self-determination as understood by Lenin, and sought out the Leninist texts that analyze the USSR's first years of socialist construction -- an experience that would later be standardized by the Comintern as a program applicable to all other countries.[56] At the time, Mariátegui rejected this imposition as a failed solution for Peru's ethno-national question, and departed in search of an alternative.

Preparing for War

Out of the 1984 COB congress, the group publicly proposed forming armed detachments within the mines. All the political groups had put this forward -- the POR (Trotskyist) only on the condition of a progressive tendency within the armed forces -- while Red Offensive called for self-organization by the miners. From 1985-87 they prepared for war. Quispe and Raúl García took responsibility in this area. The miners instructed about the deployment of dynamite, the construction of explosive devices, grenades, mines, etc. In August 1988 they began a more systemic military training under the direction of Felipe Quispe, three months of practical learning on various techniques of guerrilla warfare: military exercises, ambushes, resistance, nighttime trekking, and armament operations. This brought about major setbacks.

While training in the high plains around the province of La Paz they stumbled on a group of 11 French and Canadian tourists and, having been discovered, decided to detain them by force. The guerrillas' peaceful behavior gave the Bolivian tourguide the notion of escaping into the night, and upon arriving in La Paz

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[55] Mariátegui, 1976, and Qhananchiri, 1988

[56] Qananchiri, 1990

informed the Ministry of the Interior of the armed group's presence. When the guerrillas discovered the tourguide's absence they freed the tourists and dissolved, departing by different paths and receiving help from the civil population to hide out. The army created outposts with detention centers with 4,000 men throughout the zone, raided houses, bombed mountain areas and set up tight roadblocks on the highways. Attentive to their existence the authorities thus remained vigilant.[57]

On the 13th of March[58], 1989, as part of their military training, they made a series of attacks on 20 sites of three political parties in La Paz and El Alto (ADN, MIR and UCS) to express their rejection of the May 7 elections in which the katarista scabs (*amarillos)* participated subordinately to the local-mestizo parties. To highlight their disgust, the charge of dynamite was accompanied with a sack of excrement, which occurring before dawn left only material damages. On November 14,[59] another similar series of attacks hit 40 centers of five parties, this time adding the MNR and CONDEPA to their targets, as a statement of boycott for the December 3 municipal elections. Due to these actions, Felipe Quispe was captured and held incommunicado for two weeks. In solidarity with their brother, several indian organizations raised public denunciations to the United Nations, Amnesty International, the World Council of Indian People (CMPI) and the Indian Council of South America (CISA) over the arbitrary detention by the government of Paz Estenssoro. Due to lack of proof the authorities set him free at the end of April 1990.[60]

Red Offensive joined the blockades developed by the peasants in those years because they considered this the form by which the communities challenged the state. For the mestizo kataristas the blockades were opportunities to see the commoners in combat. Red Offensive joined the blockades in groups of 10 to 15 men, with automatic weapons. It was later decided that involving civilians outside the organization took too much risk and they adopted a more discreet presence.

The EGTK mestizos maintained distance and material independence from the communities – they trained and raised consciousness but did not live among them permanently. Nor did they survive at their expense. At first, available resources were donated by their families, food was brought by the peasants and the TNT was

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[57] Ayar Quispe, 2005 pp. 27-31
[58] The anniversary of Tupak Katari's first assault (*cerco*) on La Paz in 1781.
[59] Anniversary of Tupak Katari's quartering.
[60] Ayar Quispe, 2005 pp. 34-38

stolen by miners. Beginning in 1989, the main form of acquiring resources became expropriation: assaults on banks and mining company payrolls. The most astounding of these was the taking of the University of San Simón's payroll in Cochabamba for $500,000 in October of 1991. These strikes were well-planned, making use of information from sympathizers, with both indians and mestizos participating. They did not kidnap rich people for ransom because of the high risk involved in claiming the ransom money.[61] Their actions accorded with a revolutionary ethic to only attack operations with insurance and avoid affecting people with low and middle incomes or exposing innocents to risk. Iturri remarks that their actions together brought in almost a million dollars (Iturri, 1992). With these resources they maintained growing numbers of full-time organization cadres (about 20 persons), printed books and acquired materiel like arms, explosives, vehicles, etc. They bought and delivered weapons and munitions to go with the mausers the peasants carried and did target practice with. Some of these were bought from the Bolivian army itself.

Their main presence in the countryside was the aymara zone around La Paz, although they also worked in the coca industry at Chapare around Cochabamba, under Carlos Lara, where the people were armed and trained. They made contact with Evo Morales who passed their contacts on and secured their work; but they worked with the rank-and-file and did not see him again.[62]

Launching the Armed Mission

Red Offensive rejected the vanguard and foquismo (Che's theory of the guerrilla), holding that the working class had to lead the armed clash so that the uprising or war of the guerrillas would be a truly communitarian rebellion. They held two secret preparation meetings at rural schools and selected managers for each section: the mines, the aymara countryside, that of the quechua, and a section for the city. When necessary, they also held sectional meetings to elect new representatives.

