Andean women's oppositional filmmaking: on and off-screen practices and politics

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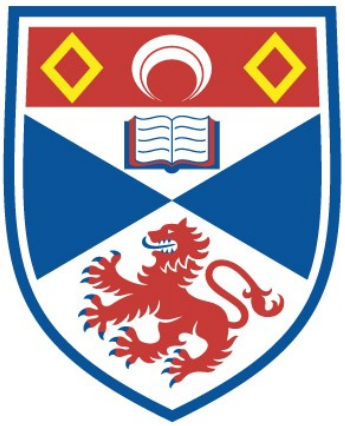

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Abstract

This thesis examines the work of three women, active in the production of oppositional cinema in the Andes in the last third of the 20th century: Beatriz Palacios, María Barea and Domitila Chungara. A focus on women's contributions is crucial for the examination of political film practices and politics in artisanal production contexts. However, to date, the privileging of auteurist and formalist approaches in Latin American political cinema scholarship —which foreground the products over the processes— has overshadowed women's involvement and, also, the active and creative participation of indigenous and working-class subjects. To correct this gap and to restore the emancipatory and collective dimension of these cinematic practices —consistent with the decolonial principles of Latin American Third Cinema— I focus on women's labour in production, distribution, and exhibition. To allow for the excavation of this hidden and complex scenario, I use oral histories, personal archives, and interviews—counter-sites to the domain of state archives, cinephilic journals, and auteurist scholarship. Inscribing Palacios, Barea and Chungara's practices and politics into official history contributes not only to recover their figures but to situate the research field of Andean political cinema in a more rigorous framework of understanding.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

The Erasure of the Wives

In 1968, a group of friends and young families, belonging to the intellectual elite of the city of La Paz, produced the film *Blood of the Condor* (Ukamau, 1969); a docu-fiction that denounced the forced sterilisation of indigenous Bolivian women by members of the US Peace Corps in the 1960s. Politically, the film was very efficient because —in part— as a consequence of its exhibition, the American organisation was expelled from the country by the progressive military government of General Juan José Torres.[1] The movie was also very successful artistically, quickly becoming an undisputed part of the canon of the New Latin American cinema.[2]

The tremendously challenging production of the film was entirely collective and would have been impossible without the enthusiastic contributions —at some personal risk— of all the members of the team, as can be deduced by their testimonies.[3] In spite of this fact, *Blood of the Condor* has entered official cinema history as the work of a brilliant auteur named Jorge Sanjinés. It might be affirmed that this ironic result —

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[1] James F. Siekmeier, "A Sacrificial Llama? The Expulsion of the Peace Corps from Bolivia in 1971," *Pacific Historical Review* 69, no. 1 (February 2000): 65.

[2] The entry for the film in the *Historical Dictionary of South American Cinema* describes it this way: "One of the most important South American films ever made and a key work of the activist, leftist, pan-continental nuevo cine latinoamericano movement of the 1960s." Peter H. Rist, *Historical Dictionary of South American Cinema* (Plymouth: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), 611. The movie is included even in the most recent reference books. For instance, Stephen M. Hart, in his concise canonical history of Latin American Cinema, from its origins to the 21st century, devotes five pages, out of less than two-hundred, to *Blood of the Condor*. Moreover, in the first sentence of the section Hart defines the film as a "classic." Stephen M. Hart, *Latin American Cinema* (London: Reaktion, 2015), 57.

[3] Jorge Sanjinés, "La experiencia boliviana" in *Teoría y Práctica de un cine junto al pueblo* (Mexico: Siglo XXI, 1979), 26-31. Here Sanjinés describes in detail the problems found by the community of filmmakers at the beginning of the shot of *Blood of the Condor* in Kaata, from his account it is easy to recognise the communitarian ethos of the project.

crediting a single person for a collective creative endeavour— happens frequently in Latin American political cinema, due to the, by default, auteurist gaze.

Fortunately, first-hand accounts of the productions are useful to counter this inaccurate approach. In his memoir, Antonio Eguino, the cinematographer of *Blood of the Condor*, describes the Ukamau group as a tribe and a *cofradía* (brotherhood).[4] This word choice points out that a communitarian social structure was to be credited for making the film. He depicts the production process as a very fulfilling experience, conducted by a united group of people that "lived up to the motto 'one for all, all for one'."[5] For him, the entirety of the members of the tribe/brotherhood contributed their labour, ingenuity, and creativity to the project.

Eguino himself was a key participant. Besides being the cinematographer, he ran important errands such as developing the film in Argentina (there were no laboratories in Bolivia). Moreover, he participated in the postproduction in Bolivia and Cuba and attended the European premiere at Venice International Film Festival. That is why it is significant that in his account, he credits particularly the ingenuity and cunning of his assistant Humberto Vera, a jobless Argentine football player who volunteered to work in the movie. Thanks to Vera, the power generator —instrumental for the shot— arrived at the remote film location, the tiny hamlet of Kaata. To credit subaltern labour, in the explicit way Eguino does, is vital to understand the big picture of Andean oppositional film production. An artisanal, precarious and politically dangerous production mode, supported by the militant contribution of many people.

Not surprisingly, many of the participants were women. In fact, at least three married couples with their children travelled to Kaata. Eguino acknowledges the female halves of these couples briefly in his account referring to them as the "women of the

[4] Fernando Martínez, *El cine según Eguino* (La Paz: Bolivia Lab, 2013), 48–50.
[5] Ibid, 54.

crew."[6] However, although their names appear in the credits of the film only the names of the male halves have entered history. To set the record straight, these women were: Consuelo Saavedra, Danielle Caillet and Gladys de Rada.[7]

Saavedra was a Chilean artist who was married to the director, Jorge Sanjinés, and travelled to the shoot with their three children. She was also an active catalyst within the group. Eguino, who knew Sanjinés from his childhood, attributes Sanjinés' early politicisation to her influence.[8] In *Blood of the Condor*, she is credited as an assistant director, although according to Eguino her tasks far exceeded that role. She also took care of the food logistics in a place where there were neither roads nor a stable market, nor suppliers of any kind; under such challenges, feeding a group of fifteen people each day, including small children, was a critical task.[9]

The wife of producer Ricardo Rada was also in Kaata. While named both in the credits and in Eguino's book as Gladys de Rada, her actual surname remains unknown.[10] According to the credits, she worked as the production assistant, but she also acted as an on-set translator of Quechua. She and her husband were the only crew members who spoke the local language, translation skills that were crucial during filming in the Quechua-speaking region.

Danielle Caillet, Eguino's French-born wife, was the third woman who moved to Kaata, bringing with her their one-year-old son. Besides taking on the role of an American health worker in the film, she also maintained continuity and took still photos

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[6] Ibid, 55.

[7] Some portions of this thesis have been published by the author (solo) during the conduct of this investigation: "The Embodied Testimony of Domitila Chungara in *The Courage of the People* (Jorge Sanjinés, 1971)," *Interlitteraria* 22, no.1 (2017): 180-193, and "Auteurism, *Machismo-Leninismo*, and Other Issues. Women's Labor in Andean Oppositional Film Production," *Feminist Media Histories* 4, no.1 (Winter 2018): 11-36.

[8] Fernando Martínez, *El cine según Eguino*, 46.

[9] Antonio Eguino, interview with Isabel Seguí, La Paz, August 5, 2015.

[10] In countries of Hispanic culture, women do not lose their surnames when they marry, but sometimes they take their husband's surname using the preposition "de" which means "of," which is a traditional formulation.

of the production. She would go on to become a well-known photographer, sculptor, filmmaker, and video maker. Her 1980 film *Warmi* (Woman) is a pioneering work of Bolivian feminist nonfiction, which portrays the diversity of women's lives in the country. Later in the decade, she theorised the need for a women's cinema in Bolivia in her article "La importancia de un cine llamado Potencial-Mujer" (For a Cinema Called Woman-Potential). In it, she details a programmatic interest in teaching cinema techniques and transferring audiovisual technology to Aymara and Quechua peasants and working-class women. She also argues that these groups could use such knowledge and equipment to overcome their economic and gender-based exploitation, regarding cinema as a tool to enhance women's contribution to the country's development.[11]

The production of *Blood of the Condor* shows that Andean political films, as cultural artefacts, were the result of complex processes carried out by communities of workers and facilitated by extensive support systems. This includes a range of actors from above and below the line crew, to the indigenous players and the expanded networks of family, friends, and volunteers. Notably, women, who contributed fundamentally to the political reach of oppositional cinema, in creative and non-creative roles, on and off screen.

I soon realised that to tell the story of this radical practice, my scholarly work should contain radical aspects too, such as a permanent questioning of hierarchical readings on cinematic labour and value. The problem of the auteur-based approach (common to date in the study of political filmmaking in the Andes) is that it not only fails to account for the significant contributions of all the participants in a production. Furthermore, it contradicts both the political aims of these collaborative projects and their praxis. Consequently, if I wanted my own praxis to be coherent with the aim of my

[11] Danielle Caillet, "La importancia de un cine llamado Potencial-Mujer," *Imagen. La Revista Boliviana de Cine y Video* 5 (December 1988–January 1989): 2–3.

work —bringing recognition of other voices into the regime of film and film scholarship— I should displace the focus on the product and the economy of cinema (that characterises industry and scholarship) and concentrate on the processes, reading them as emancipatory endeavours in themselves, beyond their material outputs and the commercial or artistic value associated to them.

A non-auteurist approach dovetails with the political missions of Andean political cinematic projects, whose aims were to mobilise change, not to create consumable products. Moreover, the study of the processes gives visibility to the broader context of activist filmmaking, which finds sites for action at stages of development, production, distribution, and exhibition. Therefore, this perspective is more suited to the study of works produced under the heading of political collectives, allowing to avoid the irony of fetishising the auteur and their oeuvre.

Because, ironically, the attention and praise received by *criollo* (European descent) male directors from auteurist/formalist perspectives, contributes to an economy of white supremacist colonial patriarchy, which replicates the same North American and European hierarchies that these films might seek to unsettle. While, alternatively, the thorough examination of the full range of contributions and distributed creativity in the cinematic processes not only reveals women's labour, but it also provides a more robust understanding of collective and participatory media, both objectives of this research.

Besides the theoretical and commercial approaches, another determining factor of women's exclusion is the inherent male chauvinism that characterises the political culture of Latin American liberation movements. This is a crucial structural reality that film historiography, to date, has made little effort to interrogate. The barely questioned practice of machismo translated to the internal hierarchies and distribution of roles inside the cinematic collectives, marginalising women's labour, even in "liberated"

groups. This oppressive practice was jocosely called *Machismo-Leninismo* by its female members. I appropriate the joke to use it as a way to name the patriarchal ideology persistent in Latin American left-wing groups.

To sum up, I affirm that auteurism, Westernised approaches to cinema's inherent value, and the lack at present of an adequate scholarly discourse on the specific problems associated with *Machismo-Leninismo* and its consequences, have not only provoked the erasure of female filmmakers, but are also obstacles to the correct understanding of Latin American political cinematic practices and texts. In order to overcome these issues, I propose a revision of Andean oppositional film history using non-hierarchical and feminist theoretical approaches. I also propose the use of a methodology that allows finding new evidence, through renewing oral history accounts —both searching new testimonies beyond those by male directors and, also, posing further questions to the same old interviewees— and expanding the archive through accessing unofficial files.

The necessary project of rewriting Latin American film history from a feminist perspective is on its way. I hope this contribution will give further impetus to a continental project, that —in consonance with the nature of the studied mode of production, and due to its sheer scale and complexity— can only be successful if it is collective.

Organisation and Structure

This thesis has benefited from several theoretical frameworks and methodological approaches, both Western and Latin-American, stemming from different disciplines. I devote chapter one to clarifying how these variegated frameworks and methods have shaped my work. This is in an attempt to situate this research theoretically, and to account for the practices behind it which have affected the investigation process and the final results.

Chapters two, three and four are respectively devoted to three case studies of Andean women filmmakers: Beatriz Palacios, María Barea, and Domitila Chungara. They were by no means the only women making political films in the Andes from the beginning of the 1970s to the end of the 1990s. However, these examples point out overshadowed and unconsidered patterns of women's labour which illustrate the heterogeneity and instrumentality of women's contribution. By unearthing the labour practices as much as the individual personalities, I hope to add to the development of more comprehensive analytical categories that would allow for a shift in the traditional status of women as viewed within the commonly accepted framework of histories of Latin American oppositional cinema; from a mostly invisible status—their contributions overlooked and devalued— to one of centrality.

Chapter two is devoted to the cinematic practices of the Ukamau group, interpreted through the lens of Beatriz Palacios (Oruro, Bolivia, ca.1945- Havana, Cuba, 2003). Palacios, despite being a key agent in the Ukamau project, has remained its hidden face. However, I argue that her all-encompassing approach to cinema deepened the outreach of Ukamau's political scope. She considered all the stages in the cinematic life cycle of a political film similarly important. In my processual perspective, I concur

with her. Accordingly, I address all types of labour conducted by Palacios — investigator, script-writer, sound-person, director, art director, assistant editor, sound editor, distributor, exhibitor, disseminator, educator, and evaluator of the political impact of the films—however, I also pay particular attention to her work as a producer and manager of a small producing company. In that sense, I propose the academic consideration of the figure of the 'wife-producer.' This role was often conducted by the wives of Latin American independent filmmakers who produced the work of their husbands-directors for a variety of different reasons; the ideological and/or artistic commitment of the wife-producer in facilitating the making of these films is also analysed in chapter three, taking María Barea as the second case study.

Palacios is also a paradigmatic example of voluntary self-sacrifice, something easily forgotten by those whose historiographical perspective does not include personal relationships as a factor worthy of consideration in understanding the production of cultural artefacts. The prioritisation of her husband's projects made it impossible for her to flesh out most of her own ideas for films. Evidence is presented of at least four unfinished projects by Beatriz Palacios, some of them unknown. I analyse the remaining evidence of these projects and the junctural, but also structural reasons why they could not be achieved —in chapter three, I also reveal an unfinished project by Barea. Finally, Beatriz Palacios' case study allows me to discuss the power issues at stake within emancipatory cinematic collectives. Identifying structural, ingrained problems latent within hierarchies is instrumental to establishing historiographies of collective cinema.

In chapter three, I address the participation of María Barea (Chancay, Peru, 1943) in the Peruvian oppositional film scene. Barea did not sacrifice herself for any man or patriarchal structure, but she has paid the price of being ignored. Despite the importance of all her career developments, and having been participant of the most

important milestones of Peruvian oppositional film history, she has been cast out of scholarship. This chapter aims to redress this situation, creating a chronological and critical reconstruction of her bio-filmography.

The importance of Barea is based on her radical practice. She questioned the forms, mediations, and structures of both first and second cinemas.[12] Moreover, the characteristic that distinguishes and unifies Barea's work, as a director, was the defence of women's rights. The protagonists of her films are Peruvian women of the popular classes (organised housewives, domestic workers, or girl gang members) victims of economic and political violence. Barea's film work aims to favour their empowerment processes through a testimonial approach. Despite being films of denunciation, the emphasis of María Barea's cinematographic work is placed not in victimhood but on the agency and transforming potential of women's organisations. This is a characteristic that links Barea's work with the last chapter of the thesis.

In chapters two (Palacios) and three (Barea), I address collectives of filmmakers working in alliance with different subaltern groups; in chapter four, I complete the picture by focusing on one of those groups, the Housewives' Committee of the tin-mining town of Siglo XX in Bolivia, led by Domitila Chungara. This organisation of working-class women made films in alliance with different groups of filmmakers, during two decades. Chungara makes an excellent case for studying political communication by subaltern subjects. She, as the leader of a marginalised grass-roots movement, managed her public image and, consequently, the public presence of the

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[12] In Fernando Solanas and Octavio Getino's theorisation of the three cinemas, the first one is industrial Hollywood, the second, European auteur, and the third, the decolonising cinematic practices of the third world. Fernando Solanas and Octavio Getino, "Towards a Third Cinema: Notes and Experiences for the Development of a Cinema of Liberation in the Third World," in *New Latin American Cinema*, vol. 1, ed. Michael T. Martin (Detroit: Wayne University Press, 1997), 33-58. Published in Spanish as "Hacia un Tercer Cine" in the Cuban journal *Tricontinental* 13, in 1969. In this thesis, I use the English version published in *New Latin American Cinema*, ed. Michael T. Martin (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1997), 33-58.

people she spoke for. She and her comrades were conscious of what was a stake in the generation of cinematic story-telling. Consequently, they embraced several collaborative creative processes in a very profitable symbiosis with the filmmakers, well aware of the image they were potentially projecting in their own filmic participations.

This last chapter opens up the discussion on the participation of film subjects as a form of collaborative authorship. In chapters two and three, I suggest the expansion of the notion of creativity in order to acknowledge the disregarded off-screen creative processes in film production, distribution and exhibition. In this final chapter, I address the creative work on-screen conducted by activists who were non-professional actors. In this way I come full cycle in my address of the cinematic practices and politics of Andean women between the end of the 1960s and the end of 1990s.

Chapter 1. Frameworks and Methodologies

1.1. Where is this Research Situated?

This is not an investigation situated in the Andes, nor even in Latin America. On the one hand, I am a Southern European researcher, although Spanish-speaking. On the other, it has been carried out at and funded by a British University. Therefore, I have received numerous theoretical influences from Anglo-Saxon academics that I believe have enriched my perspective in many aspects. Fundamentally, my introduction to a genealogy of feminist film scholars and texts, provided to me by my supervisor Dr Leshu Torchin, has worked as an eye-opener, as I will explain later in this chapter.

Nevertheless, as the overarching theoretical framework, I would highlight the pivotal influence of Latin American Third Cinema theories. Principally, the effort to decolonise film theory carried out in Latin America by 1) the Santa Fe school,[13] and Cine Liberación group in Argentina;[14] 2) Julio García Espinosa's bid for an imperfect cinema in Cuba;[15] 3) the "cinema with the people" —not about the people or for them

[13] As early as 1962, Fernando Birri states that their primary targets are the working-class and peasant audiences, and secondarily they wish to reach the bourgeoisie too. Fernando Birri, "Cine y subdesarrollo," *Cine Cubano* 64 (1967). First published in English by Michael Chanan, ed. *Twenty-Five Years of the New Latin American Cinema* (London: BFI, 1983), 9-12.

[14] The most influential of these essays is probably "Towards a Third Cinema" written by Fernando Solanas y Octavio Getino, see footnote 12.

[15] First published in Spanish as "Por un cine imperfecto" in *Cine Cubano* 66/67(1969). In this thesis, I use the English version published in *New Latin American Cinema*, ed. Michael T. Martin (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1997), 71-82.

but with them— theorised and practised by the Ukamau group in Bolivia, [16] and 4) Brazilian filmmaker Glauber Rocha's aesthetics of hunger.[17]

These interrelated theoretical contributions provide the basis for understanding the material conditions of film production to which I will refer (an artisanal, precarious, peripheral and dependent cinema). They also provide its ideological horizon, the will to free cinema from Western frames of reference and the ultimate purpose of a liberated filmmaking: to emancipate the minds of both spectators and makers.[18]

Latin American third cinema theories insist on the need to decolonise culture (the products, but mostly the processes of creation of cultural products) applying themselves specifically to the cinematic field. The methodologies they propose are also similar. Firstly, prioritisation of the effectiveness and political usability of the materials.[19] In that sense, cinema is seen as an educational and awareness-raising process. It is also a process of internal decolonisation and empowerment of the filmmakers.[20] The middle-class cineastes are asked to abandon the well-known bourgeois road to artistic celebrity and are offered instead an unpaved and uncertain

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[16] *Teoría y práctica de un cine junto al pueblo* is a collection of essays by Jorge Sanjinés and other materials such as transcriptions of testimonies of members of the audiences compiled by Beatriz Palacios. Jorge Sanjinés and the Ukamau Group, *Teoría y práctica de un cine junto al pueblo* (Mexico: Siglo XXI, 1979).

[17] Glauber Rocha, "The Aesthetics of Hunger," in *Brazilian Cinema*, eds. Randal Johnson and Robert Stam (NJ: Associated University Presses, 1982), 69-71. English translation by Randal Johnson and Burnes Hollyman.

[18] It is important to point out that when these theories were discussed and written about, we were still years away from the inception of the postcolonial (Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak, Homi Bhabha) and decolonial (Anibal Quijano, Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, Walter Mignolo) theories; therefore, the contribution of the Latin American filmmakers is especially valuable; because, above all, it was coming from the practitioners themselves.

[19] See Fernando Birri, "Cinema and underdevelopment" in *Twenty-Five Years of the New Latin American Cinema*, ed. Michael Chanan (London: BFI, 1983), 11.

[20] Here we can see the influence of Franz Fanon, in the debates that were taking place among the filmmakers of the third world at the time. Each individual must travel the path and discover the inner enemy that inhabits themselves. Cultural decolonisation inevitably passes through the empowerment of the creators, in the words of Pino Solanas and Octavio Getino, overcoming "feelings of frustration and insecurity." Fernando Solanas and Octavio Getino, "Towards a Third Cinema: Notes and Experiences for a Cinema of Liberation in the Third World," 48.

path that would require blood, sweat, tears; and most importantly, frequent self-analysis and self-criticism.

Secondly, these theories propose liberation from the canon and the conventions that populate the theory and practice of Western cinema; for instance, the concept of artistic and/or technical quality, which is inextricably linked to bourgeois culture and economy and, therefore, is an obstacle to popular emancipation. If cinema is to be for the people and from the people, it should question the value hierarchy of bourgeois art. As a consequence of this problematisation, formal quality necessarily becomes an aspect of secondary importance. This new priority order makes no technician or artist irreplaceable. The emphasis is placed on processual work, collaboration, and the emancipatory goals contained in the films (embodied in their form and content). [21]

Thirdly, the subaltern classes become the target group of the movies, instead of the traditionally-desired public composed of urban, middle-class cinemagoers. This shift in the politics of reception is linked to the necessity for active viewers, not passive consumers. Ideally, through this process, the spectator should turn into the creator and critic.[22]

All the points raised by Third Cinema theoreticians/practitioners —two roles inseparable in the cases of Birri, Solanas, Getino, García Espinosa, Sanjinés and Rocha— are going to be found in Andean political filmmaking: the collaborative modes of production, the emphasis on the political usability of the product, the triggering of internal decolonisation and empowerment processes through filmmaking, the work for an awakened spectatorship, and even the desire for a proletarian film criticism. However, although Third Cinema theory suits the imperfect and radical practices of

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[21] See Julio García Espinosa, "For an Imperfect Cinema," 71-82; Solanas and Getino, "Towards a Third Cinema,"; and Jorge Sanjinés, "Problems of form and content in revolutionary cinema," in *New Latin American Cinema*, ed. Michael T. Martin (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1997), 62-70.
[22] See Fernando Birri, "Cinema and underdevelopment," 11.

Andean oppositional cinema, oddly enough, this framework has not been systematically applied to its research. Thus, this is one of the gaps I intend to fill through this thesis.

With regard to why the well-suited framework of Third Cinema has been under-used, the reasons are different in the two national contexts. In the Bolivian case, just as the production of cinema in Bolivia is scarce, film history, theory, and criticism are also not abundant. And due to the amount of space dedicated to Jorge Sanjinés film scholarship in the country could be qualified as Sanjinés-centric. For decades, cinema in Bolivia has been synonymous with Jorge Sanjinés, for a series of reasons. Firstly, he was a trailblazing film theoretician. His *Teoría y práctica de un cine junto al pueblo* (Theory and practice of a cinema with the people) was the first important volume published on Bolivian cinema and an instant classic, which instead of encouraging reflection on national cinema has almost had a deterrent or paralysing effect in the long term, as I will explain later in this chapter.[23]

As for the Peruvian case, film history, theory, and criticism have been written, for the most part, by white middle-class male cinephiles. This is usually accepted without interrogation in the country. However, some evidence shows that the historiographical paradigm established by these cinephiles, when adopted uncritically by historians, has resulted in the marginalisation and biased interpretation of Andean-Peruvian filmic production.

The majoritarian tendency, which is to use auteurist and formalist approaches, has shaped the narrative in a way that marginalises many core participants and practices, and expunges from history the decolonising processes which have been undertaken. I will address the particularities of both national histories soon, but first I

[23] Except for Alfonso Gumucio Dagron, who went on to develop a comprehensive practice as film scholar and a progressive specialisation in popular communication.

will proceed to justify what I qualify as “oppositional” and “Andean” in the filmmaking practices studied in this thesis.

1.2. Nomenclature Choices

Why oppositional?

The production of political films in Latin America is often referred to by different labels, such as militant, revolutionary, third, oppositional, or political intervention cinema. I have chosen to use the term "oppositional filmmaking," building on Julianne Burton's nomenclature, which highlights a focus on the emancipatory conditions of the production and the reception of this cinematic practice. In her article "Film Artisans and Film Industries in Latin America, 1956–1980: Theoretical and Critical Implications of Variations in Modes of Filmic Production and Consumption," she emphasizes how "use value" or political usefulness was the principal objective of oppositional cinematic projects. This type of value was prioritised above artistic or monetary value, which are the focus in other modes of production.[24] I would add that the political use encompassed all the stages of the cinematic process and was not limited to reception.

Moreover, the term "oppositional" allows me to bridge the gap and to encompass the two different historical periods (1960s and 1970s, and 1980s and 1990s) and the two separate national contexts (Bolivian and Peruvian) that I address in this thesis. In these three decades (from the end of the 1960s to the end of the 1990s), the rhetorical strategies of the films were forced to change, due to the transformation of political and economic conditions. Nevertheless, there were continuities in the filmmakers' objectives, which are easily traceable through the

[24] See Julianne Burton, "Film Artisans and Film Industries in Latin America, 1956–1980: Theoretical and Critical Implications of Variations in Modes of Filmic Production and Consumption," in *New Latin American Cinema*, ed. Michael T. Martin (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1997), 180.

persistence of modes of production, avenues of distribution, and use of political cinema across the decades and across the permeable Andean border. Consequently, "oppositional filmmaking" works as a useful umbrella term to characterise all those practices, from the strictly militant to the more broadly social, derived from the evolution of the political and economic contexts that I proceed to describe briefly.

The so-called "long 1960s," a period of common epochal characteristics that extended into the mid-1970s, was characterized by a radical cinematographic militancy founded on the hope that revolutionary political change was within reach. This optimism was based on a series of successful anti-imperialist events that took place at a tri-continental level: the Cuban Revolution (1959), Algerian independence (1962), and the American defeat in Vietnam (1975). What happened instead of a global revolution, however, was a vicious counter-revolutionary attack on a continental level called Operation Condor, implemented in the 1970s. This plan consisted of a series of intelligence operations coordinated among South American dictatorial governments, working in close collaboration with the US government and the CIA. The goal was to stop Latin American leftist insurgencies in any form, from legitimate governments such as that of Salvador Allende in Chile to guerrilla movements such as the Montoneros in Argentina or the Tupamaros in Uruguay.[25]

Operation Condor resulted in widespread atrocities: tens of thousands of people tortured, killed, disappeared, and illegally imprisoned. As a result of State-sanctioned terrorism, different strata of society, especially younger generations who once dreamed of changing the economic, political, and social paradigm, became demoralized and demobilized. During the 1980s, as an immediate continuation of

[25] See J. Patrice McSherry, "Tracking the Origins of a State Terror Network: Operation Condor," *Latin American Perspectives* 29, no. 1 (January 2002): 38-60.

political repression, neoliberal economic policies were imposed continent-wide. The economic doctrine of the Washington Consensus and its enforced policies subjugated the peoples of Latin America more efficiently than armies had in the previous decade.[26] Consequently, the possibility of implementing an economic and political alternative to capitalism, seemingly promised by earlier, anti-imperialist successes, seemed to vanish.

Film production faced similar challenges. In the 1960s and 1970s, Latin American oppositional cinema searched for ways to weaponise cinema, but from the 1980s onward the revolution was a lost dream, and filmmaking became less partisan and more reflective. But throughout, filmmakers never abandoned their political and social orientation, and over this forty-year period, urban middle-class filmmakers continued to make oppositional films with, and for, the subaltern groups.

Why Andean?

Traditionally, film researchers have not put in place pan-Andean perspectives, situating instead their work within the national or continental contexts. However, the Andes mountain range has been historically a space of cultural and commercial circulation. As a result, the national and transnational cinematic practices addressed in this thesis were motivated by this lively circuit (the comings and goings of film practitioners between

[26] The Washington Consensus was a set of economic policy recommendations imposed on developing countries during the 1980s by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, and U.S. Department of the Treasury. These organisations offered advice, usually attached to huge loans conditioned to the application of structural adjustment programs. They also fostered the reduction of state involvement. These neoliberal packages produced at the end of the decade the deprotection of an enormous part of the population in Latin American countries and the incrementation of their inequalities.

neighbouring countries were always in place, and still are) and sometimes by the pan-Andean agenda of the filmmakers, which is more cultural than political.

However, it is crucial to note that in highly centralised political systems, such as the Peruvian and Bolivian ones, the thematic and formal Andean component in their cinemas is acutely diverse. Bolivia is a country where the Andean is hegemonic, since the centres of economic and political power have traditionally been, and continue to be, in the highlands of the country. The seat of government is the city of La Paz (Chuquiago Marka in Aymara), located at 3,600 meters altitude, and situated in a strategic place or transit point within the extended Andean axis. In Peru, however, the capital, Lima, with its enormous demographic and symbolic weight, is located on the coast, over one thousand kilometres away from Cusco, the ancient capital of the Inca empire. The power in Peru is mainly of Hispanic origin. Bolivia, on the other hand, with a percentage of indigenous population over 40%, is much more mestizo. However, in Peru, the mountain region has a significant cultural weight in the country too and, in consequence, the Andean themes —especially the conflicted relationship between the city and the countryside—are incorporated into many Peruvian cinematic narratives.

Moreover, it is necessary to acknowledge the disparity in Bolivia and Peru's political developments during the period covered by this thesis (from the end of the 1960s to the end of the 1990s) that translated broadly into their national film developments, from the legal frameworks to the themes of the films. Peru, from 1968 to 1975, was under a populist military regime led by General Juan Velasco Alvarado. This progressive authoritarian government developed several policies in alliance with the peasantry and the working class. Meanwhile, in Bolivia, the brief progressive regime of another military leader, General Juan José Torres (1970–71), was followed by the fascist military regime of General Hugo Banzer (1971–77), which harshly retaliated

against progressive sectors of the Bolivian population. Conditions changed for Bolivia when, in 1982, after the general mobilization of the population, democracy was restored, and a period of relative peace began. During the same period, and by way of contrast, in Peru a bloody internal conflict began in 1980 and lasted until 2000.

Notwithstanding the differences in the respective scenarios, it becomes useful to frame as Andean the transnational practices of political cinema in Bolivia and Peru, between the 1960s and the 1990s, in order to point out that both nation-states share a common cultural substratum that stems from their pre-Hispanic heritage and from their colonial past. Moreover, a distinct advantage to the use of the concept *Andean cinema* is that it not only acknowledges the shared physical and cultural landscape but also speaks to a transnational circuit of cinema practitioners and practices between Bolivia and Peru, including the pan-Andean ideas and feelings that nurtured these exchanges. Hence, the term itself is signalling a new framework of understanding and new possible avenues of research.[27]

Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge that *Andean cinema* does not exist as well-established category (although Andean Studies is a strong sub-field within Latin American Studies). In the global imaginary, *Andean cinema* often seems to be a concept employed to define the cinemas of the central Andes: Bolivia, Peru, and Ecuador. A paradigmatic example in English is the chapter entitled "Andean Images" that John King dedicates to these countries in his book *Magical Reels. A History of Cinema in Latin America.*[28] Obviously, Bolivia, Peru, and Ecuador are Andean countries, but so are Chile, Argentina, Colombia, and Venezuela, although they are not commonly

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[27] I address some of these collaborations and mutual influences between the Cusco School and Ukamau in Isabel Seguí, "Cine-Testimonio: Saturnino Huillca, estrella del documental revolucionario peruano" [Cine-Testimony: Saturnino Huillca, Peruvian Revolutionary Documentary's Star], *Cine Documental* 13 (2016): 54–87.

[28] John King, "Andean Images: Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru," in *Magical Reels. A History of Cinema in Latin America* (London/New York: Verso, 1990), 189-206.

defined as Andean, due to the specificity of their national cinemas.[29] When using a category, in the way in which King or I do, there is always a lurking uncertainty as to whether or not the categorisation also contains within it elided Orientalist or exoticising connotations. However, using the denomination *Andean cinema* to refer to Peruvian and Bolivian cinemas is not unique to Western scholars. For example, in 2015 Julio Noriega and Javier Morales published the edited volume *Cine Andino*.[30] In the introduction, the editors propose the formation of a discipline for the study and analysis of audiovisual materials with an Andean theme.[31] However, the book does not live up to these expectations, resulting in a compilation of papers on different aspects of Peruvian and Bolivian national cinemas, with no transnational perspective.

To conclude, although it is not one of the primary intentions of this thesis to contribute substantially to the field of Andean studies, or to taxonomise a sub-field, I argue that it is necessary to make progress towards a broader understanding of the transnational aspects of the cinematic practices undertaken through the porous Andean border; and, for that purpose, the umbrella term *Andean cinema* has a utility. Finally, to clarify how the term *Andean* cinema is being employed here, I qualify as Andean those films produced in the Andean regions of Bolivia, Peru and Ecuador. This includes those located far away from the mountain range (such as the city of Lima or the Bolivian rainforest) but in which Andean subjects (bearers of the Andean cosmovision) are the protagonists. Moreover, I identify as 'Andean' the women filmmakers whose work I

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[29] In a purely geographical sense, it would be more accurate, perhaps, to refer to the "central Andean" cinema. However, while, in a global conception, Andean is synonymous with Peru, Bolivia, and Ecuador, while "northern Andean" is not equivalent to Colombia or to Venezuela; and neither is "southern Andean" to Argentina and Chile. For that reason, saying central Andean would be unnecessary or redundant.

[30] The origin of this volume was a session called "Andean Cinema" held at the South-eastern Conference of the Society for Amazonian and Andean Studies, at the University of Central Florida in 2013.

[31] Julio Noriega Bernuy and Javier Morales Mena, "Introducción" in *Cine Andino* (Lima: Pakarina Ediciones, Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, 2015), 9.

analyse here because they are Bolivian and Peruvian nationals, and the location of their films is Andean or directly informed by the Andean world.

1.3. National Film Histories

Sanjinés-centrism in Bolivia

A very early quotation by Carlos Mesa Gisbert serves as a case in point for what I choose to call Sanjinés-centrism:

> The irruption of Jorge Sanjinés in Bolivian cinema is truly decisive. With his presence, he will change the history of our cinema and the approach that until his appearance had been given to it. It has also given rise to the Ukamau "phenomenon" as a group presence that is placed meteorically among the highlights of the New Latin American Cinema, elevating Sanjinés himself to the top of the great auteurs of the continent.[32]

Mesa's statement appears in the introduction to the first edited volume ever devoted to Bolivian cinema, *Cine Boliviano: del realizador al crítico* (Bolivian Cinema: From the filmmaker to the critic), published in 1979.[33] His introductory text is, indeed, the first attempt at a short history of Bolivian cinema. Hence, it is remarkable not only for how the author appraises Sanjinés but also for the fact that one-third of the essay is devoted to him. This quotation also illustrates the contradictory way in which Sanjinés and the Ukamau group have been historicised. There is an insistence on the

[32] Carlos Mesa, "Intento de aproximación al cine boliviano," in *Cine boliviano: del realizador al crítico* (La Paz: Gisbert, 1979), 38. All translations are my own unless stated otherwise.
[33] In this volume, the historian and critic gathers essays from filmmakers and critics (Pedro Susz, Francisco Aramayo, Luis Espinal, Beatriz Palacios and Jorge Sanjinés), interviews with filmmakers (Sanjinés and Antonio Eguino) and other materials such as filmographies of authors and film indexes.

exceptionality of Sanjinés "the auteur," and the group is described as the step or pedestal on which Sanjinés' personality is surmounted.

This type of description is at odds with the interpretation offered by Sanjinés about the work and objectives of the Ukamau group. A good example is *Teoría y práctica de un cine junto al pueblo*. This book, also published in 1979, contains previously published and also unpublished texts by him, and other items such as testimonies of audiences (collected by Beatriz Palacios), storyboards and pictures. One of the most influential essays contained in the book is "Problems of Form and Content in Revolutionary Cinema,"[34] which addresses pre-eminently the issues of collective work and poses auteurist traditions as a problem for a revolutionary cinema.[35] According to Sanjinés, a change was needed. He argues that "with a change in the relations of creation comes a change in the content, and in parallel, a change in the form."[36] In this quotation, Sanjinés marks a priority order to undertake Ukamau's all-encompassing challenge: firstly, changing the production practices (relations of creation); secondly, the content, and in parallel, the form.

However, there has been an overwhelming interest in researching the formal aspects of Ukamau's contribution, yet very little study has been conducted regarding the change in the production culture or "relations of creation," and even less in alternative distribution and exhibition practices. Unfortunately, a focus on formal aspects leads, almost inescapably, to auteurist readings of the product, consciously or unconsciously channelling Eurocentric concepts of artistic genius.

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[34] Jorge Sanjinés, "Problems of Form and Content in Revolutionary Cinema," 62-70. First published in the Colombian journal *Ojo al Cine* 5, in 1976.
[35] In the English translation published in Martin's book, the Spanish word *autor* (author) has been replaced by "screenwriter." In my opinion that is a bad translation choice, which subverts the original meaning.
[36] Jorge Sanjinés, "Problems of Form and Content in Revolutionary Cinema", 63.

An added problem is that, before there was any external commentary on Ukamau's work, the group was already reflecting on it and Sanjinés writing about it.[37] The quantity of available texts from Sanjinés about Ukamau's cinema has made him the principal source for the research of the films. Consequently, in the public gaze, his role as ideologue turned him into the single author. Also, it is difficult for those interested in Ukamau —journalists, scholars, critics, or the general public— to escape from the mesmerising interpretation he offers of their filmmaking practice. Like the snake biting its tail, one approaches Ukamau films with Sanjinés' texts in mind; and this fact conditions the experience, confining it on one side, and steering it towards a particular direction on the other.

Moreover, undeniably, Sanjinés is a great seducer: his rhetoric, the theatrical framing of his own life through almost mythical stories, his aura of intangibility; his practically eremitical concealment, which for some is a product of pure paranoia, while for others is justified by the severely repressive times which he had to endure. All of the above have made him a legendary character. So, the challenge is to approach the work of a cinematic collective that is overshadowed by the director. But his shadow looms not only over Ukamau. Sanjinés' enormous symbolic weight within the history of Bolivian cinema and the magnification of his figure, mainly due to international recognition, has had negative consequences in a culturally colonised country and among its cultural elites. The character of the gigantic patriarch has made it almost impossible for any Bolivian filmmaker of his generation and of the following ones to escape his influence or avoid comparisons.

As a case in point, in 2015, I attended a panel on Bolivian cinema at the Bolivian Studies Association conference, held biennially at the Bolivian National Archive in

[37] For instance, "Problems of Form and Content in Revolutionary Cinema" was published in 1976.

Sucre. Both, the panel (all men) and the audience (mostly men) were members of a new generation of filmmakers and critics. It struck me that in the discussion of the new practices of Bolivian cinema, the speakers and the public repeatedly referred to Jorge Sanjinés from a position somewhere between fatigue and veneration. That experience added to the many hours of conversation with Bolivian filmmakers, historians and critics I have had during the years of this research; and all of which leads me to conclude that their feelings towards Jorge Sanjinés are often magnified, and are, I would say, excessive. This excess could be avoided by tackling the asymmetries of power that motivate the creation of icons, and also by avoiding allegedly aseptic textual approaches to filmmaking. To keep Sanjinés in an isolated place, subject to devotion or resentment, is deceiving. He undoubtedly deserves a position of importance, but one which is embedded in complex collaborative processes, alongside other partakers whose contribution was also fundamental, as I am going to show in this thesis by addressing the figures of Beatriz Palacios, María Barea and Domitila Chungara.

Peruvian-Andean Film History written from Lima

In Peru, film history, theory, and criticism have been written, for the most part, by white middle-class male cinephiles. Most of these film critics turned historians were members of the editorial board of the film journal *Hablemos de Cine* (Let's Talk About Cinema), that published its first issue on February 1965 and was in place until 1986. The founders were four *limeño* (based in Lima) university students, Isaac León Frías, Federico de Cárdenas, Juan Bullitta, and Carlos Rodríguez Larraín. They met at the cine-club of the Catholic University of Lima and immediately created a lively affinity group.

The editorial board of *Hablemos de Cine* — a journal that, as said, was in place continuously for more than twenty years—were responsible for the formation of the Peruvian film canon, and consequently for shaping public tastes, at least the medium and high-brow ones. Moreover, the members of the board were not only film critics, they became film professors in the scarce university modules of film studies; and they are in addition the authors of the few compilations of Peruvian film history that have been published.

The *hablemistas* have been unwilling or unable to separate their role as film critics from their public duty as historians and teachers. Their influence has been deep and pervasive. The most common way to approach Peruvian cinema, in a first instance, is reading the seminal works by Ricardo Bedoya, and Isaac León Frías's chapters in groundbreaking compilations of Latin American Cinema such as Guy Hennebelle and Alfonso Gumucio-Dagron's *Les Cinemas de l'Amerique Latine,* or his regular contributions to international film guides (*Variety* or *The Guardian*). [38]

Due to this monopolistic situation, their particular approach has prevailed internally and has also reached abroad. A case in point is Ricardo Bedoya's book *100 años de Cine en el Perú: Una Historia Crítica* (100 years of Cinema in Peru: A Critical Story). This book is probably the most referenced and authoritative volume for investigators of Peruvian cinema to date. However, the title itself indicates what kind of product the volume is: the history of Peruvian cinema made by a critic and a cinephile. Moreover, the author makes it explicit in the introduction:

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[38] Ricardo Bedoya's most notable publications include: *100 años de cine en el Perú: Una historia crítica*, (Lima, Universidad de Lima, 1992); *Un cine reencontrado: diccionario ilustrado de las películas peruanas* (Lima: Universidad de Lima, 1997); *El cine silente en el Perú* (Lima: Universidad de Lima, 2009); and *El cine sonoro en el Perú* (Lima: Universidad de Lima, 2009), and in collaboration with Isaac León Frías: *Ojos bien abiertos el lenguaje de las imágenes en movimiento* (Lima: Universidad de Lima, 2003). Isaac León Frías publications include: *El Nuevo Cine Latinoamericano de los años sesenta. Entre el mito político y la modernidad fílmica* (Lima: Universidad de Lima, 2013) and *Tierras bravas. Cine peruano y latinoamericano* (Lima: Universidad de Lima, 2014).

> I have been carried away by the passion of evaluating and comparing characteristic of the critic, even better, of the cinephile, rather than by the prudence of the historian who prefers that the passing of time refines his perspectives and appease his opinions (...) the omissions or perhaps inaccuracies contained in exposure are my responsibility, as well as the value judgments that I emit that are expressions of personal tastes, and carry with them the manifestation of my preferences and perhaps prejudices, affinities, discrepancies or concordances with the sensibilities expressed in this or that film.[39]

An indispensable text to understand the dominant position of the *hablemistas* in the creation of Peruvian film culture is Jeffrey Middents's groundbreaking book *Writing National Cinema. Film Journals and Film Culture in Peru*. He explains that the name of the journal itself exposes the formalist tendencies of the editorial board: "To talk about cinema (hablar de cine), particularly in the mid-1960s, meant to privilege the formal structural elements intrinsic to cinema —the mise-en-scène—over all other aspects referenced by a particular film."[40] This is a trend that the French critics at *Cahiers du Cinéma* made fashionable, and was imitated by colonised young intellectuals around the world. After 1968, *Cahiers* became a Marxist journal; however, *Hablemos de Cine* persevered in their rather formalist editorial line.

Apart from the obsession with mise-en-scène, the other substantial fixation of these young critics was "film quality." This notion, as well as other related ambiguous concepts such as "taste," have been defined and measured by privileged gate-keepers

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[39] Ricardo Bedoya, *100 años de cine en el Perú: Una historia crítica* (Lima, Universidad de Lima, 1992), 16.
[40] Jeffrey Middents, *Writing National Cinema. Film Journals and Film Culture in Peru* (Lebanon: University Press of New England, 2009), 1.

since the Renaissance, steadily creating the aesthetic hierarchies of high culture.[41] This mode of production of taste usually tends to take the form of a canon; a list of top cultural products that should be universally acknowledged because of their quality. 'Canon' means 'rule', and all canons are based on exclusion. In the 20th century, the boundaries between high and low culture were contested, and an entire world of new aesthetic paradigms replaced the old ones. But, somehow, a canon always remained in place in most of the arts. And cinema as a new art in search of legitimacy immediately established its own canon(s).

One of the principal problems of the editorial line of *Hablemos de Cine*, and its sub-products such as reference books and university syllabuses, was their unapologetic Western-influenced cinephilia. In the opinion of Jeffrey Middents, the French *politique des auteurs* was so important for these Peruvian critics "that they were looking desperately for someone to fulfil their ideals."[42] In a sort of Pirandellian search, the *hablemistas* desired a Peruvian *auteur*, in order to legitimise their national project. Finally, in the late 1970s, they found one among them, Francisco Lombardi.[43] Not by chance, Lombardi has been for many years, the only Peruvian acclaimed director, defined by Peter H. Rist in his *Historical Dictionary of South American Cinema* as "The best-known Peruvian born film director," [44] until the rise to international art film stardom of Claudia Llosa.

Before that, a very different, non-authorial cinematic production, in place in Peru from the mid-1950s, had achieved certain exposure abroad. The documentarists of the *École de Cuzco* (members of the Cusco School were Manuel and Víctor Chambi,

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[41] As Pierre Bourdieu analysed in *Distinction. A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984), originally published in France in 1979.
[42] Jeffrey Middents, *Writing National Cinema*, 53.
[43] Ibid, 53.
[44] Peter H. Rist, "Francisco Lombardi" in *Historical Dictionary of South American Cinema* (Plymouth: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), 372.

Eulogio Nishiyama, Luis Figueroa and César Villanueva) had been internationally recognized by prominent voices such as the French film historian George Sadoul (who gave them that name) or John Grierson, who saw in them the authenticity of a first-hand account, far from the paternalist representations of the Andean region made by foreign filmmakers. But, for the *limeño* critics of *Hablemos de Cine*, all these Andean developments were regarded as something amateurish or imperfect.[45] They were daydreaming of another kind of cinema, in Jeffrey Middents words "the editors at *Hablemos de Cine* believed they had a duty to educate the viewing public, to craft high-quality, aesthetically oriented Peruvian films."[46]

In 1977, the release of two Andean-centered feature films marks a new beginning for the Andean filmic production in the country. These are *Los perros hambrientos* (The starving dogs) by the producer María Barea and the director Luis Figueroa (historic member of the Cusco School), and *Kuntur Wachana* (Where the condors are born) by the producer Pilar Roca, and the also *cusqueño* (born in Cusco) and communist director Federico García Hurtado. At that point, the *hablemistas* coined and started using the category "peasant cinema" (cine campesino) systematically to refer to the films made outside of Lima, mostly Andean-centered movies.

This improvised but enduring definition has proved a problematic analytical category because it is inaccurate. The Peruvian reality is more complex and not so dichotomic. The supposed campesino filmmakers were also inhabitants of the same city, Lima, and the scenery of these films was often urban, but regionally urban, rather than

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[45] Ricardo Bedoya in the chapter "Manuel Chambi y los documentales del Cusco," written for Paulo Antonio Paranagua's volume *Cine Documental en América Latina,* affirms that Chambi, and in general the documentalists from Cusco, forgot that the correct (vigorous and beautiful) sequential alineation of the footage was the *conditio sine qua non* to achieve film's solvency. Which is a very serious accusation to make by someone who has been held responsible for the divulgation of this cinema, because Paranagua's volume is the first —and was for a long time, the only— authoritative academic text on Latin American documentary. Ricardo Bedoya, "Manuel Chambi y los documentales del Cusco" in *Cine Documental en América Latina,* ed. Paulo Antonio Paranaguá (Madrid: Cátedra, 2003),153.

[46] Jeffrey Middents, *Writing National Cinema*, 70.

metropolitan. Finally, although the *hablemistas* themselves admitted that the term was probably all too schematic, they were constantly referring to the cinema produced outside Lima as *campesino*, to the point of including the inaccurate category in the history books which they were publishing —though sometimes with reluctance or within quotation marks.[47]

Most probably the crude dichotomy between an urban and a *campesino* cinema was rooted in the prejudices of the critics based on unconscious class and race biases, characteristic of the *limeño* middle-classes. The filmmakers Figueroa and García Hurtado, the principal representatives of the *campesino* current in the eyes of the *hablemistas*, protested this typecasting denomination and interpretation of their work, but without success, because the coiners of the term were gatekeepers (editors of the only authoritative film journal in Peru) at the same time.[48]

Nowadays, the *hablemistas* still are, if not an oligarchy, a sort of aristocracy. They exemplify the challenges of this thesis, mainly of how to excavate hidden histories buried by the ways in which history/scholarship has been written to date: privileging nation states, men, auteur/artists, and formalism over process. However, I do not want

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[47] A case in point is the section titled "El llamado 'cine campesino'," (Literally, the so-called "cine campesino") in Bedoya, *100 Años de Cine en el Perú*, 208.

