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Storytelling Coloniality: Indigeneity, Decolonization, and the Politics of Radical
Alterity in the Andes

A Thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements
for the degree Master of Arts

in

Anthropology

by

Amy Michelle Kennemore

Committee in charge:

    Professor Nancy Grey Postero, Chair
    Professor Joseph D. Hankins
    Professor Rupert S. Stasch

2014

The Thesis of Amy Michelle Kennemore is approved and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically:

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University of California, San Diego

2014

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EPIGRAPH

In ancient times mountains arose, rivers spread out from one place to another, lakes were formed. Our Amazonia, our swamps, our highlands and our plains and valleys were covered with greenery and flowers. We populated this sacred Mother Earth with different faces, and since that time we have understood the plurality that exists in all things and in our diversity as human beings and cultures. Thus, our peoples were formed, and we never knew racism until we were subjected to it during the terrible times of colonialism.

We, the Bolivian people, of plural composition, inspired by the struggles of the past since the depth of history, by the anti-colonial indigenous uprising, and in independence, by the popular struggles of liberation, by the indigenous, social and labor marches, by the water and October wars, by the struggles for land and territory, construct a new State in memory of our martyrs.

A state based on respect and equality for all, with principles of sovereignty, dignity, complementarity, solidarity, harmony and equality in the distribution and redistribution of social goods, where the quest for the common good predominates; with respect for economic, social, juridical, political and cultural plurality of the inhabitants of this earth; in collective coexistence with access to water, work, education, health, and housing for everyone.

We leave the colonial, republican, and neo-liberal State in the past.

Preamble, Political Constitution of the State, Bolivia 2009

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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

Storytelling Coloniality: Indigeneity, Decolonization, and the Politics of Radical
Alterity in the Andes

by

Amy Michelle Kennemore

Master of Arts in Anthropology

University of California, San Diego, 2014

Professor Nancy Grey Postero, Chair

Borrowing from recent work on political ontology, this thesis explores three

different versions of "storytelling coloniality": an autobiography by fourteen Mapuche

scholars that enacts a politics of knowledge through the production of their own book; an

experimental ethnography that approaches knowledge through the notions of colonialism

and decolonization that emerge from the ritual practices of Aymara Shamans and

Apprentices in the Bolivian highlands; and a science fiction novel, set roughly in the year 2070, which enacts an "oral history of the future" organized around the logic of Andean thought. Produced and circulated within local and international academic audiences, these stories make visible contemporary legacies of colonialism, explore spaces in which alternative social worlds emerge and thrive, and problematize how alterity is envisaged, enacted, articulated, and aggregated within the context of contemporary global processes and power relations. As a state-led project of change, decolonization in Bolivia can be seen as the most recent process of liberal governance that seeks to manage forms of radical alterity. Yet, as these stories reveal, there are fundamental disagreements over the meaning and scope of the transformative projects unfolding in the Andean region, which underling the salient, yet difficult task of engaging with struggles for social justice—at once ontological, epistemological, subjective, economic, and juridical—in the context of liberal frameworks and modernist assumptions. By making visible other ways of imagining and enacting decolonization, these stories provide a different reading, or diagnosis of the present moment that I suggest is worth taking seriously in order to fully grapple with the meaning and scope of decolonization emerging in the Andean region today.

INTRODUCTION

In January 2009, a national referendum in Bolivia approved a new constitution

that established the country as a plurinational, communitarian state. Drafted in a popular

constituent assembly that included for the first time the participation of indigenous

representatives throughout the country, the new constitution signalled a dramatic political

reconfiguration of the relationship between the nation-state and indigenous peoples. The

document not only advances indigenous cultural, territorial, and political rights, but also

incorporates ethical and moral principles from various indigenous groups into the model

of the state itself. Article Eight, for example, states that:

> The State assumes and promotes as ethical-moral principles of the plural
> society qhilla, ama llulla, ama suwa (no seas flojo, no seas mentiroso ni
> seas ladron) [this is an Aymara moral code, don´t be lazy, don´t lie, don´t
> steal]; suma qamaña (vivir bien) [an Aymara ideal of the good life],
> ñandereko (vida armoniosa) [a Guaraní ideal of harmonious life]; teko
> kavi [a Guaraní admonition to live well and wisely]; ivi marei (tierra sin
> mal) [a Guaraní idealized notion of the land without evil]; and qhapaj ñan
> (camino o vida noble) [a Quechua call to follow the noble path]. (Art. 8, §
> 1; Postero 2012, 88)