On November 14, 1990, they gathered on foot by the Chacaltaya mountains, a place selected for strategic reasons as well as for symbolic elements. During that year Chacaltaya's law dictated the *achachilas* (mountain spirits) that would protect

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[61] As had been proved by the experience of the FAL-ZW, another guerrilla group.

[62] Interview with CLU, Escárzaga, 2009

them. There were 200 clandestine delegates and 90% of these were indigenous, basically aymaras and quechuas from the country's new provinces. There were representatives from every cell[63] selected at the two previous meetings, who brought the resolutions made by their comrades in separate meetings about previous proposals. These dealt with evaluations of the country's situation, considered the problem of organization and made proposals for continuing the armed preparations throughout each sector. A majority decided to launch public armed actions, an instance where the indigenous will strongly pressed on the mestizos to follow. For the indians, the decision was influenced by the nearing date of October 1992, the arrival of Pachacuti, the moment of change.

According to Ayar Quispe one group suggested it was necessary to wait two more years because there was still a lack of mass involvement, while others said, "That the work of masses has been completed for many years, and that is why we're old and tired." This position was voiced by Fernando Surco.[64]

A minority voted against, saying it still was not time, that the political work must develop further. They thought it was dangerous to organize only as militants when the social movement had not unified around the military path. According to Álvaro García, he was against, while Raquel Gutiérrez and Felipe Quispe were in favor.[65] He recalls the proposal for the name Ejército Guerrillero Tupac Katari (EGTK) coming as well from that meeting, being made by the miners.[66] According to Quispe the indians had proposed it. It is evident that the name identified with Aymaran indianism, just as those before it bore the mark of the political organizations and unions.

According to Quispe the guerrilla war began formally on June 21st, 1991, the Aymara New Year. To mark the launch they hung three cocks from lightposts in El Alto[67]. The act was meaningless to public opinion so they chose another date to begin with the propaganda of the deed, the closest being the 4th of July (US

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63 Each cell or *t'aqas* consisted of 4 to 5 members, autonomous in their group's planning, decisions and execution of revolutionary actions. (Ayar Quispe, 2005 p. 46)

64 Ayar Quispe, 2005 p. 46

65 Interview with AGL, Escárzaga, 2004

66 Interview with AGL, Iturri, 1996

67 The cocks represented the State powers, threatening their disempowerment. The act was not inspired by Aymaran tradition but a deed of Sendero Luminoso in Peru, which announced its presence by hanging dogs that represented a rival group, Patria Rojo, with their cacophonous barking. The cocks were used because of the nickname of Bolivian president Jaime Paz Zamora (1989-93), thus mocking his regime. It was a confused message with which almost all were dissatisfied.

Independence). That day three high tension towers around the El Kenko barrio of El Alto were blown up by explosives.[68] For Raquel Gutiérrez, one of the main problems with this launch was to not have found a way of coordinating it with mass actions, which, later from jail during the immensely growing peasant marches, they understood could have been done correctly.

Álvaro García confirms that they carried out more than 2,200 armed actions, but the police unilaterally recognize only 48, accusing them of 55 acts of sabotage (the press announced just half of these). García believes the press refused to publicize the actions in order to minimize the armed group's presence and deny the existence of its peasant base. The most published actions were the blowing up of high tension towers, gas and oil pipelines, and dams that caused blows to public opinion and the national economy, being presented by the press as terrorist actions *against* the interests of the peasants. García concludes that actions like dismantling bridges, blockades and dynamite were basically rank-and-file actions supported by the EGTK, not EGTK actions. They were carried out by militants from those communities as military missions and could not conflict with the peasants' interests as the communities did not benefit from the light the towers carried overhead.[69]

(photo of Felipe Quispe)

The actions were done with the further aim of spreading their communiques through the press, but their ideas did not appear as they had hoped. Neither did the press denounce the military repression of the aymara communities in response to their actions, nor did the urban population feel concern for the repression or poverty in the rural areas. García sees the EGTK communications with the urban

[68] Ayar Quispe, 2005 pp. 47-49
[69] Interview with AGL, Iturri, 1996

world as deficient thanks to being naive, ambiguous and contradictory.[70] For the dynamite attacks carried out by the EGTK, one of the authors of which was killed and identified as a peasant, the press described the group as indigenist and related it with Sendero Luminoso, only after their capture learning that mestizos also took part in the group. The press's treatment of the group of indigenous was less indulgent than that given to the Commission Néstor Paz Zamora (CNPZ)[71], an exclusively mestizo insurgent group that appeared earlier, which was presented as mistaken and psychologically disturbed but motivated by sentiments of altruism. The indianist group on the other hand was disqualified by its indigeneity and feared for the radicalism signified in the name Tupak Katari. Their appearance in July 1991 sparked terror that massive actions would occur on October 12, 1992, the 5th Centennial of Columbus's American landing.[72]