[48] The issue number 75 of *Hablemos de Cine* published in May 1982 is a case in point of what can be defined as an abuse of their role as gatekeepers of quality. In this issue, the section 'Peruvian Cinema' is integrally devoted to the filmmaker Federico García Hurtado, at that time the author of many short documentaries and three feature films: *Where the Condors are Born* (*Kuntur Wachana*, 1977) *Laulico* (1980) and *The Huayanay Case* (*El caso Huayanay*, 1981). The first part of the section is a lengthy interview with García, conducted by the most prominent members of the editorial board: Ricardo Bedoya, Federico de Cárdenas, Jose Carlos Huayhuaca, Reynaldo Ledgard and Isaac Léon Frías. The Peruvian critics make an examination of García's grammatical correctness. He fails the test. They prove García's "incoherent" use of cinematic language, with several examples. They criticise the use of elements from different genres, for instance, the use of melodramatic expressive means in a film that pretends to be political and testimonial. Moreover, they see contradictions in the narrative structure, constant aesthetic inconsistencies between the different parts of the movie, problems in the direction of actors, in the mise-en-scéne, and so on. In their opinion, the free use of any available expressive methods, which the filmmaker utilises, cannot be tolerated. Even more aggressive than this interview with Federico García is the article that follows in the same issue of *Hablemos de Cine,* by José Carlos Huayhuaca called "The dilemma between Language and Compromise: The Cinema of Federico García." In the introduction, Huayhuaca states the superiority of urban over *campesino* cinema, and accuses García of formal eclecticism and recommends him to start caring more about the cinematic form.

to imply that their work is dishonest. On the contrary, they are candid professionals, who never had a strategic approach to achieve the kind of power they hold. They were just a group of young friends —passionate cinephiles from privileged backgrounds— who just happened to be the very first who wrote about cinema in the racist and patriarchal Peruvian context. Furthermore, in Peru, there are counterpoints to their critical tendencies, such as the historiographic works by Giancarlo Carbone and Violeta Nuñez Gorriti, much less editorial and formalist and more based on oral history and archival research.[49]

In the current context, more voices of newer generations are slowly adding heterogeneity to film history and criticism in Peru, mostly in the case of non-fiction formats. These fresh takes are manifested through the curatorial work of John Campos, director of Transcinema Festival. Or the blog *Hablando de documental. Todo sobre documental peruano* (Talking about documentary. All about Peruvian documentary) by the documentary filmmaker and lecturer of visual anthropology, Mauricio Godoy, who is training new generations of students, many of them young women, who show interest in incorporating gender approaches to the research of Peruvian cinema.

[49] Giancarlo Carbone most notable publications are the collection of three volumes*: El cine en el Perú: 1887-1950, testimonios* (Lima: Universidad de Lima, 1991), *El cine en el Perú: 1950-1972, testimonios* (Lima: Universidad de Lima, 1993), and *El cine en el Perú. El cortometraje, 1972-1992* (Lima: Universidad de Lima, 2007). Violeta Núñez Gorriti has published *Cartelera Cinematográfica Peruana* 1940-1949 (Lima: Ediciones del autor, 2006). *El cine en Lima 1897 – 1929* (Lima: Ediciones del autor, 2011), and more recently the article "El cortometraje documental peruano 1972-1980" in the journal *Imagofagia* 12, 2015.

1.4. Feminist Frameworks/Methods Focused on Practices and Politics

This project, a feminist revision of Andean cinema history, aims to add up to the ongoing development of a comprehensive Latin American women's filmmaking scholarship. To compensate for the lack of specifically Latin American feminist film theory, I have used Anglo-Saxon feminist film theory (both in general and that which has referred specifically to Latin America). This particular framework not only has the benefit of showing us women but also of restoring the radical politics to an examination of Latin American political cinema from the end of the 1960s to the beginning of the 1990s.

Feminist film historiography, feminist production studies, and women's *testimonio* studies are political scholarly approaches to cultural practices. They present overlapping interests, but basically, they interrogate the power issues present in the modes of production. In order to be successful in unveiling what traditionally has been ignored by film studies (such as the off-text realm, distributed creativity and shared authorship, women's and subaltern contributions), these approaches have developed new sets of research questions and methodologies. However, they also showcase how the theoretical and the methodological are interdependent because research methodologies influence the way in which research questions are made and answered, conditioning the results and the final theoretical contributions.

The field of Latin American women's filmmaking is currently gathering momentum. Its good shape was partially materialised in the conference 'Latin American Women's Filmmaking,' held in University of London at the beginning of September 2017, of which I was part of the steering Committee and at which María Barea, the

protagonist of chapter three, was one of the guest directors. My contribution to the collective development of a Latin American women's filmmaking field has the particularity that is not motivated by an aesthetic search. B. Ruby Rich recently wrote that what justifies the creation of a Latin American Women's cinema "field of its own" is the existence of a mature corpus of work by female directors.[50] I argue that that reason is only one part of a more complex rationale. It is urgent to unearth not only directorial work but all women's contribution —from above and below the line, on and off screen. To do so, it is necessary to question labour and art hierarchies, and how they are narrated. Hence, one of the objectives of this thesis is apparent: unearthing hidden women participants in the Andean political cinema scene. Yet another is more complicated: finding and telling women's ways of producing cinematic life, in cycles that go from the first stages of any film process (such as fundraising) to its furthest activities (for instance, event organisation and audience assessment). The first is the act of naming, the second the act of valuing women's ways of doing, and it requires a paradigm shift.

Feminist economists propose a non-androcentric economic paradigm, at the heart of which lies the ways in which women care and share. To achieve equality in a system based on the sexual division of labour, it is crucial to ascribe value to those tasks traditionally considered feminine. These are overshadowed in the value scale of patriarchal societies, although they are fundamental for the generation and sustenance of daily life.[51] I propose to bring this approach to Andean cinema history. In consequence,

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[50] B. Ruby Rich, "Preface: performing the Impossible in Plain Sight" in *Latin American Women Filmmakers. Production, Politics, Poetics*, eds. Deborah Martin and Deborah Shaw (London: I. B. Tauris 2017), XV.

[51] See Marianne A. Ferber and Julie A. Nelson, *Beyond Economic Man: Feminist Theory and Economics* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993).

this thesis does not seek to claim the women analysed here as exceptional individuals, but to enhance their ordinary ability to provide for the existence of the projects, build inclusive and collaborative spaces, and focus on the needs of the collective to transform the existing conditions.

A particularly extraordinary genius is not the primary force behind political filmmaking activity in the Andes but, as we have seen in the previous section, collaborative practices are. Overall, for an all-encompassing critical feminist film historiography, it is necessary to subvert the verticality in the analysis, and to start looking for women's instrumental and sophisticated contribution. Patricia Zimmermann points it out, in the case of documentary, in her article "Flaherty's Midwives":

> Simply constructing new mythologies about repressed or forgotten documentary goddesses to replace old, patriarchal, dead Flaherty would fail to engage and dismantle these foundational myths and images. As historiography, that practice would merely create a competitive history rather than one that rethreads the very processes of historiography.[52]

Zimmermann's case study is the Flaherty Seminar, but the methodological shift she is proposing can be applied to the study of any cinematic activity. Moreover, it suits particularly well the analysis of marginal cinemas. This rethreading of the processes in which historiography is done, mirrors the rethreading conducted in oppositional filmmaking practices because it aims to overcome competitive approaches to the writing of history. It is neither an addition nor a competition; it is a subversion. The variety of instrumental labour that is going to be analysed in this thesis —producing, staging,

[52] Patricia Zimmermann, "Flaherty's Midwives," in *Feminism and Documentary*, eds. Diane Waldman and Janet Walker (Minneapolis/London: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 65.

distributing, disseminating and evaluating low budget films in non-industrial contexts—conveys the importance of women's participation in Andean oppositional cinema, and also their practical and ideological contribution, which is mingled because women's daily praxis is often a political intervention.

As said before, two major obstacles to the correct understanding of Latin American women cinematic practices and texts can be found: auteurism and Westernised approaches to film value. Moreover, both film theory and film practice of Latin American political cinema are conditioned by *Machismo-Leninismo*. As for auteurism, realising how are the actual processes of birth of cinematic products is understanding that only Athena was born directly from the head of a man (her father Zeus), the remainder of things are typically delivered through labour. The direct consequence of this realisation is questioning auteurist approaches to cinema history. In this sense, the longevity of auteurism within feminist film scholarship is disappointing. In a recent, article Priya Jaikumar notes:

> The feminist interrogation of authorship has to be considered in tandem with feminist investments in female authorship, just as non-Western interrogations of authorship must be considered in conjunction with their investment in non-Western authorship. Any critical examination of authorship must proceed from a grasp of why, despite feminist, deconstructive, black, Third World, and anticolonial criticisms of the concept since the 1960s, the idea of the author and the practice of auteurist criticism have endured in some guise.[53]

[53] Priya Jaikumar, "Feminist and Non-Western Interrogations of Film Authorship," in *The Routledge Companion to Cinema & Gender* (London and New York: Routledge, 2017), 206.

Disinvestment in female authorship, as Jaikumar's suggests, helps to understand the actual collaborative production practices of Latin American political cinema too, because it forces us to perceive the range of labour and the scope of its sexual division. It also helps the liberation from the impositions of the Westernised film criticism, which has created an aesthetic canon which marginalises those cinematic practices considered of inferior quality or less worthy of critical interest, such as collaborative video projects.

Another instrumental strand of the feminist paradigm shift is monitoring the consequences that cinephilia and fanboy cultures have in the conformation of canons and cinema histories. Noël Burch affirms that "From its origins, cinephilia is essentially a masculine passion. And not only because of its scopophilic dimension."[54] At the beginning of the 1990s, Burch warned against the perils of cinephilia as practised by the too-influential critics of *Cahiers du Cinema* (we have seen a case in point regarding a Peruvian film history written by critics in the previous section). Lúcia Nagib takes this opinion of Burch in her chapter "Beyond Difference: Female Participation in the Brazilian Film Revival of the 1990s," recently published in the book *Latin American Women Filmmakers*, edited by Deborah Martin and Deborah Shaw in 2017. Nagib asks for new theoretical tools and notes "(…) we need to posit the question of what the terms 'director' or 'filmmaker' actually mean and whether it would be productive to identify them with the author or auteur of a particular film."[55] Many of the ideas of Nagib's paper resonate with the contents of this thesis, but particularly with the idea of shared authorship. Nagib addresses the case of the Brazilian *Retomada* (the film revival in the 1990s). She also draws attention, in the Brazilian case, to a very typical Latin American

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[54] Noël Burch, *Revoir Hollywood. La nouvelle critique Anglo-Americaine* (Paris: Editions Nathan, 1993), 8.

[55] Lúcia Nagib, "Beyond Difference: Female Participation in the Brazilian Film Revival of the 1990s," in *Latin American Women Filmmakers. Production, Politics, Poetics*, eds. Deborah Martin and Deborah Shaw (London: I. B. Tauris 2017), 33.

phenomenon, the couple (personal and professional) of filmmakers, which is going to be analysed in chapters two and three.

In a chapter of the same volume, titled "Parando la olla documental: Women and Contemporary Chilean Documentary Film," Claudia Bossay and María Paz Peirano also situate the filmic production within a context of expanded or shared authorship. But moreover, they describe and characterise a female film culture of communal survival and solidarity. They link women's filmmaking practices with Latin American women's forms of resistance and rebellion.[56] This is a fundamental idea of this thesis. Like the Chileans, Peruvian and Bolivian women filmmakers were also rooted in specific cultures of resistance and they used political tools and strategies stemming from wider patterns of popular organisation in their filmmaking processes.

Scholarly contributions on women's filmmaking in the Andean scenario are rare. This fact stresses the need to conduct more research in Bolivia and Peru. In 1994, Elena Feder published a remarkable article "In the Shadow of Race: Forging Images of Women in Bolivian Film and Video."[57] Feder makes a detour through female participation in Bolivian cinema and video, pointing out most of its overshadowed figures. Her pitch in is fundamental. However, it is striking how she follows an auteurist approach that —in a paper devoted to gender in Bolivian film and video— foregrounds Jorge Sanjinés and overshadows Beatriz Palacios, referring to her just once as "a longtime producer and collaborator with Jorge Sanjinés."[58] Moreover, although she devotes four pages to the *The Clandestine Nation*, there is no mention to Palacios, its investigator and executive producer. We are going to see this pattern repeated

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[56] Claudia Bossay and María Paz Peirano, "Parando la olla documental: Women and Contemporary Chilean Documentary Film," in *Latin American Women Filmmakers. Production, Politics, Poetics*, eds. Deborah Martin and Deborah Shaw (London: I. B. Tauris 2017), 70-71.
[57] Elena Feder, "In the Shadow of Race: Forging Images of Women in Bolivian Film and Video," *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* Vol. 15, No. 1 (1994): 123-140.
[58] Ibid, 132.

throughout all the literature. The aim of chapter two is to reverse this situation, offering new findings that foreground the importance of Beatriz Palacios in the Ukamau group and adding value to available evidence which has been dismissed to date.

As for the Peruvian case, Sarah Barrow has recently contributed to Peruvian women's filmmaking scholarship with the chapter "Through Female Eyes: Reframing Peru on Screen." Here she addresses three very different filmmakers: Claudia Llosa, Marianne Eyde and Rosario García Montero, interrogating their potential influence on film policy, production, and funding, but also in criticism and spectatorship. In her final remarks, Barrow makes a crucial claim about the necessity of a strategy that would allow subaltern women to become filmmakers to speak for themselves.[59] The issue about the mediation conducted to the subaltern voice is going to be a constant interrogation throughout this thesis. Barrow is also undertaking a promising investigation on the Peruvian trailblazing filmmaker Nora de Izcue, focussing not only on her works but also on her role as a union leader and advocate. Barrow's research approach argues for the consideration of the totality of the participants and stakeholders, something particularly necessary in order to change the face of Andean cinema history.

Feminist Production Studies

Feminist production studies provide useful conceptual tools to make women visible. Particularly, the examination and questioning of imposed labour hierarchies that keep apart creative and non-creative work and impede the correct understanding of the

[59] Sarah Barrow, "Through Female Eyes: Reframing Peru on Screen," in *Latin American Women Filmmakers. Production, Politics, Poetics*, eds. Deborah Martin and Deborah Shaw (London: I. B. Tauris 2017), 63.

absence of hard boundaries in the actual workflows. In a very recent article Miranda Banks boldly affirms:

> Production studies is a feminist methodology. At its core, production studies often resist or complicates traditional power hierarchies, it has its origins in a nonbinary interdisciplinarity, and it has a capacity to highlight cultural inequities. Though there are production studies scholars who push back against, or simply ignore, the tradition of feminism within the study of cultures of media production, a genealogy of production studies reveals its deep affinities with feminist scholarship: a tradition of research by and about women, as well as core themes that resist top-down hierarchies, that highlight production at the margins, and that make visible hidden labor.[60]

This research fulfils every single point in the description made by Banks. It is by and about women, its core theme is power negotiation and the subversion of hierarchies, and sheds light on marginal production and overshadowed labour. However, the artisanal quality of the Andean mode of production's context makes it profoundly different from those industrial undertakings where production studies and more generally film studies, as a discipline, established their underpinnings. Hence, an important shift is to situate the research in the right scenario, far away from a structured, industrially-hierarchical logic. Andean filmmaking in the second half of the 20th century was characterised by an extreme poverty of means, which was compensated by the strong commitment of the participants in the filmic processes. All the partakers were essential because, due to the weakness of the material situation, the

[60] Miranda Banks, "Production Studies," *Feminist Media Histories* 4, no. 2 (Spring 2018): 157.

only force that took these projects forward was the engagement of the crews and the generosity of an extended support network.

Julianne Burton in "Film artisans and Film Industries in Latin America, 1956-1980" affirms that in Latin American oppositional filmmaking, procedures integrated all levels of the creative process instead of compartmentalizing them into discrete areas. In consequence, it is not possible to develop closed categories of production labour, as can be done in more industrialized systems because the line between above- and below-the-line crew members was blurred (although I would add this is not equivalent to a purely horizontal workflow). As for the means of production, these cinematic processes did not require large amounts of capital, expensive or complex infrastructure, equipment, studio sets, professional actors, or screenwriters.[61] That allowed for the production of films by communities of filmmakers on the grounds of mutual help.

Regarding women's participation, what can be said is that some tasks were feminized (for instance production management, casting, continuity, marketing, and distribution), although these tasks could have been carried out equally well by men. In general, the lack of structures forced all participants in the production to multitask with flexibility. But even so, it is possible to establish patterns, and above all—and this is one of the objectives of this thesis—to start naming unacknowledged production tasks commonly performed by women that have hovered under the historiographic radar.

A collaborative cinema was produced in this context, not only because there was a political intention behind this labour structure, but also because it was the only possible way to make films. Without the total commitment and voluntary work of those involved at all levels, then, the films would not exist. However, it is not possible to claim that even a purely horizontal collaborative cinema was being implemented.

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[61] Burton, "Film Artisans and Film Industries in Latin America, 1956–1980," 180.

Although these groups were intended to be emancipatory, or at least to create an emancipatory cinema, their structures still mirrored society at large, with charismatic leaders, internal hierarchies, and complex power relations within the crews that derived from broader social structures of colonial and patriarchal domination. Hence, the mediation conducted during the creative process should be troubled by the analysis of the power issues at stake.[62]

The first step towards a depatriarchalisation of the analysis of Latin political cinema would be to apply the motto "personal is political" —the foundational claim of radical feminism. Because, the systems that facilitated film production were based on personal relationships of friendship or kinship. Crew members did not operate in isolation. They were part of a broad mutual aid and solidarity network outside of any institutional context. Affinity, friendship, love, and sex bonds trace the Latin American oppositional cinema map. And within this structure, the heterosexual couple had a primary role that has so far been overlooked. Additionally, already complex familial, social, and national networks were further complicated by the advent of dictatorships that forced many filmmakers to go into exile. With these displacements, alliances and loving exchanges became transnational.

Personal relationships, regarded as a sensitive subject, have traditionally been considered only fit for gossip and are often overlooked in scholarly work on the history of Latin American film. However, in the context of its precarious mode of production, they cannot be a secondary consideration. Rather, they were the cornerstone of an artisanal film's feasibility. Perhaps in other modes of production with more stable industrial and financial structures, personal bonds of love, friendship, or kinship do not affect production in the same way. However, in the case of the Latin American

[62] Isabel Seguí, "Auteurism, *Machismo-Leninismo*, and Other Issues," 17.

oppositional cinema, they often had a direct impact on production. Emotions such as companionship, enthusiasm, and generosity could turn an impossible film project into a great success. Conversely, jealousy, betrayal, or abuse could turn a utopian project into a painful human experience.[63]

As for the women who participated in the projects with their partners, it is commonly (unconsciously) assumed that they performed auxiliary labour, offering the "natural" support that "every" wife should give to her husband in whatever walk of life. Consequently, the collaborative and creative work performed by these women, understood as a part of their domestic obligation, has been rendered invisible, as we have seen in the case of the female members of the crew of *Blood of the Condor*.

A pioneer scholar to address the topic of Latin American Women's production practices is Julia Lesage. In her article "Women Make Media Three Modes of Production," Lesage taxonomised the field. She addresses the three dominant modes of production undertaken by women filmmakers in Latin America: the independent production (exemplified by the work of the Chilean Valeria Sarmiento in exile); the collective production by urban middle-class filmmakers (taking as a case study the Colombian group Cine Mujer); and, the collective subaltern production (for which she uses the example of Nicaraguan Taller Popular de Video "Timoteo Velásquez").[64]

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[63] Dramatic ruptures in friendships and marriages played a very important role in the dissolution of Andean film groups. Personal problems usually mingled with accusations of improper economic management, and the oral histories are full of detailed accounts of these facts—shared off the record. Yet there are some written testimonies, such as: Rene Weber, "El grupo Chaski: una película sin *happy end*" (The Chaski Group: A Film Without a Happy End), *Butaca Sanmarquina* 1, no. 1 (1988): 22–24. See also Antonio Eguino's memoir *El cine según Eguino,* in which the Bolivian filmmaker makes passing reference to the problems that provoked the breaking up of the first Ukamau group, including fights between Sanjinés and Consuelo Saavedra during the filming of the unfinished *Los caminos de la muerte* (Roads of Death). Eguino notes: "There came a time when personal relationships were tense, there were arguments, shouts, disagreements. There was a constant tension between us. Jorge and his wife fought, that was the beginning of the break that came later." It is not clear if the last sentence refers to the separation of the couple formed by Saavedra and Sanjinés or the dissolution of the Ukamau group, or both. Fernando Martínez, *El cine según Eguino*, 60.

[64] Julia Lesage "Women Make Media Three modes of Production," in *The Social Documentary in Latin America*, ed. Julianne Burton (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1990), 315-347.

According to Lesage the vicinity between the filmmakers and their subjects is one of the main characteristics of the three modes of production. She also remarks that women move among these modes, as we shall see in this thesis too. So, we find a complex scenario of precarious collective enterprises impossible to grasp using exclusively textual formalist analysis. Furthermore, for the writing of her article Lesage credits a methodology based on structured interviews and also personal conversations with feminist media makers. A way of obtaining data based on personal connection and trust is key to a feminist research method.

Nevertheless, the work by a feminist production studies scholar that I am going to use in a most specific way is the excellent monograph by Erin Hill, *Never Done. A History of Women's Work in Media Production,* which although it focuses on Hollywood practices, has been a very useful text for my work due to her accurate description of the emotional labour undertaken by women in the studio system.[65] Hill coined the term "creative service" to describe, the "boss-secretary relationship" in the Hollywood studio era. This term describes a series of roles "cohering around their most essential shared function: serving creative work by subtracting all noncreative work from the process."[66] She affirms: "Workers in such roles aid the creative process by serving as a repository for all its unappealing tasks, details, and emotions."[67] Despite the obvious contextual difference, this term is utterly useful to describe the Latin American husband/director-wife/producer relationship. Two paradigmatic cases, Beatriz Palacios and María Barea, are addressed in chapters two and three.

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[65] Erin Hill, *Never Done. A History of Women's Work in Media Production* (New Brunswick, New Jersey and London: Rutgers University Press, 2016).
[66] Ibid, 134.
[67] Ibid, 133.

Most of the films addressed in this thesis are testimonial. A testimony is a political cultural device created collaboratively with the objective of unearthing untold stories, contesting official history, and intervening in the reality to change it. Any testimony is based on a pact of trust between speakers and listeners. As the psychiatrist Dori Laub and the literary scholar Shoshana Felman noted in their groundbreaking joint work, testimony is a place of encounter, which is useful and empowering for both parts. The act of speaking makes sense through the act of listening, with includes bearing the pain of the other and assume the responsibility of becoming a witness.[68] The enormously vast fields of witnessing, testimony and *testimonio* studies have interrogated the politics of enunciation and reception in a thorough way, which is not possible to summarise accurately within the limits of this section. Hence, I address only how they have enabled useful ways of thinking about the work and presence of the women in relation to the politics of film.

When talking about filmic testimonies I do not refer only to talking heads-type individual recollections. Testimony appears in several forms, from personal interviews to highly staged drama documentaries. If the format is wide, the scope of this re-storytelling is also broad, from the concrete denunciation of a specific massacre to the dissension of an entire value system. The characteristic that all of these forms have in common is that they showcase and denounce situations of exploitation and oppression in order to transform the audiences and to push them to act to change the status quo. This is because the main objective of filmic testimony is not only raising awareness or

[68] Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub, *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis and History.* 1st ed. (United Kingdom: Taylor & Francis, 1991), 57.

offering a fairer historical narrative but also transforming and affecting reality. As Leshu Torchin points out in *Creating the Witness*, the audiovisual political activity of witnessing compels the audiences to act in the world to change it.[69]

Witnessing or bearing witness is not about telling and receiving but about a landscape of activities and interactions. Andean political cinema is no exception. It was understood by its makers as a mass communication weapon or tool (depending on the decade) aimed at the transfiguration of the spectators. Frances Guerin and Roger Hallas affirm that "the agency of the material image (…) is grounded in the performative (rather than the constative) function of the act of bearing witness, material images do not merely depict the historical world, they participate in its transformation."[70] It is true that the images created by testimonial performers and allied filmmakers were aimed to transform the world, but what world? What sphere? The majority of the filmic testimonies I am going to refer to here were not primarily addressing distant urban middle-class leftist publics —the foreseeable audience of what Julia Lesage calls "Latin American solidarity films."[71] Conversely, their target audiences were the collectives of producers themselves, who used the films as a means of self-representation to educate or to empower their own ranks or to address other groups with similar experiences and concerns. For that, the dissemination from bottom to bottom was primarily sought. There was, of course, some interest in reaching other audiences — to raise awareness or to open the doors to a possible generation of resources— but these cinematic products were not intended for theatrical consumption by regular cinema-goers or cinephiles

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[69] Leshu Torchin, *Creating the Witness. Documenting Genocide on Film, Video, and the Internet* (Minneapolis/London: University of Minnesota Press, 2012), 5.
[70] Frances Guerin and Roger Hallas, *The Image and the Witness. Trauma, Memory, and Visual Culture* (London/New York: Wallflower Press, 2007), 4.
[71] Julia Lesage, "Feminist Documentaries: Finding, Seeing and Using Them," in *The Documentary Film Book*, ed. Brian Winston (London: BFI, Palgrave McMillan, 2013), 268.

(even the solidarity type). They were envisioned to meet a political function of consciousness-raising among the subaltern audiences.

Latin American Women's Testimonio

Andean women filmmakers were committed to the creation of witnessing publics mostly in the proletarian public sphere. Evidence of this activity of participative transformation through audiovisual witnessing is going to be discussed in all the chapters of this thesis. In the particular case of Beatriz Palacios, she performed this activity programmatically, systematically, and throughout her entire career, with a coherence that only a few Latin American political filmmakers have achieved. Domitila Chungara's literary testimony is an undisputable part of the canon of the genre; however, her first testimony is cinematic. As for María Barea, all of her works, even in fiction, draw from testimonial research.

In this genre, the narrators commonly are illiterate or semi-illiterate subjects, members of marginalised collectives, who would not have the cultural capital needed to create standardised cultural devices, such as commercially publishable books or films. To that end, these speakers, and the group they represent, establish punctual or long-lasting alliances with organic intellectuals, who put their cultural capital at the service of their cause, for shared political objectives. Hence, in a Latin American *testimonio* there are often four types of participants. First, the first-person speaker or *testimoniante*. Second, the marginalised group that she represents. Third, the intellectual mediator (writer, filmmaker, journalist), who owns the cultural capital that allows them to create a reproducible device that can be disseminated. And, finally, the audiences (in a range

from the oppressed group itself to distant publics) who have a necessarily active role to play.

The literary genre of Latin American *testimonio* was institutionalised by the Cuban Casa de las Americas and legitimised in the West by leftist American academics such as John Beverley, George Yudice, Marc Zimmerman, and many others. It is remarkable that the majority of editors or compilers of Latin American *testimonio* were women, as well as the vast majority of speakers. Caroline Boyce notes that the interest of women in this narrative form may be, among other things, because:

> Oral life story clearly exists in that same liminal space between the public and the private, between oral and written discourses. In its intertextuality, its open-ended, dialogic form, then, the oral life-story form functions explicitly to facilitate empowerment for women who historically have been silenced, whose words are not accepted as having legitimacy in the realm of accepted public discourse where formal autobiography resides.[72]

Women mastered the art of the testimonial encounter due to their trust building capacity. Trust is the first step in the testimonial contract to be established between the narrator and the mediator. Boyce describes it as "the critical ingredient in having the stories told at all."[73] This connection can be facilitated by the sharing of common elements such as gender identity, class, nationality, language, and political objectives. The feminist *testimonio* scholar and practitioner Margaret Randall explained how the

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[72] Carole Boyce Davies, "Collaboration and the Ordering Imperative in Life Story Production," in *De/Colonizing the Subject: the politics of gender un women's autobiography*, eds. Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992), 15.
[73] Ibid, 12.

female practice of *testimonio* meant a paradigm shift in the field of memory, incorporating female subjectivity and priorities:

> It was not a matter of remembering more. It was a matter of remembering differently, unfettered by what men have deemed worthy of recording, unaltered by male perception, uncluttered by the male system of rewards for achievement according to their values. We were bringing back our own voice. We learned to listen.[74]

The basic notion that a testimonial is the result of a dialectic act, brings us to another key feature of this practice, which matches traditionally feminine ways of doing politics: its collective nature. The first-person singular 'I' talks on behalf of a first-person plural 'we'. [75] The cooperative generation of content that defines *testimonio* forces the interrogation of its production under the light of expanded authorship. The production of testimonies is a site of encounter and negotiation, which is emotional and political, simultaneously. The resultant cultural devices (books, movies, plays, radio programs, comics…) are traces of a process and, at the same time, tangible results of a significant cross-class encounter produced between two or more individuals. Behind the participants in the testimonial pact, there is a range of motivations: from political utilitarianism to solidarity, from admiration to creative interest, from opportunism to love, and most probably a mix of them all.

Latin American women's *testimonio* is also processual. The study of *testimonio* is inextricably linked to the context of production and reception. However, the

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[74] Margaret Randall, "Female Practice in Journalism," *Latin American Perspectives* 18 (1991): 106.
[75] See John Beverley, "The Margin at the Center: On testimonio (Testimonial Narrative)," in *Modern Fiction Studies* 35:1 (spring 1989): 23; or Lynda Marin "Speaking out Together: Testimonials of Latin American Women," *Latin American Perspectives* 18.3 (Summer 1991): 53.

complexity of this processes was concealed during the 1970s and 1980s, due to the political agenda of most editors of testimonies, which led to the absolute starring role of the narrator, for the sake of greater service to 'the people' and higher appearance of authenticity. In those cases, the stylistic devices were used to erase any trace of authorship, or self-representation, by the compiler/editor/mediator. The editors themselves came to realise this mistake over the years, but, at the time, the legitimacy of the mediation function led to a series of controversies related to truth and representation.[76] In this research, I foreground the act of mediation of testimonies conducted by Andean women filmmakers as well as the creative participation of collectives of subaltern organised women in cinematic testimonies, highlighting the complexity of the processes behind these creations and the power issues at stake.

Another contentious issue regarding *testimonio* is whether it could be termed as a form of feminist collective writing/performing. Certain feminist agenda and practices share many characteristics with the continental testimonial project. As Nancy Saporta notes:

> […] both [*testimonio* and feminism] include theory based on and grounded in the reality of a people who are breaking silences; both include theory for those who envision a future distinct from their past oppression; both use discourse who give voice to many others in the same situation; and both influence and are influenced by people who, with their new consciousness as a political subject,

[76] The editors of 1970s and 1980s testimonies are now more willing to acknowledge their co-authorial role because they are not under the pressure of the political urgency that, in the past, pushed them to hide it. Especially women, whose tendency was trying to disappear as creative authors and show themselves just as a necessary tool at the service of popular movements. In fact, the intellectual women responsible for the success of the continental testimonial project did not seem to realise that, while trying to give voice to the voiceless, they were voiceless too. In an interview that I conducted with Moema Viezzer, the compiler of the written *testimonio* of Domitila Chungara, she looks critically at her past intent to disappear behind the voice of the narrator (MoemaViezzer, email interview with Isabel Seguí, 2014).

> make evident the relationship between the personal and the political in a historic moment when the subject sees herself/themselves as an integral part of the collective process. [77]

However, it is highly problematic to define the testimonial practices of Latin American women as feminist expressions, primarily, because many of their protagonists would disagree with being labelled as feminists. Domitila Chungara is a case in point, although her oral teachings were ideologically counter-patriarchal and she was a tireless fighter against machismo in both private and public social structures, she, throughout her entire life, defined herself as non-feminist. This political position was based on her deep distrust of the inter-classist alliance between women fostered by Western or Westernised middle-class feminists. Her priorities instead were the partnerships based on class interests. This lack of identification with the bourgeois feminist agenda resulted in the rejection of the term, but not a denial of the necessity of undertaking counter-patriarchal political action. In 1978, she affirms:

> I think that at this moment it's much more important to fight for the liberation of our people alongside the men. *It's not that I accept machismo, no. But I think machismo is a weapon of imperialism just like feminism is.* Therefore, I think that the basic fight isn't between sexes; it's a struggle of the couple. And *when I say the couple, I also include the children and grandchildren,* who have to join

[77] Nancy Saporta-Sternbach, "Re-membering the dead: Latin american women's "testimonial" discourse" *Latin American Perspectives* 18 (3, Voices of the Voiceless in Testimonial Literature, Part I) (Summer 1991): 92.

the struggle for liberation from a class position. I think that's fundamental now (emphasis mine).[78]

So, Chungara's rejection of feminism is based in the believe that feminist struggle was an individualistic one —opposed to the communitarian principles that she wanted to foster— and counterproductive for the proletarian groups at the specific political juncture of the 1970s.

The case of the leftist intellectuals is certainly different although a significant number of them also embraced the feminist cause with some objections. A written statement that illustrates this position is Margaret Randall's address entitled *al lector* (to the reader) made in 1975 in her book *No se puede hacer la revolución sin nosotras* (The revolution cannot be done without us women), a quintessential example of women's *testimonio* genre. This quote draws close to the position of the ones like Beatriz Palacios and María Barea on the issue of women's liberation:

> "Women's liberation" is an increasingly common term in the political and social vanguards of Europe and the United States. What is called with a certain vagueness "a movement" has a vast array of appearances and intentions: from the anti-imperialist woman who understands that she cannot be free until all the women —all the people— are free, to the so-called radical feminists, whose reactionary anti-man positions fit perfectly into the propaganda apparatus of the

[78] Domitila Barrios and Moema Viezzer, *Let me Speak! Testimony of Domitila a Woman of the Bolivian Mines* (London: Stage 1, 1978), 234.

system. In Latin America, the liberation of women cannot be a reality separated from the liberation of the peoples. [79]

The above quote, that showcases the usual position of the Latin American women in leftist movements, is very similar to Chungara's in its content. Latin American women were entirely conscious that not only capitalism, but machismo also affected women's lives negatively. However, it was a priority not to break the common front, shared with men, for peoples' liberation. Moreover, although they were undertaking counter-patriarchal endeavours, and fighting *Machismo-Leninismo* on a daily basis, they rejected the label "feminism," reading it as a suspicious foreign conceptualisation.[80]

Furthermore, frequently, those unapologetically Latin American feminists were accused by other progressive women of worrying exclusively about women's issues, while ignoring urgent "general problems."[81] As if those "women's only problems" pointed out by the militant feminists do not substantially affect society as a whole, or do not reflect a matrix of domination, the patriarchal, which should be overcome in order to emancipate both men and women.

This misconception prevailed, and it is still present in the thought of many Latin American women. The so-called gender approach came to save the artificial distance created between counter-patriarchal practitioners and those perceived by them as

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[79] Margaret Randall, *No se puede hacer la revolución sin nosotras* (La Habana: Casa de las Américas, serie testimonio, 1975), 11.

[80] This still happens. See the article "¿Es que acaso debemos ser todas feministas? Reflexiones de mujeres mapuche para un debate" published online by Millaray Painemal and Isabel Cañet in March 4, 2008. http://www.eldesconcierto.cl/2018/03/04/es-que-acaso-debemos-ser-todas-feministas-reflexiones-de-mujeres-mapuche-para-un-debate/

[81] To take on example, Micha Torres —founder of the Peruvian women's collective Warmi, and whose writings are, curiously enough, always focussed on women issues—shared with me her perception that while the country was devastated by the bloody internal conflict between the State and Shining Path, Peruvian feminist organisations were discussing female orgasm (a triviality for her). She perceived that prioritisation inadmissible.

Westernised feminists. The even more puzzling result is that now it is common to find intellectuals, activists, or even scholars that defend that they have a 'gender' approach in their work, while also asserting they are not feminists.[82] At the same time, due to the Western broad understanding of feminism as a plural phenomenon, this narrow definition of feminism and its rejection by many Latin American leftist women is interpreted as a contradiction in terms by Western scholars.

Although I disagree with the pigeonholing of feminism, it is for me a terminological dispute of no utility to impose the feminist label to the practices of women that consciously have decided not to define themselves as such. It is to acknowledge and respect their choice, I use the term "counter-patriarchal" and not "feminist" to qualify those Latin American women groups (such as the Housewives Committees of the Bolivian Mining Unions) and their practices (in this case the filmic testimonies participated by them), who explicitly reject the definition of themselves as feminists. This is although, it appears likely that a Western viewer would perceive as apparently feminist the ideology behind these women's testimonial practices. In such provisional and imperfect ways, I try to solve what I consider more as a misinterpretation, founded on political trenches of patriarchal origin, than an actual controversy.

To conclude this section, *testimonios* are transmediatic devices, the same life-story can appear in many formats (books, comics, plays, films and videos, radio programs, etc.). The producers were not attached to the finished form, because the products were just tools for broader processes of *concientización* (awareness-raising).

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[82] A case in point is the historian Sara Beatriz Guardia, openly reluctant to define herself as a feminist, but whose contribution to Peruvian Women's History has been game changing. Furthermore, she directs CEHMAL (Centro de Estudios La Mujer en la Historia de América Latina) a continental network for the investigation of Latin American Women's History and coordinates the journal *Historia de las Mujeres* (Women's History).

The end was not the literary or filmic product, but the transformation fostered by the entire process. In this sense, Third Cinema and *testimonio* are facets of the same emancipatory project and frequently overlap, as we shall see throughout this thesis.

The use of testimonial methodologies by Andean women filmmakers can be observed not only in the textual choice of elements (interviews and reenactments by witnesses) or rhetorical strategies (reporting, exposing, denouncing) but in the entire filmic cycle. It appears in the preproduction thanks to the use of participative research and scriptwriting methodologies. Also, in the production, through the necessary self-representation by the witnesses or close groups during the filming. And, finally, in the stages of dissemination and exhibition in their popular-pedagogical aims, the strategic creation of witnessing publics and the further evaluation of the impact of the films. Linking to the next section, *testimonio* is mainly a framework of collaborative production that challenges the notion of authorship, expanding it to several instances, including the performers who self-represent themselves creatively.

1.5. Community filmmaking/Collaborative filmmaking

Community filmmaking offers a model of understanding based of the practices of filmmakers, in issues such as cinematic process, participation, collaborative authorship, and community and public engagement. Three paradigmatic cases of community filmmaking serve to explain Andean oppositional filmmaking practices from the 1960s to the 1990s: 1) The Fogo Process, which marked a shift in a top down state project (by National Film Board of Canada) to wanting islanders to tell their stories; [83] 2) George Stoney and Judith Helfand's work methods in *The Uprising of '34* defined by Barbara Abrash and David Whiteman as "Coalition Building Model of Filmmaking," due to the way in which communities are brought together, and even formed, in the making and screening of a film;[84] and 3) Elizabeth's Miller practice-based research work, which follows up on Fogo Island's transition to a model of shared authority and authorship.[85] Although they also evidence that the Andean processes were far from being strictly communitarian and that they could better be defined as collaborative.

This is also confirmed by Latin American scholarship. According to the definition by Alfonso Gumucio, in his edited volume *El cine comunitario en América Latina y el Caribe* (Community Filmmaking in Latin America and the Caribbean), for an audiovisual project to be defined as communitarian, it must be fostered by an organised community which intervenes in every single stage of the project (from the

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[83] See "The National Film Board and Fogo Island, Newfoundland: A Continuing Story," National Film Board, accessed June 14, 2018, https://www.nfb.ca/playlist/fogo-island/

[84] See Barbara Abrash and David Whiteman, "The Uprising of '34: Filmmaking as Community Engagement," *Wide Angle* 21 no.2 (March 1999): 88.

[85] See Elizabeth Miller, "Building Participation in the Outreach for the Documentary the Water Front," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 43, no. 1 (Winter 2009): 59-86. Also, Miller and Michelle Smith, "Dissemination and Ownership of Knowledge," in *Handbook of Participatory Video,* eds. Naydene De Lange, Claudia Mitchell, and Elizabeth-Jane Milne (Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press, 2012); and Miller and Thomas Waugh, "The Process of Place: Grassroots Documentary Screenings," in eds. Svetla Turnin and Ezra Winton*, Screening Truth to Power* (Quebec: Cinema Politica, 2014), 35-44.

constitution of the group that generates the idea to the analysis of the impact of the work in the community) and which makes decisions in the modes of production and dissemination.[86] Whereas, in the process studied here, the initiative normally came from the mediators/filmmakers which were not part of the portrayed communities.

However, these practices predate the exercise of the right to communication and representation by politically marginalised or ignored human collectives, that will be taken further by Andean indigenous communities in the next decades.[87]According to Gumucio, the seed of community filmmaking in Latin America was planted by the social awareness practices developed by these filmmakers, who he denominates "facilitators" of the word and the image of the others, in his words: "The role as facilitators is eminently communicational and makes the difference between a purely individual artistic expression and a collective one."[88] However, there are some issues that should be further interrogated in order not to mystify excessively the emancipatory scope of these cinematic processes.

In this thesis will appear cases in which a group or community follows the entire process, from filming to dissemination, of their own cinematic story. However, there are other cases where the community participating in the filming will be present just in the shooting phase, but other groups of subaltern subjects in similar conditions will identify and benefit from their participation, making sense of their world too. For instance, the protagonists of a film can be Peruvian peasants, but Ecuadorian indigenous people can

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[86] Alfonso Gumucio Dagron, "Aproximación al cine comunitario," in *El cine comunitario en América Latina y el Caribe*, ed. Alfonso Gumucio Dagron (Bogotá: FES [Fundación Friedrich Ebert-Comunicación] y Fundación Nuevo Cine Latinoamericano, 2014), 32.

[87] For instance, the work of CEFREC-CAIB (Centro de Formación y Realización Cinematográfica - Coordinadora Audiovisual Indígena Originaria de Bolivia).

[88] Gumucio, "Aproximación al cine comunitario," 19.

declare that the story told in the film is their own story.[89] Above all, the film was always understood as a process by its makers, although it is commonly not a perfectly orthodox community process, because it travels through different communities and only the filmmakers remain a stable presence.

The main difference between the model that Miller and Gumucio propose and the practices of Ukamau, Chaski, or Warmi is probably the absence of shared ownership in the case of the early practice of collaborative filmmaking. The participants in these films never totally co-owned the final product, neither materially (they did not hold their rights) nor ideologically. Also, they never totally shared authority with the urban middle-class filmmakers. The last word was always the one of the filmmakers, holders of the cultural capital. It depended only upon the goodwill of them if the decision making was more or less horizontal because there were not previous agreements about how the cinematic processes were going to be conducted (this is a big difference with more contemporary community projects where the negotiations between filmmakers and involved communities start in the identification phase). The only agreement that normally was set in advance was related to the economic remuneration for the indigenous communities that hosted the shoots. And in that case, the content was about the rent and salaries not about rights over the finished product. As far as I know, the peasant communities, unions, and other social organisations never questioned their status as mere collaborators rather than right holders.

However, since in the production of these type of films, it was necessary that there was the commitment and contribution of a wide range of participants —many of them neat creative contributors, such as the indigenous actors that through their improvised reenactments give body and meaning to the scenes— the attribution of the

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[89] Sanjinés and grupo Ukamau, *Teoría y práctica de un cine junto al pueblo*, 72-73.

100% of the authorship of the films to the directors is unrealistic. The share in the authorship varies considerably but there is always a significant amount of it over the final result, in all the films analysed here.

1.6. Methodology

Feminist, production, and community filmmaking studies are methodologies that shift the gaze from the auteur to the producing community and from the film-product to the cinematic process. These displacements make women, below-the-line staff, and non-professional partakers come to the fore. Consequently, I have been making use of them in order to write a history of Andean filmmaking which overcomes a Europeanist model of film appreciation and valuation which is at odds with the political intentions behind the cinematic projects I address.

My principal research tools have been oral history and the access to unofficial archives (not open to the general public because they are personal or belong to institutions that have not made them accessible). There is an urgent need to recover the histories that nowadays are kept in endangered personal files, or in the even more fragile oral history accounts. Oral history is the main way to obtain the information needed because memory is one of the few places where this kind of data is stored. Leslie L. Marsch, in the first chapter of her book Brazilian Women's Filmmaking, draws attention to the necessity of the use of oral history methods to investigate the "unofficial" participation of women both in political and cinematic groups.[90] Pioneer researchers in Latin American Cinema, such as Julianne Burton, or in the Peruvian case, Giancarlo Carbone, made extensive use of oral history. However, there are new questions to be made.

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[90] Leslie L. Marsch, *Brazilian Women's Filmmaking* (Chicago and Springfield: University of Illinois Press, 2012), 13-14.

I try to get new sources of information and stay away from the traditional storytelling mostly based on celebratory narratives constructed by male directors or critics. I also interview these directors, but I always try to ask different questions to avoid being told the same things again. The problem is not so much the men in the pantheon but the researchers, who put them there in the first place, and keep asking the same type of questions which reinforce the official narrative.

At least in the case of the subjects of my study, they answer happily any question, even about their private lives. This is important because my research is based on understanding human relationships of friendship, love, kinship, and so on. So, I need to ask personal questions, because they are political. To date, I have never had any problem with asking these questions in order to reconstruct historical narratives that incorporate women. The problem comes when you should transform the answers into academically publishable material. That is why in this thesis, I advocate for the academic consideration of personal relationships as one of the driving factors in artisanal political production cultures.

Personal archives are also very relevant. They show evidence of facts that the human memory erases or conceals, but often the access to these sources is facilitated by a previous relationship of trust established with the informants during the interviews. As for my archival research, in October 2012, I travelled to Bolivia specifically to obtain the movies of the Ukamau group in order to make a series at the University of Valencia (Spain). Then, I scanned some of the contents of the archive kept in some cupboards in the premises of the Fundación Grupo Ukamau (Ukamau Group Foundation) in La Paz. In 2015, within the purview of this investigation, I came back and asked Sanjinés for permission to look into the small and abandoned archive again. I worked there for two months. After getting familiar with the contents of the dusty files, untouched for

decades, I realised that I was in front of the remains of the life work of the late Beatriz Palacios, compiler of the archive and manager of the group. Palacios was alive in those files. Her mind, heart, and soul were kept there: her loves and priorities (what to save, what to highlight, in which order) and hates (what to throw away, what to censure). I never got to know Beatriz Palacios —curiously, she died at the beginning of July 2003, one month after my first arrival to Bolivia. However, through her files I had peculiar access to her work methods, indissolubly united to her life.

I have completed the rest of Palacios' story through conversations with people that got to know her. Some real friends, some mere acquaintances, and some, probably, enemies. I have also studied all her publications (which are under researched) and used the compilation of interviews with her collaborators contained in the documentary *Beatriz junto al pueblo* (Beatriz with the People, Sergio Estrada, 2011). However, I have to admit that my main source to access Palacios has been Sanjinés, who, with enormous generosity, has shared with me his private life for the sake of a proper posthumous recognition of his loved wife and comrade. In retrospect, I realise that his option of trusting me was a tricky one for him. He knows my project; I never hid from him that I was writing a feminist revision of the history of the group and that recovering the entire contribution of Palacios to Ukamau would mean diminishing his own in the historical account, because demonstrating her instrumentality within the Ukamau project would mean relativising his prominence in the narrative. In any case, Sanjinés does not seem to be afraid of going down some steps in the Bolivian cinematic pantheon. I believe he prefers justice to glory. His entire life has been a fight for decolonising cinema, and depatriarchalising cinema history is, or should be, part of that process.

The case of my fieldwork about María Barea has been a different case because she is alive, and I have been able to access her recollections directly. The same thing that happened with Palacios has happened with Barea: very little has been written about her, and almost nothing can be found in the academic literature. I discovered her through oral accounts. In Bolivia and Peru, people talked about her, signalling her participation and importance in several milestones of Peruvian oppositional cinema. She was ever-present in the oral history but absent from the official one. When I met her for the first time in August 2015, I was still researching Ukamau's film practices with indigenous populations. I made an appointment with Barea and Jorge Vignati and conducted an interview focused on their participation in the film *El enemigo principal* (*The Principal Enemy*; Ukamau, 1974). Soon after meeting her, I realised that she was a perfect case study, her life in its different stages represented the embodiment of various women's roles in Latin American oppositional cinema. She started as a producer of her husband Luis Figueroa, but also participated in different film collectives (mixed and women's only), and even had a solo career as a director.

Since she was alive and well, and nobody had written seriously about her before, she became my primary informant, and her private files became my primary source of documentation. In September 2016, I travelled to Lima and lived at her house for a week, conducted structured interviews and had uncountable informal conversations, not only with her but with her family, friends, and colleagues. We are in touch by email, Skype and WhatsApp. We also met in person again in London last year, when she was invited to the conference referred to previously.

In the case of Domitila Chungara, who died in 2012, my research method has been mostly based on the already existent bibliography and filmography. One of the main sources has been her written testimony *Let Me Speak. Testimony of Domitila a*

Woman from the Bolivian Mines, but I also contacted its co-author, the Brazilian educator Moema Viezzer and interviewed her by email. Viezzer sent me the last version of the book, published only in Portuguese twenty-five years after the first edition. This commemorative version includes a very long prologue by her, which is a critical analysis of the detour of the book with the necessary historical perspective. I find this paratext a fascinating source to evaluate the interclassist collaboration between women in the context of Latin American *testimonio*. It is also a good reflection on the construction of a proletarian public sphere because Viezzer witnessed the success of the circulation, translation to multiple languages, and adaptation to various formats of her original creation; all of it inserted in a political project far beyond the editorial marketing.

Viezzer also sent me pictures of her last encounter with Chungara and a dossier containing compromising information about treachery suffered by the Bolivian leader at the hands of her own comrades. Male leaders were jealous of the sudden international prominence achieved by a woman like Chungara and sent a false letter on her behalf asking Arnaldo Orfila, the director of the Mexican editorial house Siglo XXI, for some changes in the content of the book. I have not yet decided how to use, or where to send, these files. But this is an example of how trust is built and passed on through generations.