The rights of non-human actors such as *Pachamama* (an Andean conception of Nature or

Mother Earth) have also been recognized in recent legal reforms in Bolivia as well as

Ecuador. In December of 2012, the Bolivian Legislative Assembly passed the *Ley Marco*

de la Madre Tierra y Desarrollo Integral para Vivir Bien (Framework Law of Mother

Earth and Integral Development for Living Well), which recognized Mother Earth as a

"sacred" (Art. 4.2) and promoted harmony with the "living systems of Mother Earth"

(Art. 4.12); social and climate justice (Art. 4.13, 4.14); economic plurality based on

communitarian notions of complementarity, reciprocity, solidarity, equilibrium rooted in

indigenous notions of *Vivir Bien*, or Living Well (Art. 4.15); complementarity and equilibrium with the "living beings *in* Mother Earth" (Art. 16); and a "dialogue of knowledges" between traditional knowledge and the sciences (Art. 17).

In Bolivia, these changes follow a period of popular insurgency at the turn of the twenty-first century, as social movements throughout the country demanded a deepening of citizenship and political participation in response to poorly implemented neoliberal and multicultural reforms. The subsequent rise of Evo Morales and his political party in 2005, the Movement Towards Socialism (*Movimiento al Socialismo*, or MAS), has espoused this struggle through a project of "decolonization" centered on initiatives such as the new constitution, economic redistribution, social programs, pluri-lingual education, and indigenous autonomy. While the process of drafting and passing the new constitution in Bolivia was highly contentious (see Beaulieu 2008; Postero 2010; Schavelzon 2013; Tapia 2007), the document nonetheless serves an important symbolic function in acknowledging the historical legacies of colonialism. The preamble highlights the historical struggle against racism, dispossession, and marginalization. It "re-founds" the nation-state through a retelling of an origin myth located in a distant past, when the "plurality that exists in all things and in our diversity as human beings and cultures" was ruptured by the racism and domination of a "terrible colonialism" (CPE 2009, pmbl.). In this narrative, the current moment of change in Bolivia draws its significance from a long "collective memory" (Rivera Cusicanqui 1984) of resistance to colonial, liberal, and neo-liberal governance, evoking the martyrs of the past in the name of a new future of coexistence, plurality, and material equality for all Bolivia citizens.

Accompanying new legal frameworks, narratives such as this not only recognize the plurality of knowledge practices and worldviews in Bolivia, but also advance such forms of radical social difference as a corrective to colonial legacies of violence and exploitation. However, recent literature on indigenous rights and recognition underlines that there are clear limits when operating within the framework of modernity and liberalism (see Engle 2010, Kymlicka 1995; Postero 2010; Povinelli 2001, 2002). Moreover, decolonization is a concept utilized by a diverse set of actors—activists, intellectuals, academics, middle-class professionals, non-governmental workers, and state officials alike—to assess the past and prescribe a normative future for the nation. This thesis explores the implications of incorporating indigenous epistemologies, narratives, practices, and values within state institutions and academia, asking what is at stake for different actors as they engage in and shape various notions of decolonization emerging today.

I suggest that there are fundamental disagreements over the meaning and scope of the transformative projects unfolding in the Andean region. These disagreements underline the salient, yet difficult task of engaging with struggles for social justice in the context of liberal processes—at once epistemological, subjective, economic, and juridical—that govern and foreclose the undecidability of radically different worlds (see Povinelli 2001). In this sense, my interest in decolonization is two-fold: One, as the most recent process of liberal governance in the Andean region that delineates radical alterity in ways that obscure ongoing and pervasive forms of colonialism. And two, as a set of methodological and practical questions that seeks to recognize the epistemological asymmetries, moral evaluations, and assumptions of liberalism and modernity, also

problematizing activist engagement with decolonial struggles in ways that do not reproduce existing hierarchies (or produce new ones).