Bolivian society was very affected by the experience of the PCP-Sendero Luminoso in neighboring Peru, from the aymara peasantry along the border areas to the political elites that feared the potential contagion. It was an extremely violent insurgency still at its peak, with its leadership being captured in September of 1992, at which point the organization dissolved. To the EGTK, formed almost a decade after the launch of the maoist insurgency, the orientation of that experience was unavoidable considering the overlapping cultures of the indigenous andean peasanty, which coincided as the social subject appealed to as a base for both groups.[73] At the same time, they avoided following their path. Their political strategy avoided terrorism and tried to find commonality with the community's interests, seeking actions that would not provoke the people's rising through bloodshed. The few deaths that occurred were accidental and innocent victims were avoided in their attacks and expropriations. Their interethnic accord prevented the idea of exterminating whites from entering their rhetoric, despite the katarista indianism being labelled a death-cult by critics.

Capture

After 7 months of armed actions, one portion of the EGTK fell into police hands. Iturri raises the possibility that the civilian government used people on the left

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[70] Interview with AGL, Iturri, 1996

[71] The fourth phase of the ELN was sprung by the CNPZ in 1990. The guerrilla group used the name of the president's brother in functions to highlight his betrayal of the Revolution. See “Historia del ELN: Jaime y Néstor Paz Zamora 20 años después”. Semanario Aquí, La Paz, Dec 15, 1990, p. 5

[72] Soruco, 1993

[73] Escárzaga, 2006

with intelligence access to sell cheap arms to radicals with the purpose of infiltrating unions and left parties, and that this is how they were discovered. State Intelligence mounted a trap to disarm the EGTK called Operation Paloma, in which members of the military offered *Javier* (Raúl García Linera) purchase of 160 collapsable cartridge FAL rifles.[74]

On March 9th at the Hernando Siles stadium in La Paz, where the sale was planned, Raúl García and Silvia de Alarcón were captured without arrest warrants of any kind and were detained incommunicado for 19 days before being presented. A military-police dragnet was cast around the cities of Sucre, Cochabamba, La Paz, Oruro and Potosí, bringing down their comrades. Raquel Gutiérrez was detained on the 9th of April in El Alto, followed hours later by the ex-mining leader Víctor Ortiz, Álvaro García and Silverio Maidana Macías, a peasant. The next day Macario Tola Cárdenas, mining leader from Caracoles, and Santiago Yañique Apaza, miner from "La Chojlla" were detained. They were all tortured and held incommunicado until their presentation before the judge on April 15th. On April 13th, Juan Carlos Pinto Quintanilla was detained holding 80,000$, and was then tortured until being presented to the Public Ministry on April 21st. Despite the mestizos' capture, the EGTK pulled off several armed actions in June and tried to blow up a passenger train. On June 23rd, two dynamite attacks took place in El Alto and the bombers left a manifesto boasting that only the Marxist-leninist wing of the organization had fallen but the indian-katarista wing would fight on. The text's style departed from its predecessors.

On June 2nd, Channel 12 from the University's television in Sucre received a video for release. In the images, masked men threatened to kill the presidents of the Supreme Court, Congress, the Senate, and the Deputies. They flashed new weapons while critiquing neoliberalism, the privatization of industry and the government's festering corruption. They called for an indigenous state composed of the nationalities inhabiting the country and declared war until death on the government. They challenged the contract signed to extract from the Uyuni Salt Flats, which they considered an attack on national sovereignty.[75]

The free tupakataristas proposed continuing armed actions in the jungles of Alto Beni and the country's east, where there was less repression than in the Aymara

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[74] Iturri, 1992

[75] Ultima hora, La Paz, July 2, 1992 p. 14

and Quechua zones. Finally on August 19th in El Alto, three blocks from the Federation of Peasants center, plainsclothes police snatched Felipe Quispe Huanca, Alejandro Choque and Mario Apaza Bautista and hooded them. Quispe declares that by offering no resistance they were able to survive. Someone close to them had turned them in for money. They were tortured and presented before the District Attorney on August 21st, where the TV journalist Amalia Pando asked Quispe, "Why did you choose the path of terrorism?" The indian's haughty clapback was, "Because I don't want my daughter to be your servant, nor do I want my son to carry your baskets."[76] Quispe's response startled her and placed in full view the chasm of race separating them, as well as evincing the faultlines in Bolivian society that motivated the armed struggle. From that moment on, Quispe became a symbol.

12 members of the EGTK were captured, 10 men and two women, and another eight people without connection to the guerrilla group were part of the trial. All 12 were tried together and charged with: armed uprising, terrorism, destruction or damage to State property, attacks on public services, fabrication, possession, selling of and damage through explosive materials, asphyxiations, etc., falsifying documents, false ideology, using falsified materials, armed robbery, inciting the public to commit crime, malicious association. The Interior Minister Carlos Saavedra classed them as a Marxist-leninist group who hid behind *indigenismo* links to Sendero Luminoso, the MRTA or drug cartels. The 500,000$ confiscated from Juan Carlos Pinto disappeared. Their families went to the national and international human rights organizations to complain about the abuses they were suffering.[77] Armed actions carried on for several months. There were EGTK attacks in November of 1992, blowing up the La Paz-Oruro fuel lines on the 21st and attacking USAID on the 24th. But there was no establishment of a new indian coalition and repression ended their political activity.