Finally, since the majority of the films I analyse in this thesis are not for sale, I got them from their owners and co-makers, Jorge Sanjinés, María Barea, Helena Solberg and Liliana de la Quintana. The necessity to contact them personally gave this research a personal, artisanal, and alternative characteristic that matches the making and circulation of the films themselves. I also made an effort in my research to watch the films with groups of women in Spain, Bolivia, Peru, and Uruguay, in order to assess

their reception. This thesis is informed by a sort of participant observation of the films' reception while I was acting as a curator and disseminator. I continue to screen and discuss these films publicly or in small groups whenever I am asked or am able to. Now, I feel responsible for their circulation too and part of their ongoing life cycle. I have become convinced that this is still politically usable material, that comes to life in front of contemporary witnessing audiences.

CHAPTER 2. Beatriz Palacios and the Ukamau Group

2.1. Introduction: Ukamau through Palacio's prism

Beatriz Palacios is an intriguing figure. Described by Alfonso Gumucio Dagron in 1975 as "halfway between Mata Hari and Tania the *guerrillera*," she has hovered under the radar of historiography and her recognition is long overdue.[91] Archival evidence and oral testimonies indicate that she managed every aspect of the daily operation of the Ukamau group from her incorporation into it in 1974 until her death in 2003. Her influence was not only managerial, but also ideological and creative. Her ascendancy over Jorge Sanjinés was enormous, but the latter's authorial persona has ended up eclipsing Palacios' work and ideas. This fact is not due to Sanjinés' will, or to the information provided by the people who worked with them or were part of the different Ukamau teams during those years. In every single oral account from collaborators, assistants, friends, and colleagues, the interviewee emphasizes the permanent control exerted by Palacios over each one of the stages of production and distribution of the films. We can even intuit, by the descriptions of her personality, that she was most probably an over-controlling workaholic. Consequently, almost every decision passed through her hands, or was the product of a consensus between her and Sanjinés.

If none of her collaborators, including her partner and comrade, overshadow her in their oral narratives—on the contrary, they almost unanimously show admiration and recognition—it can be affirmed that the responsibility for the absence of Beatriz

[91] Alfonso Gumucio Dagron, *Diario Ecuatoriano. Cuaderno de Rodaje* (Quito: Consejo Nacional de Cinematografía del Ecuador, 2016), 137.

Palacios in the academic literature is due to the perspectives chosen to analyse the Ukamau group. Focusing on the innovative cinematic language and the empowering representation of working-class and indigenous groups (textual form and content), is not enough. More complex discussions about the politics of the production, exhibition, and reception need to be undertaken. Moreover, delving into Beatriz Palacios' contribution is a matter of consistency, because she was the main person responsible for all the tasks involved in direct relation to the emancipatory processes named as "cinema with the people" during the twenty-nine years in which she belonged to the group. Her self-imposed duties and her organic involvement with social and political movements ensured coherency between the theory and the practice of the Ukamau project.

The Ukamau group has a complex history that spans over fifty years.[92] In the first phase, before the arrival of Palacios, three of its most iconic feature films were

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[92] As for the specific bibliography dedicated to the Ukamau group and its director, the Ibero-American Film Festival of Santa Cruz published in 1999 a compilation of various materials (essays, interviews, storyboards, photographs) titled *El cine de Jorge Sanjinés*. In 2010, the Argentine Collective *Rev(b)elando imagenes* edited the special volume, coordinated by Pablo and Sebastián Russo, *Jorge Sanjinés y el grupo Ukamau, reflexiones y testimonios*. It contains film analysis, interviews, and essays by Mariano Mestman, David Wood, and María Aimaretti, among others. Both Wood and Aimaretti devoted a significant part of their doctoral dissertations to the Ukamau group, as Dennis Hanlon also did. In chronological order, the dissertation of David Wood (King's College, University of London, 2005) is titled "Revolution and pachakuti. Political and indigenous cinema in Bolivia and Colombia;" the British scholar reads Ukamau's productions as mediation artefacts between the notion of social change of European origin, the revolution, and Andean pachakuti (historical moment when the overall order is upside down). Another outstanding contribution is Dennis Hanlon's doctoral dissertation (University of Iowa, 2009); Hanlon's "Moving cinema: Bolivia's Ukamau and European political film, 1966-1989" situates Ukamau and Sanjinés in a transnational context, paying special attention to Bertold Brecht's influence in Sanjinés, the ideological use of the sequence shot and the parallelisms between Sanjinés and other European political filmmakers. For her part, the thesis by the Argentinian scholar María Aimaretti titled "Aesthetic production, social intervention, and symbolisation of cultural memory in Bolivia. Grupo Ukamau and Teatro de los Andes. Experiences of a cultural production trend of political horizon" (University of Buenos Aires, 2015), compares the artistic trajectories of both groups with a special emphasis on the production of cultural memory artefacts for social and political uses. Parts of these three works have been published in the form of articles and book chapters, such as Wood's "Indigenismo and the Avant-garde: Jorge Sanjinés' Early Films and the National Project," and "Andean Realism and the Integral Sequence Shot;" Hanlon's "Travelling Theory, Shots, and Players: Jorge Sanjinés, New Latin American Cinema, and the European Art Film" and "From Taking to Making Images of Indigeneity: Reading the films of the Ukamau Group Ethnographically;" or, Aimaretti's "Revivir la experiencia, narrar la masacre, impugnar la Historia: sobre el uso del Testimonio en 'El coraje del pueblo' (Grupo Ukamau-Jorge Sanjinés, 1971)" (Reviving the Experience, Narrating the Massacre, Challenging History: On the Use of Witness in *The Courage of the People* [Ukamau-Jorge Sanjinés Group, 1971])," or "Mirada-límen y memoria heterogénea. Acerca de La nación clandestina (Jorge Sanjinés, 1989)" (Gaze-

made: *Ukamau* (Aymara for *And so it is*, 1966), *Yawar Mallku* (*La sangre del Cóndor*; *Blood of the Condor*, 1969) and *El coraje del pueblo* (*The Courage of the People*, 1971). In 1972, they shot a feature in Peru named in Quechua *Jatun Auk'a* (*El enemigo principal*; *The principal enemy*, 1974). In 1973, Sanjinés post-produced the film in Cuba, where he met Palacios. In 1974, the second phase of Ukamau began under the rule of the Sanjinés-Palacios tandem, which lasted until her death in 2003. They completed *¡Lloksi Kaymanta!* (*¡Fuera de Aquí!*; *Get Out of Here!*, 1977), *Las banderas del amanecer* (*Banners of the Dawn*, 1983), *La nación clandestina* (*The Clandestine Nation*, 1989), *Para recibir el canto de los pájaros* (*To Hear the Birds Sing*, 1995) and *Los hijos del último jardín* (*Children of the Last Garden*, 2004).[93] After Palacios' death, Sanjinés concealed himself for years. During this time, he devoted himself to writing novels, short stories, poems, and scripts, all of which have not been published.[94] A renewed Ukamau team, headed by the new producer and Sanjinés' right-hand woman Mónica Bustillos, started the third and last phase of the group around 2010. In 2012, they released *Insurgentes* (*Insurgents*), an odd project in the history of the group, because it was sponsored by Evo Morales' State with a budget around one million dollars. In 2016, they released another "big budget" period drama, *Juana Azurduy: Guerrillera de la Patria Grande* (*Juana Azurduy: Guerrilla from the Great Homeland*). Despite the expenditure, none of these films have been a box office or critical success.

Limen and Heterogeneous Memory. About *The Clandestine Nation* [Jorge Sanjinés, 1989]). In 2016, Wood published his first monography *El espectador pensante: el cine de Jorge Sanjinés y el grupo Ukamau*, which is the most complete and rigorous academic work on the group, only available in Spanish. The complete list of authors that have written articles and chapters on the films of Ukamau is too long to be referred.

[93] The first Ukamau group was formed of Oscar Soria and Jorge Sanjinés, with the subsequent incorporation of Consuelo Saavedra, Ricardo Rada, Antonio Eguino, and the collaboration of other members such as Mario Arrieta, Danielle Caillet, and Gladys de Rada. Eguino and Soria retained the legal name of the original enterprise "Ukamau Ltd." and used it to undertake different filmic projects. So, one entity is Ukamau Ltd. (led by Eguino) and another is Fundación Grupo Ukamau (Ukamau Group Foundation), created by Sanjinés and Palacios in the 1990s.

[94] I know about the existence of these texts because Sanjinés lent to me to in 2012 the novel *Los viejos soldados* (The old soldiers), and the short stories volume *Relatos Contemporáneos* (Contemporary Stories), both finished in 2010, but written in the previous decade.

Ukamau stands out in the history of Bolivian and Latin American cinema for their cinematic practices in alliance with the Andean masses. The aim was to foster the processes of political liberation through cinema, transforming the relations in production through integrating the indigenous populations, creating a cinematic language harmonious with the Andean understanding of time and space, generating alternative circuits for the distribution of the films, and fostering communal spaces for their exhibition and discussion. One of the reasons for the lack of scholarly attention given to the practical side of this filmic endeavour is the simplification in the selection of primary sources used to construct Ukamau's narrative. The typical range of sources focus on the voice of Jorge Sanjinés: interviews, essays, and films interpreted in a formalist/authorial key.[95] Even the continuous efforts of Sanjinés himself to employ the plural in his statements seems to be read as a sign of false modesty (a royal 'we') and not taken seriously by the scholars who, by doing so, continue to attribute him with the *de facto* sole authorship of the films.[96]

As said, hitherto it has been ignored or unacknowledged that between 1974 and 2003, Beatriz Palacios was the person who was chiefly responsible for all the tasks in direct relation to people, tasks as important as: liaison and negotiation with the subaltern protagonists and their political or communal organisations, before and during the production; dissemination of the films; generation of educational projects; and impact evaluation, among others. But new research needs not only political intention but also evidence. Palacios' files kept in Fundación Grupo Ukamau in La Paz, allow for a

[95] See his early interviews for film journals like *Cinéaste* 4, no. 3 (1970-1):12-13 and *Cinéaste* 5, no. 2 (1972):18-20; *Cine cubano* 71-72 (1972): 52-59 and *Cine cubano* 98 (1981): 80-83; or *Hablemos de cine* 52 (1970): 36-40, or the more recent for the Cuban television with Manuel Pérez, or for the Argentine journalist Ana Cacopardo, both available on YouTube. Regarding the essays, I refer principally to the ones included in the volume *Teoría y práctica de un cine junto al* pueblo, published in 1979, but also others such as "El plano secuencia integral," *Cine Cubano* 125 (1989): 65-71.

[96] I analyse the overshadowed contribution of the female members of different Ukamau crews in the article "Auteurism, *Machismo-Leninismo*, and Other Issues. Women's Labor in Andean Oppositional Film Production." *Feminist Media Histories* 4, no.1 (2018) Vol.: 11–36.

feminist revision of the history of the group, not only recovering her figure but rethinking Ukamau's practices and politics as well.

2.2. Beatriz Palacios, Cornerstone of the 2nd phase of Ukamau (1974-2003)

The enigma of Beatriz Palacios

The enigma of Beatriz Palacios begins with her name. There is the frequent suspicion among her acquaintances that Palacios was not her real surname. Often, Azurduy is cited as her first surname.[97] Determining her actual age is also problematic, the year of birth that commonly appears in her biographies is 1952. The range of sources that offer this date goes from the catalogue of Bolivian women filmmakers compiled by the *Movimiento Nuevo Cine y Video Boliviano* (New Movement Bolivian Cinema and Video) to Wikipedia.[98] In the posthumous publication of her writings, the volume *Los días rabiosos* (The Days of Rage) the date that appears in a short bio on the cover is more recent, 1958.[99] However, Jorge Sanjinés assures that when they met in Cuba, in 1973, she was twenty-eight years old. This information, which is probably the most plausible, indicates that Palacios was born ca.1945. A further problem that impedes knowing her actual date of birth is that the identity document she used upon her return from exile was possibly forged, since Sanjinés states that they obtained it under uncertain circumstances.[100] A revealing testimony about Palacios' effect on people is a comment about her by Alfonso Gumucio Dagron dated July 12, 1975:

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[97] Homenaje a Beatriz Palacios en el Patiño," *Los Tiempos*, April 15, 2007. http://www.lostiempos.com/actualidad/cultura/20070415/homenaje-beatriz-palacios-patino.

[98] "Beatriz Palacios," in *Mirada de mujer. Realizadoras bolivianas*, ed. Liliana de la Quintana (La Paz: MNCVB, Nicobis, and Círculo de Mujeres Periodistas, 1992), 7-8.

[99] Beatriz Palacios, *Los días rabiosos* (La Paz: Editorial Gente Común and Fundación Grupo Ukamau, 2005).

[100] Jorge Sanjinés, interview with Isabel Seguí, La Paz, August 12, 2015.

> Speaking of Beatriz, it is a character that intrigues me a lot, halfway between Mata Hari and Tania the guerrilla. I know she has been in Mexico for several years. She says that she is a Bolivian and she knows a lot of details about Bolivia indeed. She says she has travelled here and there, she knows how to speak with a Mexican, Cuban, and Ecuadorian accent when necessary. I do not know if her actual name is Beatriz Palacios because the other day when she wanted to remember her mother's last name, Jorge had to remind her. The surname was Durán or something similar. Beatriz recounts that she often dresses as a peasant woman to smuggle herself across Latin American borders. Jorge is very fond of her now. They get along well.[101]

A lot of information can be recovered from this single quote. It is the longest comment devoted to Palacios in a shooting diary that scarcely names her despite the small size of the crew and her ubiquitousness (remarked by other members and apparent in the credits of the film that acknowledge her as co-screenwriter, producer, and co-editor). Gumucio poses, first and foremost, the mystery surrounding her. He makes a comparison with two prominent women in the collective imagination of the 20th century: Mata Hari (Margaretha Zelle), a spy who is popularly known for using her erotic capital to reach her goals; and Tania (Tamara Bunke), the guerrilla woman, who was assassinated in Bolivia while undertaking armed action commanded by Che Guevara (often inaccurately described as her lover). Both strong women, marked in the patriarchal imagination by their beauty and courage, but both also — as the

[101] Gumucio acted as the assistant director in the first shoot of *Fuera de Aquí!* (*Get Out of Here!*, 1977), in Ecuador, in 1975, and kept a diary for his own record, which was published in 2016 by the Ecuadorian National Cinema Council (CnCine) under the title *Diario Ecuatoriano: Cuaderno de rodaje de Fuera de Aquí*. It constitutes a precious source for the investigation of Ukamau's cinematic practices. Gumucio, *Diario Ecuatoriano*, 137.

stereotypical men's "others" are— clandestine and mysterious. Gumucio doubts Palacio's words, from her nationality to her identity. He suspects she conceals something. He is puzzled by the fact that she can mimic different accents. And he bears witness of her affirmation that she used her racial characteristics to disguise herself as a harmless indigenous peasant to cross borders without being noticed by the authorities. He also expresses his perception of the relationship between her and Sanjinés in mild terms. He sees the relationship as provisional or junctural. This perception is going to be proved wrong.

Alfonso Gumucio Dagron became in a short time one the most prominent Bolivian film historians, the author of the first history of Bolivian cinema, the volume *Historia del Cine en Bolivia* published in 1982. I asked him about Beatriz Palacios in July 2015, forty years after the previous quote, and this is what he maintains nowadays: "Beatriz was always a mystery. Not only for me, for everyone. I never knew much about her. Perhaps I should have asked more, when I had the chance."[102] This last affirmation is extremely interesting because nobody seemed to ask her about herself, and not only due to a lack of interest. Close collaborators such as the video maker Liliana de la Quintana, the cinematographer César Pérez or her assistants for years, Patricia Suárez and Consuelo Lozano, did not dare to ask her about details of her personal life, origins, or activities. She was a fiercely private person and there was an assumption in her close circle that that must be respected. Nobody was sure if the reason for this extreme privacy was protection, paranoia, or both.[103]

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[102] Alfonso Gumucio Dagron, interview with Isabel Seguí, La Paz, July 7, 2015.

[103] The paranoid attitude of Sanjinés and Palacios is legendary and has become a common place topic among those who knew them. However, the Peruvian filmmaker Nora de Izcue made a very interesting comment about it to me. Once, Palacios made a clandestine appointment with her. The meeting was to be held in a public space in Lima but following Palacios instructions they should pretend not to know each other. Izcue asked a person at her service to follow Palacios discreetly to see if anyone was actually controlling her movements. After their bizarre meeting on the street, Izcue went back home. Later, her assistant told her that, effectively, Beatriz Palacios was being followed by two people. Moreover, when

Hence, Beatriz Palacios's apparently low profile was not, to any large extent, imposed from the outside. She cultivated, until the day of her death, an aura of mystery around herself, that some attribute to the virtue of prudence —so necessary in such a turbulent political time— while others attribute it to a taste for adventure; and the less benevolent, to a necessity to cover up 'certain things' (in Bolivia widely spread rumours affirm that she was a member of the Cuban secret services or was at least ready to serve the Cuban regime if so requested).

In any case, Palacios never had an interest in being the subject of a biography, being in the spotlight, or in capturing any kind of public interest. But she is not a completely forgotten personality. In 2005, her newspaper articles were published in a book titled *Los días rabiosos* (The Days of Rage), in a short print run that did not get much attention.[104] In 2011, the Bolivian filmmaker Sergio Estrada made a documentary about her, *Beatriz junto al pueblo* (Beatriz With the People).[105] This documentary was an attempt to track the character of Palacios through the testimonials of her acquaintances. One striking feature of a piece of research like that, which I have also done for this chapter, is the number of contradictory versions that arise. This would occur with any biography, but in the case of Palacios the result is shocking. From saint to devil, she is portrayed mostly through superlatives. Perhaps this is just a feature of the Bolivian idiosyncrasy. The objective of this chapter is to disentangle her enigmatic personality and to acknowledge her contribution to the Ukamau group, Bolivian, Andean, and Latin American cinema.

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their meeting was finished, Izcue was also followed back home. Nora de Izcue, interview with Isabel Seguí, Lima, June 21, 2015. For Fernando Solanas and Octavio Getino "The watchwords 'constant vigilance, constant wariness, constant mobility' have profound validity for guerrilla cinema." Fernando Solanas and Octavio Getino, "Towards a Third Cinema," 51.

[104] Beatriz Palacios, *Los días rabiosos* (La Paz: Editorial Gente Común and Fundación Grupo Ukamau, 2005).

[105] *Beatriz junto al pueblo* (Beatriz with the People; Sergio Estrada, 2011. This material is currently used by a community organisation based in El Alto (La Paz), Fundación COMPA, in their audiovisual pedagogy workshops.

Palacios-Sanjinés: twenty-nine years of association (love, work, and politics)

It is not feasible to understand Ukamau, between 1974 and 2003, without tackling the topic of Palacios and Sanjinés's relationship. I started asking "personal" questions motivated by the need to establish a reliable chronology of the activities of Ukamau during the exile period. Sanjinés provided me with a series of details about their first meeting in Cuba in 1973 and their subsequent movements, which proved to be a useful base line that gave more precision to my investigation.[106]

In 1972, Sanjinés filmed *The Principal Enemy* in Peru and at the beginning of 1973, he moved to Havana to work on the postproduction of the film at the ICAIC (Cuban Institute of Filmic Art and Industry). Palacios had reached Cuba ten years earlier, in 1963, aged eighteen, to study journalism. She belonged to a leftist family with connections to the Bolivian Communist Party, who had even helped in the logistical support for Che Guevara's guerrilla in Ñancahuazú, in 1966-67. They met because Palacios, at that time president of the Committee of Bolivian Residents on the island, sought an interview with the well-known filmmaker.

It could be said that Palacios was already in love with Ukamau's work before their encounter. At her initiative, the Committee was engaged in the dissemination of Ukamau movies throughout the Caribbean country. Hence, we find that the pedagogical use of cinema was ingrained in Palacios political life project. The fact that they met because she —as the president of the Committee— arranged an interview with him, also

[106] The following details are based on Jorge Sanjinés' oral account in two interviews in July 29 and August 12, 2015.

gives us an indication of her interest in the genre of the interview before joining Ukamau. This is nothing extraordinary since she was a trained journalist.

For both, it was love at first sight. She already admired his work, but Sanjinés marvelled at this extraordinary young woman who had circulated his films throughout the island (from Sierra Maestra to Matanzas). From that encounter, they became inseparable and immediately began a relationship, extramarital for both. Beatriz was married to a Cuban army officer; however, she was already following separation proceedings. Sanjinés was married to Consuelo Saavedra and they had four children (Paula Verónica, Carolina, Iván, and Mallku). The family was exiled in Chile after the coup of General Banzer in Bolivia in 1971. Although Sanjinés was determined to leave Saavedra, the situation turned dangerous for his wife —a politically identified person— after the coup against President Salvador Allende in September 1973. Consequently, they reunited in Cuba.

Despite the unpleasant surprise of finding her husband in a new relationship, Saavedra found in the Cuba of the time a good place to locate her family as a single carer, thanks to the free education and health services provided by the Cuban state. After the separation, she remained in the island for five more years, at least enjoying a certain stability and material security.[107] Meanwhile, Sanjinés and Palacios left the island, first for Europe for the promotion of *The Principal Enemy!* (Ukamau, 1974) and then to Ecuador where they produced *Get Out of Here!* (Ukamau, 1977), between 1975 and 1976.

[107] These dates coincide with the ones given by Iván Sanjinés (Saavedra's son) in a recent interview. He affirms that he remained in Cuba from 1974 to 1978 and those were the most stable years of his childhood and youth. Iván Sanjinés interview with María Aimaretti, "Entrevista a Iván Sanjinés. Memoria, identidad, dignificación y soberanía en el Espacio Audiovisual Boliviano: el CEFREC, o esa realidad que muchos soñaron," *Cine Documental* 18 (2018): 222.

During the subsequent twenty-nine years, Palacios took care of all the heavy tasks that guaranteed the day-to-day running of their film productions, Ukamau's office, and the households she shared with Sanjinés. She started her film career in 1974 as the assistant producer in *Get Out of Here!* Despite lacking prior cinematographic experience, she ended up in the credits as co-screenwriter, co-editor, and head of production. After their return to Bolivia from exile, in 1978, she co-directed with Sanjinés the documentary *Las banderas del amanecer* (*Banners of the Dawn*, Coral award best documentary film, Havana Film Festival 1983). Afterward, she produced the remarkable *La nación clandestina* (*The Clandestine Nation*, Golden Shield Award, San Sebastian Film Festival 1989), *Para recibir el canto de los pájaros* (*To hear the birds sing*, 1995), and *Los hijos del ultimo jardín* (*Children of The Last Garden*, 2004). She was also founding member of the New Latin American Cinema Foundation, located in Havana, a member of the Bolivian New Film and Video Movement, and representative of the International Film School of San Antonio de los Baños in the Andean country.

She served as the filter between Sanjinés and the world, gatekeeping access to the celebrated figure, much as the secretaries of the producers or the assistants of the directors do in Hollywood. But unlike Hollywood's secretaries, Beatriz Palacios was also a powerful executive. Sanjinés delegated to her much of the decision making, for convenience but also due to an absolute trust. For her part, Beatriz Palacios saw herself as a guerrilla without a gun. A cold warrior. According to Jorge Sanjinés, she found in filmmaking the weapon she needed to fight imperialism without bloodshed. Nevertheless, her frustrated desire was to participate in the armed struggle. Although having served in the Cuban army for some years, she was never authorized to participate in armed actions. Thus, the Ukamau film group was her own cultural and

educational guerrilla force. For the outside world, Sanjinés appeared as the leader, but Palacios was the *comandante* who managed Ukamau with authority.

Her approach to film as a guerrilla practice was focalist. *Foquismo* (Focalism) is a theory of guerrilla warfare, proposed by Ernesto Che Guevara and formulated by Régis Debray, which claims that a revolution can be initiated by a small group or *foco* (spotlight) even though the overall conditions do not appear to be the most appropriate.[108] This small group must be hierarchically organised and act with extreme caution, discipline and sacrifice for a cause bigger than individual wills or desires. Interestingly, a focalist approach to filmmaking never abandoned Palacios (even after the Cold War was finished) and it conditioned, with little changes, the production mode of Ukamau for almost thirty years, requiring sacrifice from everyone, but firstly, from her. The general appraisal of her colleagues is that Palacios gave her life for the project. She died in 2003, having spent her last years severely ill, but always enduring stoically her physical limitations, while not abandoning her multiple activities.

In July 2004, one year after her death, Sanjinés wrote a poem called "Beatriz." He describes how much he misses her because she was his main connection to the outside world: "(…) you brought from the street / the perfume of the new, / the playful footprint / of the event // you brought your attention / to the smallest happening, / nothing escaped / your understanding and / you knew how to look at the day / better than anybody.// I waited for you to arrive / from the street / work / travel / to inform me / of life (…)"[109]

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[108] See Ernesto Guevara, *Guerrilla Warfare* (London: Souvenir, 2003), first published in Cuba in 1960; and Régis Debray, *Revolution in the revolution? Armed struggle and political struggle in Latin America*. (Wesport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1980).

[109] Jorge Sanjinés, "Beatriz," Fundación Grupo Ukamau, dated July 2004. I found a previous poem called "Beatriz" in Ukamau's archive, dated 1994. In this one, Sanjinés portrays himself in Paris, alone, recalling their first stay in the French city in 1974. The focus is on two extreme feelings: on the one hand their love and desire; and on the other, the fear of being traced and punished by unnamed enemies (possibly the CIA in connivance with the Bolivian army).

Significantly, Sanjinés portrays himself at home while Palacios is outside. He chooses a reclusive existence, waiting for her return to inquire about the events of the world. Obviously, he admires this dynamic woman profoundly. He describes her superior ability to interpret reality ("look at the day") and shows total faith in her judgment, perception, and critical capacity. The admiration described in this poem, written only a year after her death, shows the importance Palacios had in his life as a whole—working, personal, and political. Sanjinés remained very comfortably in his ivory tower, knowing that she had all their business under control. Moreover, she was going to generously share with him her knowledge, sensibility, and workload, because they shared a mission: Ukamau. This unpublished text evidences that to credit her only as a producer falls very short of her true role.

It cannot be known how Beatriz Palacios would have evolved if her premature death had not occurred. In the previous years, she had been working on a personal project, the movie *La tierra sin mal* (The Land Without Evil). She had already been granted state funding. The casting was done, and the entire pre-production finished. In the archive of the Fundación Grupo Ukamau (Ukamau Group Foundation) can be found a detailed weekly shooting script. When everything was ready —with even Sanjinés willing to be her assistant for the first time—she was hit by an outbreak of her chronic arthritic disease and had to postpone the filming indefinitely and, finally, died unexpectedly within a year, when travelling to Cuba for medical treatment. In this chapter, I argue that ignoring her contribution deprives Ukamau's history of one of its most important and original aspects. To redress this situation, I am going to address Palacios's role as a producer, director, disseminator and evaluator. Nevertheless, in the last part of the chapter I reveal three documented, unfinished cinematic projects by her. This is probably the deepest research effort ever done to shed light on this instrumental

filmmaker. However, much more work should be done to unearth Beatriz Palacios' life, work, and legacy.

2.3. Palacios, the Producer

Guerrilla Producer

If Beatriz Palacios had a cinematic agenda, it was the prioritisation of political usefulness over other types of value associated to film products, such as the commercial or artistic. This is directly linked with chapter four, where we will see how Domitila Chungara's communicative goal was the same. The beginning of Palacios' film career was a project in Ecuador finally entitled in Quechua *Lloksi Kaymanta!* in Spanish *¡Fuera de Aquí!* (*Get Out of Here!*; Ukamau, 1977). I am going to historicise the production of this movie in order to analyse Palacio's role as a guerrilla producer in a movie made during the worst years of the Condor Plan. In any case, many of the features of guerrilla filmmaking are going to be maintained throughout her career and will characterise Palacios' production practices during more democratic times, as we shall see.

Her initial assignment in *Get Out of Here!* was production assistant. Therefore, the primary responsibility for this film production was expected to fall on Jorge Sanjinés. However, in the credits of the film Palacios appears as head of production plus as being co-responsible for the screenplay and editing along with Jorge Sanjinés. This indicates that Palacios quickly gained power within the team, due to her enormous organisational capacity, which was tested in difficult circumstances such as those of this shooting. It also indicates that her intellectual participation occurred from the start. As co-author of the script and co-editor, and production manager, she was placed as second in the hierarchy of the group.

Usability and instrumentation of film was Palacios cinematic credo. Probably because Palacios and Sanjinés' priorities were totally aligned at this point, Palacios' influence on him is clearly felt; for instance, in this affirmation he makes in an interview for *Framework*: "The aim of *¡Fuera de Aquí!* is to bring out the sinister mechanism used by the imperialist enemy to destroy or weaken our country. From this perspective, the film cannot be mistaken, it must be of some use. It can really become an instrument for struggle and work."[110]

To summarise the long and winding process of production of *Get out of Here!* there were two shootings; the first in June 1975, and the second in approximately February 1976. A first edition was done in Merida, Venezuela (these rolls were partly lost by an airline), and a second and final version was finished in Italy. Finally, the film was released in 1977. Thanks to the first-hand information provided by the publication of Alfonso Gumucio's shooting diary, written during the production of *Get Out of Here!* this film becomes an extraordinary case study of the "cinema with the people" mode of production. Gumucio's diary is an original source that can be used to contrast the teleological account often made by Sanjinés, which suggests that after the enlightening experience of *Blood of the Condor*, he had reached sufficient maturity in his capabilities to relate to and negotiate with the peasants or workers participating in the films, that everything was made smooth from that point forward.

This interpretation is somewhat simplified and optimistic. It is true that the experience of making *Blood of the Condor* was very important for the filmmakers in providing them with a deeper understanding of the nature of the Andean peasants. This invited the filmmakers to start an inner decolonisation process that allowed Sanjinés to develop new, more respectful, communication strategies in subsequent film projects.

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[110] Jorge Sanjinés, *Framework. A Film Journal* 10 (Spring 1979): 33

However, the fact remains that the relations with peasant communities were always problematic. This difficulty was motivated and justified by the centennial mistrust, and by the obvious difference of priorities between a rural Andean community and a film crew.

The main strategy used by Ukamau to involve rural communities was to run screenings of Ukamau's previous films, as a token of his respect towards the indigenous people. Sanjinés states: "The film opened up. As the peasants saw our films they felt identified with them and said: 'We want one too!' And then, they participated with total commitment."[111] However, according to Gumucio, getting them to be fully involved in the filming was not so easy. The filmmakers found themselves in the constant need to persuade the non-professional actors to participate, almost every day. In the case of the shooting of *Get out of Here!*, Gumucio attributes Palacios and himself with having to convince the communards to take part. He affirms that Sanjinés "did not explain anything to them."[112] Henceforth, the task of mediation with the subaltern participants was going to be Palacios' responsibility. She possessed a remarkable ability to understand and effectively communicate with peasants, miners, housewives, prostitutes, children, or street vendors. That aptitude made her especially well equipped for the realization of an actual "cinema with the people."

It is Sanjinés himself who remarks on Palacios' ability: "She was superior to me because she had more wisdom in approaching people. She had an enormous capacity for that."[113] In addition, she was not perceived as a *K'ara* (racially white) like him, a six feet tall green-eyed white man. Palacios was racially Indian, and she was supposedly fluent in Aymara (a language that she learnt as a child, not at home, but during summer

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[111] Jorge Sanjinés, interview with Isabel Seguí, La Paz, August 12, 2015.
[112] Alfonso Gumucio, interview with Isabel Seguí, La Paz, July 7, 2015.
[113] Jorge Sanjinés, interview with Isabel Seguí, La Paz, August 12, 2015.

holidays spent with acquaintances of her family). She also had an exceptional level of human empathy, and an unmatched persuasive ability, probably based on her own genuine commitment to the popular struggles.

Her capacity for mediation and negotiation was based on her permanent attitude of active listening. As we have seen in the introduction, this was a common gift among the intellectual women mediators of Latin American *testimonios*. It was, definitely, a very valuable asset in the case of Ukamau filmmaking practices because the success of each filmic project depended on the active involvement in the shooting of the local community. The participation of the communards was instrumental because they played multiple roles in the productions, from performers to builders, assistants, cooks, suppliers, etc. Moreover, they were hosting the event in their territory. So, they provided the crew with a place to live and work during the production. Nevertheless, this was a contested space. The mass of Andean peasants often feels a deep distrust of the white or *mestizo* urban middle classes, even to those ones, who were supposedly allies. This attitude is probably the one that has allowed them to survive genocide as a people and epistemicide as a culture.[114] Therefore, a film location was not only the place to situate the action, but also a place of the encounter and clash between two epistemes: the one of the filmmakers (urban middle-class intellectuals); and the one of the popular classes, the subjects of the films. In that context, Palacios' trustworthiness was particularly useful.

She did not have the same capacity for dialogue with the upper classes, however. The personal and professional relationship Palacios had with some of the intellectual Bolivian elite was downright bad. She is remembered as someone dark, hard, dogmatic, insensitive to anything but her own cause by people in the film sector. As said earlier,

[114] Epistemicide is a term used by decolonial scholars to refer to the destruction of indigenous knowledge (episteme) by the colonisers of European descent.

there is a certain character duality in Beatriz Palacios. On the one hand, she was empathic and capable of being sweet with the 'nobodies'. On the other, she was perceived as reproachful to those who didn't share her political point of view.[115] Alfonso Gumucio's overall appreciation of Palacios is half way; for him Palacios combined harsh political dogmatism, with a pragmatic and efficient approach to daily work. Nowadays, with an historical perspective, he considers her an excellent producer and the also the ideologue of the Ukamau project in all its non-cinematographic aspects.[116]

However, Gumucio criticised the general atmosphere of filmic focalism in the shooting of *Get out of Here!* which interestingly was applied not only to security procedures, but also to certain disciplinary requirements. To illustrate this, he recalled the case of the Chilean cameraman Héctor Ríos (who lived in exile in Venezuela and had been the responsible for the photography in *The Principal Enemy*) who was supposed to participate in the filming. Sanjinés and Palacios informed the rest of the crew that Ríos was not coming because he asked for a salary of 1,500 dollars per week to participate. They accused Ríos of betrayal and made the rest of the members of the crew sign a letter calling Ríos a traitor. In Gumucio's opinion: "Those things were initiatives of Beatriz, in those things she was very strong."[117]

Gumucio's diary tells a series of anecdotes about the fear and caution with which the crew were forced to act, daily. Despite understanding the political context, he condemns the naïve guerrilla wannabe attitude of some members of the group.

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[115] Jorge Sanjinés, interview with Isabel Seguí, La Paz, August 12, 2015.
[116] Alfonso Gumucio, interview with Isabel Seguí, La Paz, July 7, 2015.
[117] Alfonso Gumucio Dagron, interview with Isabel Seguí, La Paz, July 7, 2015. María Barea has confirmed this story to me. It was recounted to her by Hector Ríos who, decades later and still deeply hurt, showed her the famous letter. According to Barea, Ríos considered this accusation unfair, because Palacios and Sanjinés were not taking into account his personal situation which impeded him from abandoning his family to follow them (María Barea, interview with Isabel Seguí, September 27, 2016).

However, regarding Palacios he affirms: "Probably, Beatriz Palacios is the calmest and most serene."[118] Arguably she was the most politically experienced member of the crew. Her knowledge, self-imposed discipline and the maturity and rigor of her ideological position, made her seem calm. On the contrary, some other members of the crew were full of bravado, childishly daydreaming of direct combat in an armed struggle, without realising, in opinion of Gumucio, the irrationality and futility of that desire.[119]

The cautious attitude of Beatriz Palacios never abandoned her, or Sanjinés, even after the Cold War was finished and the political situation had apparently changed. Paradoxically, this approach offset the possibility of undertaking a truly horizontally configured work with a group of peers. The power structure of the Ukamau group was, as in a military column, strictly vertical. Only the top command (the Sanjinés-Palacios tandem) had a clear idea about the strategy (what was happening, who was involved, where the money was coming from, how it was going to be expended, etc.). The information flowed downwards in bits and pieces only when it was considered necessary by Palacios and Sanjinés.

In a recent interview conducted by María Aimaretti with the film soundtrack author Cergio Prudencio, who worked with her for the first time at the end of the 1980s, he describes Palacios as "the commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces, in the most military and operative of the senses."[120] Palacios' procedures were rooted in a hierarchical political culture, which, for her, had proved to be useful at least in the Cuban case, her country of adoption. Palacios and Sanjinés saw no contradiction in treating their subordinates, at least some of them, especially women (as in the case of

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[118] Gumucio, *Diario Ecuatoriano*, 47.
[119] Ibid, 47.
[120] Cergio Prudencio, interview with María Aimaretti in *Secuencias* 49 (Forthcoming, first semester 2019). I want to thank Dr Aimaretti for sharing this material prior to its publication.

her long-time assistants Consuelo Lozano and Patricia Suárez), or those with no specialised technical roles, as replaceable labour force, who should not be completely trusted in order to serve the general interest.

One employee of Sanjinés and Palacios, referred to Sanjinés' attitude as ultimately typical of the "landowner mentality."[121] This interpretation, although harsh, and even insulting, has a basis in some reality. Sanjinés was originally a member of the oligarchy and although he diligently walked the path of inner decolonisation, it can be argued that the spectrum of the inner coloniser was always there, couched in his unconscious attitudes. I have discussed the veracity of this interpretation with other members of the cultural elites of the capital city who have a very different opinion and attribute this hostility of the subordinates to the proverbial Bolivian sin of envy, which is certainly as real as the spectrum of the inner coloniser, perhaps more so.[122]

While taking into account the remarkable polarisation of the points of view, I will conclude by saying that —conversely with what is usually understood by those Third Cinema film scholars who study revolutionary film texts without delving in their mode of production— a *focalist* approach to film practice undermines the possibility of actually emancipatory collective filmmaking. This is due to the necessary lack of transparency and the strictly hierarchical relationships that must be established in order to make this type of guerrilla cinema successful. In this case, the ones who suffer the most unjust treatment are the rank and file members of the crew, who must surrender themselves totally to a big plan that they mostly ignore and, in turn, blindly trust the good judgement of the group leaders. Finally, it is fundamental to note that Beatriz Palacios continued to deploy this type of leadership even when the political circumstances changed, and it was not necessary to have in place those extreme

[121] Ramiro Valdez Guzmán, interview with Isabel Seguí, La Paz, August 17, 2015.
[122] Patricia Flores, interview with Isabel Seguí, La Paz, August 17, 2015.

measures. As a result, the Ukamau machinery ran as a clockwork but there was a lack of internal democracy.

Wife-Producer

The partnership between a female producer and a male director is a social formation which has proved to be a successful mode for film making in challenging production contexts, such as the Latin American independent/artisanal mode of production. In these cases, wife and husband roles often conform to a pattern: the man is the artist and the woman is the executor. Although their workloads are similar, the distribution of power is unequal, while the social and cultural capital (awards, tributes, a place in history) resulting from the labour of both parties continues to accrue solely to the male director.[123]

The study of the Hollywood studio era boss-secretary relationship done by Erin Hill helps to understand the Latin American husband/director-wife/producer relationship. Her concept, "creative service", describes a series of roles that serve "creative work by subtracting all noncreative work from the process."[124] And that is exactly what the producer-wife does, taking care of the entirety of the organisation from the most strategic to the most painstaking tasks that are fundamental for the production while receiving no public recognition, including a great quantity of emotional labour. Invisibility is also characteristic of domestic labour, so, when a woman works as a producer for her male partner, her activity is unconsciously interpreted as an extension

[123] Seguí, "Auteurism, Machismo-Leninismo, and Other Issues," 21.

[124] Hill, *Never Done*, 134.

of her household duties, and consequently played down by trade peers, public, critics and researchers.

Beatriz Palacios is a paradigmatic case of wife-producer. The story goes that, often, a younger woman, who loves and admires her partner (the male director-author), offers herself to act as the producer of his films. This decision may be the result of the social convention that leads women to put themselves at the service of their husbands, or, on the contrary, can be a conscious, mature and meditated decision on the part of the woman. I had the opportunity to interview Renate Sachse, the producer and wife of the Chilean director Patricio Guzmán, on this issue. It can be said that Guzman's latest successes and his return to the front row of the public scene are mainly based on the full support provided by Sachse to his career. She, in the middle of the 2000s, realized that Guzman's projects were not likely to be financed and made the decision to devote herself entirely to producing her husband's films. For it, she created the production company Atacama Films. Sachse remembers taken this difficult decision out of love to Guzmán since she never was particularly interested in making films. But in the end, she self-imposed this task with joy and without any self-deception. In her words:

> I became a producer without wanting to. I do not have the vocation of a producer, I only know the work of Patricio. I accompany him. I know everything. I take part in all the creative processes (...) It is a privilege to live and work with an artist like Patricio. But it is also a huge job, which I do not recommend to anyone. I work 24 hours, and I have to fight hard to be myself. That is important. But, I do not feel that I sacrifice myself because fifteen years ago, out of personal necessity I asked myself the question. I decided. I authorised myself to take that step [to become the producer of Guzman], because it was the only way to make the film [*Nostalgia for*

the Light, 2010]. Because no one was financing us. And that makes me able to take my place. I can defend, resist and limit (...) But I do not have the impression that I sacrificed something. If I had that feeling I could not do it. If it is a sacrifice, in my opinion, it does not work. Doing the act of authorising yourself is a deliberate decision that makes you assume all the consequences, even the unpleasant ones. It is a very rational decision.[125]

In the following case studies —the Bolivian Beatriz Palacios, addressed in this chapter, and the Peruvian María Barea, addressed in chapter three—the circumstances of the act of authorising themselves to be producers of their husbands are different to Sachse's (a middle-aged Western woman and a trained psychoanalyst) because Palacios and Barea were younger when they started to work with their respective partners. Moreover, they were motivated by a political urgency that led them to surrender themselves without reserve and without concerns about what were they risking in the process of becoming producers of their husbands —from physical security to psychological integrity. However, they could not be depicted as innocent vulnerable creatures. Although young, they were grown women who embarked on this life with full consciousness and desire. But, at the same time, it cannot be ignored that they faced a situation of disadvantage. Jorge Sanjinés and Luis Figueroa (Barea's husband), were already recognized personalities in their countries and held a social power that these young women lacked.

However, in the work place these women were regarded as the managers. Erika Hanekamp, a German woman who participated in the second shooting of *Get out of here!*, says about Beatriz Palacios: "She was the first one to get up in the morning, and

[125] Renate Sachse, interview with Isabel Seguí, St Andrews, April 4, 2015.

the last one to go to bed. She was involved in everything. She did everything. She was the organiser."[126] The musician Cergio Prudencio, who got to work with her ten years later, defines her as "El Control" (the control), the one who centralized all the operations.[127] Patricia Suárez, who was assistant of Palacios in the production of *The Clandestine Nation*, between 1985 and 1988, already in democratic times, affirms that although the power was concentrated among Sanjinés and Palacios, she, not he, personally oversaw everything (actors, costumes, scenery, props). As said in the previous section, the production assistants, a team between 3 and 6 people, received concrete daily orders about what to do (make, pick up, buy, or rent something or deliver a message), but they were not acquainted with the general plan. They never had access to a script, or even the plot of the film. Moreover, the human resources working on the project were compartmentalised and the communication between them inexistent. The production team in the city was not in touch with the production team in the countryside, who were the ones responsible of the coordination between the peasant communities and Ukamau high command. Only Palacios knew and coordinated both teams. Suárez affirms: "Many people circulated around the office, but most of it was a mystery, it was forbidden to ask questions."[128] The same is affirmed by Prudencio regarding the creative team, for instance, he was in charge of the music but had no contact with the director of photography or other participants. He was accountable to Palacios and Sanjinés only and had no other interactions. This experience leads him to questioning overtly the idea of the actual existence of a Ukamau "group."

Suárez describes Jorge Sanjinés as an absent figure. He delegated in Palacios the labour relations with the crew and the actors. She was the one responsible for

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[126] Gumucio, *Diario ecuatoriano*, 199.
[127] Cergio Prudencio, interview with María Aimaretti, *Secuencias* 49 (forthcoming 2019).
[128] Patricia Suárez, email interview with Isabel Seguí, March 12, 2017.

negotiating and making the payments and always reminded everyone of the necessity of making sacrifices for the cause. Although she admits that at that time many people would have worked freely for Sanjinés.[129] However, I would remark that the Ukamau group always paid their collaborators, something that cannot be affirmed of many other Latin American political filmmakers. Suárez also confirms that Palacios was the screen between Sanjinés and the outside world (Prudencio describes her as a wall).[130] And that most of the times she responded to inquiries for interviews by claiming that he was travelling, something that may or may not be true.

The other close assistant of Palacios, Consuelo Lozano, expresses herself in very similar terms. These women were proudly working for her for years, but they never had the feeling of belonging to a collective of filmmakers, where their opinion was going to be listened to or their contribution recognised. All of them were giving their best for the abstractly emancipatory goals of the Ukamau group, but they were not enjoying the personal benefits of participating in a liberating process. From the point of view of Palacios and Sanjinés, it could not be otherwise, because their labour methods were grounded on a self-imposed polarised worldview based on a very specific type of political culture, the one of the Latin American left during the Cold War which was highly hierarchical and patriarchal.

Sanjinés, if asked, straightforwardly acknowledges Palacios' importance. In an interview I conducted in July 2015, Sanjinés claimed: "Without Beatriz a film like *The Clandestine Nation* would not exist." This single statement is remarkable considering what it adds to the big picture and it should be taken into consideration by scholarship, criticism, and Bolivian media. *The Clandestine Nation* is regarded worldwide not only

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[129] Ibid.
[130] Cergio Prudencio, interview with María Aimaretti, *Secuencias* 49 (forthcoming 2019).

as Jorge Sanjinés' masterpiece, but, probably, as the best Bolivian film ever made, a source of national pride. The entire mainstream European auteurist culture fell at Sanjinés' feet after the film was awarded with the Golden Shield at San Sebastian Film Festival in 1989, something unprecedented for a Bolivian movie. However, the alleged auteur himself finds the contribution of Beatriz Palacios to the movie so crucial that it would not exist without it. By contrast, she is absent, as a co-creator, in all the references to the film. And she never lifted a finger to change that false perception.

The lack of interest shown, in general, by film criticism in the interrogation of production cultures deepens the gap between labour and recognition. The tasks associated with the executive production of any Ukamau's films (or any low budget films in countries with no industry) are multiplied exponentially in comparison with industrial films. They include a range of responsibilities so wide that it implies the devotion of the totality of the working time the producers have available over many years. But it is not only a question of time consumption and workload. The multitasking production processes are extremely challenging and require competent skills in diverse roles: organising, negotiating, writing projects, pitching, communicating with people of all types (from indigenous peasants to Western television executives), buying, renting, marketing, being in charge of all the logistics (from feeding the crew on a daily basis to contract laboratories abroad), and so on. Sanjinés declared to me the superiority of Palacios because she was able to do three things at the same time: typewriting, speaking with him, and speaking on the telephone with someone else. He laughed and declared himself unable to do so. To conclude the discussion — while using a patronising tone— Sanjinés declared women in general superior to men.[131] But, if that were the case, a further interrogation would be needed: who benefits from the superior capacities of

[131] Jorge Sanjinés, interview with Isabel Seguí, August 12, 2015.

these women? It seems that their husbands/colleagues are the net beneficiaries. They accrue all the public recognition while the "superior" women shoulder the unrecognised work. They have, surely, the satisfaction of contributing to the emancipation of their people, but it's always from the shadows. On the other hand, in the case of Palacios, she acted as creative servant for Sanjinés while holding a big amount of power and decision-making capacity.

2.4. Palacios, the Director

Banners of the Dawn (1983)

To analyse the one and only film in which Palacios appeared in the credits as co-director, we go back on time to 1978, when Palacios and Sanjinés returned to Bolivia from the exile. In an unpublished text called "El retorno" (The return) Palacios expresses gratitude for the facilitation of their comeback to the group of women from the mines, who initiated the epic hunger strike that ignited the end of Banzer's dictatorship; and which was followed by a general amnesty, the release of political prisoners, and the call for democratic elections. These women were Domitila Chungara and her comrades Angélica Flores, Aurora de Lora, Nelly de Paniagua, and Luzmila Rojas.[132]

Due to profound admiration, yet also sensing the enormously filmic quality of this story, Palacios proposed to Sanjinés that they produce a documentary about the strikers. Her intentions could not be fulfilled because the political situation speeded up and forced them to focus on the current affairs instead of revisiting historical ones, though recent. However, as discussed in chapter four, she later revisited the idea of portraying the women of the mines in a short documentary, co-directed with the young video makers Liliana de la Quintana and Raquel Romero, called *La mujer minera y la organización* (The miner woman and the organisation, 1986).

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[132] Beatriz Palacios, "El retorno". Fundación Grupo Ukamau, no date.

The project undertaken instead was *Banners of the Dawn*, a chronological reconstruction the historical episodes between the coup by Alberto Natusch Busch on November 1, 1979, and the return to the presidency of the country by the legitimate president Hernán Siles Suazo, in October 10, 1982. The movie covers the three general elections registered in 1978, 1979 and 1980; the two coup d'etat led by Colonel Alberto Natusch Busch and General Luís Garcia Meza; it documents the slaughter of All Saints Day; the assassination by the military of the socialist leader Marcelo Quiroga Santa Cruz and the Jesuit priest Luis Espinal (a journalist, film critic, and human rights defender). Moreover, the documentary bears witness to an enormous variety of peasant and working-class mobilisations; and finally, it shows the uncertain and fragile reopening of the democratic process. Nevertheless, the narrative emphasis is placed on the massive popular resistance that restored the power to the people by taking it from the hands of the army.