Borrowing from Mario Blaser's (2010) recent work on political ontology, I aim to draw out the dynamic processes through which decolonization is shaped today through the concept of "storytelling." From the perspective of political ontology, we can see disagreements over decolonization as "ontological conflicts," or historically imbued conflicts over modes of being in the world, which also surface in epistemological debates over what counts as knowledge; what it means to be a known, knowing, and knowable subject; and what ways of knowing and being in the world are deemed as legitimate and valuable to humanity (ibid., 2010, 3). For Blaser, modernity is but one story that engenders epistemological and ontological assumptions about the world, which is constantly being reshaped in relation to alternative stories that are embodied and enacted through practice. The central aim of his approach is one of dialogue: to "engage the radically different knowledge practices of those worlds/realities deemed inferior by modernity, and to be willing to allow modern ways of knowing be 'contaminated' by them" (ibid., 23).

Rather than approaching the epistemological and ontological practices as stemming from some "world out there," the notion of dialogue suggests that academics must problematize their own position in the production of knowledge (ibid., 3). As a form of dialogue, storytelling seeks to generate spaces to think about what might be at stake for groups engaged in struggles for social justice in ways that go beyond modernist assumptions, which tend to focus solely on liberal notions of cultural rights, recognition,

and economic redistribution (ibid.). For Isabelle Stengers (2005), a central challenge is how we might

> present a proposal intended, not to say what is, or what ought to be, but to provoke thought, a proposal that requires no other verification than the way in which it is able to 'slow down' reasoning and create an opportunity to arouse a slightly different awareness of the problems and situations mobilizing us? (cited in de la Cadena 2010)

This thesis takes up this challenge, employing storytelling as a means to draw out the heterogeneous, often contradictory ways that actors grapple with the nature of historical and ongoing forms of colonialism in the Andean region. The following chapter will outline recent theoretical and methodological contributions as a means to problematize modern knowledge practices and draw out the processes through which liberal forms of recognition obscure the present-day forms of marginalization and violence that shapes different social worlds. Central to decolonial studies in Latin America has been the contribution of Peruvian Sociologist Aníbal Quijano (1998, 2000, 2007), who refers to the "coloniality of power" to call attention to ongoing forms of colonialism that work through interrelated subjective, cultural, and epistemological processes. These processes have produced hierarchical relations of power through categories of race, place, class, sex, and gender that act as techniques of domination to shape global power relations and people's everyday experiences (see also Burman 2011, 2012; Escobar 2008, 2010; Grosfoguel 2006). To break with modern hegemonic epistemological practices, decolonial scholars advocate a focus on "alternatives to modernity" as a way to construct "a more radical and visionary project of redefining and reconstructing local and regional worlds from the perspective of practices of cultural, economic, and ecological difference" (Escobar 2010, 162-163).

While I agree with a research agenda that highlights the salience of alternative epistemological practices in shaping debates over human rights, cultural recognition, global capitalism, and development, the disagreements over decolonization drawn out in this thesis call attention to the highly contingent, uneven, and heterogeneous terrain in which alternative worlds emerge and are articulated. Elizabeth Povinelli's (2011) recent work on late liberalism provides a nuanced approach to explore the processes through which particular distributions of tense, eventfulness, and ethical substance shape radically different social worlds. Povinelli uses late liberalism as a way to refer to the specific form that liberal governmentality has taken in response to the anticolonial and social movement struggles of the second half of the twentieth century, which questioned the legitimacy of paternalistic and assimilationist forms of governance. In other words, the techniques of governance characteristic of late liberalism signify a response to the "crisis of how to allow cultures a space within liberalism without rupturing the core frameworks of liberal justice" (ibid., 26). Contemporary struggles for decolonization in the Andean region represent a challenge to many of these techniques, in particular a questioning of the limits of multicultural rights and recognition. Yet, as decolonization in Bolivia is also a project that has been implemented from within the nation-state (along with the legacies of neoliberalism), I find situating these transformations within the broader context of late liberalism a useful way to explore the tensions inherent in such a project. The next chapter will draw from these concepts to build on recent literature on coloniality, asking how the discourses of indigeneity and decolonization operate to manage radical difference, even as it creates new possibilities for those who it seeks to govern. As Povinelli underlines, potentialities for alternative social worlds may emerge from efforts

to police radical difference, but, rather than fully articulated projects, they often exist in noisy states of "exhaustion and endurance" that in themselves question the "neat capture" of late liberal governance. In this terrain, she suggests, "to be the same, to be durative, may be as emancipatory as to be transitive" (ibid., 130).