Jail

During the torture sessions and afterwards in jail, the strategy of the jailers and torturers was to pit against each other the identities and interests of the indians and mestizos. The interethnic pact and alliance represented the central challenge to the state and had to be destroyed. Once the mestizos were captured and discovered to

[76] Quispe, 1997 p. 50

[77] On April 23rd 1992, 78 professors from the Department of Sciences at the UNAM signed a letter against the human rights' violations in the detention of Raquel Gutiérrez and Álvaro García.

be part of the organization the media changed their discourse to present the mestizos as spokespeople and capable of being reformed. With the indians it was otherwise. Evident in the accounts given by the participants about their experiences is a fissure in their impossible interethnic masterplan, which transcends the good intentions of any individual and expresses the insurmountable cultural barriers constructed for the preservation of the dominant society. Then there is the issue of the foreigner Raquel Gutiérrez.

While under torture following their capture the tupakataristas gave up almost all the information on the organization's resources, which were then seized by the military, no names were shared and this saved other members from prison.[78] Survival and life in prison accentuated the differences of class, ethnicity, gender and personality, seen in their ways of dealing with incarceration and strategies for achieving freedom, in how they made use of each jail and legal system's concrete conditions, in creating lines of solidarity with other prisoners, in the group's communication between different jails and in the support found and obtained beyond the jail in communities, milieux, families, and institutions. Despite many differences, their years of common experiences kept them in friendship and solidarity, and at the end it was through this unity that they achieved freedom. This fact was aided by their strategy to avoid terrorism.

The women were sent to the Center for Women's Service and Orientation (*Obrajes*) and the García Linera brothers were locked in the Maximum Security Prison of Chonchocoro in El Alto along with the miners Macario Tola and Víctor Ortiz. Felipe Quispe was placed in San Pedro and later spent three months in Chonchocoro, but the authorities decided to move him again to San Pedro to keep him separate from the brothers and two miners. He stayed imprisoned there another five years. Juan Carlos Pinto and the other captured peasants were also in San Pedro. Other political prisoners accused of terrorism since 1989 that belonged to FAL-ZW and the CNPZ were in Chonchocoro. The conditions of incarceration changed according to each jail. Chonchocoro, a modern institution of maximum security, had extreme restrictions, but the ramshackle prisons of San Pedro and Women's Service are more flexible, given that the majority of prisoners are poor and indian.[79] This allowed the inmates to take advantage of their seclusion to

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[78] Carlos Lara Ugarte was the only mestizo member to avoid capture, even though there was an arrest warrant and reward offered for him. He lived semi-clandestinely in Santa Cruz until the statute of limitations expired. (Interview with CLU, Escárzaga, 2009)

[79] There is a customary regime in Bolivian prisons based on communitarian or proto-syndicate formalities, arranged by the

develop themselves as individuals, maintain lines of friendship and politics among themselves, struggle for liberation and be in better condition to reincorporate into society upon release.

The inmates began building a network outside the prison that years later would bring their release. They were fully involved in the defense trial. They maintained permanent external support from Fiorela Calderón[80], who coordinated the solidarity tasks and legal aid. Raquel Gutiérrez set up a solidarity network around herself and the other prisoners through invitations to young intellectuals, academics, and politicals who supported the cause to eat with her in prison on Thursdays, visiting day. Through them and with the financial help of her family she obtained books, journals, a computer and other invaluable elements for the group's intellectual activity. Juan Carlos Pinto relied on the help of the Youth Pastor with whom he had worked previously. In spite of the Youth Pastor group holding him in poor favor and a request by the Cochabamba Archbishop to turn him away, they provided copious assistance.[81]

Juan Carlos confirmed that contact was maintained between the jails through their families and the other outside organizations that sustained a vital line of solidarity:

> "The jail was so informal we could send notes, and once spoke over the phone. Coincidentally we met Raquel in 1995 when we were discussing a list of demands, she the representative from her jail and I from mine; it was the first time we'd met, it was very emotional. Once I went with a sports delegation to Chonchocoro and could see the comrades who were stationed there."[82]

At Women's Service (*Obrajes*) in August of 1992, Raquel and Silvia planned a hunger strike over the death of a prisoner with tuberculosis and goiter due to lack of medical attention, who was held for more than four years for being unable to pay a debt. 100 women went on strike for 9 days. They demanded justice for the

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prisoners themselves in the absence of the state, with some jails even being semi-open. The increasing criminalization of poor peasants beginning in the 1980s facilitated the transition to a system where solidarity and reciprocity are the basic mechanism for confronting misery. Distinct collective identities feed into an autonomous democracy where the prisoners' representatives are elected and regulated by themselves. (Pinto, 2004, p.40)