Banners of the Dawn is a guerrilla documentary carried out with a minimum crew composed by Beatriz Palacios, Jorge Sanjinés, Eduardo López Zavala (who declares in the documentary *Beatriz junto al pueblo* that he was invited by the couple to join them when they met in Mexico) and a few more people who occasionally supported them.[133] Their activity for more than two years consisted of recording the daily chronicles of political and social mobilisations in the country, in an urgent and testimonial style. The entire production took four years to be completed. Palacios and Sanjinés started filming in La Paz after the coup of Natusch in November 1979 and

[133] Iván Sanjinés, son of Jorge and manager of CEFREC (Centro de Formación y Realización Cinematográfica), notes that he also returned to Bolivia in 1978, and as part of the Ukamau group participated in the production of *Banners of the Dawn*. He must have been underage at the time. Iván Sanjinés, interview with María Aimaretti, "Entrevista a Iván Sanjinés. Memoria, identidad, dignificación y soberanía en el Espacio Audiovisual Boliviano: el CEFREC, o esa realidad que muchos soñaron." *Cine Documental* 18 (2018): 223.

released the movie at Havana International Film Festival in December 1983, where it won the Coral best documentary award.

In this chapter, Beatriz Palacios has been shown devoting her workload mostly to creative service or "aid(ing) the creative process by serving as a repository for all (the) unappealing tasks, details, and emotions" going on in Ukamau's cinematic projects.[134] However, in *Banners of the Dawn* she was co-responsible for the entire creative cycle (investigation and documentation, scriptwriting, direction, and postproduction) while carrying on, too, the bulk of the production and distribution. Consequently, *Banners* was for her a beloved undertaking, whose making and raising was hard and risky —Palacios even suffered imprisonment to avoid its confiscation and destruction by the Peruvian authorities in 1981— yet it was also rewarding. [135]

Testimonial approach to journalism, filmmaking, and activism

The process of documenting events in this film is based on the collection of evidence. Many of the testimonials that ground the argument are audiovisual, but before the filming work, research work was needed; and Palacios, an experienced interviewer, took the lead. Moreover, due to the shortage of personnel, she held the role of the sound recordist in the filming, which suited her remarkably because she was a journalist with a predilection for the testimonial format and had a great ability to listen and to gain trust.

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[134] Hill, *Never Done*, 133.

[135] After the coup of 1980 they went back into exile, in late 1981 they had completed a first version of the film. Then they fled to Peru with the intention of entering Bolivia by land, but the police were waiting for them in Lima. Jorge Sanjinés managed to escape from the airport but trying to avoid the confiscation of the film Palacios was arrested and imprisoned for two weeks, a time which could have been much longer, had it not been for the intervention of her dear friend the filmmaker Nora de Izcue, who moved heaven and earth to take her out of prison. When Palacios was released they returned to Bolivia with the film, but then they resumed the filming once again because they realized that the people were moving again, and the dictatorship would fall apart sooner than later. Jorge Sanjinés, La Paz, July 12, 2015 and Nora de Izcue, June 21, 2015, interviews with Isabel Seguí.

Some testimonies collected by Beatriz Palacios are preserved in the Fundación Grupo Ukamau's Archive. Many of them date from the time of the filming of *Banners of the Dawn* (November 1979- October 1982) while others are from later on because Palacios never stopped doing this blend of journalism and oral history for the preservation of popular memory. The testimonies consist of interviews and transcripts of conversations with all kinds of subjects of subaltern origin: street vendors, prostitutes, shoeshine boys, soldiers, housewives, miners, the elderly, peasants, etc. As Doris Sommer notes, Latin American intellectual leftists, from the 1960s on, tried to find new ways to "adequately reconstruct their national histories in a way that would help to plot directions for change."[136] She defines the impulse behind this challenging mandate as "a combination of guilt, social responsibility, and a kind of superiority that breeds messianism."[137] This is descriptive of the impetus behind the political and artistic work of the Palacios-Sanjinés couple, a paradigmatic example of how Latin Americans do not make a clear distinction between the role of intellectual, artist, and activist.

As shown throughout this thesis, this testimonial turn affected women more than men, "journalists, anthropologists, and literati left their writing desks to become scribes. The women writers stood to gain the most; they could address their double marginalization by helping to portray other women as workers, militants, strategists."[138] However, the work of Jorge Sanjinés since its inception was also based on staged testimonials or docu-fictions. Ukamau films, even the fictions, are testimonial-like because they represent the historical context, with the aim of challenging the official

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[136] Doris Sommer, "Not Just a Personal story: Women's testimonios and the plural self," in *Life/Lines. Theorizing Women's Autobiography,* eds., Bella Brodzki and Celeste Schenk (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1988), 112.
[137] Ibid, 112.
[138] Ibid, 114.

accounts, and always point out those responsible for social injustice and/or repression. In these productions, the portrayed perpetrators could be generic social groups or institutions (the *criollo-mestizo* oligarchies, the army, the Peace Corps, the CIA) or could be concrete individuals (politicians, military, or company managers) directly accused by using their name and picture, although, it is more frequently the first case. The testimonial vocation of Beatriz Palacios was more orthodox and less prone to fiction. Soria and Sanjinés saw themselves as narrators and demiurges yet, for her, reality was convincing enough. Moreover, women intellectuals, artists and activists were the ones who had most to win with the testimonial turn. Suddenly, what they did best became fashionable: perceiving, listening to and conveying the stories of the voiceless. Through this activity, they could also overcome their own lack of voice in a male chauvinist literary and filmic environment. They felt that, at last, there was a place for the recognition and legitimisation of their processual methodology in the public sphere.

The testimonial production of Palacios was diverse, in addition to the research of stories and conducting of interviews featured in the documentary *Banners of the Dawn,* she regularly published articles, chronicles, and reports in the press. Her section in the weekly *Aquí* — which was eloquently called 'Para no olvidar' (Not to forget)— deserves special mention.[139] She inaugurated her column on March 23, 1983 (in April that year *Banners of the Dawn* premiered in La Paz). In a footnote on a draft of the article "Bolivia, Días Rabiosos y Tensos" (Bolivia: Rabid and Tense Days) there is a

[139] The weekly magazine *Aquí* was founded among others by the Jesuit priest, human rights activist and film critic, Luis Espinal in 1979. Espinal was brutally murdered by paramilitaries in April 1980. Beatriz Palacios started her column the 23rd of March 1983, with the intention of "spreading the courageous and anonymous voice of workers and peasants, men and women, that suffered in their own flesh the humiliation of the dictatorship" in a context, the return to democracy, where there was a risk of forgetting or distorting recent events. These articles where compiled and published under the title of *Los días rabiosos*, in 2015. Beatriz Palacios, *Los días rabiosos* (La Paz: Gente Común and Fundación grupo Ukamau, 2005).

short bio that informs us that she was preparing for publication a compilation of testimonies obtained by her on the streets during the filming period of *Banners of the Dawn*.[140]

Her aim in exposing these testimonies during the early years of the transition to democracy was to combat the culture of impunity that was becoming the norm in the country. In fact, Bolivia has never carried out a rigorous process of transitional justice, while all those responsible for the repression have gone unpunished, apart from General García Meza who was tried and convicted, dying in a military hospital in La Paz on April 29, 2018.[141] But some of the other perpetrators, such as Hugo Banzer, were even rewarded with the presidency of the government in subsequent democratic elections.[142] Although the announced book never saw the light of day, a selection of her work was published under the name of *Los días rabiosos* (The Days of Rage) in 2005. The name of the article published in 1983, "Bolivia, Días Rabiosos y Tensos" (Bolivia: Rabid and Tense Days), inspired the title of the book.

The motivations that led Palacios to choose the testimonial genre as a preferred form of expression emanated not only from the "testimonial turn" of the intellectuals of the continent, but also from her training as a journalist in Havana. Cuba was one of the hubs of this new kind of proletarian literature, and Cuban cultural institutions did their most to legitimise the genre in the 1970s.[143] Cubans were prominent theoreticians and practitioners of the genre, such as Miguel Barnet (with his seminal testimonial novel

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[140] Beatriz Palacios, "Bolivia, Días Rabiosos y Tensos," Fundación Grupo Ukamau, no date.
[141] "Muere el exdictador boliviano Luis García Meza a los 86 años," Efe, La Paz, April 29, 2018. https://www.efe.com/efe/america/portada/muere-el-exdictador-boliviano-luis-garcia-meza-a-los-86-anos/20000064-3600495
[142] Only very recently, in August 2017, has the Bolivian government created a Truth Commission. This commission arrived too late, and at an enormous cost to the families of the victims of State terrorism. Curiously, one of the five members of the panel is Eusebio Gironda, who appears in *The Courage of the People*, re-enacting his role as the student leader who was in Siglo XX at the moment of the massacre of St John's Eve.
[143] The "Testimonio Prize" awarded annually by Casa de las Americas epitomised the definitive institutionalisation of the genre.

Biografía de un cimarrón (*Biography of a Cimarron*) or his essay *La fuente viva* (The living source). Nevertheless, foreign writers and journalist like the American Margaret Randall found in the Caribbean island a fertile ground for their testimonial experimentation in search of new languages.

For Randall, a good editor of testimonies should cultivate an insight into the ideology of the proletariat and have a sound knowledge of the subject matter. They must show, as well, human sensibility and a humble respect for the informant and their life. They must be persistent, disciplined and organised at work and be a proficient writer.[144] Palacios fulfilled this ideal. Moreover, her work complied strictly with the elements that, for Randall, underpin testimonial procedures: use of direct sources; the delivery of a story not through the generalizations that characterized conventional texts, but through the particularities of the voice (or voices) of the protagonist of a fact or event; immediacy; the use of complementary or support material to contextualize a life story; and finally, aesthetic quality.[145]

In her selection of testimonies — and throughout her work— Palacios shows a consistent interest in women and a focus on their issues. Mostly, her focus is on women of the popular classes. In her approach to them she stands out due to the lack of any patronisation, and her willingness to highlight their agency and wisdom. This admired perspective is used in general by Palacios to refer to the Bolivian popular classes. When asked about the goals of *Banners* she states: "More than an interest in denouncing the atrocities that have been committed against our people it has interested us to perpetuate

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[144] Margaret Randall, "¿Qué es y cómo se hace un testimonio?," *Revista de crítica literaria latinoamericana* 36 (1992): 28
[145] Ibid, 25.

their lucidity (...), their maturity, and the tremendous determination they have to construct a just and humane society."[146]

Palacios, hence, privileged the use of a direct, raw style out of respect and admiration. It was her perception that there was no need for excessive editing after hearing and watching, with full attention, what the ordinary people had to say. After her return to Bolivia, she was permanently fascinated by the eloquence and coherence of the people surrounding her. In consequence, her attitude was one of permanent active listening, collection, and transcription of testimonies. A good example of her "testimonial" life style can be found in the article "La modista" (The seamstress) for her column *Not to forget*. Palacios situates the events she describes in October 1980: the film crew had travelled to the city of Oruro to interview a group of mineworkers who had fought back against the military coup of Garcia Meza, the previous July. They were travelling incognito and had a tough time passing through several military checkpoints in one of which an agent of the Bolivian state was about to discover their 16mm camera hidden in a bag of groceries and clothes. Once in Oruro, they were recovering from the stress over coffee at the home of trusted friends. Palacios writes:

> In the room, there was a young, thin, coppery-skinned woman, with a beautiful and intelligent gaze who was attentively listening to our conversation. The friend who hosted us told us that the young lady had had, a few days before, a much more terrible experience than ours. *Then, I asked her to tell us her story.* We were interested in filming her, but we brought only the necessary virgin film to cover the purpose of the travel. *When we explained to her our current work*

[146] Beatriz Palacios and Jorge Sanjinés, "Jorge Sanjinés y Beatriz Palacios hablan sobre su película 'Las Banderas del amanecer'," *Aquí*, January 14-20, 1984.

and my intention to publish and denounce the abuses, she offered herself to testify, with a lot courage, to tell us what she had gone through: 'I am Marta now —because while this nightmare that punishes our country does not pass, I will not use my true name— and I am seamstress, that's what I do for a living, and with that I feed my children.'[147] (Emphasis mine).

The woman then proceeds to tell the story of how on July 19 (days after the murder of the socialist leader Marcelo Quiroga Santa Cruz) four paramilitaries entered her home accusing her of having participated in a demonstration on July 17 against Garcia Meza's coup. That accusation was true; she, with other community members, had stoned tanks in the streets. The paramilitaries, using extreme violence, attacked her and her two small children. The alarmed neighbours entered their home to defend them and prevent her arrest. After threatening to lynch the paramilitaries if they did not release the woman, the scared thugs run away, and the woman was able to flee rapidly leaving the children, who were hidden by the neighbours, and then returned to her overnight. Since that event, the three of them had been living in hiding.

The piece about the seamstress shows the procedures followed by Palacios to earn the people's trust. First, she depicts herself as one among many people being intimidated by the fascist forces. From the beginning, Palacios shares her fears and vulnerability. But, at the same time, she shows her strong commitment to the denunciation of these acts and offers herself as a mediator and megaphone to the voiceless, making her cultural and social capital available to them. Moreover, Palacios' trustworthiness was predicated on her accurate knowledge of the social reality of the country. People would open their hearts to Palacios, even in circumstances where

[147] Beatriz Palacios, "La modista," in *Los días rabiosos*, 43-48. Originally titled "La costurera."

prudence was a survival tool. Drawing from her ability to penetrate people's hearts, she developed a testimonial style grounded on respect, identification, and first-hand knowledge of the context.[148]

Regarding her editing work, it follows a pattern, which is possibly a vestigial trait of her journalistic background. She starts with the depiction of the subject, making a micropolitical analysis; later, she proceeds to the macropolitical contextualization of the life story, but without losing sight of the person who is suffering from remediable causes. For instance, in the article "Quién sabe si volverá" (Who knows if he will return), published in *Aquí*, in 1986, she starts by describing her permanent attitude of active listening: "The flight was delayed, and I wanted to use my time interviewing a school teacher who came to the airport to bid farewell to her husband."[149] This introduction frames her prospective intention of making public denunciation through a wide range of case studies of diverse social classes, that will show the spectrum of suffering of the Bolivian population. In the first part of this interview, the woman explains she is a former teacher forced to be a cook in the house of a family of expats, since the salary is better than the one the State pays to school teachers. Meanwhile, her children are employed in various informal jobs, and they go to night school. Her husband is now a migrant worker, but they contracted debts to pay for the trip, hoping that it was an investment for the whole family. After the introduction of the woman's personal situation, Palacios asks the lady: "Why do you think things are like that?" and she answers emphatically: "Well, I think mainly because we are crucified by this damn external debt, mostly, contracted by Banzer. That is the primary cause."[150] Then the woman explains how the perverse mechanism of debt affects the inhabitants of the

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[148] Randall, "¿Qué es y cómo se hace un testimonio?," 27.
[149] Palacios, "Quién sabe si volverá," *Aquí,* La Paz, May 10-16, 1986.
[150] Ibid.

country, analysing as well other macropolitical issues that profoundly affect the lives of ordinary people. The first part of the interview could move a reader to tears. Palacios empathises with the pain of others very easily, and hence she can mediate the emotion masterfully, but she always shows the structural causes of poverty, inequality, and lack of opportunities.

Palacios' writings balance emotion and analysis. Ukamau films' approach is similarly emotionally moving, without losing sight of the political criticism and didacticism. Nevertheless, the journalistic testimonies by Palacios can also be used as sources for the research of her cinematic practices. For instance, in the article called "El capitán" (The Captain) she describes the start of the filming of *Banners of the Dawn*:

> I went to the neighbourhood of Munaypata the 7th of November of 1979, during the military coup. The city was controlled by numerous patrols. War jeeps and armoured cars with heavily armed soldiers circulated the streets as if a foreign army had invaded our city of La Paz. The general strike called by the Bolivian Workers Central was massively supported and very few civilians bustled in the streets. Our film group decided to make a movie that would account for these events and the slaughter perpetrated against the people. *We were interested in getting direct testimonies of the genocide* and I wanted to get to the relatives of the victims and the wounded. It was said that more than three hundred people had been murdered on the streets. The assassinated were not only those who faced the army with stones and sticks. Bystanders and walkers had been shot too. The officials had ordered to open fire indiscriminately, or maybe it would be more accurate to say that they were shooting discriminately, targeting the

poor and the people with indigenous blood that live in the slums of La Paz.[151] (Emphasis mine).

The group's strategy was informed by Palacios' procedural communicative impulse, but in *Banners of the Dawn,* this impulse also informs the film text. In Jorge Sanjinés opinion: "Beatriz was the soul of this film." He remarks: "she contributed a lot in the editing, she has a refined cinematic sense and her observations helped decisively."[152] Therefore, in the film structure, —as in Palacios' testimonial work— the real events structure the narrative and not conversely.

Another characteristic of Palacios' testimonial style was the first-hand intimate knowledge of the popular classes. During the filming of *Banners*, the small film crew travelled around the country during more than two years, always seeking to portray from within the workers or peasant mobilisations (also, surreptitiously, they recorded the armed forces). In this regard, there are outstanding images of all kind of events: rallies, roadblocks, assemblies, meetings. Also, more adventurous demonstrations of force, such as a scene where a group of miners, hidden under balaclavas, make an exhibition of dynamite launching; or another striking scene where a group of covered-up women and men laboriously prepare Molotov cocktails while talking about the necessity of being always prepared for the fight. According to Jorge Sanjinés, the level of intimacy and trust that the crew of Ukamau shared with the communities being portrayed was due to a common political position (against the dictatorship and American imperialism), and the defining factor of trust was Palacios' active militancy

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[151] Palacios, *Los días rabiosos*, 27.
[152] Jorge Sanjinés, interview with Lupe Cajías, May 19, 1984. The newspaper cutting of this interview is kept in Fundación Grupo Ukamau's archive. The cutting includes the date of publication but not the name of the outlet.

(not his) which guaranteed the organicity of the results in the eyes of the participant groups.[153]

On the other side of the spectrum, *Banners* is considered by the critics to be one of Sanjinés' less successful films. It is often described as irregular and confusing, a minor oeuvre, not at the level of other creative milestones by the director that are more formally balanced and aesthetically beautiful. Sanjinés is widely admired by male Western or Westernised film critics as an auteur who has managed to balance the openly political content of his films with an efficient accomplishment of cinematic beauty. However, in this case, in the words of Alfonso Gumucio: "(…) in *Banners of the Dawn* this [aesthetic] concern seem absent; the directors seem to have taken the option of exercising a stark look at the political reality of the country, without filters or aesthetic make-up. The result is, the same way, harsh and violent."[154] Furthermore, Gumucio remarks that foreign audiences would perceive the film as a cryptic mass of testimonies that gives too much information, with little clarification.[155] Gumucio seems to forget that Palacios and Sanjinés were not so interested in foreign audiences or Westernised film criticism. Instead, they were reacting to the internal political situation and trying to be of service to the Bolivian people.

One of the reasons why the film may be considered "confusing" is due to the lack of an external narration, such as the voice-over that usually accompanies Ukamau's films. In the *Courage of the People* and *Get Out of Here!* the voice-over, made by Jorge Sanjinés himself, constitutes a classic example of authorial control, because the director imposes his own version of the facts at the end of the movie. In the case of *The Principal Enemy*, the narrator was the indigenous peasant leader Saturnino Huillca, a

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[153] Jorge Sanjinés, interview with Isabel Seguí, August 12, 2015.
[154] Alfonso Gumucio, *"Las banderas del amanecer,"* in *Cine Documental en América Latina,* ed. Paulo Antonio Paranaguá (Madrid: Cátedra, 2003), 380.
[155] Ibid, 380.

storyteller used to create a Brechtian distancing effect, through announcing the events before they are shown, in order to avoid suspense. This way the spectators are less affected and more aware of the critical approach taken by the film. *Banners* was the first time since *Blood of the Condor* that an Ukamau film had no voice-over. The decision to abandon the voice-over was taken by consensus by the directors, according to Sanjinés: "There is no narrative that guides the facts, we took care to not impose our voice, and everything said and spoken in the film comes from the opinions of the people, their leaders, the real protagonists of their true story."[156] However, this was the first time that Palacios had directed and, therefore, had the final responsibility in the formal decision-making. Moreover, the sound was Palacios' duty, not only during the shooting, but also as the researcher and salvager of the other sources that were finally used to construct the narrative. I would, therefore, venture to say that it was on her initiative that the over-indoctrinating voice-over was dismissed; principally, for practical reasons, because there were enough usable political arguments in the voices of the common people of Bolivia.

Moreover, and paradoxically, the abandonment of the voice-over did not mean that the directors renounced editorialisation. On the contrary, the main thesis of the film was constructed from a collage of voices that came not only from the direct sound captured during the unfolding street events, but also from sources produced expressly for the film (such as interviews) or acquired through semi-scripted provocations by the filmmakers (creative re-enactments). In addition, external sources, like radio programmes, were used freely to support their arguments.

The final minutes of the film are an excellent case in point for the editorial sound montage developed by Palacios. At the end of the movie, the Bolivian people,

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[156] Palacios and Sanjinés, "Jorge Sanjinés y Beatriz Palacios hablan sobre su película 'Las Banderas del amanacer'," *Aquí*, January 14-20, 1984.

after many tribulations, remove the military from power, allowing the return of Hernan Siles Suazo, the legitimate President elected in 1980. Nevertheless, Siles, who won with an electoral programme that promised to end the economic package imposed by the International Monetary Fund, has not fulfilled these promises at the time of editing, so the filmmakers want to send him a message of warning. To do so, they devote the last five minutes of the film to a caveat.

The sequence begins with images of street riots. However, the central element is not the image but the carefully selected and edited audio narrative, assembled like a collage of voices but with a definite editorial line. It begins with the intervention of a trade unionist who warns that if the government of Hernán Siles Suazo does not implement his manifesto (the one which the people voted for) they will not collaborate, and there will be clashes instead. Then a group of militants discuss the source of the problem, concluding that the principal obstacle is not the people who rule (i.e. Siles or García Meza), but the system. Consequently, the solution for the country would be something that has so far never been tried: removing capitalism and installing a socialist system instead.

After this claim, the audio cuts to a demonstration where people shout, "Weapons for the people, damn it!" Then the audio returns to the prior discussion, to insist on the idea that what is important is a change of the whole system. A new cut brings us a speech of a leader who says: "Therefore, we must think that our fundamental goal is the seizure of power, but not in a democracy as we know it today. We seek a people's democracy, participatory, where decisions are made by national majorities and not by private enterprises or the military." Then the tune that has been the leitmotif of the entire film comes back, while we watch a group of working-class children marching, representing the future. In the next scene, that marks the end of the film, we witness a

worker-peasant meeting in Ayo-Ayo —the birthplace of the Aymara leader Tupac Katari—a crowd of peasants run up a hill (an image of hope and overcoming) while shouting "Long live Bolivia! Down with US imperialism! Long live Tupac Katari! Long live Bartolina Sisa! Long live the Bolivian Workers Central! Long live the Bolivian United Confederation of Peasant Workers!." While the crowd of indigenous peasants keeps climbing the hill, the word *fin* (the end) appears on the screen, but then this single word is used to form the sentence: *No tiene fin un pueblo que está en pie* (There's no *end* for the people on their feet). The audio-visual montage of the last minutes of the film conveys the message using a collage of popular voices; however, it is a very clear message and not one open to interpretation. Although it is, by all means, much more effective than a conclusion transmitted by a Griersonian "voice of God," all of these variegated voices unanimously support the directors' thesis: there is no possible victory for the people in a neo-liberal system and the Bolivian people are not going to stop fighting the military, economic, social, or racial oppression, until their final reckoning. So, beware new rulers, legislators and "democratic" representatives.

Palacios' film style: between direct and political intervention cinema

Sanjinés affirms in an interview with Lupe Cajías that *Banners of the Dawn* is a film of "direct cinema".[157] I would rather place it halfway between direct and political intervention cinema, because it not only documents but also interprets "reality." It has a spirit of direct cinema in its inclusion of "the living experience and the negotiation with

[157] Jorge Sanjinés, interview with Lupe Cajías, May 19, 1984.

chance," [158] also, the approach to the temporality of concrete action; but the film does not pretend to present a panorama open to multiple interpretations. As seen, the message of the film is precise. There is a Manicheistic vision of conflict, with clearly separated good and evil sides; and, although the good side is densely populated and offers a multi-faceted view of the Bolivian people, it also provides a polarised vision of the conjuncture.

Another feature of direct cinema that is present in *Banners* is the intimacy or the ability to penetrate private spaces and the backstage of political direct action with an unprecedented closeness.[159] However, in terms of direct cinema, taking, for instance, Robert Drew's commandments (be there, be unobtrusive, do not distort the situation),[160] *Banners* only obeys the first one. Palacios and Sanjinés intervene in the events without reflecting through their filmic discourse on the mediation they exert. *Banners* is a political essay. It is not a primarily an ethnographic or aesthetic product. It is the staging of the manifestations of Bolivian popular political culture from the, somewhat internal, angle of two organic intellectuals in alliance with the represented social groups.

Palacios and Sanjinés also incorporated certain techniques in the film such as participatory filmmaking and creative improvisation by nonprofessional popular actors, which they had learned in their extensive experience in the creation of collaborative docu-fiction films over the previous decades. This methodology is very similar to the cooperative mode of production of written *testimonios* and provides an alternative to traditional individual creativity. However, this kind of creativity involves the risk of some creative exaggeration, that moves the representation away from the strictly

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[158] María Luisa Ortega, *Cine Directo: Reflexiones entorno a su concepto* (Madrid T&B Editores, 2008), 19.
[159] Ibid, 18.
[160] Jeane Hall, "Realism as a Style in Cinéma Verité: A Critical Analysis of 'Primary'," *Cinema Journal* 30, no. 4 (Summer 1991): 24.

documentary format.[161] To illustrate this latter trend, I am going to refer to the scene of the roadblock in *Banners*. This is a re-enactment performed by the actual road blockers at the request of Palacios and Sanjinés. Located in the middle of the film, the scene does not stand out; it seems to be just one more of the many popular actions portrayed in a documentary mode. However, upon making a closer analysis of the scene, we realise that it is almost entirely reconstructed through an improvised re-enactment.

Jorge Sanjinés states that he, Palacios, and López Zavala went to an actual roadblock taking place in the middle of the Altiplano.[162] Blocking the main roads is a common practice in Bolivian political struggles. The intention of the filmmakers was, as usual, to document the direct action carried out by peasants. To that end, they took some establishing shots and other images, but then they unexpectedly met an acquaintance of theirs among the road blockers, the peasant leader Lucía Mejía, executive secretary of the *Confederación Nacional de Mujeres Campesinas Indígenas de Bolivia-Bartolina Sisa* (National Federation of Peasant Women of Bolivia-Bartolina Sisa).[163] Mejía reunited the principal leaders at the roadblock, she introduced them to the members of the Ukamau group and explained the kind of cinematic work they had been conducting with the Andean people for decades. It was not difficult to convince the bored peasants—a roadblock normally lasts for several days—to collaborate on the film.

The fictional element is introduced with the supposed arrival of a car to the barricade, a Volkswagen (the production car) which is forced to stop. In the next shot, a big *gringo*-looking man gets out of the vehicle and walks towards the protestors (only

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[161] Margarita Fernández Olmos, "Latin American Testimonial Narrative, or Women and the Art of Listening," *Revista Canadiense De Estudios Hispánicos* 13, no. 2 (1989): 187.

[162] Jorge Sanjinés, interview with Isabel Seguí, La Paz, August 12, 2015.

[163] This organisation of peasant women was named after Bartolina Sisa, Aymara military leader and heroine of the struggle for independence.

his back is visible, but he is the cameraman Eduardo Lopez, so it can be assumed that Sanjinés was filming). The following shots are in point-of-view, the *gringo*/camera is aggressively addressed by the crowd of menacing Aymara peasants, who take the opportunity to show off their physical strength and their persuasive rhetorical skills, always in Aymara language. The entire scene lasts three minutes, and it is a masterful example of totally improvised "cinema with the people." The creativity of the peasants, who deliver the most convincing performance possible, is an example of a kind of testimonial inventiveness that breaks the boundaries between documentary and fiction.

Banners of the Dawn is a testimonial, processual, and politically usable film. It took four years to complete. The tiny crew travelled the entire country, went into exile in the middle of the filming, and Palacios even paid with jail time. In general, in Ukamau films, the production processes and practices are as impressive as the resultant products, but in this instance, it is even more the case. The narrative is only confusing for those who are unaware of Bolivian history during those years. However, for the protagonists, the Bolivian people, the storytelling is crystal clear and absolutely crucial. In a recent article, María Aimaretti compares the film with the *wiphala* (the many-coloured Aymara banner), which represents the embodiment of multiple voices, bodies, and points of view. The same way the complex montage on the film does not duplicate the confusion of the traumatic events but represents an effort to systematise them under a different logic, the Andean.[164]

The influence of Palacios' mediation is present everywhere in this movie, despite her insistence in disappearing not only behind the subaltern protagonists but also behind Sanjinés, who, as usual, took most of the credit in the public spheres (audience, press, criticism, and academia) of their joint work. The irony, in this case, is that

[164] María Aimaretti, "Wiphala de memorias: sobre el documental *Las banderas del amanecer* (Grupo Ukamau, 1983)," *Archivos de la Filmoteca* 73 (2017): 64.

Palacios' highly effective direction seemed to tarnish Sanjinés reputation among the Westernised film critics of their country, who did not understand the inherent coherence present not only in the process, but in the film as a text as well; a coherence present, as has been indicated, in the exquisite, almost indiscernible, blend of staged and documentary action and in the unimposing but highly editorial sound design.

The last scene directed by Palacios

Palacios had very few opportunities in her professional life to perform directing tasks. *Banners of the Dawn* was probably her best chance, however, on February 17, 2003, five months before her passing, she directed the last scene of her life for the film *Los Hijos del último Jardín (Children of the last garden)*. At that time, the streets of La Paz were stirred due to a violent uprise which went down in history as *Febrero Negro* (Black February). Taking advantage of the absence of Sanjinés, Palacios took the initiative to shoot a street sequence of the protests. To that end, she brought up to the dangerous streets of the capital city a tiny crew and a couple of non-professional actors, protagonists in the ongoing filming. Once in the eye of the storm, she instructed the team to mingle with the crowd of demonstrators that were roaring slogans against the government of president Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada, and his devastating neoliberal policies. At one point, the actors pretend to lead a march. The main actor is situated just before Evo Morales, soon to be first indigenous president of Bolivia, at that point just a leader of the opposition.[165]

[165] Black February (Febrero Negro) is the name given to a series of violent events that happened in Bolivia, between February 12 and 13, 2003. The popular unrest due to tax increases and opposition to State policies of gas exports, provoked a series of clashes between the general population and the military —included a direct confrontation between the police, who also opposed State policies, and the army— that ended up with dozens killed and hundreds injured.

Morales (unaware that he is participating in a movie), the actors, and the mass of demonstrators shout "Fusil! Metralla! El pueblo no se calla!" (Rifle! Shrapnel! The people are not going to shut up!). For a brief moment, Beatriz Palacios appears in the frame wearing a straw hat and sunglasses. Her physical appearance has deteriorated due to sickness. She looks older than she is, but her attitude is of determination. When she realises that the camera is recording her, she abandons the frame immediately. However, the final cut, edited by Sanjinés after her death, bears witness to her active presence as the director of the most interesting scenes of what is, otherwise, a failed experiment, the first digital film of Ukamau. If Jorge Sanjinés had been in La Paz that day, in his own words, he "would have tried to prevent her from going to the streets."[166] But thanks to his absence, it is possible to enjoy the last example of Palacios' cinematic style, which was also her approach to life: direct, militant, and all-encompassing.

Unfinished cinematic projects

In the formal and informal conversations that I have had throughout my research work, I was always reminded by my interlocutors of a personal project that Beatriz Palacios took to the grave. With different levels of knowledge and closeness, it was *vox populi* in Bolivia that Palacios had been preparing a movie of her own that never came about. This film is *La tierra sin mal* (The land without evil). Furthermore, through hers and Sanjinés' comments, we know that there was another project of Palacios that was abandoned in the late 1970s, the film about the five women of the mines that ended the dictatorship of Banzer. However, there are still more documentable, unfinished projects by Beatriz Palacios. I found two of them in the archive of the Fundación Grupo Ukamau

[166] Jorge Sanjinés, interview with Isabel Seguí, August 12, 2015.

(Ukamau Group Foundation): *Cuatro Mujeres para la Guerra* (Four Women for War) and *Amayapampa o la Pampa de las Ánimas* (Amayapampa or the Soul's Plain). Here, I shed light on these hitherto ignored projects by Palacios, although there may be more hidden in some dusty box, or lost forever.

Cuatro Mujeres para la Guerra (Four Women for War)

The remnants of the project *Four Women for War* consists of two pages, not dated, which include a summary of the argument of the film broken down into three parts. First, Palacios makes a general introduction of the historical period, remarking how the struggle for the Independence of Upper Peru (today Bolivia) had a high cost for its inhabitants because the war lasted longer than in any other American territory due to the colonisers reluctance to abandon the natural wealth of these lands (it is essential to bear in mind that the exploitation of metals and other raw materials from the territory of present-day Bolivia was the main source of income of the Spanish crown and its surplus gave rise to European capitalism). After placing this in context, Palacios notes:

> Among the infinity of leaders and heroes of this cruel and prolonged war, many women stood out, who in special tasks or directly in the battlefield, shone by their courage and will. Among them, it is recognised by the historiographical investigation that four are most notable: the Aymara Indian BARTOLINA SISA, the mestiza SIMONA MANZANEDA, the aristocrat VICENTA JUARISTI and the criolla JUANA AZURDUY.[167]

[167] Beatriz Palacios, "Cuatro Mujeres para la Guerra," Fundación Grupo Ukamau, no date.

This would be, hence, a film dedicated to the prominence of women in the pro-independence struggle of Upper Peru. In Bolivia, there is a popular tradition of vindication of heroic female lineages. Accordingly, Beatriz Palacios wants to bring to the big screen that story of heroines, completing the painting of the most celebrated, the Indian Bartolina Sisa and the *criolla* Juana Azurduy, with the aristocrat Vicenta Juaristi and the *mestiza* Simona Manzaneda. Palacios' ideas converge with the claims of female heroism so typical of the Bolivian left-wing and also of the popular interpretation of national history. Moreover, it shows a remarkable feminist focus. Palacios aims to foreground the contribution of Bolivian women of all races and all classes to the Independence cause, while keeping the indigenous and national liberation claim in the background. Formally, she proposes to do so by entrusting to a single actress the four starring roles, in order to "give an element of unity and organicity to the film, symbolising the value of the universal woman."[168] This reference to a "universal woman" may sound essentialist to contemporary ears. However, Palacios, throughout all her journalistic and testimonial work, enjoyed a first-hand knowledge of all strata of Bolivian society, so, it would be strange to imagine her writing from a place that was not intersectional. I interpret this concept more as a rhetorical convention —probably influenced by the feminist rhetoric of Latin American white feminism— than an actual understanding of the existence of such universal reality.

Regarding the practical aspects of the film, an exciting note included in this unpublished document reads: "The film anticipates the mobilisation of several peasant and women's organisations, therefore, thousands of them will be involved. This will naturally increase the cost of production but will enrich the strength and presence of the

[168] Ibid.

film." [169] Once again there is evidence of the intimacy of Palacios with the peasant and women's organisations who she feels secure in being able to mobilise for participation in her project; not a few tens, but thousands of them. This is another testimony to the relationship of trust and mutual help which existed between Palacios and Bolivian social and political organisations; and in this case, it is particularly interesting that it also happened with women's organisations, something that can be seen in the contribution of the *Bartolinas* to the film *Banners of the Dawn*.[170]

Amayapampa o la Pampa de las Ánimas (Amayapampa or the Soul's Plain)

Amayapampa is another unfinished film project found in the archive of the Fundación Grupo Ukamau (Ukamau Group Foundation). It is explicitly described in its title as "Docu-fiction by Beatriz Palacios." The file that contains the dossier includes a brief synopsis and objectives of the project, the summary of the necessary means — equipment (super 16mm, stereo Nagra and microphones); services (montage and sound) and technical staff (sound person, makeup artist and special effects artist)— to carry it out, as well as a forecast of the distribution of production costs between Ukamau and an alleged coproducer that they wanted to be the National Film Board of Canada (NFB). [171]

A detailed pre-script is then included, structured by sequences and scenes. According to the document, by the scope of the pre-script, the film is estimated to be about two hours long. It is also intended to be shot in super 16mm and eventually blown

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[169] Ibid.
[170] The members of the National Confederation of Indigenous Peasant Women of Bolivia-Bartolina Sisa, are known as *las Bartolinas*.
[171] The document relates that the group have contacted the National Film Board of Canada "to cover the processes of development-copying and finalization (optical, effects, credits, copies and blow-up)." Beatriz Palacios, "Amayapampa," Fundación Grupo Ukamau, no date.

up to 35mm for exhibition. The dossier also includes a description of the film's plot in French, probably to be sent to the NFB. In this specification in French, the film is divided into five blocks of content corresponding to those described in more detail in the pre-script. After this documentation, there is an 80-page press file on the tragic events that took place in Amayapampa and their political and judicial consequences. There are clippings of the main Bolivian newspapers between December 19, 1996, and October 7, 1997.

The mines of Amayapampa and Capasirca are situated in the North of the department of Potosí, in the indigenous territory which belongs to the Laimes and Jucumanis. Here, peasants and miners are the same people; they exchange their roles and have a clear notion that the land belongs to the indigenous communities, not to the companies. In 1996, there was a sudden change of the ownership of the mines of which the workers and indigenous communities were not informed. Moreover, this new company, the Canadian-American Visa Gold Corporation stopped paying the royalties to the local authorities and forbade the workers chewing coca leaves. As a result of this severe arbitrariness, mine workers and peasant communities of the region kidnapped some technicians and occupied the company's mines. In response, the government sent 3,000 law enforcement officers, who conducted the so-call Christmas Massacre. There were in total eleven dead (ten of the side of the miners and peasants, and one policeman) and dozens of wounded.

The film, according to its pre-script, aimed not only to be a denunciation of the carnage, but an x-ray of the political and social problems of the mining regions of North Potosí in the 1990s, ten years after the proclamation of decree 21,060, that supposed the privatisation of two thirds of the Bolivian mines. Palacios intended to reconstruct the days before the tragic events, through the participation of eyewitnesses and the opinion

of members of the congressional and human rights research commissions, but also re-enactments and fantastic elements, such as the representation of the souls of the victims of the carnage. The ultimate aim of Palacios was "projecting the human dimension of the dead, including the police officer, to contrast that reality with the reality of the neoliberal project that is imposed at all costs."[172]

Following the synopsis, appears the complete pre-script which divides the film into nine sequences and twenty-nine scenes. In this section, there is a description of the characters, actions, locations, even camera movements, the type of music and atmosphere of both the docudramatic or staged scenes and also the most strictly documentary, such as the interviews with relatives of the victims or political leaders. It is striking how the pre-script describes temporary changes or jumps, which are often integrated into the same shot. It must be taken into account that this project dates from the end of 1996 and is therefore after *The Clandestine Nation* (1989) and *To Hear the Birds Sing* (1995). The film could be defined as an allegorical docudrama. It is clearly influenced by *The Courage of the People* (a film not participated in by Palacios but one of her favourite Ukamau films), since its final objective is the denunciation of the violent reprisals against the miners and settlers of Amayamapampa and it is done with the participation of the mining community. It also continues *Banners of the Dawn* in its testimonial style that features the victims, their families, and numerous witnesses including the members of the commissions of investigation of the Congress and the Permanent Assembly of Human Rights. However, it is also a highly poetic film that begins and ends in a circular way with the representation of the souls of the massacred. Palacios proposes in her pre-script to mix the allegorical and the testimonial, in a very

[172] Beatriz Palacios, "Amayapampa," Fundación Grupo Ukamau, no date.

compelling way. However, the actual materialisation of her ideas will never be available.

La Tierra sin Mal (The Land Without Evil)

The so-called "land without evil" or Ivy Maraey —the primordial land or paradise, where there is no suffering— is a myth of Guaraní origin.[173] This film was intended to tell the story of a group of street children from the city of La Paz (who suffer every day from all kinds of hardship, abuses, and abandonment), to the other end of the country in search a place where children live happily ever after. It is a road movie, which on the one hand is an allegorical journey and on the other a physical journey through the Bolivian geography from the Andean Highlands to the tropical lowlands. It is also a trip through Bolivian human geography, which allows for depiction of the immense richness and complexity of the country.

This project was the most developed and mature of the unfinished projects by Beatriz Palacios. She received funding from the National Council for Cinema (CONACINE) and when everything was ready to start —and even Jorge Sanjinés was ready to be the assistant director of Beatriz Palacios for the first time in his life— she suffered a severe relapse of her chronic disease, and the shoot had to be postponed, sine die. With money already committed to the filming, another project was carried out by Jorge Sanjinés, *Children of the Last Garden*. In this film, Palacios participated as the producer and directed some of its most interesting scenes, as I have explained. Palacios

[173] The Guaraní people are series of indigenous group that live mostly in Paraguay but also in the eastern lowlands of Bolivia, northern Argentina and Uruguay and southern Brazil.

passed away before she could see *Children of the Last Garden* finished. And *The Land Without Evil* remained in the pantheon of mythical films, never made.

As sources for the research of the project, in the archive of the Fundación Grupo Ukamau (Ukamau Group Foundation), I found the shooting plan, detailed by weeks and a few loose and disorderly sheets of the literary script. Both documents are interesting. The first one shows how ambitious Beatriz Palacios' project was. The planned duration of the shoot was eight weeks, the scheduled locations were the city of La Paz, the town of Huarina (on Lake Titicaca), Patacamaya (a small town in the department of La Paz on the road from La Paz to Cochabamba), the city of Cochabamba, the city of Santa Cruz de la Sierra, The Chiquitano Plain and, finally, Urubichá (a small town founded as a Jesuit mission, in the north of the Santa Cruz department). In total, a journey of 1,200 km, whose heights oscillate between more than 4,000 meters of altitude and the 194 meters, in which the final destination is located.

The very same trip is taken, according to the loose pages of the script, by the protagonists of the film, a group of street children of La Paz that go in search of *el cerro lindo* (the beautiful hill), in the land without evil, which, for them, is located somewhere in the north of the department of Santa Cruz de la Sierra, in the far-away tropical part of the country. The shooting plan details the characters that appear in each of the ninety-four scenes of the film. This list of characters showcases the broad social portrait that Beatriz Palacios intended to create, from the political authorities to indigenous peasants of various ethnic groups, *gringos*, policemen, salesmen, drivers, doctors, caretakers, gardeners, hairdressers, musicians and dancers of all kinds, teachers, Catholic priests and evangelical pastors, among others. A very important character is the little dog of

Beatriz Palacios, Perico, who she was training for years for his role in the film.[174] It is also remarkable that the last scenes, when the children arrive at the land without evil, were to be enacted by the orchestra and choir of the old Jesuit mission of Urubichá. Palacios planned to end her film with the Chiquitano Indians, who keep alive the musical tradition transmitted to them by the Jesuit missionaries, who centuries ago taught them how to play baroque music using string instruments. This legacy has continued in the hands of the indigenous communities until today.[175]

The few disorderly pages that remain from the screenplay show Palacios' intention of making a tender portrait of the street children. In spite of all the abuses and lack of access to the most basic human rights they endure, they fight together to preserve their innocence. Moreover, although the adventures of the children on their journey show a crude portrait of the evils of Bolivian society, the script also shows supportive people who worry about the children and try to help them; and furthermore, how the children protect each other and get ahead thanks to the collective strength.

It is a pity that a project of Palacios in such an advanced state —with funding, pre-production, locations, costumes, and casting finished, the crew, including Sanjinés, already prepared to go out and film— was interrupted forever.

The majority of initiatives led by Beatriz Palacios were unsuccessful. The reason I wanted to include these failed projects in this chapter is because the history of cinema does not only consist of accomplished projects. Incomplete and aborted initiatives inform us about how forms of exclusion write another film history. The history of Ukamau could have been different if, instead of prioritising Sanjinés' initiatives, the

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[174] Jorge Sanjinés, interview with Isabel Seguí, La Paz, 12 August 2015.
[175] Probably the Urubichá orchestra is the most famous exponent of the musical legacy of the Jesuit missions in these indigenous territories which lasts until today. In the region, children continue to learn to play stringed instruments and to sing a baroque music repertoire. The quality of this choir and orchestra has made it one of the main cultural symbols of this region of the country.

Palacios' ones were pushed forward. But she, who had been suffering from rheumatoid arthritis for decades, was postponing her plans and using all of her strength in the projects creatively led by her husband, until the opportunity arrived to carry out her most beloved initiative. Precisely at that crucial moment, her interior forces failed, and her own wounded body prevented her from completing it. This is for me, and for her friends and acquaintances in Bolivia, a metaphor for her life. Her entire existence consisted of a type of radical sacrifice that on the one hand could be admired, due to the altruism of her devotion to the political cause of the popular sectors and also the devotion and love for the career she and her partner shared, but, on the other hand, could be interpreted as excessive dedication at the expense of one's own life.

There is abundant testimony about the spartan frugality in which Palacios lived, always staying in cheap hotels, travelling by the most terrible means of transport to distant regions, eating sparingly (to the point that Eduardo López Zavala says that during the filming of *Banners of the Dawn*, he and Sanjinés escaped from her to eat decently)[176] and working all day, every day. Her physical well-being was never a priority for her. She also renounced having children (something she openly manifested to desire) for a responsibility and sense of duty, and to avoid becoming a vulnerable target.[177] However, Palacios was no victim. She made all of these sacrifices voluntarily, without any external pressure. Beatriz Palacios had total power and control over her life. She was a woman with very clear ideas, not easy to manipulate. It was her own decision not to prioritise her individual care, which probably made her die prematurely. She lived as she wanted to live and died the same way, pursuing utopia with all her strength. Her entire life was a journey in search of the land without evil.

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[176] López Zavala in *Beatriz junto al pueblo* (Sergio Estrada, 2011).
[177] Liliana De la Quintana, interview with Isabel Seguí, La Paz, August 3, 2015.

2.5. Palacios, the Disseminator

Palacios envisioned political filmmaking as a cyclic process that must be nurtured in all its phases: investigation, preproduction, production, postproduction, dissemination, evaluation. The results obtained after the impact evaluation of a film were the seed for the next. Her overall objective was perfecting the political usability and effectiveness of Ukamau's cinematic products and practices.[178] However, dissemination politics —a strategic approach to programming, organising screenings, and fostering post-screening debates and other educational activities— were crucial in her cinematic work. Meg McLagan and Yates McKee affirm referring to the visual culture of nongovernmental activism that: "Politics do not lie within an image, as if the only political exchange at stake is lodged in the hermeneutical ability to decode a meaning that inheres in a text. Rather, the forms of circulation and making public are forms of political action in and of themselves."[179] Palacios was well aware of it and raised the issue at every opportunity, such as in an interview in Michael Chanan and Holly Aylet's film *Havana Report* (Holly Aylet and Michael Chanan, 1986), recorded during Havana International Film Festival in 1985, where she elaborates on the importance of the circulation practices of Ukamau in alternative circuits. Or in another interview, for the Bolivian weekly *Aquí*, in 1988, where she qualifies the dissemination work as methodical, patient, not spectacular and unpublicized (adjectives that might well describe her own

[178] Palacios, "Agradecimiento," Fundación Grupo Ukamau, no date.
[179] Meg McLagan and Yates McKee, "Introduction," in *Sensible Politics. The Visual Culture of Nongovernmental Activism,* eds. Meg McLagan and Yates McKee (New York: Zone Books, 2012), 17-18.

place in the group) and highlights that the Ukamau group is "methodically devoted to the dissemination of their work in popular and student milieu."[180]

The incomplete document "El regreso" (The Return) is a remarkable source for the investigation of circulation in non-commercial circuits. There she thoroughly explains their dissemination practices after their comeback to Bolivia from their exile in Ecuador, in 1978.[181] During the three years of exile in the brotherly country, they gained experience and improved the methodologies of distribution through class organisations. After their return, they aimed to undertake similar activities while the political openness allowed them to do so. The primary reason for the prioritisation of distribution and dissemination activities was that Palacios and Sanjinés felt the need to work towards the creation of distribution channels for their unreleased works *The Courage of the People*, *The Principal Enemy*, and *Get Out of Here!* (unreleased in Bolivia due to the dictatorship of Banzer).[182]

In the "The return," Palacios informs us, first, that the group, reduced to Sanjinés and Palacios,[183] acted with a deep knowledge of the highly organised and disciplined Latin American class organisations of the time; in consequence, the first showings were cautiously screened to the leaders only. After obtaining the approval of the leaders, the film was granted rapid access to the mass of peasants and workers

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[180] Beatriz Palacios, interview with Ximena Loza and Marianela Zamora, *Semanario Aquí*, February 6, 1988.
[181] Beatriz Palacios, "El regreso," Fundación Grupo Ukamau, no date.
[182] Ibid. Palacios explains how a copy of *The Courage of the People* in the hands of a colleague [Isabel Baufumé], who fell prey to the regime, cost the imprisonment of another person related to its production [Antonio Eguino]; and how before, Félix Gómez, responsible for special effects in the film, had been held for a year and a half in a Banzer's concentration camp (Beatriz Palacios, "El Regreso," n.d.). Regarding the consequences that the dictatorship of Hugo Banzer had for the Ukamau group, Alfonso Gumucio in his diary (entry July 17, 1975) mentions that the painter and member of the Bolivian Communist Party, Atilio Carrasco (exiled in Lima) told him the story of the repercussions of the interception of the film by the army, the detention of Eguino while Ukamau co-founder Oscar Soria was hidden. A novelty about Gumucio's account in the newly published diary, is that he describes Ricardo Rada, the founder and producer of the first Ukamau group, as a sell-out, who changed sides and started working for the army and the police at some point during Banzer's dictatorship. Gumucio, *Diario Ecuatoriano*, 155.
[183] The personal and professional relationships with former members of the first Ukamau group (Oscar Soria, Antonio Eguino, Danielle Caillet, Ricardo Rada, Mario Arrieta…) were broken.

throughout the country, multiplying the networks of alternative dissemination.[184] This strategy of building alliances and networks worked out so well that soon they could not cope with the demand of screenings due to the lack of human resources available. To respond to the petitions, they needed to recruit new members to the dissemination team.