An important question to raise for scholars engaged with struggles in the context of radical alterity, then, is one of ethical substance: what we are asking of those who are enduring in the margins of liberal governance when we posit the potentiality of their worlds as remedies to the ills of modernity? As Povinelli suggests, this is particularly salient considering that the "general availability of intensified potential doesn't seem to be equally available in the same way," creating a gap "between those who reflect on and evaluate ethical substance and those who *are* this ethical substance" (ibid., 11; emphasis added). Rather than seek out "alternatives to modernity," I suggest storytelling is a starting point to open up disagreements over the meaning and scope of decolonization: to "provoke thought" (Stengers 2005) about the problems and situations shaping this process and to allow our own categories, assumptions, and modern ways of knowing be "contaminated" by different stories (Blaser 2010).

To interrogate further the nature and implications modernity and coloniality, Chapter Three explores three very different versions of "storytelling coloniality": an autobiography by fourteen Mapuche scholars that reclaims their role as expert through the production of their own book; an experimental ethnography that approaches knowledge through the notions of colonialism and decolonization that emerge from the ritual practices of Aymara Shamans and Apprentices in the Bolivian highlands; and a science fiction novel, set in the year 2070, which enacts an "oral history of the future"

organized around the logic of Andean thought. Produced and circulated within local and international academic audiences, these stories problematize the politics of knowledge and cultural recognition as a means explore the space in which alternative social worlds emerge and thrive, and the ways this alterity is envisaged, enacted, articulated, and aggregated within the context of contemporary global processes and power relations.

Drawing from Povinelli's (2001) discussion of the anthropology of radical alterity and social commensuration, I conclude by discussing the challenges of engaging with struggles for social justice from within modern state and academic institutions in contexts such as Bolivia. Espousing radical alterity from such positions shapes assumptions about what is at stake in decolonization today, carrying the dangerous risk of obscuring the ongoing material conditions and practices of domination enabled by the historically contingent forms of late liberalism. Taking up Stenger's (2005) call to "slow down reasoning" offers one way to shift the line of inquiry away from liberal debates of cultural and identity politics and towards the politics of undecidability, potentiality, and endurance that are conditioned by such debates. These heterogeneous and contradictory stories of coloniality emerge from within the uneven and moving terrain of liberal frameworks and practices, rupturing the ways in which modern assumptions diagnose and respond to the demands of radically different social worlds while also exposing ongoing forms of policing radical alterity. By making visible the processes of coloniality, these stories provide a different reading of the present moment of social transformation in the region that I suggest is worth taking seriously to fully grapple with the meaning and scope of decolonization emerging today.

CHAPTER 1

STORYTELLING MODERNITY:
DRAWING THE BOUNDARIES OF INDIGENEITY, DECOLONIZATION,
AND RADICAL ALTERITY

*"From resistance, we pass to taking power…Today, begins the new year
for the originary peoples of this world, a new life in which we search for
equality and   justice, a new millennium"*
                    —Evo Morales, Inauguration Ceremonial Speech, Tiwanaku, 2006[i]

The day before his official presidential inauguration in January 2006, Evo

Morales participated in an indigenous popular ceremony at the archaeological site of

Tiwanaku. Led by a group of Aymara *Maestros* (shamans), the president was consecrated

by ritual practices that linked him to the spiritual and ancestral power of the *wak'a*, an

Aymara notion of a sacred place that encompasses the spirituality of the landscape as

well as the plants, animals, materiality, and human beings integrated within it (Burman

2011, 25). A few years later, in May of 2011, President Morales also played the role of

"padrino," or godfather, in a communal wedding of 355 Indigenous couples organized by

the Depatriarchalization Unit of Bolivia's Vice Ministry of Decolonization (see Postero

forthcoming). As spectacular performances of indigeneity that upheld indigenous values

as central to the nation, these state rituals seek to address more deep-seated forms of

colonialism in society, representing Andean culture as "coherent, enduring, and

valuable," a significant departure from the politics of exclusion and inequality that have

characterized Bolivia's past (Postero 2007a, 3).