80 Fiorela Calderón had withdrawn from intense activity starting in 1989 when she had health problems and a four year old son. Nonetheless, she continued working with displaced miners and Church projects like recycling trash, beekeeping, and agriculture in Cochabamba, and with people in the barrio. (Interview with JCP, Escárzaga, 2008)

81 Interview with JCP, Escárzaga, 2005

82 Interview with JCP, Escárzaga, 2005

judge responsible, the right to outside work, the end of debtors' prison, improvement of medical service and pay for working in the prison bakery. This launched a dynamic cycle of protests, reprisals, isolation, hunger strikes and outcry over the abuses committed, with other prisoners joining. This phase culminated in a riot in February of 1993 and a hunger strike where Silvia and Raquel demanded conjugal visits with their partners every 15 days for seven hours, which was allowed for the common prisoners who had husbands in Chonchocoro. They obtained the support of all the inmates for their strike and had a riot with numerous others in support of protecting their integrity. The demand was met starting in 1994. It became clear that the tupakatarista prisoners were very active and uncomfortable for the authorities, thanks to their ability to rally other prisoners to defend their rights.[83]

On his process of adapting inside San Pedro, Felipe Quispe considered:

> "When I was captured and sent to jail, in the first location my friends were union leaders that were prisoners; there they took me in. We dined together to speak at night. In jail there have to be rules. One has to be cautious. One has to be honest. Inside one does not have to be vicious. One has to be very orderly; because for myself I don't like to go to the *muralla* (the site of isolation and castigation at San Pedro). I like to be punctual with everything. Therefore, in the first location I adapted. I expected to be there 30 years..."[84]

From jail, Quispe studied his bachelor's for three years and began a degree in History at the Universidad Mayor de San Andrés through a distance-study, wanting at first to study Political Science, which was not carried. He maintained himself by cooking, washing dishes, washing other peoples' clothes and later making tableware. He did gymnastics, soccer, learned chess, and participated in various hunger strikes to achieve legal protections for the prisoners. Raquel Gutiérrez and Álvaro García continued their theoretical inquiry and intellectual formation, doing paid work like translation and editing of texts brought by friends in solidarity like Silvia Rivera, and in this way published their books, articles, and materials.

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[83] Gutiérrez, 1995

[84] Interview with FQH, Hirsuta, Humerez and Gironda, 2001

"El E.G.T.K. TIENE LA MISION DE REALIZAR ACTIVIDADES DE ORDEN MILITAR CONTRA EL GOBIERNO"

En toda esta bibliografía de Ofensiva Roja es notor... la inexistencia de citas a favor o en contra de Mao y t... movimiento, que puede ser una falta de estudio de l... doctrina, sin embargo abundan en todos los libros la... citas de Marx, Engels y Lenin, especialmente en su últ... mo libro "De Demonios escondidos en momentos de l... Revolución en las extremidades del cuerpo capitalista... que es una recopilación de los textos de K. Marx en su... manuscritos filosóficos de 1844, asimismo traduce ... estudia del siglo anterior "El Manifiesto de lo... Comunistas", con el sello de Marx y Engels y la lucha d... clases.

Todo un siglo de lucha, que de tanto luchar, sucumbi... el imperio comunista.

En sus declaraciones también sostiene que : "M... *declaro culpable de haberme asociado a la Tesis d... alzamiento armado contra el gobierno".*

"Colaboré en la "Recuperación" (atraco) de $us... 430.000.- (Cuatrocientos treinta mil dólares americanos... en la Universidad de San Simón en el mes de octubr... de 1991.

"Los dineros "recuperados" (robos, atracos, asalto... son para emprender la lucha guerrillera".

"La célula de identidad falsa que portaba a nombr... de Alberto Rojas Valencia, la obtuve a traves de mi her... mano Raúl García Linera".

"He participado en el sabotaje de pan duro" (donde... fallecieron los campesinos Severo Caza Villavicencio y... Felix Mayta maman).

IDENTIDAD VERDADERA

Profesión: Licenciado en matemáticas.
Casado con: María Raquel Gutiérrez A. (mexicana).
Padres: Raul García Suárez - Naty Linera.
Identidad: C.I. 3007962 Cbba.

IDENTIDAD SUPLANTADA

Nombres supuestos:
Alberto Rojas Valencia; C.I. 6413165 L.P.
José Rodríguez. Nombre de Guerra: "José"
"Q'hananchiri" - Responsabilidad en el E.G.T.K.
Principal ideólogo.

"En ese contexto figuran los atentados contra las torres de alta tensión, acueductos, poliductos y otros"; comencé como miembro de Ofensiva Roja dijo Alvaro García, como confesión a la prensa: "soy militante del E.G.T.K.".

Consultado si estaba arrepentido por su participación en el E.G.T.K. dijo: "no me siento arrepentido, es un gran motivo para seguir luchando por una verdadera democracia".