During the next ten years, Palacios assumed this responsibility and new members were incorporated to the group under her authority. Among these, Manuel Quispe, responsible for dissemination in the countryside, and Consuelo Lozano, who entered the group in 1983, and whose field of expertise was education.[185] However, as commented on in previous sections, the Ukamau group would never again be a horizontal structure, as it was during the sixties, because Sanjinés and Palacios would remain on the top of a group solely led by them. Nevertheless, they shared the same programmatic approach to dissemination: the need for the systematic distribution of political films at non-commercial venues, and the use of film as an education tool for the masses of disenfranchised Latin Americans. They had been practising this approach before meeting and devoted themselves to alternative distribution of Ukamau and other films after their encounter in 1973. In consequence, from the beginning of their personal and professional relationship there was a consensus among them about the need to prioritise alternative circulation in their cinematic revolutionary agenda.

In late 1976, Sanjinés wrote the text "Llamado a la difusión" (Call to dissemination), after two years of intensive work alongside Palacios and coinciding chronologically with the postproduction of *Get Out of Here!*[186] Here he maintains that

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[184] Another set of copies of the films was administered by a rural teacher, who received foreign aid and had a vehicle and two projectors. He did an even more intense job, devoting himself entirely to disseminating the movies in the countryside. Palacios relates that this teacher did not stop screening even after the coup of García Meza in July 17, 1980. Even though he had received threats, one of his daughters suffered kidnapping, and his home was raided. Beatriz Palacios, "El regreso," n.d.

[185] Consuelo Lozano, interview with Isabel Seguí, July 31, 2015.

[186] Presented at the 2nd. Encounter of the Committee of Latin American Filmmakers, held in Merida (Venezuela) in 1977 and published in *Cine Cubano*, no. 93, 1977, it was later republished in *Teoría y*

probably the main weakness of Latin American revolutionary cinema is the difficulty, or even impossibility, of it reaching its intended recipients on an extensive basis.[187] He claims that the filmmakers must take responsibility for disseminating their own materials. He recognizes that this task is heavy because it requires from the filmmaker a great deal of involvement and work. To succeed, it is necessary to bring movies directly to popular sectors and also to establish stable political alliances with class organisations, university sectors, etc., who can multiply the disseminating activities.[188]

Beatriz Palacios published twelve years later an article along the same lines titled "La película no termina con la palabra 'FIN'" (The film does not end with the words 'THE END'). She states that dissemination must be practiced "week after week, month after month and year after year."[189] So, after years of conducting this task systematically, she claims that the statistics give surprising insights into the magnitude of this unpublicised work.[190] She cites the example of *The Courage of People* which despite being the most watched Ukamau movie in theatres has been seen by twice as many viewers in alternative circuits, thanks to the direct dissemination work done by the group itself, and also by the distribution of free 16mm copies to those grass-root organisations which had the necessary infrastructure to carry out screenings.

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práctica de un cine junto al pueblo. Information obtained from Mariano Mestman, "Breves notas sobre Sanjinés y el cine político argentino," in *Jorge Sanjinés y el grupo Ukamau,* eds. Grupo Rev(b)elando Imágenes (Buenos Aires: Editorial Tierra del Sur, 2010), 118.

[187] Jorge Sanjinés, *Teoría y práctica de un cine junto al pueblo*, 82.

[188] Ibid, 89-90.

[189] Beatriz Palacios, "La película no termina con la palabra 'FIN'," *Aquí*, February 6, 1988.

[190] Statistics of uncertain origin: her own and probably Ulises Estrella's study. According to Jorge Sanjinés thirty-two free 16mm copies of *Get Out of Here!* were distributed in Ecuador (Beatriz says it was more than 20 copies in her article "The film does not end with the word 'END'," 1988); five copies were left in the Central University and the rest went to other universities, peasant communities and worker's organisations, and were circulated with tremendous vigour throughout the country. To such an extent that the head of the film department, Ulises Estrella, made a study of the impact of the film in Ecuador four years later, concluding that it had been seen and discussed by 1,800,000 people. This report is lost, but the figures seem inflated because Ecuador's population at the time was around six million people.

Palacios maintains, probably exaggerating, that Latin American film productions, through alternative dissemination channels, reach a bigger number of spectators than North American productions, through mainstream channels. Hence, this fact must be taken into account in the global continental assessment of film dissemination. She also makes the announcement that the Ukamau group (so as to say, herself) is preparing a well-documented publication about their work on alternative dissemination, which aims to shed light on the impact of Latin American political cinema on its target groups and demonstrate how dissemination tasks are the fuel for the entire cinematic process "with the people." In her words: "the stories and observations that I collected during the dissemination of our films served me in the research of new films, nurturing the historical and sociological foundation of the scripts that were subsequently prepared."[191]

Palacios introduces here a methodological note that gives a clue about the depth of her work as disseminator. Beyond the mere act of bringing the filmic material to the subaltern audiences and guaranteeing a proper debate, she used the feedback received during the Q&A to nurture their subsequent filmic projects. This implies an understanding of the film lifecycle as all-encompassing. It was an ongoing political cinematic process of learning and improvement that underpinned the "junto al pueblo" methodology. Palacios' perspective was one of the most lucid and systematic approaches to film as a tool for social transformation. This is one of the main reasons

[191] Beatriz Palacios, "Agradecimiento," Fundación Grupo Ukamau, no date. This draft could be the discourse she read in an homage to her and Daniel Caillet in La Paz, reported in the newspaper *Presencia* in October 18, 1996.

why Beatriz Palacios' ground-breaking approach to the political film lifecycle deserves a more visible place in the New Latin American Cinema histories.[192]

Researching subaltern audiences

As demonstrated, Beatriz Palacios was a professional and devoted compiler of *testimonios*. She used them as a form of evidential proof, to bear witness to repression and injustice in writing her journalistic articles and in making documentary films. However, she also used this technique in a very innovative way to assess the impact of Latin American political cinema on their targeted audiences, the popular classes. For that, Palacios, and her subordinates undertook a systematic compilation work, one that she was hoping to publish one day. Sadly, the promised monographic publication never happened. However, Palacios published several examples of her ongoing work in different places. The first example is the prologue of the book *Theory and Practice of a Cinema with the People*, which is a transcription of the intervention of a member of the audience —Juan Chimbo, a Colombian elderly man— after a screening of *Get Out of Here!* in Bogotá, which was recorded and edited by Beatriz Palacios. The book also includes other testimonies compiled in screenings conducted in Ecuador during exile.[193] The transcripts of these Q&A sessions are provided in the book as the proof of the effectiveness of Ukamau's cinematic theory and practice "with the people." Thus, the

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[192] David Wood in his thesis quotes Umberto Valverde who in an article in 1977 called "Jorge Silva y Martha Rodríguez en Mérida" refers to the complicity between Palacios and the Colombians Rodríguez and Silva, who during Merida 1977 New Latin American Film Festival engaged in parallel debates "on the efficiency of film language, the possibility of achieving 'organic integration' with the people filmed, and the role of film in recuperating popular history." David Wood, "Revolution and pachakuti. Political and indigenous cinema in Bolivia and Colombia," (PhD diss., Kings College, University of London, 2005), 14.

[193] Jorge Sanjinés, interview with Isabel Seguí, La Paz, August 12, 2015; Sanjinés, *Teoría y práctica de un cine junto al pueblo*, 71-73.

contribution of Palacios to the volume is fundamental because it vindicates the success of Ukamau's practice; making it even more problematic that this fact has been so overlooked by scholars to date. Once again, the author of the entire book is supposed to be Sanjinés.

In addition to the audience's testimonies published in *Theory and Practice*, she published a couple of interviews with spectators in the journal *Cine Cubano*. Moreover, in her files can be found some other unpublished interviews and also reception assessments. For instance, a document entitled "*Para recibir el canto de los pájaros.* A cuenta de una evaluación" (To Hear the Birds Sing: On account of an assessment), in which Palacios makes an evaluation of the reception of the film *To Hear the Birds Sing* (1995). She writes: "Each end [of the film screening] is like a new award, the kind of prize for which we worked for years: the satisfaction of seeing that we have arrived in depth to viewers, who are transformed by the film. *I have a lot of material to prove it*."[194] (Emphasis mine).

The material Palacios claimed to have, to prove the impact of the films on the audience has been mostly lost. However, there is enough remaining documentation to verify her proceedings. In the file of *The Courage of the People,* is found a transcription of an interview with Mrs. Betzabé, described as: "Woman of 42, widow of Chuquimia and mother of five children, none of whom go to school, they all work as street vendors." According to her account, she and her *comadre* (close friend), the meat seller Higinia, had been told by a fellow vendor that the film was a must-see because it showed Bolivian people fighting for their rights in a way that they had never witnessed before on the big screen. Following this recommendation, five market women queued

[194] Beatriz Palacios, "*Para recibir el canto de los pájaros.* A cuenta de una evaluación," Fundación Grupo Ukamau, no date.

outside the *Cinemateca* "with a lot of trouble, many people pushing".[195] In the interview, Betzabé affirms that she never goes to the movies because they do not interest her, but in this case, they bought tickets for the matinee and the evening programmes. So, they even saw the film twice. When Palacios asks what this type of cinema means for her, the vendor responds: "Well, cinema like this, for me, is the cinema of truth, the cinema of the people, cinema lesson, where the lesson is learned without knowing how to read the alphabet (...) this lesson teaches us to speak loudly, to unite, and allows us to stand up".[196]

These powerful testimonies raise the question of whether Beatriz Palacios, through her mediation, was exaggerating the reaction of the spectators. But, due to the freshness of the expressions, the use of popular speech of La Paz, and the type of subjects described (women market vendors of the city of La Paz who are a highly politicised and organised group) the verisimilitude is high. And although there is mediation in any testimony, these reactions of viewers collected by Palacios constitute a very interesting source to investigate the reception of Ukamau films. Regarding the published interviews, for instance, in *Cine Cubano*, in 1981, Palacios transcribes a conversation with a 37-year-old street seller who was about to attend an exhibition of *Blood of the Condor* at a university venue. When Palacios asked whether it was the first time the woman was coming to watch a movie of the kind, she answered:

> **Woman:** No, a few days ago I came to see *The Courage of the People*. These are rare films to watch because they are bad for the military, for the governments, and for the rich. So, for us they are good, because they teach us many things and

[195] Beatriz Palacios, "Un testimonio popular," Fundación Grupo Ukamau's archive, 1979.
[196] Ibid.

prepare us how to deal with those who trample on us. Now, more than ever, we need to see this kind of movie.

Palacios: *Do you always bring your child?*

Woman: Yeah, I always bring him. He already saw *The Courage of the People* and did not fall asleep (…)

Palacios: *Don't you think The Courage of the People is very strong for the child?*

Woman: No lady, maybe you think that this little guy is scared of the film. He is not. We show our children reality from birth. They must see everything, in order to learn. In *The Courage of the People*, he saw soldiers killing the miners. Tomorrow he will be a man and he will have to go to military service, but he is ready to not to shoot his friends, or relatives, or the poor. He is ready to target his true enemies.[197]

For Palacios, the testimonies of the viewers were the ultimate result of her gruelling work and constitute the best price. But these were not the only responses from the audience, there were also other spontaneous, not sought, responses. In a draft of a speech of thanks to a tribute, Palacios gives some examples of these precious rewards:

> As this work was sometimes hard, for the harshness of our rural roads, through the bitter cold of the high mines as Chorolque, or meeting with the grinding poverty of the peasants, it was offset by the joy of particular events and anecdotes. I will never forget that old railroad worker from El Alto who came to our office with the title of a piece of land he wanted to donate to the group to help us to continue making films like *The Courage of the People* (…) Another

[197] Beatriz Palacios, "Este es otro tiempo, por suerte," *Cine Cubano* 98 (1981): 62-63.

> day, three peasants came with some loads of potatoes, for us to use the money from its sale in a new Aymara film; another day, also in El Alto, a beautiful letter to Jorge was delivered congratulating him on the victory of *The Clandestine Nation* at San Sebastian Film Festival. It was signed by many people and in terms so emotional and so supportive that it was for us the best of all prizes.[198]

Those gifts were evidence of the existence of a consolidated non-middle-class public. Ukamau managed to acquire this loyal audience, through an engaged cinematic process, which began with the testimonial research and ended with the alternative dissemination and evaluation of impact; only to restart from this feedback once again. Consequently, an exclusively auteurist and formal analysis of Ukamau production is insufficient to cover the integrity of the ongoing process and it is also misleading. The complexity and political significance of this process could not be judged only for its artistic or aesthetic results. However, film criticism was (and still is) installed in a hyper-aesthetic corner that impedes correct contextualisation of the importance of Palacios' contribution to Ukamau.

Palacios also undertook the work of interviewing the crew members; some of these interviews are published, for instance a couple with the creator of the soundtrack of various Ukamau films, Cergio Prudencio, which are reproduced in a book published by the latter titled *Hay que caminar sonando: escritos, ensayos, entrevistas* (You have to walk sounding: writings, essays, interviews).[199] In Palacios' unpublished files, there

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[198] Beatriz Palacios, "Agradecimiento," Fundación Grupo Ukamau, no date.
[199] Beatriz Palacios, "La Nación Clandestina en Alemania," *Ultima Hora*, La Paz, May 6, 1990, in Cergio Prudencio, *Hay que caminar sonando: escritos, ensayos entrevistas* (La Paz: Fundación Otro Arte, 2010),

can also be found routine interviews with crew members, such as the one with the Ecuadorian members of the crew, Alejandro Santillán and Cristobal Corral, named "Entrevista a compañeros ecuatorianos" (Interview with Ecuadorian Comrades). In this type of interview Palacios shows her gift and metier; she conducted thorough questionnaires that allow better understanding of Ukamau's production practices; although, if any kind of criticism arose, it has been edited out.

167-172; and, Beatriz Palacios, "Diálogo con el compositor de la Nación Clandestina. Revelación traducida en música" in ibid, 158-166.

2.6. Coming Full cycle: The Need for a Subaltern Film Criticism

A bourgeois film criticism, based on a model of appreciation distanced from the objectives of Ukamau, was perceived by Palacios as a clear obstacle to their project. Unsurprisingly, Palacios' most personal films, *Get Out of Here!* (a film co-written and co-edited by her) and *Banners of the Dawn* (the only film co-directed by Sanjinés and Palacios) were also the ones less appreciated by film critics, who considered them loose on a formal level and not matched by the rest of the films of Jorge Sanjinés. There is no evidence of a public position of Palacios on the need for transformation of the field of film criticism. However, on the base of what we know about their symbiotic relationship, it is right to suspect that Sanjinés' public interventions on the issue reflect Palacios' position too. For instance, in the article published in *Framework,* in 1979, the director challenges bourgeois approaches to film criticism because from his point of view a film-weapon cannot be criticised using the traditional parameters (formalist). He notes that if the critics really understand the function of this type of cinema, what they have to do is to analyse its effectiveness. Furthermore, it is essential that in the near future, criticism does not come not from those who traditionally monopolise its practice (say, literate middle-class men) but from those audiences targeted by the film (subaltern subjects).[200] It is striking that he does not refer to "reception" by subaltern groups but "criticism" done by these audiences. So Sanjinés is proposing what he and Palacios stand for, a new kind of film criticism by non-literate and non-Westernized subjects, who are able to make their critique from another epistemological framework.

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[200] Sanjinés, *Framework. A Film Journal* 10. Spring 1979: 33.

Moreover, his argument incorporates Palacios' preferences for popular education and testimonial multimediality, when saying "this cinema is similar to the didactic political book and cannot therefore be judged by criteria such as 'I like it' or 'I don't like it'."[201] He then adds that, for them, any criticism must take as its central premise the "effectiveness" of the film and it must subordinate the aesthetic values; moreover, "those who judge it will reveal their own commitment to the reality in question."[202] This sounds almost like a threat. In criticising political films using bourgeois taste parameters the critics demonstrate their lack of commitment to these popular struggles. In this quote, Palacios' influence on Sanjinés' agenda resonates so strongly that he even contradicts his own principles. He had always been favourably disposed to the effectiveness of the language of his films but never to gave up beauty. In the past, he searched for "the dialectic relationship between beauty and cinema's objectives."[203] Furthermore, formal beauty, harmony and balance of film language had been as important to date as the popular liberation potentially achieved through his films. With the latter statement, he is moving away from his creed. This fact can be interpreted in two ways: 1) in 1979, the ideological influence and political priorities of Beatriz Palacios are so strong that they make him change his own priorities as a creator, or 2) he is unconsciously covering his back as an artist before the dissemination of a product (*Get Out of Here!*) which he considers privately to be of a lower formal quality to his own artistic expectations of it. The latter may be endorsed by the lack of appreciation that Sanjinés currently has for the film. This movie has been barely screened in public since the death of Palacios; it has never been digitised and it is not

[201] Ibid, 33.
[202] Ibid, 33.
[203] Sanjinés, "Problems of Form and Content in Revolutionary Cinema," 62.

part of the group of works which the author wishes to publish on DVD.[204] A mixture of both reasons —the political influence of Palacios in the overall project, and Sanjinés' discontent as an artist for what he considers a rough work— is probably what motivates the latter statement in *Framework*.

This leads us to question the complexity of the power relations within the Ukamau group and the Latin American political cinema in general. Beatriz Palacios is not known in Europe or the US. She did not publish in *Framework* or *Cineaste;* occasionally she published a brief article in *Cine Cubano*, which gives the impression of her not contributing much to the ongoing theoretical debates. But, beyond her seemingly low profile, she exerted enormous influence on Sanjinés at the political level. Moreover, she had the ability to make her voice heard in central forums through the discourse elaborated by her comrade and husband. However, both were well aware that —accordingly to Third Cinema's decolonial aims—the liberation process would not be completed until all marginalised groups were heard, their contributions respected, and their alternative epistemological frameworks legitimised. Hence, the call for a subaltern film criticism was the ultimate claim of a "cinema with the people." This remains, of course, a pending issue.

[204] Despite the tremendous popular success enjoyed by *Get Out of Here!*, Jorge Sanjinés openly recognises that he does not like it (interviews with Isabel Seguí July 29 and August 12, 2015). Moreover, this is the only film of Ukamau that Sanjinés has not been willing to digitise. It was unavailable until the recent posting online of the film by the Ecuadorian Cinematheque. That is the main reason why most of the scholars ignore the film. Conversely to Sanjinés' opinion of the film, Palacios was very fond of *Get Out of Here!* and while she was alive and responsible for programming at Fundación Grupo Ukamau the film was regularly exhibited in Bolivia.

2.7. Conclusion: Expanding Authorship and Creativity

Beatriz Palacios is a nuanced subject of study. Moreover, using her as a prism, the Ukamau group can be read in an entirely new light, because she not only contributed to the group in several ways for three decades but also held the type of power within the group that shaped its entire cinematic practice and ideological approach, by radicalising it. Her continuous efforts to document the effectiveness and impact of their films situated Ukamau practice at a whole new level of political rigour in the heterogeneous context of New Latin American Cinema. Investigation of the light and shadow of Palacios' figure reveals an expanded authorship of the films, and enhances a sense of the distributed creativity and the complexity of the group's production processes. She is a model for the study of the ubiquitous but seldom noticed figure of the "wife-producer" in Latin American political cinema. More work needs to be done on other women filmmakers like her, that have been eclipsed by the auteurist historicisation of their partners, depriving us of a big part of the overall picture.

The conclusions that can be drawn on her modes of filmmaking are twofold. On the one hand, she developed a testimonial practice that aligns with the Latin American women's *testimonio* and was characterised by an unprecedented closeness and intimacy in mediating the voice of subaltern subjects, especially women; and in a strong sense of care for people and communities, prioritising the fight for collective wellbeing over individual goals (economic or artistic). Also, her all-encompassing non-auteurist practice provides an alternative model for understanding cinema politics, one that overcomes the obvious limitation of exclusively formalist approaches.

On the other hand, the structural influence of her education and instruction in the Cuba of the time, led her to maintain and perpetuate hierarchical practices that severely

affected the workflows in the Ukamau group; making them more rigid, less open and democratic, and even more patriarchal than it had been at previous times, when she was not yet part of it. For instance, as can be inferred from the testimonies of the crew members, the Ukamau group which led the production of *Blood of the Condor* was closer to the ideal of a collective cinema practice, than any of the Ukamau productions conducted under the Palacios-Sanjinés leadership.

This fact underscores the complexity of the power issues at stake in political filmmaking, and how each case must be analysed individually, without trusting that a so-called "with the people" approach would immediately mean that crews were included within emancipatory production practices. More detail of the complex figure of Palacios is revealed through the study of her most remarkable contribution to the New Latin American Cinema: her rigorous approach to the evaluation of the impact of political films on the desired audience, the subaltern. Just for that career-long undertaking, she deserves a place in the history of political filmmaking. However, I hope to have demonstrated that all of her contributions to Andean cinema, in almost every facet, were outstanding, although some of them are also problematic.

In the next chapter, devoted to María Barea, is going to be analysed a very different case of filmmaking practice by another Andean woman, who came from a different personal and political background; and who developed a completely opposite style of management, production and direction to that of Palacios.

CHAPTER 3. Highlighting María Barea

3.1. Introduction: María Barea's Place in Peruvian Film History

In this chapter, I trace the cinematic trajectory of María Barea (Chancay, Peru, 1943). First, I explain the reasons why she has been overshadowed in Peruvian film history to date, and why she should be further considered and included. Secondly, in order to inscribe Barea into history, I present her chronological bio-filmography and analyse her works to show the variety and relevance of her contribution to Andean oppositional cinema, in the last quarter of the 20th century.

This chapter bridges the first one, devoted to Beatriz Palacios, and the last one focused on the cinematic participations of Domitila Chungara and the organised women of the Bolivian mines. Like Palacios, Barea began as a wife-producer. However, she ended up working in women-led projects which involved diverse groups of subaltern female subjects, who participated creatively, self-representing themselves and staging their political praxis. Therefore, the personal and professional trajectory of Barea, from producer-wife to facilitator of women's filmic *testimonio*, constitutes a strong link in the narrative thread that overarches this thesis.

Her vital process of personal empowerment was a successful one because she overcame many trials and tribulations, and finally ended up owning her own life and work. However, this success was not reflected in her career. By choosing the path she did, she also undertook a journey to the margins and finally to exclusion. To understand the why her life was one of diminishing returns, it is necessary to question the value system in which her life and cinematic work were situated —which is a model of film appreciation that is still in force, notwithstanding decades of critical theories and

counter-cinematic praxis. Barea was marginalised because she was not a full-fledged member of the cinephile "boys club," the commercial value of her films was next to none; and, moreover, her work was thematically focussed on subaltern women, the most overshadowed subjects of the society, including for the leftist movements, characterised by their structural machismo.

Canon formation, awards systems, the festival circuit and other frequently unquestioned mechanisms propped up by film scholars, film critics, and the industry, all contribute to a narrow vision which gives pre-eminence to two types of value: the aesthetic and the commercial. Nevertheless, a methodological focus on film as object reduces the scope of its political significance. All of the above factors act to contradict and confound the essential principles of Latin American political cinema. Third Cinema theoreticians and practitioners proposed a schema which inverted the priorities. Consequently, the type of value that was commonly accepted by them as being crucial was use value.[205] García Espinosa, in 1969, in his groundbreaking manifesto "For an Imperfect Cinema" affirms:

> Imperfect cinema is no longer interested in quality or technique (…) is no longer interested in "good taste." (…) The only thing it is interested in is how an artist responds to the following question: What are you doing in order to overcome the barrier of the "cultured" elite audience which up to now has conditioned the form of your work? The filmmaker who subscribes to this new poetics should not have self-realisation as their object.[206]

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[205] Burton, "Film Artisans," 180.
[206] Julio García Espinosa, "For an Imperfect Cinema," 82.

For Julio García Espinosa, a cinema which aspires to be truly popular should not worry about quality or taste but about overcoming these elitist concepts, through subverting cinematic aspirations. Barea followed that spirit, she was not primarily interested in formal innovation. Her priorities were the effectiveness in the representation of the human experience of the subjects of her films, and the creation of politically usable films, movies to be used as consciousness-raising tools. In Barea's alternative logic, the worthiness of a product would be judged for its capacity to improve people's lives. This is not merely materialist or utilitarian. What she offered was a sympathetic modality, a care for the community, within the cinematic practice. She wanted to improve the life of individuals, taking into account psychological and spiritual aspects (nourishing bodies, minds, hearts, and souls).

A shift in attention to these practices allows us to see the political work of film, far better than by having an exclusive focus on aesthetics or representation. When seasoned women producers and disseminators (Beatriz Palacios and María Barea) become directors the resultant product changes in consequence, and this change is not towards spectacularity but to communicative effectiveness. An aesthetically bold writing in absent in their films but an economy of means, characterised by clarity and efficiency, is present.

However, few women have devoted themselves to theorising about their own cinematographic practice (as far as I know in the Andean world only Danielle Caillet, Beatriz Palacios, and Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui). Those, such as Barea, who did not theorise their practice and did not deliver outstandingly aesthetic products are finally just ignored and excluded, regardless of the remarkable political processes behind their work. Male directors such as Sanjinés, García Espinosa, and Solanas, meanwhile, were

wisely playing with both hands, making films for the people while using avant-garde aesthetics and writing theory to feed the intellectual sphere.

Barea's contribution is elsewhere. She practised Third Cinema, through questioning the forms and structures of both first and second cinemas. From the first, she challenged the technical magnificence and refused to accept the external impositions of a perfect cinematic language. From the second, she ignored the fetishism (cine-object) and the cult of the personality of the auteur, not having self-realisation as an objective for herself (one of the main characteristics of an Imperfect Cinema for García Espinosa). Furthermore, if Barea had been a formal perfectionist, she probably would never have dared to make films because she did not have a technical background, nor was she educated in the European traditions of visual arts; the two aspects that, traditionally, give legitimacy to a filmmaker. Moreover, by often being one of the few women of the crew, she had frequently been expelled from the artistic decision-making core group (who share techie interests and cinephilic discussions), as it will be noticed in the section devoted to the Chaski group.

Barea, and the women protagonists of her films, had few artistic pretensions; however, they used cinema as an empowering practice. They were able to create products that represented themselves as agents and fulfilled different functions, such as increasing their self-esteem, raising awareness about their problems, and fostering their agendas. Consequently, there is a different type of creativity (non-aesthetic) behind the processes and textual results of Barea's films. For that reason, Sanjinés and Palacios staked a claim for a decolonised film criticism. And that is why Palacios, as seen in chapter two, expended her entire life collecting testimonies of subaltern spectators, in order to gather convincing arguments to justify the meaning of a work made side by side with the voiceless but distanced from the gatekeepers of taste.

As a matter of fact, the only clear influence by a filmmaker that Barea recognises is Sanjinés. However, she never refers to those Sanjinesian linguistic innovations that mesmerise filmmakers, scholars, and critics. Also, Barea's humbleness would never allow her to fake that kind of interest in linguistic issues. What she recalls having learnt from the Bolivian filmmaker, during her work experience with him, was the way he approached the subjects and protagonists of the film *The Principal Enemy*, who were indigenous *campesinos*. She was fascinated by the respect he showed towards them and how he earned a trust that allowed them to create together a meaningful and useful film.

Furthermore, although Barea aspired to lead her projects, free from masculine control, she —subscribing to the new poetics heralded by García Espinosa— did not necessarily seek to find her own individual visual language, in a way that would allow anyone to brand her as a film auteur (a sublimated figure that embodies the hybridisation of artistic and commercial values). Her primary aspiration was to tell the stories and communicate the messages of subaltern Peruvian women and children using the means of cinema. Nevertheless, she directed emancipatory films using a collaborative methodology, not only due to the participation of the protagonists of the films but also because of the horizontal workflow in the projects managed by her. Barea listened to the crew, learned from them and took into account their professional opinion. She fostered distributed creativity in a way probably more organic and effective than the one seen in the case of the Ukamau group, even though Barea never theorised about it because her approach was not programmatic but ethical.

Barea started in cinema as the creative servant of her husband Luis Figueroa and very soon realised that even in the progressive representations he intended to make of the indigenous peasantry, women were absent. In a similar way, her sensibility was side-lined in her husband's projects. A parallel process started, hence, of giving herself and other less-favoured women a voice. This was a process that fostered the agency of all those involved, primarily her. María Barea regularly and openly refers to her insecurity as a creator and how she grew out of it with tenacity.

The characteristic that distinguished and unified Barea's work, as director, was the defence of women's rights. The protagonists of her films were Peruvian women of the popular classes (organised housewives, domestic workers, or girl gang members) victims of economic and political violence. Barea's film work aimed to favour their empowerment processes through a testimonial approach. Despite being films of denunciation, the emphasis of María Barea's cinematographic work was placed not in victimhood but on the agency and transforming potential of women's organisations.

The main virtues of Barea as a creator, according to the German film critic and curator Gudula Meinzolt, are two: 1) she knows how to tell a story and knows what stories she wants to unearth and 2) she knows how to organise, how to lead and motivate people, and how to find ways to transform ideas into action.[207] A remarkable aspect of Barea's cinematic practices was the use of collaborative methodologies for the creation of filmic testimonies. She mediated the voice of the social groups portrayed in her films, facilitating the transmission of their message to both close and distant

[207] Gudula Meinzolt, Skype interview with Isabel Seguí, July 19, 2017.

publics.[208] She, like many other Latin American middle-class women filmmakers and writers, ended up mediating testimonies as a natural continuation of an ongoing dialogue with the women surrounding her in her daily life.

Barea is a case in point of how the testimonial process always works in two directions, emancipating the listener and the speaker. For Barea, her role models were grass-roots women. She looked at the life journey of these women with admiration and took advantage of the act of compiling their testimonies to reflect on her own life and career, and to incorporate changes to them. The result was a precious cultural product, the combination of the expressive efforts of both women of popular classes and middle-class women. An inter-class collaboration with the same political objective: empowering Peruvian women.

Regarding her testimonial practice, Gudula Meinzolt affirms that Barea conveys care and respect for the interviewees in a way which makes them feel safe and, consequently, inclined to talk.[209] This is not a unidirectional, uneven exchange. She also offers her life experience for public consideration. For instance, in a recent public intervention, she began her presentation sharing moments of her early adult life when she lost her daughter, and shortly after that, her husband. She explained then how she transformed those traumatic losses into an opportunity and an incentive to pursue her dreams of doing creative work. Then she added something fundamental, that her career choice was linked to her life experiences, not at an intellectual but at an intuitive level.[210] Barea's easiness to share the events of her life, positive or negative, with her

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[208] In this respect, Barea has a special relationship with Germany. Germans are her great friends and collaborators: the documentary-makers Christine Trautmann and Kurt Rosenthal and the critic and producer Gudula Meinzolt. Also, different public bodies, NGOs, as well as German private producers have financed and distributed her films.

[209] Gudula Meinzolt, Skype interview with Isabel Seguí, July 19, 2017.

[210] Latin American Women's Filmmaking Conference, September 19, 2017. Roundtable with directors. Birkbeck cinema, London.

interlocutor, situates her on a horizontal basis with the subjects of her films. Moreover, her presence is comforting not intimidating. In coherence with her ethics, she positions herself far away from glamorous or charismatic poses.[211]

In her work, she made use of emotional and intuitive types of thinking committed to action. This was an applied form of creativity, the finality of which was not strictly aesthetic but transformative, although she made use of the aesthetic form to reach her goals. But this type of creativity invests in visual products that are 100% usable in a practical communicative and educational way, not purely objects of contemplation. That is also the point of testimony: to convert an intimate encounter between a speaker and a listener —where crucial information about personal, historical, and/or structural abuse is shared— in documented material, to foster public awareness that leads into political action.[212]

Barea and Palacios: continuities and differences

This chapter has many continuities with the previous one devoted to Beatriz Palacios, but it also contains interesting counterpoints. Barea is, on the one hand, less ideologically dogmatic, and as a film professional she is more openly insecure and vulnerable than Palacios. On the other hand, despite recognising her insecurities, she opted for a solo career, while Palacios always teamed with her husband. In opposition, while Palacios never expressed public doubts about the legitimacy of her work, she —

[211] Ibid.
[212] About her political position, it is striking to observe the sincerity with which she describes her younger self as "ignorant in political issues." Barea, interview with Isabel Seguí, September 17, 2016. This means —in contextual translation—that she was not versed in Marxism. This is even though she was close to leftist organisations (such as *Vanguardia Revolucionaria*) and participated in reading groups, and all the cenacles in which leftist intellectuals and wannabe filmmakers. She, like most women, did not participate with an authoritative voice in these meetings, yet she was actively engaged in logistics and other types of invisible feminised labour.

consciously or not— boycotted her creative self, due to the permanent prioritisation of Sanjinés' projects in favour of her own. Whereas Barea overcame the stifling influence of different emotional partners and working collaborators and, in general, the Peruvian patriarchal cinematic and political structure, to finally start her own projects accompanied only by women, with the creation of Warmi Cinema and Video. In this late part of her professional life, those men who were part of Barea's team —such as Kurt Rosenthal, Jorge Vignati, César Pérez, or her son, Horacio Faudella, among others—related to her as equals.[213]

What both Barea and Palacios have in common is that despite their importance in the film field of their respective countries during the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, they have been practically expurgated from their film histories. It has been already demonstrated that this is unjustifiable in the case of Beatriz Palacios, so it is also in the case of Barea inasmuch as she has been a key participant in the most important developments of Peruvian oppositional cinema. In the 1970s, Barea was part the crew of the Ukamau group in Peru and producer of Luis Figueroa's work. She became a founding member of Chaski in the early 1980s. Even less attention has been given to her initiative in the creation of the women's collective *Warmi Cine y Video* (Woman Film and Video), which developed a remarkable, largely unknown, film work in alliance with women's social and political organisations during the 1990s. To overcome such neglect, in this chapter I reconstruct the entire biography and filmography of María Barea.

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[213] As a talented but humble storyteller, conscious of her limitations on a purely visual level, and a firm believer in collaborative filmmaking, Barea very much relied on her cinematographers and cameramen. This was mainly on César Pérez, but also on her great friend Jorge Vignati and Alejandro Legaspi. Later also in her son Horacio. Yet, according to Meinzolt, she always had a say, and overall, she did not want to put her abilities as a storyteller and organizer at the service of male filmmakers, as many other Latin American women filmmakers have done. Including, as it happens, Beatriz Palacios.

3.2. Bio-filmography of María Barea: Origins[214]

María Barea Paniagua (Chancay, 1943) was born on the Peruvian coast, near Lima. Her mother was Peruvian and her father Italian. She was raised as a mestizo Catholic girl, but very early in life she felt attracted to the Andean side of the country. Her first-hand encounter with the Andean world happened when, after her marriage at the early age of nineteen, she went to live to the town of Huancayo (capital city of the department of Junín, 3.200 metres above the sea level). During the four-years she remained there, Barea witnessed the reality of classism and racism in the Peruvian Andes. This experience raised her consciousness and willingness to do something to counteract the discrimination against the indigenous populations of the country. However, Barea was at the time a lower-middle-class, isolated young woman, who felt just as powerless as they did.

Since childhood, Barea had creative interests although they could not be fulfilled because she started working when she was very young. After the death of her father, at only fourteen years of age, she was hired as an office assistant at a clothing workshop. There she began dating a co-worker, Horacio Faudella Frascarolo, born in Lima but also of Italian ancestry, who would become her first husband. Faudella was a conservative man, seven years older than her, who did not want her to develop any aspect of her creative personality. Barea wanted to be an actress but in her words: "for Horacio, performing was a synonym of prostitution."[215] She gave up her interest temporarily, but she always had the intuition that something would allow her to follow her dreams. That happened when her husband suddenly died of an anaphylactic allergic reaction in

[214] The information provided in this section has been obtained through semi-structured interviews conducted in 2015 (August 24) and 2016 (September 27 and 28) and many hours of informal conversations in person but also through Skype, WhatsApp, and email, between 2015 and 2018.
[215] María Barea, Skype interview with Isabel Seguí, November 11, 2017.

Huancayo on October 30, 1967. Barea was widowed while recently pregnant with her second son (their first daughter passed away in 1966 when she was only five months old). She gave birth to Horacio Valentino on July 24, 1968. This bitter twist of fate allowed her to remake her life, on her terms.

In 1969, she decided to return to her original vocation and study theatre. While back to work, and taking care of her son, she enrolled in classes with Reynaldo D'Amore, an Argentine theatre director, at the *Club de Teatro de Lima* (Theatre Club of Lima).[216] At the time, in Lima, a theatrical renaissance had started, and Barea ascribed herself to this innovative movement. In 1971, she founded the theatre group *Asociación Cultural Artistas Unidos* (Cultural Association of United Artists, ACAU). The association aimed to promote and disseminate theatrical activity in Peru, with the intention of creating and strengthening a new national theatre. The group defined themselves as an open institution, the objective of which was to raise awareness and achieve the goals of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.[217]

ACAU was integrated by María Barea, Helena Huambos, Carmen Rosa Sevilla and Héctor Malca Lingán, as founders and active associates; and as honorary associates, Linda Guzmán, Alfonso Barrantes Lingán, Winston Orrillo, Antonio Cornejo Polar, and Ana María Portugal y Vlado Radovich.[218] They were staging the play *Los Criminales* by Rodolfo Santana. However, an avant-garde theatre was not specifically what motivated Barea, who wanted to do a less elitist and more popular type of artistic work. That is why, when the opportunity to make films appeared, she understood that through cinema —the mass art par excellence— she could channel her artistic and social

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[216] After the death of her husband, Barea went to live in Lima with her mother, Emma Paniagua. Barea refers to her as an inspiring role model, due to her egalitarian ideas in terms of class and race, something uncommon among the Peruvian middle-classes, who are characterised by their discriminatory behaviour.
[217] Leaflet ACAU from Barea's personal files.
[218] Ibid.

concerns optimally.

She got involved with filmmaking, in the first instance, when she started dating the noted cineaste Luis Figueroa Yábar. Born in Cusco in 1928, Figueroa was the son of the photographer and painter Juan Manuel Figueroa Aznar, who established a photography studio in the Inca capital in 1904. Figueroa Aznar married a member of the Cusco aristocracy, Ubaldina Yábar, the niece of the bishop Monseñor Benigno Yábar Arteta. Luis "Lucho" Figueroa learned from his father the craft of painting and photography (he also studied Fine Arts in Lima) and inherited from his progenitor—a member of the Cusco *indigenista* intellectual and artistic movement— an esteem and fascination for the Andean culture.

Also friends with Luis Figueroa were the children of the celebrated photographer Martín Chambi, to whom Juan Manuel Figueroa Aznar transferred his photography studio. The Chambi brothers, Manuel and Víctor, together with Eulogio Nishiyama, set up the Cine Club Cuzco in 1955, later joined by Cesar Villanueva, Figueroa and others. That institution would be the germ of the cinematic movement named later the "Cusco School."[219] At the same time, Manuel Chambi began the production of documentaries (*Corpus del Cuzco*, 1955, *Carnaval de Kanas*, 1956). The ethnographic short films produced by these aficionados in Cusco began to be recognised in Lima (thanks to the facilitation of Jose María Arguedas) and abroad, when, in 1958, Manuel Chambi was invited to SODRE International Film Festival in Uruguay, receiving the praise of John Grierson, who was in attendance.

The first feature film of the Cusco school is *Kukuli* (1961), directed collectively by Figueroa, Nishiyama and Villanueva. Víctor Chambi played the main male

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[219] Carbone, *El cine en el Perú: 1950-1972*, 92.

character, and the central female role was performed by Judith Figueroa Yábar. *Kukuli* was screened at Karlovy Vary film festival in 1964. Georges Sadoul, present at the event, named the collective of filmmakers *l'École de Cuzco* for the first time. In *Lettres françaises*, Sadoul proclaimed that their vision and methods were inspiring and innovative, and the name coined by the French remained, although soon after the filmmakers parted ways.[220]

Luis Figueroa began his most prolific period when he paired with María Barea in 1971. In spite of that, when they met, there was an asymmetry of power within the couple (he was a celebrated and well-connected artist, and she was a much younger woman with no cinematic experience). Soon, Barea became indispensable for his projects. First, as a creative servant, and afterwards as the manager of their joint undertakings, principally the production company Pukara. She admits that her early impulse was to put herself at the service of the artist, a man she admired because he had a significant knowledge of the Andean world.[221] Nowadays, keeping things in perspective, she describes Figueroa's approach to the indigenous population as patronising. However, he was a fluent speaker of Quechua and a sincere lover of the Andean culture.

In 1972, she started collaborating with Figueroa in different projects, such as the documentary *El reino de los Mochicas* (The Kingdom of the Mochicas, 1974), where she did the production work on location (because the producer, César Cabrera Arca, had reduced mobility). In 1973, she travelled to Buenos Aires to oversee the post-production process (laboratory, editing and sound). Hers is also the voice-over of the film. However, it was with the Bolivian director Jorge Sanjinés with whom Barea had her

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[220] Middents, *Writing National Cinema*, 25.
[221] Latin American Women's Filmmaking Conference, September 19, 2017. Roundtable with directors. Birkbeck cinema, London.

first full professional cinematographic experience, the year before, in 1972, during the shooting of *The Principal Enemy* (1974). Sanjinés met Barea in a meeting with Manuel Chambi and Luis Figueroa, in a cafeteria in downtown Lima. The Bolivian, exiled in Chile after Hugo Bánzer's coup d'état in 1971, relied on the members of the Cusco school to make a film in Peru. Chambi, together with younger filmmakers such as Fausto Espinosa, facilitated the filming logistics in locations near Cusco with indigenous communities (such as Chincheros) already accustomed to the presence of cinematographic crews.[222]

At that meeting, Sanjinés proposed that Barea work for him as a production assistant. The head of the production was to be the Bolivian Mario Arrieta (who had acted as the American medical chief in *Blood of the Condor*). Barea, who knew and admired the work of Ukamau, was excited about the possibility of working on their first film in exile and immediately accepted the offer. The shooting of *The Principal Enemy* occurred during the second half of 1972. The work she performed as a production assistant was very diverse, both in Lima and in the Sierra. She owned a car, so during the filming, she was mainly responsible for the transportation of supplies, something adventurous due to the steep access to the locations (Barea recalls that she often had to change flat tires).

Sanjinés also commissioned her with more personal tasks, such as crossing the border and travelling to La Paz —where he could not go back for security reasons— to take a message to his mother. [223] The confidence he had in her shows how reliable Barea was, considering how distrustful and cautious Sanjinés could be. Barea was also the one

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[222] Most remarkably, *The last movie* (Dennis Hopper, 1971).

[223] According to Barea, Sanjinés' mother, María Nieves Aramayo, told her that she wanted to see her son. So Barea travelled back with Ms Aramayo, from La Paz to Paucartambo in Peru. According to Sanjinés, soon after the arrival of his mother, he got seriously ill, with pneumonia and his mother took care of him until he recovered (Jorge Sanjinés interview with Isabel Seguí, July 29, 2015).

who introduced her colleague Jorge Vignati to Sanjinés. Vignati started as a sound person but ended up as a cameraman. The young Peruvian's accomplished and masterful sequence shot technique, performed with a moving hand-held camera, influenced Sanjinés' style significantly.

Barea recalls learning from Sanjinés a particularly respectful way of addressing the participant subaltern subjects in the film, and how that behaviour inspired her in future undertakings. After this fulfilling experience with Ukamau, Barea was convinced she wanted to follow a cinematic career. Shortly after the end of the shooting her immediate superior, Mario Arrieta, proposed that she co-direct a short documentary starring the indigenous peasant and union leader Saturnino Huillca (storyteller of *The Principal Enemy*).[224] The film intended to capture the symbolic historical moment of Huillca entering the Congress of the Republic to participate in the first national meeting of peasant organisations, sponsored by the Revolutionary Military Regime of Juan Velasco Alvarado. Arrieta proposed that she co-direct because it was necessary that a Peruvian national appeared as co-director to benefit from Law 19,327, which guaranteed the mandatory exhibition of Peruvian films. This film was called *Si esas puertas no se abren* (If those doors do not open, 1975) and, unfortunately, it is lost. It was twelve minutes in length, shot in 35mm, black and white. The crew was tiny: at the camera Jorge Vignati and the sound recordist was Fausto Espinosa. In the credits, Barea and Arrieta appear as directors, but this was a genuinely collaborative job of the small team. The editing was done by Victoria Chicón and the laboratory used was Industria

[224] It was also during their stay in Paucartambo when the director Nora de Izcue introduced Sanjinés to the peasant leader Saturnino Huillca, with whom she was filming *Runan Caycu* (1973). For all the films featuring Saturnino Huillca during the 1970s see Isabel Seguí, "Cine-Testimonio: Saturnino Huillca, estrella del documental revolucionario peruano," *Cine Documental* 13 (2016): 54–87.

Andina del Cine.[225] Chicón, the editor of a considerable amount of films at the time, is another Peruvian woman filmmaker whose work it would be necessary to unearth.

[225] Nelson García Miranda, *Cuando el Cine Era Una Fiesta: La Producción de la Ley No 19327* (Lima: Chaski, 2013), 89.

3.3. Wife-Producer (Case II): Collaboration with Luis Figueroa

Los perros hambrientos (The Starving Dogs, 1977), was the first feature film project undertaken by María Barea and Luis Figueroa as a couple. To that end, they created the production company Pukara Cine in late 1974. The film was shot between August and September 1975. It was a cinematographic adaptation of the work of the same name by the Peruvian writer Ciro Alegría, an indigenist novel published in 1939. The leading team in this film, like in *Blood of the Condor*, were three couples: María Barea and Luis Figueroa (the director); Mario Arrieta, returned from his Cuban exile (originally production chief, a role later on assumed by Barea, and an actor in the role of the landowner) and María Teresa Arce (actress and makeup artist); and finally, Kurt Rosenthal and Christine Trautmann, who took care of cinematography and sound respectively.

The Rosenthals (Kurt and Christine) were a couple of German documentary makers. In 1973, they were preparing to settle in Chile, to document the political process of the country, when the Pinochet coup happened. By that time all of their equipment, including a German army jeep, had already been shipped to Chile. Aborting their initial plan, they decided to land the stuff in Lima, and work out what to do next from there. When they arrived in Lima, they met Barea and Figueroa and embarked with them on the project of *The Starving Dogs*.[226] After that, they remained in the country for decades, and although after retirement they returned to Germany, they remain close friends with Barea.

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[226] See Giancarlo Carbone, *El cine en el Perú. El cortometraje, 1972-1992* (Lima: Universidad de Lima, 2007), 165-188.

According to Barea, Figueroa was a man with many ideas, but he struggled to materialise them. In consequence, she needed to assume much of the creative work. However, due to the implicitly agreed distribution of roles between them, in which the creative tasks corresponded to him, she did not obtain any revenue or credit for her creative work. For example, to meet the deadlines, she was obliged to help him with the adaptation and screenplay writing (both *The Starving Dogs* and their next feature film, *Yawar Fiesta* were based on literary works; Cesar Pérez also co-wrote this last screenplay). Barea and Figueroa often dissented in their adaptation style, Figueroa erring towards being faithful to the original text; but in Barea's opinion, this did not work well in cinema because it was too literary. Barea had greater knowledge of dramaturgy than Figueroa and knew that the conversion to cinematic language had to be more radical. However, their collaboration was not fluid; she felt that her opinion was not heard.

Barea reports that she did not seek recognition for her creative tasks since Figueroa had a great need to be in the spotlight, and her tendency was the opposite. Moreover, the creative labour was on top of her responsibilities in all the other aspects of the production. She was in charge of production and administration. Moreover, she was location scout and the permit negotiator. To this end, contacts had to be made with local authorities (political and ecclesiastical). It was also necessary to find participants to act in the film, both in urban scenes in Cajamarca and peasant communities. All these responsibilities were instrumental in the execution of the project, and time-consuming. They also required deft handling. Barea admits having learned these abilities with Ukamau; the key thing being to realise as soon as possible who is who in each location, and to understand power correlations to benefit the production.

In this case, they were introduced to Cajamarca's society by German aid workers, acquaintances of Rosenthal and Trautmann. Barea took advantage of Figueroa's prestige to ask the authorities of the National Institute of Culture for permission to film inside their heritage buildings. Finally, participants in the urban part of the shoot included many notable people of the place, such as Victor Campos Ríos, a photographer and amateur documentarian who provided valuable graphic information for sets and costumes. The Cajamarca Actors Association was also fully involved in the filming. Since the film was set in the 1930s, but it had a very low budget, the contribution of the people of the town, who lent period clothing and accessories, was crucial. In order to reciprocate all of this dedication, the film premiered in Cajamarca with great success. Filming in the peasant community was conducted in Pariamarca, where the German aid workers carried out development cooperation projects.

María Barea was also responsible for the distribution of the film, almost exclusively, without the help of Luis Figueroa. This process was especially hard and tiring because, although the film law guaranteed obligatory exhibition, to circulate national cinema was not an easy task. After creating a strategy for the launch and distribution, it was necessary to travel the whole country, negotiating the programming with each of the venues. Barea remembers that although the law was on their side, the negotiation with the programmers was hard. The exhibition practice was also complicated. Due to lack of budget very few copies of each film were made, sometimes there was only one copy available, and the film was programmed in different venues. So, the reels needed to go quickly from one theatre to the other. To that end, the small distribution companies had a staff of bikers. After the screening, the reels where

rewound and transported to the next venue.[227]

Nonetheless, the task did not end with distribution. It was necessary to attend every exhibition, and to be physically present in the hall to dissuade the box office agents to resell the tickets. This was an habitual practice called *carrusel*, in order to avoid paying the filmmakers the total sale value.[228] So the producer had to hire people to control ticket sales and to monitor them assiduously. Barea was responsible for overseeing all of this constant struggle to distribute and exhibit the film. She considered it a tiring but inevitable task that someone had to do in order to continue making movies, because getting the movie exhibited was the only way to recover the investment and to repay the debt to the banks. The feminised task of commercial distribution of artisanal films is a clear example of invisible women's labour. This crucial work was one of the cornerstones of film feasibility. However, as happens with the majority of off-screen practices, it has not been sufficiently recognised by film historiography.