But what these two brief examples underline is that the incorporation of indigenous rituals and practices in public state rituals may carry different stakes for those involved. By evoking the historical struggle of indigenous movements in the highland region, Morales' ritual performance at Tiwanaku represented for many a moment of *pachakuti*, a notion of upheaval and renovation that will restore the cosmological balance of the Aymara world (Postero 2010).[ii] Narratives of pachakuti form the "collective memory" (Rivera Cusicanqui 2003) of colonial violence and resistance in the highlands, tied to the dismemberment of revolutionary leader Túpac Katari, whose body was quartered and distributed across the region following an uprising against Spanish colonial forces in 1781. The "summoning of earth-beings," or ancient spirits in surrounding landscapes in public performances—including ancestors such as Túpac Katari—signifies the presences of "excessive practices" that rupture from dominant modern epistemological and ontological frameworks (see de la Cadena 2010). The publicity of the event showed that, not only have indigenous *cosmovisiones*, or worldviews, been maintained in the face of colonial modernity, but that they are now being presented as a valuable and legitimate source of knowledge to national and international audiences.

However, political rituals can also act as an important site of governance, incorporating particular forms of radically different social worlds to set the terms of recognition (see Markell 2003). Examining anthropological understandings of ritual, for example, Postero has argued that the state-sponsored communal wedding went beyond a mere reversal of colonial binaries between non-white/white, indigenous/colonizer, mediating in between the two poles to perform a "managed indigeneity that seeks to

justify the plurinational state and to foreclose disagreements about the meaning of

indigeneity and who is entitled to represent it" (forthcoming, 3). In drawing from Aymara

notions of ritual upheaval and renovation, Morales' speech to indigenous supporters

called an end to the era of indigenous resistance, marking the beginning of a "new life in

which we search for equality and justice, a new millennium" (cited in Postero 2007a, 2).

Significant to Morales' narrative is the linear and teleological nature of his framing,

which place struggles of justice in the past while displacing justice to an unforeseeable

future. This is distinct from Aymara notions of time as a series of non-linear spirals and

cycles that set "out on a course without neglecting to return to the same point" (Rivera

Cusicanqui 2012, 96).

But also salient in the temporal framing of his speech is the way in which it

reproduces "specific configurations of tense" tied to late liberal notions of suffering,

sacrifice, freedom, and civilization (Povinelli 2011, 29). When Morales places indigenous

struggle in the past, he is drawing from a particular ethical narrative that frames socially

different worlds in terms of a "past perfect being"—"their already having been or, their

potential to stop being what they are still in essesence"(ibid., 27)—while making sense of

present suffering in terms of a "future anterior perspective"—"what will have been the

positive outcome of this suffering from the perspective of a future interpreter we cannot

as of yet know" (ibid., 3). Drawing from Foucault's notion of biopower, Povinelli

suggests that liberal techniques of social tense explain and justify suffering in the present

moment; they "make these forms of killing and letting die seem right, reasonable, and

good" (ibid., 29). This chapter explores the implications of such narratives in the context

of Bolivia today, asking how not only how cultural rights and recognition seek to manage

social difference, but what form they take as stories that shape notions of indigenous belonging.

I situate state-led decolonization in Bolivia within the broader context of coloniality and late liberalism to ask how these broader processes shape the ways in which radical alterity is envisaged, enacted, articulated, and aggregated within the context of contemporary global processes. In a context such as Bolivia, where decolonization is enacted to bolster indigenous practices, values, and worldviews on national and international stages, it is important to continue to ask how social difference is morally evaluated and managed through liberal forms of governance; what is prohibited as a result; and how alternative notions of justice are shaped by, and shape, this new terrain of indigenous belonging. The following chapter will consider different versions of "storytelling coloniality" to ask how these narratives emerge from (and rupture with) the epistemological and ontological boundaries of modernity. First, I begin by outlining recent theoretical contributions in political theory and anthropology to frame the power-laden processes that shape such narratives, also exploring the implications of evaluating struggles in the context of radical alterity.