En su expediente existe contradicciones e incongruencias. Se confiesa como ideólogo del grupo, al haber confeccionado junto a su esposa mexicana; María de los Angeles Gutiérrez "Chantal-Wara-Wara", la panfletería y editado los libros de ediciones "Ofensiva Roja" con el seudónimo de "Q'hananchiri" escribieron juntos: "Crítica de la Nación y la Crítica Naciente"- "Tupac Katari"... vive y vuelve carajo" - "Contra el Reformismo" - "Cuadernos de Liberación" y "De Demonios escondidos y Momentos de Revolución".

A group from both prisons initiated by women began discussions about social problems and politics in Bolivia and from them eight issues of the journal Cuadernos de Discusión were published between 1993 and '96.

In '94 and '95 Raquel and Álvaro published several articles in the La Paz papers La Razón and Última Hora, two of Raquel's dealing with the recent Zapatista rising in Mexico and others about the experience of prison. In '94 Raquel published the book, *Globalization, Success or Trap*[85], and in '95 *Among Brothers: Because We Want to Continue Rebeling, the Subversion of Subversion is Necessary,* which draws lessons from the EGTK experience. Surprisingly, she presented it outside the prison in the auditorium of the University of San Andrés on September 16th, 1995. The author was escorted by two plainsclothes cops who remained behind the curtains throughout the event. At the occasion she was interviewed by the journalist Rafael Archondo, who asked if she had not herself fallen into the occlusion of the indigenous population as in her book she criticized other leftist groups of doing, and she responded:

"I believe one belongs to a group once they are complicit with it. When

[85] Edited by her family in Mexico.

> I walked out of the Interior Ministry and was presented to Justice, they asked me the same question. The only thing that occurred in that moment to answer was that I was more Bolivian than Sánchez de Lozada. And that is because one is of and belongs to the community with which they conspire... I was always looking for where the struggle existed that I wanted to be complicit with and then going there, and that is valid and I defend it."[86]

In 1995, Álvaro García published *Value Form and Community Form: An Abstract Theoretical Estimation of the Civilizing Foundation that Precedes the Universal Ayllu,* a dense 335 pages. Álvaro and Raquel edited the 1996 compilation *The Weapons of Utopia, Marxism: Heretical Provocations.* Other tupakataristas also reflected on the armed experience. Felipe Quispe Huanca wrote *We Have to Learn from our Mistakes* in 1996, and in '97, *My Capture,* both unpublished. Juan Carlos Pinto published *San Pedro Prison, Radiography of Injustice* in 1994; in '95, *Free Reflections from a Prisoner, Bolivia*; and in 1997, *Prisons and Family.* These were published with external support, the second from the Pastor and the third from the NGO Diakonía.

As seen, the group members were not broken in prison. They were able to survive, recuperate and strengthen themselves, reconstruct their networks, prepare politically, and after five years achieve freedom.

Weighing the Mistakes

They all see their major error as the vanguardism and militarism that steered the armed mission, which blocked a deeper connection to the masses. For Álvaro García, the organizing structure of war was absorbing the more prepared cadres, the most active cell of indigenous and mestizos that took on preparing for the armed rising. It was not planned this way, yet it was the very dynamic of the war that brought them there. In a way, the war shifted their focus so as to discard some of the other issues. He recognizes that they did not know how to understand the rhythms, pauses and elasticity of the blockades that were the fundamental form of the peasant struggle. Furthermore, they did not construct an urban network of protection to allow them to survive underground upon becoming detected.[87]

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[86] Archondo, 1995

[87] Interview with AGL, Iturri, 1996

Raquel Gutiérrez thinks that in emphasizing the confrontation with the state they reduced the struggle to purely armed-military forms and abandoned the work of propaganda and networking among the communities that would have promoted the self-determination of the indigenous in the public sphere. This tended not only towards military organization, it also demanded centralization and reinforced their internal hierarchies. The compartmentalization and fragmentation of knowledge about the group's outside activities was separating them from the masses. Once the principal strategy of violent destruction of the state and taking power was accepted as a line of action, the task of real self-determination, in practice, was relegated. Means supplanted ends, violence had to be carried out by specialists, driven and monopolized by ambitions for state power.[88]

They did not understand the demand for community education as a central strategy for developing communitarian self-determination. Neither did they perceive the integral role of the miners as subjects who, when they lost their jobs and stopped being miners, could have been offered alternative forms of struggle from their new conditions.[89] To Felipe Quispe, the setbacks resulted from poor organization of the military structure and a lacking ability to organize the people and raise national, racial, and traditional consciousness. The struggle's purpose was not explained: indigenous self-determination and self-government, and the reconstruction of the Qullasuyu. They were unable to unmask the lies of the pseudo-Left and the pacifist kataristas, to restore the ideology and indianism to the workers, popular sectors, and indian commoners that had been lost under neoliberalism. They lacked the time to reverse the strategy used by the dominant classes to extract armed resistance from the people, eliminating their natural order and conscience through pluri-national reforms, religious groups, and pacifist indian movements.[90]