After the commercial release at the national level, the alternative distribution was conducted. It consisted of screenings held by organisations that had 16mm equipment in peasant communities, grassroots organisations, unions, universities, schools, or in slums. But in the case of Pukara, it was not developed as a systematic job, as we have seen in the Ukamau group, thanks to the programmatic impulse of Beatriz Palacios. In the case of Barea and Figueroa's productions, they had no specific strategy for alternative distribution. They went where they were summoned. Also, they did not have many copies and had to make sure that the equipment worked well and did not destroy the few prints which they had. In these screenings, they showed their films but

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[227] This was a common practice at the time due to the scarcity of copies. Pilar Roca —another Peruvian producer-wife also responsible for distribution— explained the same set up to me. Pilar Roca, interview with Isabel Seguí, Lima, September 24, 2016.

[228] The *carrusel* was also mentioned by Pilar Roca in the same interview. This detail in the description and the value ascribed to these practical issues never shows when talking to male directors.

also others like *Battleship Potemkin* facilitated by the Soviet embassy.

María Barea and Luis Figueroa's next feature *Yawar Fiesta* (Blood Festival) was shot in 1978, although due to different problems it was not released until 1985, distributed through Chaski. In this film, César Pérez was an important member of the crew, acting as assistant director and screenwriter. *El Chino* Pérez is an outstanding Peruvian cinematographer and cameraman, who will continue being a person whom Barea trusts as a close collaborator in future projects. He moved to Bolivia in the 1990s and has been an intermittent member of the Ukamau group until today.

Barea and Figueroa split in 1980. A mixture of personal and professional problems led to the end of the relationship. There was a pressing need to finish the post-production of *Yawar Fiesta*, among other reasons to repay the bank the loan with which it had been made. But Figueroa did not seem to care about financial issues. At the end of 1979 he went to Europe, invited to a series of events and festivals, leaving Barea to face the economic and technical complications related to the blow-up of the film in Film Elements (New York), who had retained the negatives due to lack of payment. Finally, another woman came to Luis Figueroa's rescue, with whom he would also started a new relationship; she paid for the print to be developed and the film was released by the American laboratory. After their separation, Figueroa did not make another remarkable film. Conversely, for Barea the break was the opportunity she was seeking to focus her creativity and workload on herself; and, in an intertwined way, on women's issues. In her words:

> It is working with Figueroa, when I start to wonder, what about women? They are always in the background, right? And that is when I began to question the role of women and on the other hand to question myself. That I assumed myself

> to be a facilitator, I did not assume that I could express myself. I simply did not give it any thought. I just assumed that I had to help that man, that I admired, so that he could express himself and be able to do his things.[229]

In 1980, after this realisation, at thirty-seven years of age, María Barea felt ready to undertake her own creative projects and to try to find her voice while foregrounding other women at the same time.

[229] Latin American Women's Filmmaking Conference, September 19, 2017. Roundtable with directors. Birkbeck cinema, London.

3.4. Barea Director

The first opportunity in Barea's new career path came when the German producer Pierre Hoffmann (Faust Film, Munich, Germany) commissioned her to make the documentary *Mujeres de El Planeta* (*Women of El Planeta*, 1982), a short film about the women's organisation in a slum of Lima. This was part of the series of five episodes *As women see it*, which includes *Selbe et tant d'autres* by Safi Faye; *Sudesha* by Deepa Dhanraj, *Bread and Dignity: Open letter from Nicaragua* by María José Álvarez and *Permissible Dreams* by Atiat El-Abnoudi.

Barea was friends with Victoria Villanueva, one of the leaders of the *Movimiento 'Manuela Ramos'* ('Manuela Ramos' Movement) and partner of Edmundo Murugarra, leader of *Vanguardia Revolucionaria* (Revolutionary Vanguard, crucial Marxist party founded in 1965). These political organisations developed a systematic programme of work in urban slums (new settlements, in Spanish, *pueblos jovenes*). It had been through them that Barea got to know several popular organisations in the shanty towns of Lima while conducting screenings. This is a key feature of oppositional cinema, the dissemination experience emerges as the seed for new projects. When Hoffmann proposed that Barea should make a film about Peruvian women, she was clear that she wanted to do something about the women organisations in the slums.

Among the different groups she met during her alternative distribution work she regarded as especially groundbreaking the work of the *Comité de Damas 'Aurora Vivar'* (Ladies Committee Aurora Vivar), founded in 1972 in the poor neighbourhood of El Planeta. This organisation was led by the indigenous Rosa Dueñas, whom Barea knew and admired. At that time, there were few women-only organisations, and in this

case, almost all of the participants were illiterate. They set up a community kitchen and developed different mutual aid activities. Barea affirms: "It was really something that gave me a lot of strength to see these women who, with so little, could do so much to fight, get ahead, organise themselves. Well, that was the experience that affirmed me in this line of work." [230]

Barea established with Rosa Dueñas a relationship that has lasted until today and was reflected in the participation of the group of women of El Planeta in several films. In addition to *Women of El Planeta*, they participated in the first project of the Chaski collective *Miss Universo en el Perú* (*Miss Universe in Peru*, 1982) —where the face of Dueñas' mother appears as final shot— and they also acted as extras in *Gregorio* (Chaski, 1984). Another notable collaboration with this organisation of women of El Planeta is *Juntas Paramos la Olla* (*Making the Soup Together,* 1991-92), a documentary commissioned by the German television channel Deutsche Welle-Transtel and shot ten years after *Women of El Planeta*. Although I am following a chronological order, I analyse these two films together in the next section because they are part of the same process, which spanned for ten years.

Women of El Planeta (1982) and *Making the Soup Together* (1991-92)

Women of El Planeta is a film about the Ladies Committee Aurora Vivar. An association of women settlers of the *pueblo joven* El Planeta, one of the newly created settlements in the outskirts of Lima, mostly populated by Andean migrants. It features Rosa Dueñas, the head of the Committee, and other members and their families. The film is presented as a pretty orthodox documentary. The narration is linear, clear, and

[230] Ibid.

easy to follow. It is underpinned by a didactic voice-over throughout. Barea is trying to deliver information straightforwardly, to a potentially diverse audience. The German producer, Pierre Hoffmann, did not intervene too much in the stylistic decisions but Barea opted for this conventional approach in order reach both Western and local audiences. The Western public is fully fed with quantitative, contextual information.

Often, there is a critical devaluation of realist window-on-the-world type of documentaries. Alexandra Juhasz underscores the need to abandon this type of dogmatic formalist positions when it comes to judge feminist activist filmmaking. For her, the endorsement of avant-gardism as a superior way of making counter cinema, comes together with a simplified evaluation of realist techniques and also obscures the non-textual conditions of production and reception in non-industrial contexts "especially when film and video are primarily motivated by political urgency."[231] This argumentation applies to *Women of El Planeta,* Barea's first film as a director, because the primary objective, for both the filmmakers and the collective protagonist, was shedding light on the ignored struggle of the women settlers in Lima.

The beginning of the film has a structure very similar to *The Courage of the People* (Ukamau, 1971; this film is going to be analysed in the next chapter), another testimonial film that restages the fight of a group of organised women settlers, the Housewives' Committee of the Bolivian mine of Siglo XX. *The Courage of the People* predates *Women of El Planeta* by ten years. Although Barea does not remember whether Ukamau's film influenced her, the similarity of the initial sequence suggests so. Both films, in their introductions, make use of very descriptive establishing shots, while the voice-over enumerates general data (statistics about population, health and housing conditions, and so on). Both films transition then from this overview of the location of

[231] Alexandra Juhasz, "'They said we were trying to show reality - all I want to show is my video': The politics of the realist feminist documentary," *Screen* 35, no. 2 (Summer 1994): 174.

the film to the living conditions of its inhabitants, by introducing the camera inside the household of a woman community leader. In the case of *The Courage of the People*, the chosen woman is Domitila Chungara; in *Women of El Planeta* is Rosa Dueñas.[232] At that point, both films continue presenting a first-person testimony of their respective leaders in voice-over, which functions as an individual and collective narrative, at the same time (one of the basic features of the genre of testimony).

The pre-production work of *Women of El Planeta* started with an investigation based on the collection of testimonies (the same task was conducted by Oscar Soria for *The Courage of the People*). Afterwards, Barea wrote a script rooted in the many common elements of the stories shared by the women. They were personal accounts of indigenous peasant women or girls arriving from the countryside to the city, most of them illiterate, who started working in the unregulated sector of domestic service, where they suffered poor work conditions, physical, and sexual abuse. Almost all of them were single or abandoned mothers, who had to provide for their families on their own.

On the other hand, they were also characterised by their strength, desire to survive, and their ability to organise. Barea notes: "The material that I obtained exceeded what I had imagined (...) Even though it was so hard to confront that reality, I returned every day to my house with a lot of energy, and I felt that these women had a lot of courage, and I was going to try to show that."[233] Barea received from them the positive energy that gave her the courage to overcome her problems, and the discrimination she faced. Barea was inured to struggle, and that was something that

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[232] Domitila Chungara and Rosa Dueñas were well acquainted and had a mutual admiration and respect. They met for the first time in a seminar in Ecuador focused on the role of women in the democratic processes in Latin America. In her second testimony *¡Aquí también, Domitila!*, Chungara devotes an entire section to the figure of Dueñas, titled "La Rosita." David Acebey, *¡Aquí también, Domitila!* (México: Siglo XXI, 1985), 198-200.

[233] María Barea, interview with Isabel Seguí, Lima, September 28, 2016.

united her and the women of El Planeta. Her condition as a lower-middle-class single mother made her daily life precarious too. There was a profoundly personal empathic connection, not only an abstractly ideological one.

As said, in *Women of El Planeta*, the unifying device used to articulate the narrative is the testimony of Rosa Dueñas. First, we are presented with Dueñas at home, with her family, and with her partner whom she defines as a "liberated man." Their equal relationship seems to be reinforced by the images of the couple cooking together. Subsequently, we leave the domestic space and enter the organisational one. This is prefaced with a phrase attributed to Dueñas: "My story is the history of the collective struggle of the women of El Planeta." The cameras then enter a meeting of the organisation, the communitarian space.

The entire scene is a re-enacted testimony. On the part of some women, principally the leaders, there seems to be a willingness to restage their organisational practices and speeches in order to show them of. Dueñas takes advantage of the fact that a woman comes to ask for help (she needs medicines for one of her children who has tuberculosis) to explain that in their organisation "solidarity is realised practically, not like in books." Immediately, they make a collection and raise forty *soles* for the fellow lady in need. Soon after, another woman raises the issue of the lack of drinking water in the settlement. She proposes to organise a demonstration together with other slums that share their water issues. The collective votes and approves the proposal. In another intervention, the organisers of the sewing workshop inform the rest of the ladies that they have already found a buyer for their products. Lastly, an old woman proposes to run a literacy course, and it is approved, on the condition that the school teacher agrees to conduct it.

In this sequence, the women perform in front of the camera in a way that makes it difficult to establish the boundary between documentary and docudrama. However, a proud desire for self-representation is ever present. They are willing to be recorded, firstly, to seeing themselves, and secondly, to show their existence to the world. Actually, this footage —as well as that which will be addressed in the next chapter about the self-representation of the women of the Bolivian mines— serves as a resource for research on the political practices of Latin American subaltern women. In it are showcased their practices, priorities, power relations, use of time, and rhetoric.

A secondary narrative trigger is the school teacher Nilda Barberán. Through her, the audience is exposed to the importance of education for marginalised populations, especially for children but also adult women. Barberán is presented as a vocational worker. In the morning, she teaches at the primary school trying to give the pupils training that includes raising their self-esteem. The film portrays the children answering questions about current political affairs (the attempted assassination of Ronald Reagan) and singing inspiring songs. In the afternoon, she teaches literacy classes for the women of the association. The scenes of the adult lessons also function as a testimony to this common practice in Latin American social organisations. Nilda Barberán is a popular educator, we witness her methodology, but we do not hear her first-person testimony. The direct address to the camera is reserved in the film for the subaltern women only; as depicted, it is an epochal trend not to focus on the intellectual facilitators but on the marginalised subjects. With this strategy, the film situates subaltern women's utterance over the one of the experts.

A dramatic use of testimony as an instrument of denunciation is employed too, at one point, in order to show the violent history behind the location of the slums and to bear witness to the military and police violence towards the inhabitants of the shanty

towns. For that sequence, Barea interviews women at Puente Palomar, a settlement newer than El Planeta, where a massacre has been conducted by the army not so long before. Through these testimonies, we are informed that in the settlements, the primary struggle is for the land. The *pueblos jóvenes* are often on publicly owned vacant lots on the city outskirts that lack any public utilities for water, electricity or sanitation. The occupiers must, firstly, fight for the land; and, in the second phase, for the right to access to these basic services. Often, the right to occupy these lands has been obtained amidst the violence of the state or municipal authorities, who had been trying to evict the settlers with violent methods, including slaughters. El Planeta is, by the time of the documentary, in the second phase. However, it is important not to forget the bloody history of the settlements. To document these frequently hidden events, Barea raises testimonies from victims of the recent repression at Puente Palomar. They describe the atrocities they were submitted to and the resulting death toll. In this case, testimony is used to denounce a specific instance of abuse.

A testimony by a survivor has a particularly strong effect on Barea, and she wants to highlight it. The woman states: "for us, this land is already paid for because the blood of our children has run here." Barea admitted in an interview that, for her, this represents an adaptation to the new urban realities of the Andean ancestral concept of offering or sacrifice (paying for the land with blood).[234] In this sense, there is an underground current in Barea's filmography, in which she searches for the traces of Andean identity in the cultural practices of the migrants in the city of Lima. From her point of view —which is not an inside one because she is a mestizo middle-class person— the subjects of the documentaries and the characters of her fiction films always inhabit two worlds: the Andean, which is characterised as the world of the

[234] María Barea, interview with Isabel Seguí, Skype, November 11, 2017.

spiritual roots; and the urban world, that rejects both indigenous people and their beliefs but cannot avoid being penetrated and transculturated by the cosmogony of the indigenous newcomers. This is the case with regard to these women, who consider that the land they occupy illegally has been paid for with the blood sacrifice of the victims of the clashes with the police. In consequence, they perceive themselves as being the legitimate landowners.

The life stories collected by Barea in her fieldwork for *Women of El Planeta* accompanied her, in some way, throughout her entire career. For instance, Barea was fixated with the testimony of a lady who told her of the helplessness and humiliation she felt when —as a child, starting to work as a domestic servant— she was stripped of her braids. For the criollo-mestizo employers in the cities, the long hair of the peasants is a sign of lack of hygiene, whereas, in the Andean indigenous world, hair is a fundamental identitarian and spiritual attribute. Indigenous women, and often men too, do not cut their hair but braid it. In pre-Columbian cultures, extreme hair cutting was a form of punishment and humiliation destined for those who committed a reprehensible act. Therefore, forcing a girl newly arrived from the *sierra* to cut her hair is an act of symbolic violence. Barea used this story in one of the scenes of *Antuca,* a docu-fictional film, mostly based on real events.

After acquainting the viewers with the communitarian and political practices of the women of the slums and bearing witness to the repression suffered by the poor indigenous settlers, Barea devotes the final part of *Women of El Planeta* to other important activities conducted by the organised women: leisure and political street protests. As for the first, the film shows the women of the organisation taking a trip to the beach, along with their children and some "liberated men." Barea, through voice-over, reminds us that the indigenous Andean substrate emerges once again in the music

they play and the dances which they perform in their spare time.

The last scenes of the film correspond to the participation of the Ladies Committee Aurora Vivar in a demonstration. To the cry of "these are, here they are, the women of Peru," Dueñas —holding a megaphone— claims that capitalism and machismo undermine and marginalise women. Declaring out loud: "Our alternative is the organisation!" Immediately, the present members of the group repeat her proclamation: "Alternative! Organisation!" The film ends with a frozen image of this group of women calling on women to organise themselves. That is the final message. As we will also see in the next chapter, the call to organise themselves is fundamental in the political culture of the subaltern Latin American subjects, since it is the only form that historically has proved reliable and valid in order to foster improvements in the living conditions of the proletariat.

Making the Soup Together (Juntas paramos la olla) is a sort of sequel about the organisations of popular women in Lima. In the ten years that separate both productions, the women's movement of the marginalised neighbourhoods has become massive. The film illustrates the most remarkable success of this vast women's network, the creation of thousands of soup kitchens, administered autonomously. Popular soup kitchens are an instrumental aspect of the alternative collective practices of survival promoted by women in poor neighbourhoods. The national coordination of soup kitchens includes, in 1990, in Lima alone, more than 3,000 autonomous kitchens and dining rooms, which prepare approximately 1,200,000 meals a day.

The production of this film was hazardous, because Barea and Jorge Vignati, the cinematographer, did not notice that a large part of the raw film had expired, so most of the footage obtained during the initial shooting was not usable. In order to replace the lost material, the German producers, Deutsche Welle (DW), purchased from Faust

Films the rights of *Women of El Planeta*. Consequently, the first part of the documentary was based on reused footage. This, although incidentally, provides continuity to the story as it directly connects both films. This movie, despite being marked by the DW stylebook (didacticism, strong voice-over) represents women's organisations as autonomous and very well coordinated entities that provide an essential service for their members and the community. It is a demonstration of applied popular power and female collective agency. The film features the women's association running the soup kitchen and other productive projects that provide them with complementary sources of income, such as a bakery. This safe space of the dining room is essential for single or abandoned mothers, because it guarantees that their children can be attended and cared for after school while their mothers are working.

Much of the storytelling is intended to show the creation, organisation, and management of the soup kitchens. First, there are scenes of women self-building the house that will house the popular dining room. These scenes are striking because we see women doing masonry, so as to make it clear that they not only buy, cook, and manage the project, but build it from scratch with their bare hands. Subsequently, the documentary shows us the daily workflow in a community kitchen. For starters, they need to purchase produce from the cheapest markets in Lima, usually far away. In the market sequence, there is a particular scene staged to symbolise one of the main enemies of the poor, price inflation. To do this, Barea gets the market vendors to change the signs indicating the prices are always rising upwards. What cost ten at the beginning of the scene ends up costing one hundred at the end. The voice-over suggests: "The continuous increase in prices causes them many problems and they need a lot of fantasy to be able to fill the plates of the hungry families daily."

Barea wants to highlight the inventiveness employed by poor women to feed their families and describes this skill as *fantasía* (fantasy) appealing directly to the creativity implicit in the act of making the family survive with scarce resources. This reference to the fantasy that women need to rely on to feed families is notable because it is a reference to the type of applied creativity, characteristic of women's labour in many walks of life. However, in the case of women in a situation of absolute precariousness, the resourcefulness needed is even more significant. This unvalued ingenuity sustains and holds most societies together across the globe. In the exact same way, Barea was bringing forward filmic projects against all the odds. Here, Barea seems to be making an unconscious recognition of her own merits as a filmmaker and promoter of film projects.

In *Making the Soup Together*, Rosa Dueñas appears again, already a municipal councillor, leading a street demonstration. In this case, the tone of the event portrayed is more festive than the one seen in *Women of El Planeta*. Ten years after, they own the street. It is remarkable that Dueñas seems younger and also wears a more indigenous attire (skirt and long hair, worn in two braids) than in *Women of El Planeta*. Dueñas metamorphosis embodies her empowerment process, accompanied by an identity recovery. Moreover, she is not the only leader who appears in the film, the leadership of the grassroots women's movement has been further extended. Other spoke-persons appear in front of the camera, like Rosa Landaberri, the president of the national coordination of soup kitchens, who addresses the problem of machismo within the popular organisations straightforwardly. According to Landaberri, despite their unbeatable work, women still face mistrust and opposition from their husbands and male neighbourhood leaders. A similar situation is going to be discussed in the next chapter regarding the organised housewives in Bolivia.

Both these films, *Women of El Planeta* and *Making the Soup Together* bear witness to a political process that spans more than ten years. They trace the history of the movement of proletarian and indigenous women of the city of Lima. These films were owned and used by their subjects as means of education and publicity of their work and achievements. They were also screened abroad in solidarity events, documentary film festivals (such as Leipzig were *Women of El Planeta* won an award in 1983) and television. Now they can also be used as a source for the research of the political culture of Latin American popular women movements. The films set history aright, not only unearthing an oppressed group but showing their practices and how they are successful in fostering agency. Barea is by no means the single author of these films. The expanded political authorship of these collective productions is foundational to any consideration of them as cultural/political products.

3.5. The Chaski Group: Resisting *Machismo-Leninismo*

Chaski, which means messenger in Quechua, was a collective founded in 1982. Stephan Kaspar contacted Barea through Lieve Delanoy, with the idea that she would help him to co-direct a film about street children that he had planned in advance and for which he had already obtained part of the funding. Kaspar had also done previous script work with Luis Urteaga Cabrera, known for his novel about a children's prison *Los hijos del orden* (Children of the Order). This novel was born from an investigation Urteaga conducted with the inmates of the Reformatory of Maranga when he was a medical student at the National University of San Marcos.

At the time Kaspar contacted Barea, she was already the romantic partner of the soundman Fernando Espinoza, also known as *el negro* and *el zambo*, for his African-Peruvian origin. According to Barea, Espinoza convinced her and Kaspar to try a filmmaking model based on collective direction, although Barea did not like the idea because, knowing Espinoza's narcissist personality, she thought it would not work. Kaspar accepted the proposal because he did not want to work alone under any circumstances. As a Swiss citizen, he felt that he needed to legitimise his work through partnership with local filmmakers. Soon after, they invited the Uruguayan cameraman Alejandro Legaspi, who had worked as cinematographer on *Mujeres de El Planeta*, to join the collective. Fernando Barreto was also part of Chaski's founding team.

Barea left this group after three years and two movies, due to irreconcilable differences in the management of the project. Barea's version of the reasons for her departure has not been heard yet. The scant history on the Chaski group to date has provided the narrative about the collective which was developed by the two founders who remained in the group and kept the name, Legaspi and Kaspar. According to this

official version, one of the major aims of the group was "to avoid replicating hierarchical labour structures such as those that exist in mainstream film production. The collective aims at a horizontal and collaborative workflow between the members of the group, as well as the group and its film subjects."[235] However, Barea had a different experience of Chaski's workflow and internal democracy. To explain it, I will take the case of their first film *Miss Universe in Peru* (1982), which was to set the pattern for the division of labour and distribution of power in subsequent productions.

Barea had the original idea of making a film comparing two antagonistic events that were to take place simultaneously in Lima in July 1982: the Miss Universe contest, and the VI National Congress of the *Confederación Campesina del Perú* (Peruvian Confederation of Peasants, CCP). She proposed the idea to her colleagues in Chaski, who were interested and encouraged her to write up a project. The funding was secured thanks to her credit as director of *Women of El Planeta*, which had been successful abroad. At that time, she was the only member of the group that could prove directing experience. When the time for editing their footage came, something unexpected happened. In her words:

> At the time of the editing, they decided "democratically" that I was not going to enter the editing room. Alejandro [Legaspi] and Fernando [Espinoza] appointed themselves to the task. *Macho*'s stuff. I should have been in the editing room because the idea was mine and I had planned everything. In Chaski, I understood what is *Machismo-Leninismo.*[236]

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[235] Gabriela Martínez, "Independent Filmmaking in the Peruvian Context: Seeking Meaning," in *Independent Filmmaking Around the Globe*, eds. Doris Baltruschat and Mary P. Erickson (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 2015), 101.

[236] María Barea, interview with Isabel Seguí, Lima, August 24, 2015. A play on words, or joke, in Spanish that replaces Marxism for Machismo. Women used this term to refer to the common pattern of

After this frustrating experience of "collective filmmaking," it was clear for Barea that Alejandro Legaspi and Fernando Espinoza were going to monopolise the power in Chaski, and she was going to be relegated to the absolutely necessary but under-recognised job of producer. Consequently, she felt uncomfortable and started to look for a way out, but not before fulfilling her obligations with the production of *Gregorio* (1984). This was the original project about street children that brought together Barea and Kaspar and was the germ of the group. In this film, she acted as head of production. One of the most demanding tasks she carried out was the casting. Barea remembers this task as particularly challenging since the theme of the film were the street children, and the performances should be carried out by non-professional actors.

For the central role, they needed a slum boy from Lima who spoke Quechua. To find a kid like that was difficult because the children did not admit publicly their fluency in the indigenous language, to avoid racism. Barea spent months visiting schools in the outskirts of Lima until she found the right protagonist.[237] According to Erin Hill, casting is a feminised type of labour for various reasons: the clerical-organisational components of the work, the emotional aspects essentially attributed to women (instinct, emotional intelligence and intuition vs. reason, intellect and logic) and, vitally, communication skills. A casting director must show proficiency in emotional labour and service.[238] In spite of her position of responsibility, the final decisions about casting were not hers. Barea remembers with displeasure some criteria she was opposed

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patriarchal behaviour of their *compañeros*, in leftist groups, such as political parties, unions, or in this case, film groups.

[237] Barea met Marino León, the protagonist, in a little school of the pueblo joven Huasca in San Juan del Urigancho. He belongs to a family that emigrated from Huancacavelica. Barea is still in touch with him and his family. María Barea, interview with Isabel Seguí, Lima, September 28, 2016.

[238] Erin Hill, *Never Done. A History of Women's Work in Media Production,* 198.

to, for instance, when the male members of the group decided that the role of Gregorio's mother should go to a beautiful actress, with sex appeal. For her, that was a mistaken commercial and patriarchal concession. Her voice was not heard, and finally, the chosen actress was the canonically pretty Vetzy Pérez-Palma.[239]

After the success of *Gregorio*, thanks to the box office revenues and the sales of the film, the Chaski group grew very quickly and suddenly became a production company with dozens of employees. According to René Weber, it had thirty-five staff members in 1985, only three years after its foundation. Several departments were in place: production, distribution, popular dissemination, research, commercialisation and international relations.[240] This over-ambitious approach was criticised by Barea, who considered it whimsical and unsustainable, as proved to be the case some years after. The testimonies of Barea and Micha Torres in the interviews I conducted with them, coincide with Weber's, who writes: "The division outlined was purely theoretical, because in practice there was disorder in certain junctures, for example, the board and the central administration were forced to stick their hands in where there was money, whether self-generated or donated, in order to patch up holes." [241]

Barea's opinions as a member of the board were systematically dismissed, and after Fernando Espinoza had named his brother as the financial manager, she found it difficult to receive accurate economic information. Moreover, Espinoza was getting more abusive both at work and at home. She needed to split up with him for her

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[239] Seguí, "Auteurism, *Machismo-Leninismo*, and Other Issues," 29.

[240] René Weber, "El grupo Chaski: Una película sin 'HAPPY END'," *Butaca Sanmarquina* 1(1998): 22.
[241] Ibid, 23.

psychological wellbeing. As a consequence, she abandoned him and the Chaski group in 1985. [242]

[242] Barea about Fernando Espinoza: "I had known Fernando for many years, his wife was my friend. When we were in the union, I admired him very much. He had a tremendous charisma, he was the leader. He was a seducer, an impressive manipulator and was very intelligent and very flattering. But he always had to be the centre of attention. He knew that I was in conflict with Figueroa and he approached me and told me that he was in love with me and that his relationship with Victoria Chicón was not working and that he was a victim of the whole world. I loved him as a friend. So, I do not how I ended up getting hooked up with him, things happened, or he propitiated them in such a way that we started living together from the beginning. He established a very strong emotional dependency, that I did not think through enough. If I had understood the things that I can understand now, it would not have happened. Very soon after we started living together, I realized that the only healthy thing for me would be keeping away from him, but it took me years, four years that were horrible. I lived with a madman, nobody could imagine. Later on, he was left alone, because everyone realized that he was a fraud." María Barea, interview with Isabel Seguí, Lima, September 28, 2016.

3.6. Women's Collaborative Filmmaking: The Warmi Group

In 1987, Barea made a commissioned documentary *Andahuaylas suenan las campanas; Andahuaylas, ciudad hermana* (*Andahuaylas, the Bells Ring; Andahuaylas, Sister City*).[243] In 1989, Barea founded the Warmi group, with two other women who had left Chaski: Amelia (Micha) Torres and María Luz Pérez Goicoechea. Warmi is the first group of Peruvian women filmmakers. In Micha Torres, Barea found great empathy and a strong friendship that lasts until today. Torres had worked in the international department of Chaski, as assistant to Stephan Kaspar. In addition to Barea, Torres and Pérez (who soon left the collective), Sonia Llosa, Jorge Vignati, Mark Willems and Lieve Delanoy joined the Association. They all contributed with small economic amounts to the Warmi project. María Barea and Micha Torres were to lead. From the beginning, Barea assumed the role of manager, because Torres had a parallel work in an environmentalist NGO, which allowed her to provide for her family.[244]

The objective of Warmi was to develop a line of audiovisual work with the objective of enhancing the role of women in Peruvian society. The statutes of the association define the thematic focus on women and children's issues.[245] At that point,

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[243] The Antoon Spinoy Foundation commissioned Barea to make a video documentary about the peasantry of Andahuaylas, an Andean city twinned with the Belgian town of Mechelen. The original idea of the film came from Mark Willems a Belgian aid worker for the Antoon Spinoy Foundation in Andahuaylas. Willens and his wife Lieve Delanoy were interested in culture as a liberating tool. They did a magnificent bilingual cultural project in the region, in parallel with their health and education work with the communities. In Belgium, Willems had been part of the solidarity organisation Liberation Films (distributors of Ukamau in Europe among other collectives). In Peru, he had helped Barea with the casting of *Gregorio* and had organised screenings of *The Starving Dogs* in remote communities in Ayacucho. The Antoon Spinoy Foundation managed a theatre in the city, operated by Willems and Delanoy, who created an exciting programme to promote national films, plays, and music.

[244] Amelia Torres, interview with Isabel Seguí, Lima, September 29, 2016.

[245] Statute of Constitution of the Civil Association Warmi Collective Film and Video. Notarial Archive of Dr. Ramón A. Espinosa-Garreta. July 24, 1989. Obtained from Maria Barea's personal files.

Barea already had an infrastructure for video editing (U-Matic, one of the first videocassette formats). Together with her son, Horacio Faudella, they took over a video studio that was already a bit obsolete yet still useful for video production. However, since the commercial distribution of video did not create much profit, Warmi decided to make a film in 35mm that could be released in cinemas. They wanted to do a movie about domestic workers, who in Peru are mostly peasant girls who migrate to the cities. On her motivations in promoting this film project, Barea says: "At that point, after everything I had lived through, I was clear that I had to work harder on the topic that I had an accumulated experience of: the problems of migrant women."[246]

The collaboration with the Association of Domestic Workers

Barea had met Vittoria Savio, an Italian aid worker who had been displaced by the internal conflict from her community of residence, where she had been living for the previous ten years. Savio shared Barea's priority of working with the invisible domestic workers, especially the little girls. To understand and document these overshadowed human trafficking, they travelled together to peasant communities in Cajamarca, collecting testimonies of peasant girls, victims of exploitation. Barea was well acquainted with the area because she had already filmed *The Starving Dogs* there in 1975, and also the ethnographic video *Porcón: Domingo de Ramos* (1989/92). Savio and the German film critic and curator Gudula Meinzolt, another significant supporter of Warmi, secured funding from German and Italian NGOs (MLAL - Latin American Movement for Latin America; ASW- Aktionsgemeinschaft Solidarische Welte, Berlin; Terre des Hommes- Germany; and Kirchlicher Entwicklungsdienst Bayern).

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[246] María Barea, interview with Isabel Seguí, Lima, September 28, 2016

While the funding was European, the local partner for the movie was the Peruvian association of domestic workers, *Instituto de Promoción y Formación de Empleadas del Hogar* (Institute for the Promotion and Training of Domestic Workers, IPROFOTH). The cinematic project had two results, a documentary and a docufiction film. The documentary *Porque quería estudiar* (*Because I Wanted to Go to School*, 1990), was based on testimonies of domestic workers collected in the Association and in a night school. Afterwards, based on these testimonies, Barea and Torres wrote the screenplay for the feature film *Antuca* (1992). The main character, Antuca, is played by Graciela (Chela) Huaywa Collanqui, one of the women that participated in *Because I Wanted to Go to School*. Barea chose her for the leading role due to the profundity and intensity of her testimony to the camera. In any case, the film is not based on the life story of Huaywa, but on a combination of several life stories. However, many of the events resonated with her biography, helping her to lead this docudrama.

When writing about the collectives of Andean women who emigrate from the countryside to Lima's slums, the Peruvian historian Cecilia Blondet notes that establishing a social presence is for them a slow, uncertain, and insecure undertaking that involves negotiation and conciliation, and requires strength and courage, because the environment is precarious, and conflict is ever present. Therefore, the new social identity of the women settlers is shaped by their individual and collective struggles, and by the positions they maintain in front of a diverse number of institutions (private or public).[247]

Collective identity is key to the survival strategies of the women settlers. Hence, an important role in the film is played by the group of organised domestic workers; and

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[247] Cecilia Blondet, "Establishing an Identity: Women Settlers in a Poor Lima Neighbourhood," in *Women and Social Change in Latin America*, ed. Elizabeth Jelin (London: UNRISD/Zed Books, 1990), 12.

the polarity between the individual and the support group is crucial in the film structure. Household workers are probably the most isolated and difficult to organise. Most begin their working life being girls of eight or nine years only. They live alone under the domination of adults who make them work without a schedule, without salary, without fundamental rights like schooling. Most of them are abused not only in their work but also physically and sexually. It is very difficult for women who had been raised under that regime of terror to find the time and strength to organise themselves and to claim their rights, but against all the odds, they do so. The two films, despite showing the harsh living conditions of domestic workers, do not develop a victim's discourse. On the contrary, they show these women as agents and reinforce the idea that, thanks to the organisations and through the collective work, they are able to change the conditions of their lives.

Because I wanted to go to School (1990) and *Antuca* (1992)

As part of the pre-production of *Antuca*, Barea and Savio interviewed domestic workers in various places in the city and the countryside. As said, afterwards, based on these testimonies, Barea and Torres wrote the screenplay for *Antuca*. However, they agreed that the interviews constituted a fantastic body of material in itself and decided to construct a video documentary out of it, *Porque quería estudiar* (*Because I Wanted to Go to School*). This short film proved very useful for the domestic workers association as an educational and awareness-raising tool. The film depicts many children, adolescent and young maids, in a range of environments and at different stages —from those who just left their country homes to search for a better future in the cities, to those who, despite their fairly young age, are seasoned workers. Furthermore, it not only

portrays the girls but their mothers as well, who often are the ones that send them out to work due to their own incapacity to feed the family with their miserable earnings as peasants.

The film, from its very name, highlights the fact that the girls want to study, learn, and improve themselves. Moreover, many of them are lured into exploitative work with the promises made by their patrons, that in the city they are going to be able to study at night, while working during the day; hence its name. Thus, a significant part of the testimonies was obtained in a night school in Lima mostly attended by young maids. This focus on the continuous efforts to improve their lives on the part of the young women is the key message of the film and underlines the overall aim of Warmi's political work: giving voice to the marginalised Andean women, and showing their inherent value to them, and to the rest of the Peruvian society.

Certainly, the most impressive testimony to the camera gathered in *Because I Wanted to Go to School* is the one of Graciela Huaywa Collanqui. She shares with the interviewer (Barea) and the spectators her traumatic memory of being an exploited girl, with the lucidity of someone who is no longer a girl. Thanks to the assistance provided by the association of domestic workers, Huaywa is now a politically trained young woman, who understands the systemic causes of her oppression. However, that does not detract from the fact that she is genuinely hurt. Part of her childhood has been robbed from her and is never going to be returned.

In an interview conducted by Gudula Meinzolt, Barea states that a life of forced seclusion creates emotional blockages in the domestic servants that is why the practice of testimony is used as a healing tool in Latin American political cultures. Overcoming communication impediments and taking the floor, perhaps for the first time, allows

them to move forward and overcome their trauma.[248] On the other hand, they experiment with a similar catharsis by watching the testimonies of other women who have experienced similar abuse. The members of the Warmi collective were so impressed by Huaywua's testimony —the balance between a vulnerability and a fierce determination— that they decided to offer her the role of Antuca, the protagonist of the docu-fiction film in preparation. Behind the selection of a format halfway between documental and fiction, there was aesthetic and political reasoning. Barea states that this choice was made due to the desire not to stray too far from a documentary frame.[249] That is why they opted to work with a non-professional actress, whose life experience was similar to the one of the fictional character. This fact provides a strong indexical quality to the film.

Using the classical genre of the *bildungsroman* and the recourse to flashbacks to structure the narrative, *Antuca* tells the story of a little girl (by the same name) who sees her life changed when, after the sudden death of her father, her mother leaves to work in the city and places her as a servant in the house of her godmother.[250] The godmother mistreats her and, finally, she ends up in Lima working for the same employers as her mother. A fellow worker informs Antuca that her mother died some time ago. Orphaned entirely, she starts a journey through a series of households, enduring abusive bosses and all kinds of violent treatment. At a certain point, she meets a girl who is part of the association of domestic workers. Timidly, Antuca starts frequenting their centre and

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[248] María Barea and Gudula Meinzolt, "Interview mit Maria Barea" in *Mirada de Mujer. Frauenblicke aus Lateinamerika. Die Regiseurin ist Anwesend*, eds. Andrea Klein, Gudula Meinzolt and Katrin Schulz (Berlin: Verein zur Förderung Feministischer Film-Bildungarbeit, 1992), 19.

[249] Barea admits that if they had had a bigger budget, she would have liked to use more fictional elements in the scenes located in the countryside, but the economic and time limitations forced them to reduce the more fictionalised scenes of the childhood of Antuca to the minimum. María Barea and Gudula Meinzolt, "Interview mit Maria Barea," 20.

[250] In the Andean culture the figures of the godmother and godfather are part of a clientelist system of social relations, the people in the villages are related —not necessarily by kinship but other bonds of servitude— to *madrinas* or *padrinos*, who live in provincial towns.

learns about her rights, while finding solace in the company of other women in the same situation.

At a crucial point, she decides to go back to her village to see her family, from whom she had been separated since she left. Accompanied by a friend, Antuca returns and meets her family, and also, her childhood sweetheart, now a man very fond of his community, who has never thought of leaving it. After the first joy of the encounter with them, Antuca starts feeling alienated. She knows that after so many years in the city, she does not belong to the village anymore. Hence, she decides to part once again, leaving behind her family, and with them her exclusively Andean identity, which is hybrid now. Back in the city where they belong, Antuca and her friend meet the other girls in the association bringing village food and drinks as a holiday present.

The dichotomy between the city and the countryside is crucial in the film. Antuca is forcibly taken to the city; however, the different experiences she has over the years make her change, learn other customs, and finally forget the peasant lifestyle and culture. When she returns to her community, she is perceived as an alien. Her identity is conflicted, in the city, she is a "dirty Indian," in the village, she is a *señorita* (miss). Both worlds distrust and reject her, yet her life belongs to the city, where she has the support of the domestic worker's organisation, her new family. The movie ends with a scene of hope, Antuca and her comrades build a hut made of straw mats for her in a sandy settlement of Lima. It is the celebration of the conquest of an autonomous space. The moral is that although Antuca is poor, her life belongs to her. She has self-esteem, joy, and hope. In spite of all the difficulties, she has managed to move forward; however, a whole life of struggle lies ahead.

The film functions as a vehicle of expression or subtle propaganda of the message transmitted by the association of domestic workers. The overall message of the

film is that Antuca knows her rights and how to organise with workers like her. But the tone is quiet, as the domestic workers are and, generally, Andean peasant women in their manner as well; it is not a Latin American macho militant film. The criticism of society is multi-layered, and the resolution is determined but humble. This contention also affects how the film is narrated, such as the slow pace, a formal choice that tries to create an atmosphere that reflects the Andean rhythms and the worldview of Antuca, the protagonist. There is no euphoria or radical combativeness.[251]

The two films *Because I Wanted to Go to School* and *Antuca* act as instruments for consciousness raising with two target groups. First, internally within the group of workers. Barea describes them as consciousness-raising materials and "instruments of liberation" by and for the organised domestic workers.[252] At this level, Barea is contributing to the creation of a proletarian public sphere in Peru, in the same way Beatriz Palacios and Domitila Chungara were doing in Bolivia. Second, both movies, but mainly *Antuca*, were intended to function as awareness-raising tools for the social class to which the members of Warmi belong: the urban middle class. Despite the fact that the movie shows that the chain of abuse is initiated by the indigenous groups themselves —it is through family members or godmothers that the girls are taken out of the communities and kept in a situation of semi-slavery in the cities— most of them end up in middle-class homes.

The spectrum of housewives that take advantage of them is very varied. Following the character of Antuca, it is conducted a radiography of femininity in Peru. She works for cruel bourgeois ladies, who do not let her study and turn a blind eye when their children or husbands try to abuse her sexually. Others are racist and frivolous, but not cruel. She even finds some that treat her with respect, like a prostitute

[251] María Barea and Gudula Meinzolt, "Interview mit Maria Barea," 21.
[252] Ibid, 19.

who originally was a low-class person but in a calculated move has opted for sex work for economic reasons. Or the feminist university lecturer who makes her study and provides her with sex education booklets. Thus, through Antuca we take a tour of the lives of middle-class urban women, and we also receive information about their oppression in a misogynistic society. On the one hand, the two bourgeois women are immoral, and they are not free, their husbands deceive them, and they live in a situation of dependence on them. On the other hand, independent women such as the prostitute or the left-wing university lecturer cannot live in fullness because of their difficult moral or economic fit in a patriarchal society.[253]

Antuca is making a case for a new approach to solidarity among women, based on overcoming class and race discrimination. Portraying with sophistication the women of the middle-class, Warmi are offering an analysis which shows the power imbalance between women. The sexual division of labour, and the absence of value assigned to domestic chores, generates in highly stratified societies the cruellest exploitation of woman by woman; only to reinforce the patriarchal structures that exploit them all, as a consequence. *Antuca* is a cry of empathy and liberation addressed to employers, which in Peru, due to the ridiculously low price of the domestic labour, are legion. Sadly, the film never enjoyed massive theatrical release because when it was finished, the Law 19,327 had recently been abolished. And neither the Warmi collective nor Barea alone would have another opportunity to undertake a feature film.

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[253] At the end of the 1970s two important books containing testimonies of Peruvian women were published in Peru: Esther Andradi and Ana María Portugal, *Ser mujer en el Perú* (Lima: Mujer y Autonomía, 1977); and Maruja Barrig, *Cinturón de castidad. La mujer de clase media en el Perú* (Lima: Mosca Azul, 1979).

3.7. Barea's Last Finished Project: *Daughters of War* (1998)

In 1997, Barea received a commission for an episode in the film *Girls Around the World* (1999), produced by Brenda Parkerson. This is a collection of six documentaries on a diverse group of 17-year-old girls from across the globe. The different episodes are made by women filmmakers from Benin, Germany, Finland, Pakistan, China, and Peru. The series aims to provide a critical cross-cultural perspective into the lives of young women as they transition into adulthood, targeting young American women as the audience.[254]

In this documentary, Barea immerses herself in the lives of a very particular type of girls: gang members in Ayacucho. The film called *Hijas de la Violencia* (*Daughters of War,* 1998) focuses on Gabriela del Pilar Bendezú Flores, an orphan, whose mother was among the thousands of innocent civilians killed during the bloody internal conflict in Peru (1980-2000). She and her sister lived with their grandparents from their early childhood, because the mother was working in the rainforest. The lack of love and the permanent abuse they endured at the hands of family members in their early life, and the subsequent killing of her mother, marked Pilar traumatically. This situation drove her to the streets, where thousands of children, raised in the same violence, gathered in gangs that reproduced this violent behaviour.

The film is a raw portrait of these gangs of teenagers, through poignant re-enactments of their criminal activities, fighting, and binges, performed by the kids themselves. In this film, Barea takes to the extreme her empathic capacity when recovering the testimony of the protagonist. Barea admits to having contacted Benzedú

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[254] "Girls Around the World," Women Make Movies, accessed September 15, 2016. http://www.wmm.com/filmcatalog/pages/c518.shtml

after accessing her judicial files thanks to the facilitation of some journalist friends of her—this fact, gives a glimpse of the lack of protection that juvenile offenders had at the time the film was made. Barea, again, uses the life story of Gabriela (also called Pilar) Benzedú as the narrative device through which the story is told, highlighting, at the same time the stories of the collective of gangsters. Benzedú and her sister had been living with their paternal grandparents since an early age. Their father went away, and their mother works very hard as a settler in the rainforest, having been unable to bring their children to the remote region. However, she visits the girls in town whenever her activities allow her to do so. But one day she disappears and never returns. This situation affects Gabriela, a little girl, a great deal. They only get to know the truth behind the vanishing of their mother, when their drunk grandmother tells them that she has been murdered—just another innocent peasant victim of the internal conflict.

The approach used by the film to explain the devastating consequences of war in the lives of Peruvian children is subjective, the focus is on their suffering. The description of the context is less explicit; there is no voice of God and the overall result is intimate. The documentary, in an interesting approach, does not take the side of the military or Shining Path, apportioning culpability equally on both groups. The reconstruction of Gabriela's terrible childhood is done using the testimonies of the grandfather and the sister, and a few family photos. The story told by Gabriela's sister —older and more balanced, who has managed to remain connected with her emotions despite the constant abuse— is intertwined with the testimony of the protagonist, who remains alienated from her feelings because of the trauma. For that reason, the oral account by the sister is key to reconstructing her story. She describes how the series of violent events made Gabriela change, hardening her heart and driving her to join a gang of lost girls like herself. Together, they drink, consume drugs, and commit small crimes.

Gabriela, unruly and desperate, behaves this way for some years, until she is detained and processed, condemned and sent off to jail. Subsequently, after her release, she becomes pregnant with her daughter.

After the information about the past provided by the sister, the narration confronts us with Gabriela's testimony. As an experience for the viewer, those two testimonies are at odds. Gabriela, at the moment of the filming, is not a desperate child or rebel adolescent but a taciturn (or depressed) young woman, focused on raising her baby daughter and surviving in a menacing environment. For Barea, an experienced interviewer and a careful listener, the subject of the interview is challenging. In the previous films, it has been rare to hear even a word out of her mouth during the interviews. However, Graciela Benzedú is so sparing with words that Barea needs to include the entire dialogue, without editing out the questions, to make some sense of the answers. We hear the voice of the filmmaker out of focus asking: "What saddens you?" Gabriela responds just shaking her head. Barea then asks: "What gives you joy?" The girl answers: "Nothing. Only my baby." This statement is followed by a photograph of a fifteen-year-old Gabriela embracing her new-born baby. The baby girl is maybe the only element of hope of the entire film, although there is a permanent suspicion that extreme violence will emerge suddenly again, and somehow will affect the baby too, as it affects everybody else in this haunted region.

In the collective sequences, Barea invited Ayacuchan boys and girls, actual members of gangs, to re-enact their criminal activities on the street and to perform in their gathering spaces. She admits that, often, things got out of hand. For instance, in one scene although the idea was to shoot a re-enactment of a party —with a fake buzz and phony squabbling— the kids ended up bringing actual alcohol and organising a melee. The result is uncanny, like a window open to a universe characterised by

mayhem and unrestrained violence. Moreover, in contrast with the other films analysed here, in this case there is no clear message of self-overcoming, empowerment, or hope. The psychological consequences of the internal conflict in the inhabitants of the Ayacucho region are so heart-breaking that it leaves the witnessing audience speechless. The war between the State and Shining Path has killed the soul of its most vulnerable victims. A hard-working, well-meaning Spanish catholic nun appears in the second part of the movie with a discourse that could potentially convey hope, but it ends up looking like a simplistically fanatical and even foreign kind of faith, in the midst of so much devastation and senselessness.

3.8. Unfinished Project: *Rocío y los pollitos* (Rocío and the chicks)

As seen in the previous chapter, devoted to Beatriz Palacios, an excellent way to research women filmmakers is to look at their unattainable or frustrated projects; principally, by focussing on the most mature or most elaborated ones, those which have been more time-consuming for their creators. In one of my last interviews with María Barea, she spoke to me about a project that she loved very much but could not finish due to lack of funding. I asked her to send it to me. The following week, I received a scanned dossier by email. The project is titled *Rocío y los pollitos* (Rocío and the chicks). I was surprised that she had never spoken before about it since it was noticeable that it was a project that had required a lot of planning. The dossier contained two pages with a plot summary, plus twelve pages with the literary script and fourteen photographs with their captions in German and Spanish. The pictures present the central actions and characters of the film (Rocío, her mother, the chicken seller) and the scenarios or locations (the street, the school, the Villa El Salvador settlement, amongst others).

The plot is the story of a seven-year-old girl whose family, composed of a mother, father and two children, arrives in Lima from Ayacucho. Her parents settle in a house made of straw mats in a sandy area, the *pueblo joven* of Villa El Salvador. The settlement does not have water, electricity or sanitation. Rocío's mother, Panchita, works as a street vendor selling emollients,[255] and her father as a construction worker. Shortly after arriving in the city, the father abandons the family and Rocío's mother

[255] A drink made with medicinal herbs from the mountain regions, which is marketed in the streets of downtown Lima.

finds moral and material support in the women's organisation of the neighbourhood, which has a mothers' club and a soup kitchen.