Decolonizing the Boundaries of Radical Social Difference

Emerging from social movements in the 1970s, decolonization in the Latin American represents a challenge to policies of assimilation and class-based organization, bringing new critiques and theoretical analyses to the fore that emphasized the importance of cultural difference as a mode of social organization and political action

(see also Alvarez, Dagnino, Escobar 1998; Escobar and Alvarez 1992). Karen Engle's (2010) recent work on international indigenous rights and recognition emphasizes the role of indigenous movements since the 1970s in shaping international law, also showing how self-determination and cultural rights has been a powerful strategic space for groups to advance their claims (see also Canessa 2007; Weber 2013). Tracing the emergence and circulation of public articulations of indigeneity, this process represents what Anna Tsing refers to as "indigenous voice:" "the genre conventions with which public affirmations of identity are articulated" (2007, 38). While providing an important space for articulations of cultural difference, Tsing (2007) notes that the genre conventions themselves hold the power of persuasion—rather than the speakers of this voice—generating leverage for the public articulation of identity claims, provided that groups "speak in a way an audience can hear" (2007, 38).

Seen as an effort to manage cultural difference, the audibility of this voice—tied to concrete liberal frameworks and institutions—carries what Povinelli calls an "invisible asterisk," which tolerates customary practices and cultural particularities, "provided [they]…are not so repugnant" (2002, 12). This perspective highlights the inherent limits of multicultural rights and recognition. As Karen Engle suggests, "the asterisk—visible or not—generally limits the right to culture at the moment that a cultural practice violates 'universal,' often individual, human rights" (ibid, 134). As Charles Hale has argued, multicultural reforms during the neoliberal era throughout Latin America did little to address structural racism and inequality, serving instead to distinguish between an acquiescent, permitted indian (*indio permitido*)—whose actions and demands suited the neoliberal framework of political and economic rationalization—and a more radical,

prohibited indian (*indio prohibido*) that threatened such projects and pushed for a more radical transformation (Hale 2004).

But recent transformations in Bolivia reveal how multicultural forms of economic, political, and social governance also generate new spaces for social struggle. Nancy Postero (2007) has argued in Bolivia that it was precisely engagement with the promises and exclusions of multicultural reforms that led to the new type of post-multicultural citizenship that emerged out of the popular mobilizations at the turn of the century. Drawing from social movement demands, Morales' state-led project of decolonization targets the limits of neoliberal multiculturalism, espousing a deepening of indigenous individual and collective rights, political integration, and national economic sovereignty in the face of transnational resource extraction industries (Burman 2011, 114-115). May 2006, the MAS government issued a decree nationalizing the hydrocarbons sector and called for a renegotiation of contracts with companies operating in the oil and gas industries, a move to reconfigure power relations with both transnational companies and traditional elite opposition groups in lowland regions rich in natural resources. The generation of new state surplus has been highly popular, going towards paying of the country's national debt and economic redistribution programs directed at poor and marginalized groups (Postero 2012). One of Morales' first initiatives was to bolster lasting structural reform by securing the passage of legislation calling for an election for delegates to a constituent assembly to draft a new constitution, later capturing 137 of the 255 seats.

However, as mentioned above, questions remain over the viability of pursuing radical social transformations from within the confines of liberal institutional frameworks

(see Postero 2010). Moreover, while the plurinational forms of recognition emerging in Bolivia today represent a challenge to the limits of neoliberal multiculturalism, it is important to situate recent transformations in the context of the broader and constantly shifting terrain of late liberalism. Similar to the way in which multicultural policies of recognition strategically seek to incorporate and discipline the challenge of cultural difference, might we see state-led decolonization as a site of governance in the context of radical social difference?

To frame the relationship between social difference as a site of struggle and governance, I borrow from French theorist Jacque Rancière's distinction between policing and politics. For Rancière, the police order is a complex set of hierarchical, often intersecting, arrangements that manages or distributes the "sensible," or

> the allocation of ways of doing, ways of being, and ways of saying, and sees that those bodies are assigned by name to a particular place and task; it is an order of the visible and the sayable that sees that a particular activity is visible and another is not, *that this speech is understood as discourse and another as noise*. (1999, 29; emphasis added)

This notion of police resonates with recent literature in decolonial studies, which traces processes of colonialism through modes of knowledge production that are linked to modernity and global capitalism (Escobar 2002; Quijano, 1991, 1993, 1998). For decolonial scholars, what is at staking in decolonization is thus an epistemological question, but also fundamentally a question about disagreements over heterogeneous ways of being in the world continue to be rendered as "noise" in the policing of social difference. For Rancière disagreement signifies a form of politics in the sense that it