He recognizes the rush towards launching their armed propaganda actions. They saw the armed struggle as a competitive sport and did not analyze the earlier Bolivian guerrilla experiences to identify their errors and implications. They misunderstood the mass character of Katari's indigenous campaign from 1780-83, that of Wilka in 1899, and of the 1952 revolution. They could not make the EGTK cause into one of millions and millions of indians, mestizos, and even poor gringos on the American continent. They did not know how to properly choose men and

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88 Gutiérrez, 1995, p. 48
89 Gutiérrez, 1995, p. 44
90 Quispe, 1996

detect the traitors who infiltrated both the indians and mestizos.[91]

For Quispe, it was a major mistake to concentrate the information and resources with the group of mestizos, which included vehicles, money, communications, military equipment, safe houses, location secrets, contacts with the cells, press and propaganda, and more. This contradicted the indian elders' and the assemblies' recommendations not to centralize the EGTK's resources in few hands. He grants this error to the mestizos' lack of trust for the indians. And when the mestizos fell into police hands, that information was obtained by the security agents through torture, and the organization was rapidly destroyed. Furthermore, those still free did not have the necessary resources as everything had been seized.[92]

Even if the mestizos resisted the indians' proposal, they were not capable of building the armed organization in the aymara territory among the communities. They were exterior to it, in the sense that their material sustenance did not depend on it. This was possible thanks to their economic freedom, achieved through the expropriations, but the autonomy it allowed them also granted a certain hegemony. This is one site where the military path superseded the political, and the mestizos were elevated over the indians.

Strategies of Escape

The cultural differences between the indians and mestizos were evident in their approaches to achieving liberty, although in the end they were able to get free through unity. In the early prison years, the mestizos made plans to escape, but it did not come to fruition. Later, Raquel Gutiérrez dreamed up the idea of appealing to the sensible sectors of public opinion for support, for which it was important to moderate the radical and threatening profile of the tupakataristas – something inherent to the personality and aspiration of Quispe.

The indian organizations mobilized multiple times in demand for the release of the campesino prisoners accused of being tupakataristas. On September 11, 1992, three thousand peasants circled the San Pedro jail demanding the liberation of the accused EGTK prisoners. On October 12 of the same year, the indigenous proclaimed the arrival of Pachakuti in La Paz's Plaza San Francisco and

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[91] Quispe, 1996
[92] Quispe, 1996

inaugurated the Assembly of the Original Nations. At the action a document was read, titled "To the conscience of all my brothers", sent by Felipe Quispe in jail. It signals that the 500 years of resistance, "is the beginning of the indian epic against the invaders and usurpers; it is a war to the death that continues even in our day, come what harm may." It also requested that the assembly declare the jailed tupakataristas as prisoners of the 500 year war, which it did. Following the action, the mass circled Plaza Murillo to symbolize a siege (*cerco)* upon the Government Palace, and finally moved up to San Pedro to demand the freedom of the jailed peasant leaders. Later, on February 18, 1993, four thousand aymaras circled San Pedro prison and threw stones through windows and gifts to Felipe Quispe, again demanding the freedom of the accused EGTK indians.[93]

In 1996, the law of Just Bail was passed, which opened the possibility of those held without trial or sentence to be granted release with probation. The law has a clause indicating that the authorities could apply within a year to withdraw cases of major crimes for more than 8 years' sentencing, which was applied to the EGTK prisoners in light of having only completed 5 years of seclusion (Benavente and Suárez, 1996). Raquel Gutiérrez applied under this law after completing the 5 years, which a district judge negated due to the unresolved charges of armed rising and subversion. The Mexican Ambassador Hermilo López Bassols protested against the unjust decision, meeting with the spokespeople for the Sala Penal Primera to analyze the case and emerging with a compromise to emit a definite decision on August 16, 1997. The Interamerican Commission for Human Rights of the OEA also called upon the Bolivian Government to free her. To bolster the freedom demand for her the others accused of belonging to subversive groups, Raquel began a hunger strike on April 13, against the counsel of the ambassador. The strike was supported and replicated outside the prison by the group Mujeres Creando (Creative Women), achieving wide reactions in the media. This helped the families of the prisoners organize a mobilization for the release of the men, which finally occurred.

For their part, the peasants from the state of Omasuyos circled the prison of San Pedro on July 17th, demanding Quispe's freedom. Finally, having completed five years of seclusion, all the prisoners accused of belonging to the EGTK and other groups were released on probation.