We see that the themes that obsess Barea are repeated: the emigration from the countryside to the city, the abandonment of the family by men who leave women alone with the responsibility of taking the family forward, and finally the abandoned women organising to respond collectively to the challenge of survival. However, this film not only shows women's issues. It foregrounds the consequences of these circumstances for the children, who in this case are the protagonists of the narrative. In this sense, this unfinished project of Barea's is a clear parallel of the unfinished project which Beatriz Palacios was perhaps most passionate about, *La tierra sin mal*. First, both are stories whose protagonists are marginal children who live in difficult situations. The idea of these filmmakers is, on the one hand, to draw attention to the harsh situation of the marginalised children of their countries, especially in the cities, and on the other, since childhood represents the future, to send a message of hope. Both make dramatic use of the tenderness and innocence that children embody. The kids, despite living in severe conditions, manage to find a way to enjoy childhood. In the case of Barea, the film links children rights with women's rights, a line of work made explicit in Warmi's statutes.[256]

Nevertheless, from the imagination of the child protagonists of Ukamau and Warmi scripts emerge indigenous legends, alive in the oral story, that are used by them to survive in traumatic contexts. In the case of *La tierra sin mal*, the motivation of the kids to undertake a long and dangerous journey from the highlands to the Bolivian lowlands is the search for the land without evil, or a paradise where children are always happy. In the case of *Rocío and the chicks*, after the father abandons the home, Rocío's childhood universe enters into crisis and she explains it to herself associating this

[256] Statute of Constitution of the Civil Association Warmi Collective Film and Video. Notarial Archive of Dr. Ramón A. Espinosa-Garreta. July 24, 1989.

stressful new reality with an ancient Peruvian creation legend: the story of the couple formed by the Sky (Pachacamac) and the Earth (Pachamama), and their children, the Moon and the Sun. The girl uses her own version of the ancient legend to sublimate the current difficult situation and hope for a happy end, when the sky, the earth, the sun and the moon will live in harmony again. In the use of this story as fictional element, can be perceived another of the obsessions of Barea, the survival of the Andean cosmogony in the city.

Although the film is grounded on all the testimonial and documental work developed by Barea in the last few decades, it signifies a firm step towards fiction, as it was for Beatriz Palacios *La tierra sin mal*. Both films were intended to be fiction feature films shot in 35mm, which is the cinematographic format that opens the doors of theatrical venues and exports. However, I do not directly associate the desire to move to fiction feature film format with the desire to become an author. This motivation was never present in Barea's ambitions. She aspired to tell the stories of immigrants from the countryside to the city. She wanted to ethically mediate the voice of those who were not being listened to, women and children, to show their humanity and the need to treat them as rights holders, not outcasts. She and Torres wrote this political but emotional story with the aim to connect with the most basic empathy of the viewers. In this case, the consumers of this format (ninety minutes feature on 35mm celluloid), the urban middle-class audiences, who were their own social class.

However, it is an unavoidable fact that, historically, Latin American women have had very little entry into the field of directing fiction feature films. This is a multi-causal problem, but the basis of it is inequality in access to resources and opportunities. In the case of the filmmakers addressed in the first two chapters of this thesis, although at one point they reached the maturity and self-security that would allow them to be

competitive in market terms —and also creating artistic products capable of being incorporated into the canon— for different reasons, both directors were unable to finish their projects.

3.9. Conclusion: Women's Empowerment and Cinema

At the end of *Making the Soup Together*, the voice-over claims: "organised women, with their new social role, have acquired a new awareness of their personal value. Now they demand the recognition of their merits and the participation in decisions within the community, neighbourhoods, and other governing bodies." There is a parallelism between the processes followed by the immigrant women to whom Barea devotes almost all of her work, and her biography. She also found her own way through the generation of supportive collective spaces and confronted various patriarchal structures —from the heterosexual couple on which a particular type of Latin American political cinema is based (husband/director-wife/producer) to the *Machismo-Leninismo* of the leftist cinematic world— finally achieving a new identity, borne out of this learning process. However, in the same way in which the voices of working-class women are very much still unheard in Peruvian politics, Barea's film work with them has been marginalised.

The reasons for this exclusion have been addressed already in the introduction to this chapter and demonstrated throughout the argument. To summarise them, in the same way that poor, illiterate and racialised women are ignored, a woman filmmaker is ignored when she does not sell herself as a unique creator, who pre-eminently seeks a language of her own, or generates a theory that supports her practice and just pours all her creativity and resources into the cause of outcast women, in a non-spectacular way. In terms of production practices, Barea's story is that of a creative servant who dared to be a fully-fledged creator, but without aspiring to subalternise her collaborators. In terms of discursive practices, for Barea (as for Palacios) *testimonio* was a collective

emancipatory locus of encounter and social transformation that benefited speakers, mediators, and listeners equally. Consequently, her ethical/political intention, her sense of compassion for the people and the community, exceeded her need to convey her own speech as an individual creator.

Despite the success of her films in terms of service to the portrayed collectives, after *Daughters of War*, Barea has been unable to find funds to continue making movies, and in the same way she has been written out of the history of Peruvian oppositional cinema. The objective of this chapter was to demonstrate the relevance of her contribution to it, in the last quarter of the 20th century. Her alliance with several groups of subaltern women and her use of collaborative methodologies for the creation of filmic testimonies deserves a more prominent space. However, the fact that she portrays these social groups (voluntarily) with little authorial mediation, and the results of these processes are not aesthetically/cinematically spectacular, has resulted in an overshadowing of her work. That this is the case shows that it is necessary to challenge the current mode of film appreciation to favour the construction of a more comprehensive film history, that regularly incorporates practices, processes, and use value, as some of the crucial features to evaluate political cinema.

CHAPTER 4. Cinema with Domitila Chungara

4.1. Introduction: The Stage Presence of the "Stageless"

This thesis advances, gradually, from a focus on the mediators of the voices of Andean subaltern women, to concentrate on the point of view of the speakers themselves. Until now, we have seen both Beatriz Palacios and María Barea serve different political projects through the mediation and creation of valuable images for groups that were not yet in a position to make their own films. In this last chapter, I focus on the other side of the equation, taking as a case study the participation in cinematic projects by the organisations of women of the Bolivian mines; and, specifically, one of them, Domitila Chungara, who was, for many years, leader of the Housewives' Committee of the tin-mining town Siglo XX.

During most of the last century, the systematic economic and military violence exerted by the Bolivian state, national and transnational companies against the mining communities had the paradoxical effect of fostering women's empowerment. In the absence of their husbands, fathers, and brothers, who were murdered or imprisoned, these women needed to get out of their households, to organise and to resist. They also needed to reclaim for better wages for their male partners and for material resources to guarantee the very survival of their families in the remote mining settlements. Ultimately, they generated a specifically feminine discourse and rhetoric, became well-known, and thus entered the pantheon of Bolivian liberators. This status was not only due to their political achievements and irredentist attitude towards the military repression conducted by successive dictatorships between the late sixties and early eighties but was also due to their open confrontation with the economic violence

imposed by the doctrines and organisations responsible for the implementation of the Washington Consensus during successive decades.

Domitila Chungara's life story was used to bear witness to both repression and resistance, on different media by several mediators, during a period of time that spans more than twenty years (1971-1994). As usual in Latin American *testimonio*, her charismatic image and leading role was used to create a collective narrative. Her written testimony, *Si me permiten hablar* (Let Me Speak!), is a canonical object of study by Latin-Americanists.[257] Nevertheless, there has been little attention paid to her other testimonies in different formats, and to the circulation of them as part of the political action conducted by her organisation. Turning our attention to those other materialisations of her life story —not only the filmic ones, but also the ones addressed to other subaltern women in even more popular and usable forms such as plays, radio programs and illustrated booklets— allows a highlighting of the transmediatic quality of Latin American *testimonio*. When recognising this axial feature, it is possible to situate better and to expand the understanding of the testimonial practice, revealing it not as a cultural object, but as a political process.

Creativity and authorship by on-screen subjects

This last chapter brings light to another aspect of Andean oppositional filmmaking, the participation of film subjects as a form of collaborative authorship. In the previous chapters, I have been proving how, in order to acknowledge disregarded off-screen creative processes, it is necessary to expand the notion of creativity and to include other forms of labour in film production, distribution, and exhibition, such as organisation and

[257] Moema Viezzer, *Si me permiten hablar: Testimonio de Domitila, una mujer de las minas de Bolivia* (México: Siglo XXI, 1977). Translated into English as *Let Me Speak! Testimony of Domitila, a Woman of the Bolivian Mines* (London: Stage 1, 1978).

logistics, communication, and negotiation, administration, casting, dissemination, among others. In this final chapter, I am going to address the creative on-screen work by activists who were non-professional actors. In a recent interview, African American woman filmmmaker Ava Duvernay affirmed that activism and creativity are "always intertwined. Activism is inherently a creative endeavor—it takes a radical imagination to be an activist, to envision a world that is not there. It takes imagination and that's not far from art."[258] Story-telling and performance are always at the foundation of political communication.

Chungara makes an excellent case for studying political communication by subaltern subjects. She, as the leader of a marginalised grass-roots movement, explored the ways of combating invisibility and took any opportunity in any form (written, oral, audio-visual) to raise her voice. She managed her public image and consequently, the public image of the people she spoke for. However, in order to acknowledge her agency in the cinematic processes addressed in this chapter, it is necessary to expand the consideration of what is a creative contribution to a political film. The savvy women of the Bolivian mines fully understood that "politics revolves around what can be seen, felt, sensed. Political acts are encoded in medial forms (…) by which the political becomes manifest in the world."[259] Chungara, conscious of the importance of communication, embraced several collaborative creative processes that, in a very

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[258] Kristina Monllos, "Filmmaker Ava Duvernay on the Creative Process as the Intersection of Art and Activism", *Adweek*, June 10, 2018. https://www.adweek.com/creativity/creative-100-ava-duvernay/

[259] Meg McLagan and Yates McKee, "Introduction" in *Sensible Politics: The Visual Culture of Nongovernmental Activism*, eds. Meg McLagan and Yates McKee (New York, NY: Zone Books, 2012), 9.

profitable symbiosis with the filmmakers, journalists and educators would allow her to more widely publicise her political agenda.

There were three key pieces of reasoning behind the strategy of political communication conducted by the organisation of housewives: firstly, they had the necessity to show to the world their mere existence and to disseminate their history to different publics (nationally and internationally, in proletarian or solidarity/middle-class public spheres). Secondly, they wanted to teach their successful practices and methods, and the ideological underpinnings behind them, to other subaltern women. Their cinematic performances included individual and collective testimonies and reenactments of their forms of struggle. They staged negotiations, assemblies, demonstrations, and hunger strikes—all lessons of non-violent civil disobedience. And last but not least, they needed to overcome the invisibility to which they were condemned by patriarchal structures (both allies —such as their husbands, or the union— or enemies —such as the mining companies, the government, or conservative sectors of the Catholic church) and demonstrate their instrumental contribution to the joint struggle of Bolivian mining proletariat.

The first film that collects the testimony of a housewives' organisation is *The Courage of the People* in 1971. During the following decades, the organised housewives appeared in different documentaries bearing witness to their consolidation as a classist organisation. These cinematic processes are complex and, in the cases I am going to focus on, involve many people from its inception to dissemination stages: grass-roots members, leadership, the crew of filmmakers (in above and below the line roles), and different types of addressees (other subaltern women, intellectual and/or political audiences, critics, and academics).

However, I would like to prioritise in my narrative the point of view of the housewives' organisations. Melissa Williams, when reflecting on how feminist media scholarship approaches working-class women's reality, notes that often scholars analyse and categorise working-class women through methodologies, language, and intellectual standards that belong to the middle-class elite and make working-class women's rhetoric impossible to hear.[260] She also pinpoints a tendency "to reduce working-class women to their physical bodies and economic status, ignoring their intellectual contributions."[261]

Taking into consideration Williams' arguments, and in coherence with my objective of enhancing the voice of the housewives of the mines, I avoid the use of evaluative rankings concerning formal excellence. This is because privileging Westernised models of aesthetic appreciation would imply dismissing works that are crucial sources for the interpretation of the discursive evolution of the housewives' organisations. Consequently, I read all the filmic products in the way that they perceived them, as tools or even weapons, the quality of which would be defined by their capacity to mobilise and foster the understanding and replication of the political practices being portrayed. Therefore, I shall be according the same attention to both awarded feature films intended for theatrical release, and short videos to be used in workshops held in rural venues.

Regarding body politics, Williams notes: "Rather than allowing space for the language and thought of working-class women, feminist media scholarship focuses on how the literal appearance and actions of working-class women —and their

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[260] Melissa Williams, "'I Kinda Prefer to be a Human Being': Roseanne Barr and Defining Working-Class Feminism and Authorship," *Spectator* 25, no. 2 (2005): 29.
[261] Ibid, 26.

representations in the mass media— destabilize notions of femininity and gender roles for women within *middle-class* culture."[262] Although the Bolivian mining housewives —due to their non-normative bodies and masterful staging of body-based forms of struggle— are a mesmerising potential object of study, a focus on the appeal of their embodied presence entails the danger of overshadowing their political thought. To avoid this unwanted outcome, I try to balance the consideration of their strong stage presence with a focus on their discursive strategies.

Editing, mediation, and exclusion of the subaltern voices

The autonomy and scope of the self-representation of the women of the mines has limits because they did not participate in postproduction. To put forward their communicational agenda, they acted in alliance with trustworthy organic intellectuals; using them, somehow, as loudspeakers to allow their message to reach distant publics. However, Domitila Chungara and the women of the mines were neither in possession of the technology nor the technical knowledge that would allow them to create finished cultural devices. Consequently, they were always at the discretion of the editors, who were free to impose their criteria over the final result. That is why, as said in the introduction, these are practices of collaborative cinema but not exactly collective or communitarian ones. Because, in the end, the audience is left without knowing what the protagonists of the film would have emphasised if they could make editing decisions for themselves.

The lack of participation of the subaltern subjects in editing decisions has been largely discussed in *testimonio* literature. Regarding the differences in the mediation

[262] Ibid, 28.

conducted in written and audio-visual testimony, Gustavo Aprea notes that the audio-visual format registers the precise moment in which the dialogue between the speaker and the interviewer happens, consequently, the paratextual elements (tone, gesture, silence) that accompany the words uttered make the experience more vivid for the spectator and allow them to establish a closer and more empathic relationship with the speaker. They also amplify the sense of immediacy between the speaker and the spectator.[263] However, this perception is just an illusion, because the filmic edition is as strong as the written one.

For Mariano Mestman, although the directly heard utterance "collaborates in the (feeling of) authenticity of the voice, we know that in films the presence of *testimonio* is quantitatively less (much less) than in the case of books, even for reasons of extension or format, and in its layout in the film it often remains under the arguments put forward by the voice-over."[264] Moreover, with or without voice-over there is mediation, as seen in the case of *Banners of the Dawn*. In the case of the majority of the films addressed in this chapter, the directors do use an editorial voice-over to foster their own agenda. However, this agenda never betrays the political and communicational objectives of the portrayed subjects. On the contrary, it is a synergic effort.

In this chapter, I am going to address these issues in different testimonies by Chungara and other collaborations between the women of the mines and several organic intellectuals, paying attention to the mediation conducted, and their circulation. This example showcases the creativity and co-authorship of the filmic testimonies by the

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[263] Gustavo Aprea, *Documental, testimonios y memorias. Miradas sobre el pasado militante* (Buenos Aires: Manantial, 2015), 109.
[264] Mariano Mestman, "Las masas en la era del testimonio. Notas sobre el cine del 68 en América Latina," in *Masas, pueblo y multitud en cine y televisión*, eds. Mariano Mestman and Mirta Varela (Buenos Aires: Eudeba, 2013), 187.

subaltern subjects. But first, I contextualise the particular struggles of the housewives of the mines, amidst the rich and complex practice of resistance and dissidence carried on by the Bolivian subaltern groups.[265]

[265] The mining proletariat, indigenous peasants and low-income urban population.

4.2. The Women of the Bolivian Mines

The Bolivian popular sectors have developed a strong political culture and a very efficient capacity for organising collectively, that probably culminated with the overthrow of the president Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada in 2003, after the so-called Gas War. According to Magdalena Cajías, the political culture of the popular sectors of Bolivia results from the confluence of the mining-union, indigenous-peasant, and urban-popular cultures, and is characterised by their self-identification as being exploited and marginalised due to the implementation of State and private sector policies. This certainty comes together with the awareness of the existence of popular power (*poder popular*) and the belief in the possibility of an actual triumph against the wealthy and powerful. The collective dimension of the political struggle is built from below, through participatory and direct democracy.[266]

Bolivian subalternised groups also identify a national adversary who, depending on the historical moment, may be the alliance of the military with the oligarchy, or representative democracy and its political parties controlled by the mestizo-whites. In addition, they identify external adversaries, mainly the United States of America, due to its interference in national life. Also remarkable is the conviction of the popular sectors in their right to control the natural resources, defining its uses, and deciding economic plans and projections, principally regarding mineral resources.[267]

Given the preceding considerations, in Bolivia, the outcome of the extreme military, political, economic, and symbolic violence exercised against the disenfranchised populations has often been the opposite of the one expected: it has

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[266] Magdalena Cajías de la Vega, "El poder de la memoria: los mineros en las jornadas de octubre de 2003," in *Conflictos políticos y movimientos sociales en Bolivia*, ed. Nicholas A. Robins (La Paz: Plural editores, 2006), 46.
[267] Ibid, 46.

empowered them.[268] Women are a fundamental part of the resistance. Heroines, such as Bartolina Sisa, Gregoria Apaza, Juana Azurduy, or Domitila Chungara, are only the tip of the iceberg of a cross-sectional communitarian political culture, in which individuals have no meaning other than as part of a larger collective structure.

The creation of Housewives' Committees within the mining union

Mining trade unionism appears from its historical beginnings to be linked both to labour claims as well as to self-defence against repeated episodes of state violence.[269] In 1944, the *Federación Sindical de Trabajadores Mineros de Bolivia* (Federation of Mineworkers of Bolivia, FSTMB) was created. This organisation was called to be the vanguard of the labour movement in the country because of the number of its members and the radicalism of its agenda. The support of the FSTMB for the *Movimiento Nacional Revolucionario* (National Revolutionary Movement, MNR), was key to the success of the Bolivian National Revolution of 1952, one of the largest in the continent (only the second in the 20th century after the Mexican) and, probably, the most unknown of the Latin American revolutions in the past century.

The 1952 regime led to the modernisation of a country that was still ruled by power structures inherited from the former colonisers. However, due to the pressure exerted by the labour organisations, the "revolutionary" steps went beyond the initial expectations of some sectors of the MNR, and completely changed the face of the country. The most important measures of the national-revolutionary government were universal suffrage; military, land, and education reforms; the creation of the *Central*

[268] In the Andean cosmovision, while death is not the end, the hunger suffered by the majority due to the unequal distribution of wealth and the patrimonialisation of public goods is intolerable.
[269] In the 20th century, the massacres of Uncía, in 1923, and Catavi, in 1942, were the firsts of a long series, of which the last episode was the so-called Christmas massacre in Amayapampa, in 1996.

Obrera Boliviana (Bolivian Workers Central, COB); and last, but not least, the nationalisation of mines. However, as soon as 1953 the US government assisted the Bolivian government in drafting a new oil code, and in 1955 the Gulf Oil Company was already operating. At the end of the decade, there were ten American oil companies installed in the country. Successive MNR governments diverged from progressive policies and began strengthening the armed forces. Finally, in 1964, the coup of General René Barrientos —vice president of the government of Victor Paz Estenssoro in his third term— ended the already failed project of the National Revolution of 1952.[270]

Barrientos' regime was openly hostile to the labour movement and the urban, progressive, middle classes. The new military government established a strong alliance with the peasantry but carried out systematic repression in the mining areas of the country. Arguably, the most notorious episode of this phase of repression was the slaughter of Saint John's Eve. This massacre is the central theme of Ukamau's movie *The Courage of the People,* filmed in 1971 in a participatory process with the mining community of Siglo XX, who were witnesses and actual survivors of the carnage. The trigger of the massacre had been the presence of Ernesto 'Che' Guevara in Bolivia. Guevara was trying to launch a guerrilla focus with the intention of igniting a revolution throughout South America from the very heart of the continent. Che's lack of knowledge of the reality of Bolivia has been widely analysed; as has, in the same way, the lack of support he received from the Bolivian Communist Party and the Bolivian peasantry.

In the early 1960s, the negative consequences of the macroeconomic stabilisation plan, imposed by the IMF on Bolivia, were unbearable in the mining

[270] Herbert Klein, *A Concise History of Bolivia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 219-222.

regions, and that fact boosted the union's demands. Consequently, it increased the political repression against the unions and their leaders. In this context arose the Housewives Committee of Siglo XX. In 1961, the wives of some of the imprisoned union leaders of the mining settlement of Siglo XX sought help from other women to collectively demand the release of their husbands. In response to this call, sixty women marched to the capital city of the country, La Paz, where they went on hunger strike and issued a manifesto calling for the liberation of the detainees. This was in addition to other economic demands, such as the payment of back wages and the correct supply of the company store. The strike, supported by women in other sectors of society, lasted ten days and was triumphant. The union leaders were released, and the women of Siglo XX decided to constitute themselves as an organisation within the union: the Housewives' Committee. The two main modes of action of the Committee were, firstly, supporting structural claims that benefited the mining collective like better wages for the workers, and medical services and the correct supply of the company grocery stores. Secondly, they agitated for women's issues, such as obtaining jobs for single, widowed, or abandoned women, and, in solidarity with women from other sectors, especially peasants.[271]

Although the housewives' organisation was born as a support group and they were not part of the feminist movement, the resistances that organised women faced because of their political work were many. Their husbands were reluctant to allow them to develop activities outside the household. Consequently, they were forbidden to participate in meetings and demonstrations and too often violently coerced not to do so. The union was also openly misogynist, so having a say was a constant struggle for the

[271] Moema Viezzer, James Dietz, and Paula Tuchman, "El Comité de Amas de Casa de Siglo XX: An Organisational Experience of Bolivian Women," *Latin American Perspectives* 6, no. 3 (1979): 82.

women, even though this myopic point of view was against the interest of the mining collective. June Nash notes that even the company management was "more aware than the union leaders of the potential force the mobilisation of women might have in providing an independent supply base and in the public demonstrations which had an effective appeal to the wider population."[272] She also points out that other conservative forces such as the Catholic church tried to stop the political action of the organised women "the clergy were prompted to counter the women's hunger strike implying that woman's body, as a reproductive vessel, was not her own property to threaten by subjecting it to hunger strikes. This was never asserted in the case of the hunger strikes carried out by men."[273]

Despite the opposition, the importance of this women's organisation did nothing but grow over time, and they often became a vanguard group within the labour movement.[274] Furthermore, their political significance was not just within the mining unions. Their most renowned achievement was catalysing the end of the dictatorship of Hugo Banzer, through another hunger strike in 1977. At that time, after sixteen years of activity, the women of Siglo XX were invested with a symbolic power capable of mobilising the entire country. The struggle of the housewives of Siglo XX foregrounded the fact that, in parallel with the anti-imperialist struggles and the national political conflicts, other overshadowed battles were going on in Bolivia at the time. For instance, women's daily wrestling for the survival of their families, which probably constituted the most crucial and desperate battlefront. Nevertheless, in the same way that Ernesto

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[272] June C. Nash, *We Eat the Mines and the Mines Eat Us: Dependency and Exploitation in Bolivian Tin Mines* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 243.

[273] Ibid, 243.

[274] Thomas C. Greaves, "The Woman's Voice in Andean Labor Unions," *Urban Anthropology and Studies of Cultural Systems and World Economic Development* 15, no. 3-4 (1986): 365.

Guevara ignored the priorities of the Bolivian people —rushing at a breakneck adventure in foreign territory without consulting its inhabitants— the labour movement usually ignored the needs of the women, who alone bear the responsibility of sustaining human life.

Domitila Barrios, the person, and Domitila Chungara, the persona

Domitila Barrios Cuenca, better known as Domitila Chungara, is an icon and a role model for Bolivian grass-roots women movements, even though, in the years before her passing, she was almost forgotten and put into a corner. After her death, on March 13, 2012, the Bolivian government declared three days of official mourning —without cessation of activities— and President Evo Morales offered symbolic condolences to the mining family.

She was born in Siglo XX in 1937. Her life was marked by extreme challenges from the beginning. At a very young age she left school and took on her shoulders the responsibility of raising her five sisters after her mother's early death. Her father —a tailor of indigenous origin, and a militant of the MNR, who participated actively in the revolution of 1952— played a dual role in her life. On the one hand he was careless, on the other, in her memoirs Chungara admits that, conversely to what was expected, he inculcated gender-egalitarian ideas in his daughters, raising them on the principle that women have the same rights as men.[275] Moreover, the fact of being born and growing up in the mining region exposed young Domitila to a vibrant political culture which gave her a firm class consciousness and a remarkable critical capacity.

[275] Barrios and Viezzer, *Let me Speak*, 56; *The Courage of the People* (Ukamau, 1971).

Domitila Barrios married, before her twenties, the tin-miner René Chungara, adopting his surname as the one for her public persona. At the end of the 1980s, after René abandoned the family, she tried to go back to her maiden name; however, the branding associated with the name was too strong and also useful, everybody in Bolivia and abroad reacted to this name, so she never could get rid of her association with her ex-husband in the public sphere. Moreover, René never was in the spotlight, he was a rank and file member of the mining union, who did not stand out, while she was an international working-class celebrity. Since I am referring to her public figure and her performing work in the political sphere, I name her Domitila Chungara (her stage name) and not Domitila Barrios.

In the mid-1960s, Chungara, a young mother struggling to making ends meet, approached the Housewives' Committee of Siglo XX to find some help. Her involvement in politics started during the dictatorship of René Barrientos, a very repressive period for the mining communities. In these extremely difficult times, Domitila Chungara stood out due to her courage, strength, and leadership capacity. In 1967, she was severely punished for her public position against the army, suffering consecutive detentions, imprisonment, torture and exile. But this ordeal did not break her, after some time —recovered from her physical and psychological wounds— she returned to the mines and continued her political activities, suffering from some after-effects but as determined as ever to fight for the community. At that point, she started to be respected even among the male union leaders in Bolivia, although the women's organisation she represented never gained actual decision-making power within the union.

Chungara achieved international recognition after her unexpected intervention in the International Women's Year Tribune, held in Mexico in 1975. The United Nations

officially proclaimed 1975 as International Women's Year. The first World Conference on Women was called in June in Mexico City. The event was twofold. On the one hand, the governmental forum, participated in by one hundred and thirty-three countries. On the other, the International Women's Year Tribune, a parallel forum attended by four thousand NGO representatives.[276]

Chungara's speeches caused a profound impact on the attendees at this international event, especially on the subaltern women who were present, who were a clear minority even in the Tribune. Therefore, when she raised her voice in this platform to denounce the situation of the women of the mining regions of the Bolivian highlands, it came as a surprise. Moreover, Chungara, with overflowing political intuition, far from addressing only local issues pointed out the principal flaw of the conference, its focus on the concerns of white middle-class women. She was an indigenous woman (although at that time she did not identify herself primarily as such) and had a Marxist background. Her approach to any situation, included the Mexico conference, was from a class struggle perspective. So, she stood up against any universalist definition of women or women's situation. The Bolivian proposed, instead, an approach to women's issues that we today would call "intersectional."[277]

Chungara caught this international forum unprepared because any other woman in her circumstance — a multiparous, barely educated housewife from a peripheral region, who was travelling abroad and participating in an international meeting for the first time— would have been terrified to raise her voice. Conversely, the powerful

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[276] See "World Conferences on Women: Mexico 1975," UN Women, http://www.unwomen.org/en/how-we-work/intergovernmental-support/world-conferences-on-women#mexico

[277] Chungara claimed for an intersectional interpretation of women's lives many years before the African-American academic Kimberle Williams Crenshaw coined the term. Obviously, Crenshaw's proposal was born out the political praxis of African-American women who had been practicing a feminism useful for them and their needs, different from those of white middle-class women.

staging of her thought became inspiring, and soon after iconic, for organised subaltern women of all kinds, in Latin America and beyond.

Furthermore, her legendary participation in the UN Women's Tribune was fuelled by the rapid circulation of the anecdote of her confrontation with Betty Friedan.[278] According to this quasi-mythical story, Friedan (a quintessential representative of liberal feminism of the time) tried to silence Chungara, claiming that her positions were too partisan. The American, who was proposing a unitary World Plan of action, regarded Chungara's claims as divisive and menacing to her objective of uniting the women of the world. When Friedan argued that politics should not separate them, Chungara replied by saying that what bonded working-class women to same-class men was much more than what united them to bourgeois ladies. Legend has it that after these sort of defiant declarations, the chair withdrew the floor from Chungara. Consequently, the outraged members of the audience began to shout: "Let her Speak! Let her Speak!" Under pressure, the chair felt obliged to return the microphone to Chungara and allow her to finish her speech, affirming her posture, to general acclaim.[279]

From that moment on, Chungara became a subaltern celeb. However, she returned to her normal activities, as a housewife (mother of seven) and community leader, soon after the Conference, but first she spent some time in Mexico giving talks

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[278] Betty Friedan was an American feminist theorist and activist. Her book *The Feminine Mystique* (1963) was instrumental for the development of Western feminism. According to Jocelyn Olcott there was a confrontation along these lines, but it was not with Betty Friedan but with the Mexican Esperanza Brito de Martí. Jocelyn Olcott, *International Women's Year: The Greatest Consciousness Raising Event in History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 3-4.

[279] This story, even if it is not exactly true, is based on the actual class race division of the feminist movement from the 1970s until now. Similar discussions emerge repeatedly within the feminist movement. For instance, in the recent women's strike conducted in Spain in March 8, 2018, groups of racialised Spanish women (black, gypsy, Muslim, etc.) confronted the organisers accusing them of making their agenda invisible.

and compiling with Moema Viezzer the testimony of her life, the best-seller book, *Let Me Speak! Testimony of Domitila, a Woman of the Bolivian Mines.*

A mother's political culture

Remarkably enough, the housewives' committee of Siglo XX and other highly politicised groups of women in other mines that followed cohered around the notion of being mothers as a form of labour. Motherhood is a flexible concept that is defined depending on socio-economic and cultural factors. In the particular case of the women of the Bolivian mines, being a mother implied much more than being the biological bearer of children, it meant being the principal, and sometimes unique, person responsible for the reproduction of life in their precarious households. Most of them had numerous children and other dependent family members but no other regular source of income than the meagre salary of their husbands (no pay, in the case of those widowed or abandoned).

Like other cultural systems, revolutions also project their own archetype around women's bodies. In the case of the Bolivian revolution of 1952, the ideal role assigned for women was "revolutionary motherhood." The revolutionary project, rhetorically and practically, underpinned women's responsibilities in the reproductive sphere and the state was called on to educate them to guarantee their efficiency.[280] The strategies developed to meet the expectations towards that model of motherhood, such as "mother's clubs," caused a non-desired effect: the empowerment of Bolivian subaltern

[280] Nicole L. Pacino, "Creating Madres Campesinas: Revolutionary Motherhood and Gendered Politics of Nation Building in 1950s Bolivia," *Journal of Women's History* 27, no. 1 (2015): 63.

women. As a result, they seized the opportunity of escaping the private sphere —with the legitimate alibi of attending meetings or training— and launched themselves into the public sphere.[281] Moreover, the symbolic power invested by State propaganda in the bodies of women (as the essentialised carriers of life and culture), made women's body-based oppositional struggles extremely subversive.

Maternity-related topics are vital to the body issues addressed in Latin American women's testimonies. From middle-class women to peasants, workers, or guerrilla women, all of them tackle the issue of motherhood in one moment or another, even if it is only to explain the decision to forgo having children, as Rigoberta Menchú does in her testimony.[282] In this regard, Nancy Saporta has noted:

> In women's testimonial discourse, it is either having lost their children or imagining for them a social change and political transformation that motivates the act of writing. The text itself becomes the symbol for an act of love: not simply abstract love of one's country, one's race, or one's revolution (although these characteristics are also present) but rather, love for the human being to whom them gave life.[283]

In her testimonies, Chungara describes herself mothering her sisters first, and after that, her children. She addresses not only the misery of being the mother in a poor household but also denunciates the violence exerted against her children due to her political activity: from her imprisonment with a two-year-old baby to the premature

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[281] Ibid, 71.
[282] Elisabeth Burgos-Debray, *Me llamo Rigoberta Menchú* (Havana: Casa de las Américas, 1983), 342-350.
[283] Nancy Saporta-Sternbach, "Re-membering the dead: Latin american women's 'testimonial' discourse," *Latin American Perspectives* 18, no.3 (Summer 1991): 98.

birth of a dead foetus which occurred while in detention, due to torture. In the filmic testimonies we are going to analyse in this chapter, the image of the bodies of the struggling women has an indexical quality, intended to provide authenticity to the narration. Moreover, those bodies bear an iconic quality. The multiparous body of Domitila Chungara represents how life is engendered and maintained in the mines of Bolivia. As mothers, they were desperate, but they had a clear understanding of the mechanisms of oppression. Consequently, they aimed to find permanent solutions which involved transforming the entire system rather than achieving just a few concrete demands.[284]

Furthermore, the political work of the housewives, focused on a very particular and local fight for the survival of their families, was linked to the need to change both the junctural and structural realities of the country. Cristobal Aljovín and Nils Jacobsen in their book *Political Culture in the Andes* point out that there is a tendency in the Andes to engage local struggles in larger national or transnational emancipatory projects.[285] In the case of the housewives, there is a diachronic continuity to their tactics and rhetoric even though they are engaging synchronically with evolving social and political contexts.

Filmic self-representation as a strategic choice

One of the research questions of this chapter is to which extent the participation in film processes by women from mining communities was a deliberate strategy of political communication or, conversely, whether it was a passive choice, following the initiative

[284] Isabel Seguí, "The Embodied Testimony of Domitila Chungara in *The Courage of the People* (Jorge Sanjinés, 1971)," *Interlitteraria* 22, no. 1 (2017): 180-193.
[285] Cristobal Aljovín de Losada and Nils Jacobsen, *Cultura política en los Andes (1750-1950)* (Lima: Institut français d'études andines, 2007), 314.

of allied organic intellectuals. My initial hypothesis was that it was a conscious activity, but I would need to find evidence of the self-reflexivity behind their participation in films. In Chungara's second written testimony *¡Aquí también, Domitila!* (not translated into English) is found the proof that the members of the Housewives' Committee were fully aware of the power of mass media —and, uniquely, American cinema— to alienate the working class. Therefore, they wanted the creation of a different cinema, alternative to the one they consumed habitually in great quantity at the theatre of the mining company.[286]

This reflection is developed in the section titled "El joven de la película" (The guy in the movie) that is part of a chapter eloquently titled "Introducción a la comunicación y otras lecciones" (Introduction to communication and other lessons).[287] Here Chungara describes an investigation into media consumption and its influence on the population of the mines, conducted by the organisation of housewives. This initiative was motivated by the concern felt by the members of the committee when they noticed how their children were developing extreme self-hatred, which they suspected was a reaction to the negative influence of mass media models in their subjective self-perception. Chungara explains the conclusions of this research work carried out by the housewives by providing numerous examples. Some of these refer to representation, but she also analyses the processes of reception of the films, such as the psychological alterations they have realised that movies produce in their audiences.

The members of the committee analysed samples of newspapers, magazines, radio, television and cinema and concluded that all media "give racist, discriminatory

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[286] David Acebey and Domitila Barrios de Chungara, *¡Aquí también, Domitila!* (México: Siglo XXI editores, 1985), 206.

[287] Ibid, 203.

and alienating messages." [288] But they realised that cinema was the most influential medium in the mining settlements. [289] This was because going to the movies was the only leisure activity that the miners and their families could afford. The price of the tickets was very low, especially when compared with the price of food (the cost of a movie ticket was one peso, whereas the price of a piece of bread was eight pesos). Moreover, the vast majority of films released in the mines were Hollywood features. So, the population was overtly exposed to American cultural colonisation.[290]

As for their representation, they noted that the hero of the movie was always gringo and the bad guy was them. In Chungara's words: "The bad guy in the movie is dark, Indian, black, Chicano. So, we are the worst offenders, the bad son, the drunkard, the degenerate, the trafficker, the rapist, the murderer, the prostitute, the torturer ... instead, the gringo plays the role of the best son, the best policeman and always the best." [291] They were also aware that the identification mechanism triggered by cinema as a medium made the boys and girls of the mining settlements try to imitate the good guy. However, when they looked themselves in the mirror, they saw the evil guy in the reflection. Consequently, they tried to change (clothes, hair-style and make-up), and they started disavowing their elders. The committee regarded as responsible for this not

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[288] Ibid, 204.
[289] Ibid, 205.
[290] The author of this blog called "Catavi Tierra Querida" (Catavi, dear homeland), posted in October 8, 2014, his remembrances of the Simon Patiño Theatre, the company theatre of the mine of Siglo XX, that takes its name from the founder of the mining Company. The blogger, called Freddy Willy (probably a pseudonym), shows his nostalgia for the good old days (the 1970s) when he used to frequent this theatre, which is the space in Catavi he misses most. He remembers watching American blockbusters such as *King Kong* (Edgar Wallace and Merian C. Cooper, 1933), *Tarzan the Ape Man* (W. S. Van Dyke, 1932), *Planet of the Apes* (Franklin J. Schaffner, 1968), *Papillon* (Franklin J. Schaffner, 1973), one co-production *The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly* (Sergio Leone, 1966), and all the movies by the Mexican comedian Cantinflas. The blogger explains how the theatre was divided in two sectors, *preferencia* (preference) used by the office clerks and families and *luneta* for the miners and families. He affirms that the major part of the audience were youngsters.
http://catavifreddy.blogspot.co.uk/2014/10/teatro-simon-i-patino.html
[291] Acebey, *¡Aquí también Domitila!*, 206.

only the movies, but also the alienated parents that fell into the contradiction of buying indigenous children cowboy gear and toy guns to kill Indians.[292]

For Chungara, the superheroes were one the most harmful fictional devices of all. She argues that they have been invented by the American storytellers to make the people think that normal human beings are powerless to fight and solve their problems. So, they need to helplessly wait for the intervention of fantastic super gifted beings to be liberated. Hence, for Chungara, the ultimate political goal of the movies of superheroes is weakening people, taking away the confidence in their transformative potential.

Regarding some concrete effects of cinema on the spectators, they observed that violence-led movies calm the spectators, especially the adult men in the audience. In their opinion, men enter the theatre full of rage towards their bosses, the authorities, or the entirety of the socio-economic system, but the highly violent narratives make them unconsciously sublimate their legitimate fury. Chungara exemplifies this with her own husband and other frustrated male miners, who after being exposed to violent films (action, horror, war) exit the venue at ease, with a false sense of relaxation and peace. She concludes that this is problematic because this psychological mechanism only helps them to tolerate their daily exploitation further.

The informal but thorough study conducted by the Housewives' Committee of Siglo XX suggests that they were conscious of what was at stake in the generation of cinematic story-telling and aware of the image they were potentially projecting in their own filmic participations. Consequently, they wanted to be part of the creation of cinematic products alternative to the mainstream, in order to self-represent themselves as flesh and blood fighting beings, in filmic formats that were neither self-deprecating nor alienating. It can be concluded that theirs was an informed and strategic choice.

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[292] Ibid, 206.

4.3. The Testimonies of Domitila Chungara

The testimony of Chungara is a cultural/political device that was transmitted through different media in radically diverse formats and compiled by its mediators following different methodologies. It is important to attend to these mediations and their modes of circulation because political aesthetics are embodied not only in the media form but in the "networks of circulation whereby images exist in the world and the platforms by which they come into public prominence."[293] For instance, Chungara's first ever public account of her life story was made to the cameras of Ukamau in *The Courage of the People* in 1971. Consequently, her first testimony was as an audio-visual one, based on staged reenactments of her and her comrades' political activities. Hence, it is more performative than a talking-heads interview and much more than a written testimony. Moreover, it was the trigger that allowed Chungara, to her amazement, to start making a name for herself in international arenas. When Helena Solberg (Brazilian filmmaker, based in the US) saw Chungara's act in *The Courage* she was most impressed, and sought her participation in the documentary *The Double Day* (International Women's Film Project, 1975). The same year, Solberg invited Chungara to the release of their film in Mexico at the UN Women's Year tribune. In such a way, Mexico was the place where Moema Viezzer met Chungara and proposed her compiling her written *testimonio*.[294] This publication translated into many languages made Chungara's life,

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[293] Meg McLagan and Yates McKee, "Introduction" in *Sensible Politics. The Visual Culture of Nongovernmental Activism*, eds. Meg McLagan and Yates McKee (NY: Zone Books, 2012), 10.

[294] I asked Viezzer for the reasons of her participation in the conference and she said: "In 1975 I was thirty-seven years old. I did not travel to Mexico for the conference. I lived in Mexico, exiled from the military dictatorship in Brazil. I accompanied my husband Marcelo Grondin, who worked at the Universidad Iberoamericana. I did not have any role in the Conference; I participated in the parallel Tribune to the UN First Conference on Women, Peace and Development. I was invited by a group of exiled women in Mexico, from the Bolivian Democratic Committee in which Marcelo, who had lived many years in Bolivia, was involved. I had no experience or militancy in the feminist movement. 1975's Tribune was my first contact with feminism; that's the truth. And it was from that moment that I devoted

thought, and activist praxis, travel the world. However, while the widespread circulation of the book was turning her into an international subaltern star, nobody in Bolivia could read the book or watch Ukamau's or Solberg's movies, because the regime of the dictator General Hugo Banzer impeded it. Chungara, meanwhile, continued with her exhausting routine of domestic and community labour, and also had time to instigate the end of Banzer's regime through a hunger strike, that acquired national proportions.

The effectiveness of their grassroots organisational work was so appreciated in Bolivia, that the Centro de Investigación y Promoción del Campesinado (Centre for the Investigation and Promotion of the Peasantry, CIPCA) —headed by the Jesuit Catalan priest Xavier Albó— and the Confederación de Pueblos Indígenas de Bolivia (Confederation of Indigenous Peoples of Bolivia, CIDOB) proposed the creation of a set of popular education materials based on her life story, destined to train women peasants in organisational skills. The set consisted of a booklet and a short film. The booklet *Domitila, la mujer y la organización* (Domitila, the woman and the organisation) collected the life and teachings of Chungara in a straightforward language and with a series of illustrations or cartoons by Clovis Diaz. A super 8 documentary with the same name was commissioned to Alfonso Gumucio Dagron to be used in the workshops. Sadly, it is currently unavailable.

Later, in 1985, David Acebey compiled the second of Chungara's written *testimonios*, *¡Aquí también Domitila!* (Also here Domitila!), recording her experiences from 1976 to 1985. The book is mostly comprised of her international travels at the end of the 1970s and her exile years at the beginning of the 1980s. She intended with this

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myself to study, talk, share, act in the women's movement and the feminist movement in my country, in Latin America and internationally, until today" Email interview with Isabel Seguí received on November 8, 2014. This testimony confirms that he UN tribune was actually a proper consciousness-raising event, as Jocelyn Olcott affirms in her book *International Women's Year: The Greatest Consciousness Raising Event in History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017).

testimony to be held accountable, to her peers, for her political activity outside of the country.

In 1986, Liliana de la Quintana, Raquel Romero, and Beatriz Palacios produced the short video *La mujer minera y la organización* (The Miner Woman and the Organisation), which includes Chungara's testimony. In 1994, Liliana de la Quintana used this interview again in the episode devoted to women of the mines in a series on Bolivian woman called *Rebeldías* (Rebelliousness).

Finally, in 2002, Moema Viezzer met Domitila Chungara in Cochabamba (Bolivia) and interviewed her for the last time. This reencounter became very fruitful for them both, since they could review —with the necessary historical perspective— the path followed by *Let Me Speak!* throughout the years. This joined reflection is included in the introduction of the 15th edition of the book in Portuguese, a special edition called *Se me deixam falar…-25 anos despois* (Let Me Speak…25 Years Later). Unfortunately, this prologue has not been translated into Spanish or English.

Purpose, mediation, and circulation

In spite of all these different mediations of Chungara's testimony, there is a basic homogeneity in the narrative and the same messages are contained in all the devices. This is due to the almost verbatim repetition of Chungara's words in every account. She created a very strongly-unified narrative, marked by the political ideas and rhetoric style of her organisation. As for the ultimate intention of Domitila in testifying, Javier Sanjinés notes: "Domitila's testimony wishes to construct a "proletarian sphere"—a transgress of the public and private spheres of bourgeois culture— so as to install the

deep understanding and alliance of a unified popular front."[295] She also affirms this will in a postscript to *Let me Speak!,* dated 1978, that refers to the process followed in the compilation of the book but applies to the overall objective of her testimonial activity:

> After transcribing and organising the recordings, this testimony now returns to the working class so that together —workers, peasants, housewives, everyone, even the young people and the intellectuals who want to be with us— can learn from the experiences, analyse and also learn from the mistakes we've committed in the past, so that through correcting these errors we'll be able to do better things in the future, guide ourselves better, direct ourselves better, to see the reality of our country and create our own instruments to improve our struggle and free ourselves definitively from imperialism and establish socialism in Bolivia. I believe that that's the main objective of a work such as this.[296]

For Chungara her testimonies were educational tools, first for working class subjects and organisations, secondarily for allies, and finally for everyone. She marks a clear hierarchy of target groups, which is necessary to keep always in mind when analysing these works. The primary objective of her testimony was to teach her peers (from the successes and mistakes), to improve their capacity of analysis and self-management (guide and direct themselves better), and to boost their morale. This was a war against capitalism and imperialism. She is explicit when signalling that the objective was to "establish socialism in Bolivia." To disseminate her message, she was willing to make alliances with anyone available.

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[295] Javier Sanjinés, "From Domitila to "los relocalizados": Testimony and Marginality in Bolivia," *Inti: Revista de literatura hispánica* 32 (1990): 140
[296] Domitila Barrios with Moema Viezzer, *Let me Speak!,* 235.

Nevertheless, she felt more proximity to some editors over others. For instance, with the team of Ukamau and Alfonso Gumucio Dagron, she shared an ideological spectrum and nationality. However, her closest Bolivian collaborator was David Acebey because he also belonged to the working-class, he was a union comrade and they had been striking, travelling, and had even exiled, together. Other factors, like shared gender favoured different bonds; for instance, Chungara found a particular type of intimacy with Moema Viezzer and Helena Solberg, which encouraged her to share with them her most traumatic experiences. However, even though both women were Brazilian, class-differences made the testimonial pact between Viezzer and Chungara closer. Solberg was a middle-class urban intellectual; in turn, Viezzer was the daughter of emigrated Italian peasants, settlers in a remote tropical region of Brazil. The two sides of the testimonial contract were nearer, and the contact zone of trust was emotionally wider and also based on a shared Freirian search for social justice through popular education.

In any case, *Let me Speak!* was published by the important publishing house Siglo XXI in Mexico. This had the advantage of securing a broad distribution; however, it also made it the subject of consumption by urban middle classes and academics. This danger of co-optation of the text by the bourgeois public sphere can also be found in Ukamau and Solberg films. For that reason, and coherent with their pedagogic aims shared by the authors, in 1978, Viezzer conducted workshops based on *Let me Speak* addressed to working-class people. For that activity, she composed materials that further clarified the lessons contained in Chungara's testimony. She organised Chungara's thoughts into three blocks: 1) The Bolivian reality; 2) The preparation of the people for the seizure of power; and 3) The participation of the women in this process.[297]

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[297] Moema Viezzer, *Taller de trabajo sobre el testimonio de Domitila, una mujer de las minas de Bolivia* (La Paz: Centro de Estudios de la Educación [CEDE-INTEC], 1978), 1-2.

The most appropriated device containing Chungara's testimony regarding its capacity to reach subaltern publics is the set of materials *Domitila: La mujer y la organización* (Domitila: The Woman and the Organisation), commissioned by CIPCA and CIDOB, that included a film and a booklet. It was exclusively disseminated through popular education channels within the proletarian public sphere.[298] Although it has many similarities with the book edited by Moema Viezzer, the booklet is not a simplification of *Let Me Speak!* On the contrary, Viezzer compiled much of her book on the basis of those talks that Chungara gave to workers in different forums, collecting her oral teachings in her task of consciousness-raiser and educator, reflecting the experience of her didactic lectures.

Domitila: The Woman and the Organisation is a distillation of nearly twenty years of Chungara's thought, and organisational experience as a community leader, particularly addressed to rural women. This material aimed to introduce this marginalised collective to grassroots politics, showing them examples of successes and failures based on practical experience. The booklet's text is written in a very straightforward language and accompanied by cartoons to help its understanding. Moreover, the documentary *Domitila, The Woman and the Organisation* by Alfonso Gumucio Dagron, was intended to be used in a complementarily way to the booklet in the activities designed by CIPCA and CIDOB to foster organisation and communitarian participation.[299] The booklet was so successful that it was re-edited, only six months later, in the neighbouring country of Peru, by the Las Casas Centre in the city of Cusco.

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[298] Domitila Barrios, *Domitila: la mujer y la organización* (Cusco: Centro Las Casas, 1980). Sadly, the intended program to be developed through workshops —using the booklet and the super 8 film documentary by Alfonso Gumucio as educational materials— had only a little time to be put in practice. The military coup of García Meza sent Alfonso Gumucio into exile, who went to Mexico, and Chungara, who moved to Sweden with all her children. "Domitila." *Bitacora Memoriosa*, March 14, 2012, accessed November 12, 2015, http://gumucio.blogspot.co.uk/search?q=domitila.

[299] Ibid.

Consequently, it was breaking the boundaries between peasants and miners and trespassing over the artificial borders of the Andean countries, helping to consolidate a pan-Andean subaltern public sphere.