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[93] Ayar Quispe, 2005, pp. 61-64

Liberty

Felipe Quispe left jail on November 17, 1997. The peasant mobilizations on his and the other peasant prisoners' behalf sought to reclaim the EGTK and its indigenous component for the aymara movement, in separation from the mestizo half. This logic came during the prison period to the rebel indian who had allied with *q'ras* and was held in prominent standing outside the jail. The political conjuncture was favorable. The CSUTCB was divided in two quechua factions. One had at its head Evo Morales, leader of the coca growers Federation from el Chapare and of the Movement towards Socialism (MAS). At the head of the other was Alejo Véliz, peasant leader from Cochabamba and of the People's Sovereign Assembly (ASP). Both leaders tried to subordinate the CSUTCB to their respective political bases. The rank and file that did not belong to either of the conflicting groups proposed Quispe as a unity candidate. The conflicting leaders hoped to be able to bend Quispe's leadership to their own directions. Quispe was elected as executive secretary of the national CSUTCB on November 28, 1998, at the Unity Congress in La Paz. The leadership of Quispe signified a radical turn in the peasant movement, considering the proposal to construct a separate state for

aymaras, quechuas and eastern indigenous peoples, and the rejection of the pluri-national proposal and the parliamentary path taken by the MAS leadership.[94]

Quispe's aims within the CSUTCB were a continuation of his guerrilla and indianist katarista perspective developed in the EGTK, believing that the structure of the campesino union would offer a platform for broader struggle and allow incorporation with the communal bases in regions beyond the state of La Paz. Quispe worked intensely on the ground among the aymara communities, and large indigenous mobilizations under his leadership developed in 2000. His management made his figure a charismatic image among the aymara population, recognized as *el Mallku,* who is the aymaran high authority in politics, society, religion, and the territory of joined ayllus: the condor that communicates from men to the gods. His proud retorts are legendary to power and the *q'ara* world, including his sharp critiques of political adversaries from the presidents of the Republic to Evo Morales, close to him and rival cocalero leader.

On November 14th, 2001, Quispe founded the Pachakutik Indian Movement (MIP). In his speech, Quispe signals the membership's goal to express itself through mobilizations and force, and to concede a transitory phase under legal and electoral struggles. He uses a metaphor to illustrate this position: in the two hands underneath an indian poncho, one holds the legal struggle and the other holds a weapon. He applies the strategy of indianist struggle learned through the lessons of katarismo.

Raquel and Álvaro found it more difficult than Quispe to integrate themselves into a productive political life because the mestizo society would not pardon or allow infractions as bygones. Nonetheless, they did find a way. Both worked as professors in the University of San Andrés and departed from the perspective of armed struggle, directing their attention to an analysis of the neoliberal period's transformations of Bolivian society and its effects on living conditions for the popular classes. In this work they connected with the intellectuals Luis Tapia and Raúl Prada (also educated in Mexico) with whom they published several collective and individual books, and forming the theoretical group Comuna. The group contributed to the formation of a new generation of activists and scholars that were both indian and mestizo.[95] They maintained connections with Bolivian social

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[94] Patzi, 2007

[95] One of them being Félix Patzi.

movements, Raquel intensely involved in the mobilizations in Cochabamba of 2000 ('the Water Wars'), and returning to Mexico in 2001 where she continued her radical perspective on Bolivian social movements and kept up her political and intellectual links with former comrades in arms.[96] Álvaro García continued his studies and engaged as a political analyst, promoting the understanding of indian social movements in white-mestizo public opinion through the press, radio, and television.

Juan Carlos Pinto returned to Pastoral Juvenil and obtained support from the ecclesiastic institution to create Pastoral Penitentiary, specializing in carceral studies.

Survival was more difficult for the other militants in the group who had less political and academic qualifications. Only the support of family allowed the mestizos to readapt to a 'normal life' that in general they had never had to begin with.

A New Era

The remarkable elections of 2005 saw pairing with Álvaro García Linera permit Evo Morales to win the vote of the middle urban mestizo sectors while at the same time add the vote of radical aymara sectors identifying with his tupakatarista past. For this new intercultural alliance, the team of the vice president incorporated the majority of the ex-members of the EGTK, both mestizos and indians, and others further from the armed organization along with some who had collaborated after prison. The new political project, distinct from the radical one developed priorly, still benefited from the political capital they had individually and collectively compiled.[97] Felipe Quispe opposes the new project, considering it a continuation of the neoliberal pluri-national state; he stayed out, weakened and politically marginalized.[98] The same for Raquel Gutiérrez.

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[96] Gutiérrez, 2008

[97] Juan Carlos Pinto was coordinator for the Representatives to the Constituent Assembly (REPAC), after which taking on work close to the Vice President. Macario Tola was Senator for La Paz. Raúl García Linera and Silverio Maidana work in the department of the Vice President. Carlos Lara and Wilfredo Vela worked in the REPAC of Santa Cruz. Eugenio Rojas is Senator in La Paz. Félix Patzi was Minister of Education, Raúl Prada was an assemblyman and Vice Planning Minister. (Interview with JCP, Escárzaga, 2008)

[98] At the start of 2006 Quispe was replaced from directing the CSUTCB, which rested in the hands of leaders close to Evo Morales. His party the MIP won 2.16% of the votes in the 2005 presidential elections and lost its necessary portion for legal standing. He returned to do politics in his community Ajllata and makes his living as a peasant.

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