Domitila Chungara's testimonial travelled not only through the Andes but to the rest of the Americas, and the world. Its dissemination in the proletarian public sphere was successful and, in a dual movement, helped to consolidate that communicative sphere. As for the global spread of *Let Me Speak!* Moema Viezzer explains in her book *25 years later*, that the *testimonio* of Domitila circulated widely throughout all Latin America in resistance. The dissemination was facilitated by the publishing house Siglo XXI, which offered special discounts for popular organisations. In consequence, hundreds of organisations and unions used the book, conducting collective readings and workshops on parts of it. The Brazilian publishers also allowed a special edition outside the commercial circuit.[300]

Moreover, the book was turned into a play in Costa Rica, translated into Quechua and Aymara in radio programs broadcasted in Bolivia and Peru, recorded on cassette for its use in self-help groups of black women on the coast of Colombia. In the Dominican Republic, it was used in formal education and in workshops of unions and peasant organisations. Moema Viezzer herself participated in those women's workshops and witnessed how the testimonial of Chungara, and the pedagogic materials developed from it, triggered a mirror effect, facilitating the multiplication of testimonials from the participants in the workshops.

In Lima, *Let me Speak!* was read by thousands of miners and their families from the mining centre La Oroya when they were camped outdoors on strike for several

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[300] Moema Viezzer, "Prefácio à 15ª ediçao revista e ampliada" in *'Se me deixam falar…' Testemunho de Domitila Barrios de Chunagara, uma mulher da Bolivia-25 anos despois* (Sao Paulo: Global Editora, 2003), 34-35.

weeks. It was also used outside the Americas. In the African University of Dar es Salaam (Tanzania) the book was used by groups engaged in participatory research, and in Dakar (Senegal) it was circulated among groups of women to foster new leaderships.[301]

To conclude, the path of dissemination of Domitila Chungara's *testimonio,* in its different forms, continued throughout her entire life. In 1990 —after her European exile and relocation— Domitila Chungara founded the *Escuela Móvil Domitila* (Mobile School Domitila), a project dedicated to providing political and leadership training to the Bolivian people. She continued her work as a popular educator until her death in 2012, work which was always within the scope and aims of counter communication and critical pedagogy.

[301] Moema Viezzer, "Prefácio à 15ª ediçao revista e ampliada," 34.

4.4. The Cinematic Testimonies of Domitila Chungara

El coraje del pueblo (*The Courage of the People*; Ukamau, 1971)

The Courage of the People is a denunciation of the massacre conducted by the Bolivian army in the mining settlement of Siglo XX, on June 24, 1967, during the celebrations of St John's Eve known as *masacre de San Juan* or *de la noche de San Juan* (St John's or St John's eve massacre). The film is a landmark in Ukamau's history because for the first time they put into radical practice one of the principal objectives of their agenda: the replacement of the individual hero "by the popular, numerous, quantitative hero, and the process of making this popular hero [not] only an internal motif of the film, but its qualitative invigorating agent, participant, and creator."[302] However, the director, Jorge Sanjinés, does not renounce his enunciative presence, using his very own voice at the beginning of the film, to describe the location, and at the end, to enumerate the consequences of the massacre. A possible reason for this authoritative use of the voice-over is that he was concerned that the creative reenactments by the victims of the carnage were not clear enough to deliver the message.[303]

Nevertheless, *The Courage of the People*, while not being an orthodox example of communitarian film procedure, is the closest Ukamau ever was to their ideal of a "cinema with the people." This was mainly due to the unparalleled involvement and commitment of the community portrayed in the movie, the miners of Siglo XX. The idea of the film was proposed by the survivors who wanted to refer not only to this last

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[302] Jorge Sanjinés, *Teoría y práctica de un cine junto al pueblo*, 60-61.
[303] As seen in chapter two, it will not be until *Las Banderas del Amanecer* (*Banners of the Dawn*; Ukamau, 1983) that Ukamau will renounce the omniscient voice-over, probably due to the influence of Beatriz Palacios, co-director of the film.

bloody event but to a broader history of violence against the mining communities in Bolivia during the 20th century. The film starts with the re-enactment of the massacre of Catavi in 1942, conducted by the army.[304] This prologue is followed by an exhaustive account of the slaughters suffered by the miners and their families all over the highlands during the century. This information is supported by pictures not only of the victims but also the perpetrators. Politicians, government members, high-ranking military, and company owners responsible for the carnages are named, and their photos are shown in an attempt to defy impunity and to set the record straight about these historical events.

After the prologue and the broader denunciation, the storytelling focuses on the particular happening of St John's massacre, using as narrative devices the life stories of a series of members of the mining community. The film features: an organised housewife, Domitila Chungara; a miner, Federico Vallejo; a student, Eusebio Gironda; a conscript, Simón Reinaga; and the alienated widower of a Communist martyr, Felicidad Coca, the wife of Rosendo García Maisman. Moreover, hundreds of anonymous inhabitants of the mining district participate in the re-enactment of St John's massacre and the unfolding events that led up to it. The film finishes in the immediate aftermath of the slaughter, an open ending that does not delve into the long-term consequences of it for the union leaders, including Chungara who suffered detention, tortures, and exile as a consequence of her act of speaking out against the army and the government during the burial of the victims. In *The Courage,* the closure is an uplifting epilogue, a triumphant demonstration of the members of the mining community (men, women, and children) in the same landscape and by the same people that had re-enacted the Catavi massacre in the prologue. This circular end provides hope and also Andeanises the

[304] In the film, this massacre is performed by miners of another mining community in Potosí.

narrative by inscribing it in a non-linear temporal logic, which transmits the certainness that death is not an end, but a new beginning.

As said, the film is an outstanding example of Ukamau's "cinema with the people"; firstly, because the idea for the movie came from the mining community. Moreover, they participated extensively in the production as on-screen protagonists and also giving all sorts of off-screen support. Furthermore, they were fully committed to the distribution and exhibition of the film. The organicity of the process is noticeable in the fact that the relationship of the Ukamau group with the mining unions predated this film, and it also explains the maturity of the result.

Ukamau's previous films, *Ukamau* (1966) and *Blood of the Condor* (1969), had been projected and discussed in screenings organised by the union, followed by Q&As with the filmmakers. Moreover, in 1970 the group filmed the unfinished work *Los caminos de la muerte* (Roads of Death), enjoying the support of the miner's organisations. It was during the shooting of this film that the members of the union suggested to the filmmakers the idea of a future movie about the history of the uninterrupted repression in the mining region throughout the century, such as the massacre they suffered on St John's Eve, only three years before. When Jorge Sanjinés was commissioned by the Italian State Television (RAI) to make a documentary about the living conditions in the Bolivian mines, he decided to realise the miner's proposal.

Oscar Soria, the screenwriter, travelled to Siglo XX to document the script and, to that end, he contacted survivors of different slaughters, from living witnesses of the massive bloodshed of Catavi in 1942 to the more recent survivors of St John's Eve massacre in 1967. After his fieldwork, he returned to La Paz to share with the rest of the group the results of his work. The Ukamau group decided to join forces with the actual

survivors of St John's massacre for the re-enactments. The reasons behind these choices are noted by Jorge Sanjinés:

> We discovered that it was absurd to reconstruct their experiences by using professional actors. To make this film it was not enough simply to depend on technical resources, money and personnel. It was necessary for people to provide a level of participation that quickly became the fundamental element of the undertaking. We film-makers felt that we were simply carrying out the role most suited to us, and this was very healthy for everybody. We felt that we were working alongside the people in a work that meant a lot to everyone who participated, and we felt that the people were clearly conscious of all that as we ourselves were, since they continually demanded of us the greatest authenticity with relation to the events, places, persons, and situations reconstructed. But not only were demanding of others, but they in turn demanded much of themselves and it was that exacting attitude which inspired our own efforts.[305]

In *Let Me Speak!,* Chungara explains her version about the involvement of the members of the mining community in the film:

> The same year a group of university teachers came to Siglo XX to give some talks and show some movies on unionism and economics. Among them were also some journalists and some movie directors who made up the group called "Ukhamau," (sic) They showed the movies *Ukhamau* (sic) and *Yawarmallku* (sic). Then there was a sort of roundtable discussion where they talked about the

[305] Jorge Sanjinés, Dina Nascetti and Rafael Cook, "The Courage of the People: an interview with Jorge Sanjinés," *Cinéaste* 5, no. 2 (1972): 19.

> movies (…) We also suggested they make a movie about Siglo XX. So, the director said he would. And not too much time went by, five months at most, and they came back to Siglo XX to film. And they made the movie called *El Coraje del Pueblo* (The Courage of the People). We'd already agreed with them to open the picture in five different places on the same day. But Banzer's coup came and we lost sight of each other. No one in Bolivia to this day, has been able to see that movie. I saw it for the first time in Mexico, and I like it, because at least we've documented there some accusations that are important to make. And the only thing I hope is that this group of artists keeps supporting the people.[306]

The last quote highlights some interesting aspects of the collaborative undertaking of *The Courage of the People*. First, as seen in the second chapter, Ukamau gained the trust of the community through circulating, screening, and discussing their films collectively. Second, the miners took the initiative and proposed a topic for a future movie. The co-authorship of the community starts from the original idea. As the acting counterpart of the filmmakers, the miners committed not only to the shooting (as can be witnessed in the resultant film) but also to its dissemination, and their plans in that department were ambitious (release the movie in five different venues). Finally, Chungara expresses her satisfaction with the result because the film met its objective of documenting accusations of State violence against them, despite the delay in the release of the movie until 1979, due to Banzer's coup.

Regarding the participation of the Housewives' Committee of Siglo XX in the film. The sequence devoted to them spans roughly twelve minutes and it is composed of

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[306] Barrios and Viezzer, *Let me Speak!*, 170-171.

four scenes. The performance by the Committee members is one of the most engaging in the movie alongside the prologue (the reenactment of Catavi's 1942 massacre) and epilogue played, mostly, by commoner women too. The self-representation by the female members of the mining community exceeded the expectations of the filmmakers, who highly satisfied with the result of the collaboration felt compelled to include in the narrative more unexpected (non-scripted) footage, featuring the women as protagonists. In this sense, this is an excellent example of how participatory cinema, as a situated practice, works.[307]

The segment of the film dedicated to the women of the mines begins with Chungara testifying individually. She is introduced by an establishing shot that shows her walking on the unpaved street where her poor housing is located, in a row of terraced houses that look like caves, all the same colour as the surrounding mountains. Her voice-over accompanies the images in this scene. Chungara crosses the threshold and with this movement situates the camera inside the house. While the older children do their homework and she attends to the smallest, her voice-over states:

> Since I was very young, my father always told us that women have the same right as men, always on that idea has brought us up. And because of the lack of money I was in difficult situations. There was a woman who told me that I could enter this housewives' organisation. Maybe then I could get a job. But, already before we were seeing that the housewives were working for the good of the workers. I came, perhaps, out of self-interest. But, once I started, I realised that it was necessary to organise and carry forward the women's organisation. Hence it

[307] Kirsten MacLeod, "You Play Your Part: Older Women On Screen and in Production," in *Media, Margins and Popular Culture*, eds., Einar Thorsen, Heather Savigny, Jenny Alexander and Daniel Jackson (London: Palgrave MacMillan UK, 2015), 29.

is that I went through perhaps the worst period of *barrientismo* due to being a leader.[308]

After this first statement, she looks at the camera, and her name appears on the screen. Comparing the phrase that in 1971 opens Chungara's *testimonio* in *The courage of the people*, "Women have the same right as men, always on that idea [my father] has brought us up", with the transcription that Viezzer incorporates to *Let me speak* — recorded in 1975-76: "all women had the same rights as men (...) He always raised us with those ideas,"[309] it is found that, when narrating the same autobiographical detail, Chungara's testimonial speech is almost identical. Besides the striking aspect of how Chungara and her sisters were raised —with the clear consciousness of being subjects of rights, something not usual in the education of Bolivian working-class girls— the fact of repeating an essential autobiographical fact twice, using almost the same words and sentence structure, reveals the high level of self-awareness of her own biography as a solidly constructed narrative.

Therefore, it might be appropriate to say that her process of personal empowerment did not occur through the testimonial act, as in the case of many subaltern women who reflect on their own lives when they are heard for the first time. Although Domitila Chungara testifies for the first time in *The Courage of the People* she has previously built her own autobiographical story with total self-consciousness. What in fact was produced during the testimonies of Domitila Chungara was an egalitarian inter-class encounter with her editors, which allowed for a self-controlled mediation of her voice.

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[308] *El Coraje del Pueblo* (*The Courage of the People*; Ukamau Group, 1971).
[309] Barrios and Viezzer, *Let me Speak!,* 56.

After that, she explains how she joined the organisation of housewives due to selfishness but soon became a leader, because she understood that the group worked for the good of the community. Her leadership activities led her to suffer during the worst stage of the dictatorship of René Barrientos. This is the only reference in this film to the political repression undergone by Chungara in the form of successive arrests, torture, and exile, after St John's massacre.

Chungara's presentation lasts roughly one minute, and it serves to open a sequence composed of by three other scenes performed by the Housewives' collective, which works as a tryptic of their daily political activity. The scenes constitute a primary source for understanding the praxis of this avant-garde group, as we have seen before in the case of María Barea's documentaries with the Ladies Committee Aurora Vivar and the Association of Domestic Workers in Lima.

In the first scene, the leaders re-enact a complaint to the chief of the grocery store caused by the constant shortage of alimentary supplies. Next, they re-enact an improvised assembly where they inform their companions of the fruitless negotiation, and consequently, they decide to undertake a hunger strike to demand adequate supplies, which is the third scene. On the seventh day of the hunger strike, the superintendent turns up in the school where they are on strike. He tries first to convince the women to give up and go back to their homes. However, failing to do so, he accuses them of collaborating with the guerrillas. The sequence ends with the unredeemed women beating stones and causing the manager of the mining company to flee. With that insurgent attitude their collective participation in the film ends.

Dozens of members of the Housewives' Committee took part in the re-enactments, creating with their acting work, their voices, and their bodies, one of the peak moments of Andean political cinema. In this film and those following, we see the

organised housewives delivering engaging speeches, tailor-cut with similar rhetorical characteristics. Their mastery in the rhetorical art of peroration is particularly striking. This is the part of the epilogue of a public speech when the speaker appeals to the listeners, raising their feelings and indignation to incline their will through their emotional participation.

All over this film, women portray themselves as insurrectionists; in contrast, men appear demoralised and cowed by the military repression. When leaving their meeting with the chief of the store, the leaders of the Committee inform the bulk of women, gathered at the door, of the failure of their negotiation, and that in that moment the company store does not have sufficient stock to provide for the families of the workers. Chungara summarises the situation:

> Comrades, here they want to starve us. They have not been content to kill innocent women and children in the streets. But we're not going to allow it. It is time for us to stand up as one woman. But for that we need the cooperation of the men who are here, observing us as mere mummies. It seems that they have forgotten their role as males. Since the regiment entered here, they no longer say anything.

All the women shout: "They are cowards!" Faced with the accusation of cowardice by the women, a miner says: "It is a lie, comrades, that we are cowards. We are not cowards. What happens is that we are unarmed. Our leaders are in prison. And among ourselves, there are government informers infiltrated in our movement." After listening to this excuse, another woman intervenes: "We have to do something. It is useless that we wait for the men. We, women, must go on hunger strike. What do you

say, comrades?" All women respond: "Agreed!" Then, Domitila Chungara closes the assembly, saying: "The leaders are imprisoned. The union is beheaded. Now is the time for women to lead!"

Elsewhere, I have commented that this portrayal of women's agency is not due to the will of the filmmakers, who, probably, if they had been required to script a film about St John's massacre, would never have included these vivid scenes of the concrete political struggle of the housewives. It is the format of docu-drama, based on the improvisation and the creative re-enactment performed by the actual protagonists, the factor that allows the self-representation of the women. The decolonised camera accompanies the unfolding events; the stage direction is subordinated to the mandate of the protagonists. Through the cinematic method of Ukamau, the cinema with the people, the filming community composed of the Ukamau crew and the inhabitants of Siglo XX together trespass the boundaries of documentary and enter the realm of a hybrid cinematic language, creating a testimonial re-enactment performed by the actual protagonists; while the director, Jorge Sanjinés, renounces the hegemonic voice in the narrative.[310] The cameraman (Antonio Eguino) takes very long shots with wide angles in order to capture the entirety of the happening and the collective protagonist. Moreover, the camera acts as a participant in the action, corresponding with a subjective-collective point of view, without ocular or auricular privileges. On the other hand, the unprivileged position of the camera, relative to the action, turns the spectators into participants and witnesses too. According to the Argentine scholar María Aimaretti, here "the film production can be understood as an aesthetic process of group anamnesis

[310] Isabel Seguí, "El empoderamiento de los personajes femeninos en el cine del grupo Ukamau," in *Me veo luego existo: Mujeres que representan, mujeres representadas*, eds. Esther Alba Pagán and Luis Pérez Ochando (Madrid: CSIC, 2015), 450.

triggered by the structuring presence of particular voice: the one of the witness, the survivor, which to appear, hear and be heard, needs of others".[311]

The last scene featuring the Housewives' Committee is a hunger strike. According to Javier Sanjinés, the hunger strike is commonly used by Bolivian women as a non-violent political practice and communicative action, which embodies the paradox of fighting undernourishment through radical hunger. But it is also a way of celebrating life using the human body to foster solidarity and turning personal concerns into public issues.[312] Chungara declared hunger strike on numerous occasions throughout her life, both alone and collectively. The most successful example of a hunger strike by the women of Siglo XX occurred in 1977 when five of them started a strike in La Paz that ended up overthrowing General Banzer. The Catalan Jesuit priest Luis Espinal accompanied them on this occasion. He stated about the experience:

> Hunger is a violent experience that makes us understand the courage and anger of the people. When you are hungry, you better understand the urgency of working for justice in the world. […] The hunger strike as any union praxis, has also helped to radicalise and clarify our ideological attitudes. In front of the hunger it is not useful the talk learned in books. The hunger strike has radicalised us and has radicalised the people who have been in contact with us. It

[311] María Gabriela Aimaretti, "Revivir la experiencia, narrar la masacre, impugnar la Historia: sobre el uso del Testimonio en 'El coraje del pueblo' (Grupo Ukamau-Jorge Sanjinés, 1971)." *Afuera. Estudios de Crítica Cultural* 12 (2012): 5.

[312] Javier Sanjinés, "Beyond Testimonial Discourse: New Popular Trends in Bolivia," in *The Real Thing,* ed., Georg Gugelberger (Durham; London: Duke University Press, 1996), 255.

is the best politicisation training we have ever attended.[313]

These experienced women perform a hunger strike in Ukamau's film. The scene takes place in the little school of Siglo XX. Underneath a portrait of Simon Bolívar, the strikers with their children wait while time passes by. On the seventh day, the superintendent of the company intends to undo the strike. He first appeals to their duty as mothers and wives, trying to convince them to return home. Following this unsuccessful attempt, he accuses them of being communists and concealing revolutionary aims in their prosaic demands. The housewives face and disavow the superintendent. The scene ends with him leaving the school harassed by the women of the Committee, who make him flee by beating rocks in an undefeated attitude, a record of their perennial demeanour.

A remarkable consequence of the filming of a large group of women in a political bodily act of this magnitude is that the female fighting bodies are impossible to objectify through representation. Instead, their physical presence makes them counter-hegemonic. Their bodies are non-normative. Their attributes are those opposed to the desirable qualities of women in mainstream cinema, their skin is dark and rough, their clothes are old and dirty, they are vocal and unruly fighting mothers occupying the public space unapologetically. That is the reason why the psychoanalytic approach is useless for the analysis of this filmic text (and many other manifestations of Third Cinema). The Western male scopophilic mechanism breaks apart in front of these non-canonical bodies, which are impossible to objectify either physically or politically.

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[313] Luis Espinal quoted by José Ignacio López in *Una mina de coraje. Radios mineras de Bolivia* (Quito: Aler-Pio XII, 1984), 243–244.

Through these images, the audiences have privileged access to their voices and body-based forms of struggle. The housewives acted with no external direction whatsoever, on the contrary, the camera followed them from a position of subordination, and the editing just needed to transmit the discipline and order at the foundation of their political activities. The off-screen mediation is produced by addition. The strength of their testimonies and reenactments led the filmmakers to include more footage featuring the collective of housewives than they were initially expecting. The portrayal of the Housewives' Committee of Siglo XX in *The Courage of the People* is precise, sophisticated, and comprehensive. Although they neither possess the means of production of the film nor have the last word in the editing —and we do not know how they would have represented themselves in the case of possessing the cultural and technological capital— they owned the creative process, and the filmmakers' mediation respected their co-ownership.

As for the dissemination of the film *The Courage of the People,* it was exhibited worldwide, except in Bolivia where it was censored for thirteen years. Domitila Chungara herself saw it for the first time in Mexico in 1975. In the book *Theory and Practice of a Cinema with the People* is collected the transcription (most probably recorded and transcribed by Beatriz Palacios) of an intervention after a screening of *The Courage of the People* to a group of washerwomen in Quito in August 1975. Palacios and Sanjinés' intention was to show the results of the reception of Ukamau films by their intended audiences, the subaltern. To confirm the achievement of Ukamau's objectives, this is the transcribed intervention of a washerwoman in the Q&A session that followed the screening:

> Who are the actors in this film, *compañeras*? It is the people of Bolivia; it is the people of Ecuador! It is the people weeping as only they know how. It gives us anger [*coraje*], and it would be good that when we grasp the anger, we hold it tight! We have no weapons, but we can unite, organise, because organising is like awakening [...] This film is like putting weapons in the hands of the people! This must burn to the rich like fire![314]

There are more testimonies of the reception of *The Courage of the People* among subaltern women; for instance, the film was screened as the closing act of the I National Congress of Peasant Women of Bolivia, celebrated in La Paz in January 1980. In her book *Aquí también, Domitila!* She explains how the audience of peasant women reacted during the screening. It is striking how they had the usual emotional response of crying but, according to Chungara, they were also trying to jot down the names of the perpetrators that appeared signalled on screen. After the film, the peasant women were eager to talk to Chungara and decided not to let themselves be deceived by the official accounts again.[315] This is a remarkable example of creation of a witnessing public, using Leshu Torchin's terminology.

The Double Day (*La doble jornada*, International Women's Film Project, 1975)

The second filmic *testimonio* of Domitila Chungara is the film *The Double Day* (*La doble jornada*) directed by Helena Solberg. She was a white middle-class Brazilian filmmaker exiled in the US who had already made the collective short film *The*

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[314] Sanjinés, *Teoría y práctica de un cine junto al pueblo*, 71.
[315] Acebey, *¡Aquí también Domitila!,* 88-89.

Emerging Woman (1975), a documentary that "offers a history of the women's movement since the 1800s to the 1970s, focusing on working class and women of colour as well as on the middle class."[316] Immediately after this film, she decided to make a similar one about Latin American women.

Formally, Solberg's film is a more conventional documentary, one that seeks to raise awareness of the situation of inequality that Latin American working-class women face in everyday life, focusing mainly on labour issues. From a non-orthodox Marxist framework of analysis, it depicts the reality of a diverse number of women showing the contradictions of the capitalist system, which doubly exploits women through undervalued productive and reproductive labour. In consequence, women are condemned to a precarious and exhausting existence. A situation that has become naturalised and it is necessary to denounce.

The filmmaker chose a circular structure to frame her narrative, starting and ending in Bolivia. Solberg had seen the performance of the Housewives Committee of Siglo XX in the film *The Courage of the People,* and she consequently wanted the eloquent leader of the housewives to participate in her film. To achieve her challenging goal, she requested government permission and travelled to the militarily-controlled mining area.[317] Furthermore, she invited Chungara to join her at the premiere at the UN International Women's Year Tribunal to be held in Mexico that year. Chungara accepted the invitation to the first public exhibition of the film, but with no hope of it becoming true, because of previous experiences.[318] However, this time was different. Solberg met her promise, and Domitila Chungara went to Mexico, where, as explained in the

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[316] Burton, *Cinema and Social Change*, 88.

[317] Barrios and Viezzer, *Let Me Speak!*, 194.

introduction to the chapter, she became one of the stars of the international meeting.

In the film, Solberg interviews Chungara in length, in an outdoors setting. She is positioned in profile looking at Solberg who is conducting the interview off-screen. The interview is broken down into two parts. In the presentation, Chungara refers to the hardships that mining women suffer in their lives: the lack of opportunities for girls to study; the physical and psychological violence exerted against married women by their husbands; the abandonment experienced by the widows, who lose their access to the services offered by the company (housing, medical, grocery store) when the miner dies, "muerto él no hay nada" (when he dies, there is nothing left). Chungara's voice is interspersed with images of the grocery store (*pulpería*) in full activity. Conversely to *The Courage,* here the store is not depicted as a place of confrontation but of encounter for women, acting as a commercial and political space, at the same time.

The second part of the interview with Chungara works in the film as an epilogue. Offering an affirming closure that starts with her stating:

> Since we became organised things have changed a great deal. We fought to be accepted. Before, when one of our *compañeras* spoke in a meeting the men were indignant, "Oh, these women, go home, go grind water." Lately, they expect us to talk and often agree with us. Now they come to us with a problem, saying "Why don't you complain? Is your responsibility too."[319]

Solberg and the editors, Suzanne Fenn and Christine Burrill, wanted to show the positive consequences of organising and speaking out for women. However, they also

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[318] Burton, *Cinema and Social Change*, 90; Barrios and Viezzer, *Let Me Speak!,* 195.

[319] *The double day* (Helena Solberg, 1975).

wanted to show the darker side of these actions. Although this is a film about work, and consequently almost all questions posed by Solberg to Chungara address this topic, she gets the Bolivian leader to explain details that the previous film, *The Courage of the People,* had only suggested. *The Courage of the People* had not detailed the consequences of the slaughter in the lives of the survivors, the last scene was Chungara detained, leaving Siglo XX in a military truck with her daughter Estela (interpreted in the film not by Estela, who was too old, but by Chungara's youngest baby at the time). Both, mother and daughter, suffered imprisonment as retaliation for the public denunciation that Chungara made in the burial of the victims of St John's massacre. That makes it even more striking that Chungara was willing to re-enact her own role in *The Courage*, after the ordeal she went through only a few years before. But the film does not mention it.

This crucial information is conveyed in *The Double Day*, where Chungara narrates that her first public speech in front of an assembled mob was the one she gave during the burial of the victims of the massacre at the request of her comrades. During the shooting of this interview, Estela, now a girl of seven or eight years old, is present in the same space yet off-screen except for a few seconds. This particular interest showed by Solberg in pointing out the direct relationship between Chungara's political act of speaking out publicly, and the subsequent repression, demonstrates how the gender alliance between middle-class intellectuals and subaltern activists is useful for creating political storytelling intended for women's liberation. Solberg managed to highlight the dangerous consequences, and political importance, of the act of speaking out for a woman leader like Chungara. However, the full report of her traumatic experience would not occur until she met the right listener, Moema Viezzer. The Brazilian educator gave Chungara a trustful space of love, confidence, and camaraderie, which allowed her

to share her whole story. As Dori Laub and Shoshana Felman would say, Viezzer became the "co-owner of the traumatic event."[320]

The Double Day prefigures this moment. It finishes with Chungara explaining how she was incarcerated and tortured amid accusations of being an agitator and conspirator. Then the sound track cuts to the song "Mujer" (woman) by Gloria Martín, the lyrics of which warn: "mujer si te han crecido las ideas/ de ti van a decir cosas muy feas/ que no eres buena/ que si tal cosa/ que cuando callas/ eres mucho más hermosa" (Woman, if your ideas have grown/ they are going to say ugly things about you/ that you are not good/ such other thing/ that when you are silent/ you are much more beautiful). During the song, the faces of different interviewees appear on-screen. The lyrics end by urging women to change because real life starts with equality and the time to achieve it is now.

Solberg explains that the film was very well received among working-class women in its release in Mexico's UN Tribune in June 1975.[321] She was also slightly surprised, but particularly pleased, with the reaction of the working-class women present in the premiere, since, despite her fears that the film could be too intellectual, the popular-class women present felt identification. In the same interview, she gives interesting information about how the documentary was still circulating alternatively in Bolivia ten years after its release —especially among indigenous communities— despite the lack of 16mm projection facilities.[322]

Through this film, the women of the Bolivian mines became one of the most visible faces of the courageous organisations of Latin American subaltern women.

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[320] Felman and Laub, *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis and History*, 57.
[321] Solberg with Burton, *Cinema and Social Change*, 91.
[322] Solberg with Burton, *Cinema and Social Change*, 91.

Domitila Chungara's words are used to reinforce the central ideas of the film: 1) women suffer double economic exploitation, 2) they can change their ominous situation by organising, 3) this challenge to capitalism and patriarchy requires sacrifice, but it is worthwhile. So, on the one hand she was used to convey the message of the filmmakers, and on the other, she used the filmmakers to send her message. A very profitable symbiosis was therefore achieved.

La mujer minera y la organización (*The Miner Woman and the Organisation*; Beatriz Palacios, Raquel Romero and Liliana de la Quintana, 1986)

La mujer minera y la organización (*The Miner Woman and the Organisation*) is a short documentary co-directed by Liliana de la Quintana, Raquel Romero, and Beatriz Palacios. This means that, finally, Palacios could develop her idea of making a film about mining women alongside the young videographers De la Quintana and Romero, her comrades in the Bolivian Movement of New Cinema and Video. This project was not as ambitious as Ukamau's project (intended to be a feature film), however, it is an exciting exercise of collaborative production between three women whose labour —as directors, producers, screenwriters, managers of small producing companies, and guild leaders— was significant in the Bolivian audiovisual scene, although it has been overshadowed in the historiographical accounts.[323]

The eight-minute video explains the history of the mining housewives' movement since its foundation in 1961 until 1986. At the time of its making, the housewives' national organisation was stronger than ever, and the stakes were still high, as can be appreciated in the triumphalist tone of the documentary. However, this period

[323] The situation of invisibility of women's labour in Bolivian cinema has begun to be corrected thanks to the article published by María Aimaretti, "El aporte de las videastas documentalistas a la escena boliviana en el retorno democrático: sensibilidades, prácticas y discursos," *Cine Documental* 16 (2017): 1-27.

was particularly challenging for the mining communities. Although they had been successful in resisting successive dictatorships, they were unarmed in front of the ultimate neo-liberal attack. The relocation, enacted in 1985, by the Decree 21,060, led to the closing or privatisation of two thirds of the state mines with the consequent weakening of the trade union organisations based on this productive model.

During the relocation, women became an even more instrumental cohesive element, for once the source of labour disappeared men easily lost their class identity, but the proletarian housewives continued steadily supporting the daily life of their families and displaced communities. Moreover, they were more able to preserve their self-esteem, dignity, and focus, because their political identity was never based on being wage labourers. Again, paradoxically, the capitalist system, refusing to recognise women's labour in the domestic and community spheres, immunised them, to some degree, in front of neoliberal strategies such as privatisation or relocation.

In spite of Decree 21,060 the Bolivian Workers' Union Federation (FSTMB) remained active, but it was progressively weakened. Only in that particular context, the women's committees were allowed by the mining union leadership to create a national organisation, the *Comité Nacional de Amas de Casa Mineras* (National Committee of Mining Housewives, CONACMIN) founded in January 1986. This institution sought to develop its own forms of organisation, different from those learned in the FSTMB. In a leaflet published in 1998 with the conclusion of their VI National Convention, they define the practices of male unionism as not transparent and declare that CONACMIN works for systemic change and the construction of more democratic unionism.[324]

As seen, the political orientation of the housewives was not feminist, and they were working to support the general demands of the labour movement. However, from

[324] Comité Nacional de Amas de Casa Mineras, *Nuestro VI Ampliado* (La Paz: Centro de Promoción Minera, 1998), 17.

the beginning they were regarded with suspicion and fear by men (husbands, union leaders, company managers, priests). The governmental reactions to their actions were also varied, from direct retaliation at the women through arrests, imprisonment, and torture, to indirect repression by firing, blacklisting or exiling of their husbands. This widespread opposition highlights how subversive the mere existence of empowered organised housewives was, along with the importance of the embodiment of their political practices in films for communicating their experiences and discourse.

The video explains the history of the movement briefly. First, it contextualises in the long-term involvement of Bolivian women in social struggles. Afterwards, it describes the events that fostered the creation of the Housewives' Committee of Siglo XX in 1961, a milestone in the contemporary era. After this, Domitila Chungara explains another landmark of the movement, their hunger strike in 1977 that ended up with the dictatorship of Hugo Banzer. In the interview, Domitila Chungara looks rejuvenated, ten years after her appearance in *The Double Day*. Probably, because she spent years in exile in Sweden, where her teeth, lost during torture, were fixed. In the mid-eighties, Chungara is a well-known and respected figure inside and outside her country. Though, except for the visible physical improvement, nothing seems to have changed in her or her political discourse.

She emphasises that although now their triumphant hunger strike is considered a turning point in Bolivian history, at that moment in time very few people had faith in their initiative, and they suffered utter disregard by the leaders of the union. Nevertheless, after their success, they started to be perceived as an example by women of all sectors, especially by women of other mining districts, and committees of housewives were founded all over the country. The voice-over remarks that the particularity of these women's organisations is that, besides putting forward concrete

economic demands, they have a revolutionary aim. To illustrate this trend, the filmmakers interview two members of the Housewives' Committee of the zinc-mining centre "Matilde." The two women stage a dialogue sitting in a poor house, with the portrait of the Jesuit priest and martyr Luis Espinal hanging on the wall. They affirm that sooner or later they are going to seize power because they are willing to die in order to facilitate a better life for their children.

Following this scene, the film gives an account of the recent mobilisations in La Paz, where 10,000 miners took to the streets in an unprecedented show of force. The voice-over affirms that in those recent events, the women of the mines played an instrumental role, once again. Moreover, it was this general mobilisation that led the mining housewives to create their national organisation after women from mining communities all over the country met for the first time in the streets of the capital city. To illustrate this fact, the film shows footage of the first national meeting of housewives' committees held in La Paz in 1986 that gave birth to CONACMIN. It includes speeches made in a desperate tone. The women of the mines declare themselves to be in a state of emergency and willing to die for the cause. With that message, which prefigures the upcoming disaster, the short film ends. The beginning of the defeat of Bolivian mining unionism will be portrayed the same year in a film produced by De la Quintana's production company Nicobis (co-owned with her husband Alfredo Ovando) *La marcha por la vida* (The March for Life, 1986).

La mujer minera, chapter of the series *Rebeldías* (*The miner woman* in *Rebelliousness*; Liliana de la Quintana, 1994).

Domitila Chungara was the most charismatic and well-known leader of the housewives, but she was by no means indispensable. This organisation had several leaders, before, during and after Chungara. Moreover, the majority of the rank and file members were ready to act as spokesperson in front of the cameras. The great quantity of apparitions of diverse women show that Chungara's rhetoric and public performance was not particular of her, but the fruit of a common form of political communication generated by the collective of housewives. She learnt to speak out from her elders and transmitted this knowledge to the new generations of grassroots activists. There are several films that show the political work of the housewives' organisation, such as *Banners of the Dawn* (Ukamau, 1983) or *The March for Life* (Nicobis, 1986). Nevertheless, I am going to finish this section with the analysis of a short video made by Liliana de la Quintana in 1994 (almost a decade after *La mujer minera y la organización*), titled *La Mujer Minera*, because it displays a different type of mediation.

La Mujer Minera is the first episode of a video series called *Rebeldías* (Rebelliousness), composed of four chapters dedicated to Bolivian women from different sectors: miners, women from popular neighbourhoods, peasants, and middle-class women. This series was commissioned by the *Centro de Promoción de la Mujer 'Gregoria Apaza'* (Centre for the Promotion of Women 'Gregoria Apaza') and funded by a Canadian NGO. It was broadcasted on TV (Canal 9 ATB and Red Universitaria) and the chapter devoted to peasant women won an award at the *V Festival*

Latinoamericano de Cine de los Pueblos Indígenas (5th International Film Festival of Indigenous Peoples) celebrated in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia, in 1996.[325]

The context of production of this last case study is very different from the first one, *The Courage of the People*. *The Courage* was a militant film corresponding to the zeitgeist of the "long 1960s." Later, the horrors of the Condor Operation will be followed by the systematic economic violence resultant from the implementation of the Washington Consensus. All these different types of aggression towards the popular movements resulted in new political strategies and undoubtedly affected audiovisual representation.

The miner woman takes a subjective turn. De la Quintana, the director and screenwriter, presents a characterisation of the life of the women of the mines through a voice-over, which, in the first person (mimicking the testimonial, because it is an actress reading a script) refers to aspects of her personal life, giving them a political content. The narrator describes in an intimate tone her feelings, the unrecognised work, fatigue, and isolation, and the contempt or indifference of her husband who spends much of his wages on alcohol. Once the labour and mental situation of this generic housewife of the mines has been framed, the voice-over explains how, through the organisation, this isolated person finds in the collective the force that will finally allow her to improve her situation.

Interestingly enough, the intimate tone of the scripted voice-over does not seem to match the actual testimonies of the women who appear on the screen. The tone of the speeches in the primary material is very much like the one observed in previous decades. The housewives repeat once again an almost identical political discourse based on an underlying claim, the right to survival: "We have come to claim what corresponds

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[325] Liliana de la Quintana, email response to author, August 1, 2017.

to us. For how long should we continue to starve with these meagre salaries? Our grocery stores are totally empty. Our children have empty stomachs."[326] The similarity of the speeches over time is because the situation of poverty of the families of the miners has not changed after Decree 21,060 and the relocation, or it has even got worse.

The script of Liliana de la Quintana also includes cross-cutting characteristics of the political thought of the mining women. On the one hand, the collective memory of violence against the miners. On the other, the importance of having learned to speak due to the reiteration of the violence, and how state repression led them to assume somehow the leadership of the trade union movement. However, the voice-over remarks that, despite having demonstrated their ability and combativeness, in 1982, during the XIX National Mining Congress held in Huanuni, they were denied the possibility of creating a national housewives' organisation because their male comrades decided that this was not going to be in the Federation's interests.

One of the most remarkable features of this video is the presentation of the invaluable testimonies of two of the founders of the Committee of Housewives of Siglo XX: Jeronima Jaldín (widow of the union leader Valerio Romero), and Alicia Chavarría (widow of the legendary Maoist leader Federico Escobar), who, despite their age and the relocation continue to show the same resilience and continue to be faithful to the same emancipatory ideas.[327] The film highlights that the struggle of the housewives affected by the relocation remains unchanged because their material living conditions

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[326] *La mujer minera* in *Rebeldías* (Liliana de la Quintana, 1994).

[327] Jeroma Jaldín, a leader of the Housewives' Committee of Siglo XX, was a working class educated woman. She was the nephew of a railway union leader who taught her about socialism and communism. Her husband Valerio Romero was a progressive teacher in the Company school in Siglo XX. Romero, alongside Federico Escobar became the most charismatic leaders of the time, suffering constant state repression. In 1965, the Barrientos' regime purged the worker's movement by mass dismissal of the leaders of the unions and leftist political parties. Jeronima Jaldín and Valerio Romero went to Cochabamba, where they lived and continued developing their political activities, always linked with the labour movement. [327] Federico Escobar died in 1966, most probably assassinated in an US intelligence operation, although these facts remain unclarified.

remain untenable. A woman sums it up for the camera: "The children of the relocated are walking the streets, shining shoes and begging for bread. That is what concerns us the most. We, as mothers, feel the need to fight the government, even if we have to be shot."[328] Or, this other statement: "Let's go to La Paz to defend our sources of work and the sovereignty of the country. That is the right that corresponds to us, housewives. They have not thought that the working class has matured, as the woman, as the student. In that fashion, we will continue to fight, asking for our sources of work."[329]

Despite the closure of the state mines and the relocation of the miners and their families, the political practices created by the women of Siglo XX were still alive in the popular movements of the country, such as the neighbourhood associations of those slums populated by relocated miners. To prove it, the final scene of the film is a street mobilisation, where a woman shouts: "When? Now! Long live to the mining woman! Long live to the relocated of Catavi-Siglo XX!"[330] Actually, their inherited ideas and praxis permeate the popular movements in Bolivia to this day.

Chungara appears in this film too. De la Quintana cuts fragments of two different interviews, belonging to her own visual archive in Nicobis, that serve to illustrate two milestones in the history of the Housewives' Committee of Siglo XX: Saint John's massacre in 1967, and the hunger strike against Banzer's regime in 1977 —the latter having been used already in *La mujer minera y la organización*.

A particularly interesting point of the mise-en-scene of the first interview is that Chungara appears cooking *salteñas* (pies) with her children. The daily preparation and selling of this typical Bolivian street food was one important source of income for the Chungara family, that complemented the meagre salary of René. So, for Domitila it was

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[328] *La mujer minera* in *Rebeldías* (Liliana de la Quintana, 1994).
[329] Ibid.
[330] Ibid.

also a source of economic and symbolic independence. This image of her and several of her children working in their informal family business enriches the value of the footage, because two levels of meaning are present, the daily struggle for survival embodied in the resourcefulness of the average multitasking housewife, and the historical account of other fights, also led by her, that have entered official history. However, entering history is not assurance of having livelihood guaranteed.

4.5. Conclusion: Non-cooptable cinematic bodies, practices, and politics

Domitila Chungara and the organised housewives' of Siglo XX are an excellent case study to interrogate the scope of the agency of the subaltern subjects and organisations, that participated in testimonial projects in Latin America between the 1970s and the 1990s. Moreover, it showcases an important characteristic that too often is neglected by *testimonio* scholars: the transmediality of the cultural/political device resultant from the act of delivering a testimony. Chungara's case also highlights the sophisticated process of mediation and editing of testimonies, and the importance of taking into account their circulation in order to fully understand the entire cycle of education and communication intended for these products.

Moreover, the participation of the Bolivian miner women's movement in cinematic projects for more than twenty years is case for studying political communication by subaltern subjects in collaborative film production. However, to make visible their participation it is necessary to expand the boundaries of what is usually defined as creative contribution. Several aspects stand out from this exercise of audiovisual self-representation. First, that there was a communication strategy behind their apparition in films. They were conscious of the importance of showing on screen their image and political practices. Moreover, they created their own filmic discourse and scenic presence, which was replicated, with a remarkable homogeneity, throughout their film participations: from their first creative re-enactment, in *The Courage of the People* (1971) to their starring role in the documentary video work of Liliana de la Quintana in the 1980s and 1990s.

Furthermore, they aimed to consolidate an image and political reputation of unwavering determination and commitment. They are uniformly represented, throughout the decades, as fighters, who do not faint in the face of attacks from all fronts, from domestic to military violence. In these representations, there is no room for victimhood, nor self-pity; and they do not need any external force, or superhero, to save them. The general message is unequivocal: they are willing to sacrifice, even to lose their lives, in the struggle for life. The summary of their political philosophy can be found in two slogans that are recurrently on their lips in the films discussed: "We must fight to death" and "It's better to die on your feet than to die of hunger." This ethos is the basis of an effective political position regarding the conditions of extreme misery in which they are forced to carry out their reproductive work.

The priority of their claim is also apparent: to get rid of hunger in their homes and their communities. This basic claim is founded in their role as mothers and, therefore, principally responsible for the sustaining of life, in a context in which the physical survival of their families is permanently threatened due to material scarcity. This daily confrontation with death in their homes, the constant worry, and the overwhelming workload gives them the courage to fight. The positive side of this apparent loss of fear is the agency achieved by a social group which seemed doomed by patriarchal and capitalist structures to a subaltern status and therefore, as Gayatri Spivak would say, to the lack of a voice.[331] But, contrarily, they ended up being the strongest collective in the mining community because being unwaged labourers but at the same time having a strong class consciousness made them more independent and less vulnerable to threats and attacks.

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[331] See Gayatri Spivak foundational text *Can the subaltern speak?* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1988).

Most of the films I have addressed in this chapter focus on the leader of the housewives, Domitila Chungara; however, they showcase the entire community by allowing us to hear multiple voices of a variety of women leaders, and the wholehearted participation of hundreds of anonymous grass-root members of the organisations of the women of the mines for over twenty years. These women owned neither the filmic means of production nor had the technical audio-visual knowledge that would allow them to make their own films. However, they co-authored the films because they managed to exert control over the ways in which they were represented. Furthermore, they were able to convey their message through a profitable alliance with several filmmakers. These cinematic projects show how from a processual logic, the audiovisual format has remarkable communicative features for Andean communal testimonial storytelling.

Conclusion: The Inclusion of Women's Practices, a Matter of Academic Rigour

This thesis has shed light on a number of practices and processes of Andean oppositional cinema in the last third of 20th century. It has been shown how women were present the whole time, not as by-standers or assistants but as fully-fledged members of the crews and as the driving force behind many of the initiatives. It has demonstrated the instrumentality of their contribution, in a wide variety of roles. Also, how crucial it is to expand the definition of creativity in order to incorporate women's and subaltern labour to our scholarly work. However, this is only the tip of the iceberg, and a lot of work needs to be done in order to include women's labour, in a comprehensive and rigorous way, in the history of political cinema in the Andes and Latin America.

I argue that film history and criticism would benefit very much from the paradigm change proposed by feminist film history and production studies. As a result of this theoretical and methodological shift, the analysis enhances its sophistication and its conclusions to allow for the creation of a more engaging and exciting storytelling. This applies not only to the need to shed light on hidden stories but also the urgency of retelling, in a new light, old stories that have been canonically-fixed, taking into account only partial versions which are, generally, the ones provided by male *criollo* directors and made public by male *criollo* historians.

The search for new speakers and sources is the seed for the creation of renewed narratives as well. The diversification of historical accounts augments the reliability of the historical storytelling —although of course any historical account is a subjective and mediated interpretation of the events— but, above all, it makes visible those participants that belong to social groups traditionally excluded. The writing of a fairer and more

inclusive narrative, in turn, invigorates the discipline. For instance, thanks to the feminist and anti-auteurist perspective of this thesis, it has been demonstrated that Ukamau's radical approach to cinema, its outreach and political scope, depended on Beatriz Palacios' systematic work in the dissemination and the evaluation of the political impact of their films in their target groups: the popular classes. Consequently, for almost thirty years, she was the main person responsible for one of the most coherent cinematic political praxis of New Latin American Cinema: the "cinema with the people."

Furthermore, filmmaking was used as an empowering practice not only by its on-screen protagonists but also by the women makers, like María Barea. She is a case in point of a cinema made against the grain of auteurism and other Western impositions. She questioned the forms, mediations, and structures of both first and second cinemas, challenging the technical magnificence, rejecting linguistic excellence, ignoring fetishism and the cult of the personality of the falsely individualised creator. She embodies a different type of sophistication (non-aesthetic). A filmmaking practice put forward with the radical objective of empowering herself through it, without oppressing or benefiting from the film subjects or the film crews, fostering joint emancipation.

Moreover, expanding the consideration of what is a creative contribution to a political film is advantageous. The case of Domitila Chungara and her comrades — the barely educated, but savvy, women of the Bolivian mines— shows how a subaltern group made the informed and strategic choice of participating in films. They wanted to be part of the creation of cinematic products alternative to the mainstream, in order to represent themselves as flesh and blood fighting beings, in filmic formats that were neither self-deprecating nor alienating. Moreover, the cinematic projects participated in

by Domitila Chungara show how from a processual logic the audiovisual format has remarkable communicative features for communal storytelling.

By looking at the latter instances, women become visible; but, moreover, we also become aware of: 1) the importance of dissemination and impact evaluation of political films, 2) the development of non-authorial types of filmic direction that —opposing Westernised modes of film production and appreciation— allowed for the empowerment and emancipation of filmmakers and subjects at the same time, and 3) how the wretched of the Andes, as agents, took strategic decisions to contribute to emancipatory film processes because they knew that the political becomes real when it can be seen, and that cinema was an optimum medium to blow up the centuries-old marginalisation of the Andean indigenous populations.

Consequently, and this is my last point, looking at women's cinematic practices not only reveals the existence and work of the women. It also restores the radical politics at the base of Andean oppositional filmmaking between the 1960s and the 1990s. Therefore, shifting the gaze to women's participation is not only a question of inclusivity or comprehensiveness, it is also a question of political and academic rigour.

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Jatun Auk'a (*The principal enemy*; Ukamau Group, 1974).

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Si esas puertas no se abren (*If those doors do not open*; Mario Arrieta and María Barea, 1975).

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Yawar Mallku (*Blood of the Condor*; Ukamau Group, 1969).

21 April 2015
Isabel Segui
Department of Social Anthropology

Ethics Reference No: *Please quote this ref on all correspondence*	**3981**
Project Title:	Forgetting the Written Word, Handing Over the Voice: *Testimonio* in Jorge Sanjinés' Films (1969-1983)
Researchers Name(s):	Isabel Segui
Supervisor(s):	**Dr Dennis Hanlon**

Thank you for submitting your ethical application form which was considered at the Social Anthropology School Ethics Committee meeting on 12/04/15. The following documents were reviewed:

- Ethical Application Form
- Fieldwork Risk Assessment Form
- Participant Information Sheet
- Participant Consent Form
- Participant Debriefing Form

The University Teaching and Research Ethics Committee (UTREC) approves this study from an ethical point of view. Please note that where approval is given by a School Ethics Committee that committee is part of UTREC and is delegated to act for UTREC.

Approval is given for three years. Projects, which have not commenced within two years of original approval, must be re-submitted to your School Ethics Committee.

You must inform your School Ethics Committee when the research has been completed. If you are unable to complete your research within the 3 three year validation period, you will be required to write to your School Ethics Committee and to UTREC (where approval was given by UTREC) to request an extension or you will need to re-apply.

Any serious adverse events or significant change which occurs in connection with this study and/or which may alter its ethical consideration, must be reported immediately to the School Ethics Committee, and an Ethical Amendment Form submitted where appropriate.

Approval is given on the understanding that the 'Guidelines for Ethical Research Practice' (http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/media/UTRECguidelines%20Feb%2008.pdf) are adhered to.

Yours sincerely

Convenor of the School Ethics Committee OR Convener of UTREC

Ccs Supervisor
School Ethics Committee