> makes visible what had no business being seen, and makes heard a discourse where once there was only place for noise…Spectacular or otherwise, political activity is always a mode of expression that *undoes*

the perceptible divisions of the police order by implementing a basically *heterogenous assumption*, that of a part of those who have no part, an assumption that, at the end of the day, itself demonstrates the sheer contingency of the order, the equality of any speaking being with any other speaking being. (1999, 30; emphasis added)

From this perspective, can we think of "excessive practices" (de la Cadena 2010) such as the public display of indigenous ceremonies and non-human actors as a radical politics of difference? Is there something beyond the "indigenous voice" that continues to be silenced? Through what formations of power might racial difference be reconfigured in the current moment of decolonization? How can plural and contradictory voices of decolonial struggles be rendered audible? And what are the implications for doing so?

In the early 2000s, Latin American theorists such as Walter Mignolo, Anibel Quijano, and Arturo Escobar developed the modernity/coloniality/decoloniality (or MCD) research project, which emphasizes the relationship of colonialism as constitutive of modernity and global capitalism. Important in this conceptualization is the distinction between colonialism and coloniality: whereby the former refers to colonial administration that ended following the wave of independence movements in Latin America near the end of the nineteenth century (and the final wave of anticolonial movements following World War II), Quijano's (1991, 1993, 1998) notion of coloniality underlines persistent forms of colonialism enacted through interrelated processes of social organization and knowledge production (see also Burman 2009; Grosfogel 2006).

By conceptualizing modernity alongside coloniality, the MCD research group seeks to privilege the epistemological and political space of "colonial difference"— referring to the "differences suppressed by Eurocentrism that assert themselves today with social movements at the borders of European modernity"—as a means to challenge

modernity (Escobar 2008, 168). A first aim of decolonization would thus be to make

visible the processes through which Eurocentric knowledge production has served to

naturalize racial and social difference through assumptions rooted in subject/object,

nature/culture divides (Moore, Pandian, and Kosek 2003), a hierarchical arrangement of

colonial difference between modern and non-modern actors, and a uni-dimensional and

directional notion of temporality from past to future (Blaser 2010; Quijano 2007). And

second, coloniality calls for the need for an "epistemological decolonization" that

ruptures from modern universalism to bolster an intercultural dialogue to recognizes the

plurality of knowledge practices and experiences in the world (Quijano 2007, 177).

Decolonial scholars thus target the assumptions that often prevent us from taking

seriously claims that fall outside the framework of modern knowledge practices. As

Burman notes, the

> hegemonic notion of knowledge production generates discursive scientific
> practices and sets up interpretative frames that make it difficult to think
> outside of these frames; simultaneously, it actively represses anything that
> actually is articulated, thought and envisioned from outside of these
> frames. (2012, 106)

Tracing what he refers to as the "Modern Constitution," Latour highlights the

political implications of the nature/culture divide, rooting it in debates between Robert

Boyle and Hobbes over the boundaries of science and politics:

> like a pair of Founding Fathers, acting in concert to promote one and the
> same innovation in political theory: the representation of nonhumans
> belongs to science, but science is not allowed to appeal to politics; the
> representation of citizens belongs to politics, but politics is not allowed to
> have any relation to the nonhumans produced and mobilized by science
> and technology. (1993, 28; cited in de la Cadena 2010, 343)

In the field of modern science, knowledge practices seek to know a "world out there," advancing universal and totalizing Truths that naturalize the power relations underlying such claims. Separated from the sphere of politics, "the knowing subject is enclosed in itself and peeks out at a world of objects and produces supposedly objective knowledge of those objects" (Burman 2012, 105). This line of reasoning enabled colonial racism in modern science, which objectively "ranked 'Humanity' along a 'Civilization'–'Nature' continuum" (de la Cadena 2010, 344). But important to note is the ways in which this theory of science is fundamentally tied to the political sphere in this sense, as those deemed to have reason (an thus be located on the opposite side from nature of the continuum) where the only ones seen as capable of occupying such a sphere. Indeed, early debates over who was eligible for liberal rights following the creation of the rights of man fell across a logic of a "conceivability or thinkability scale," with protestant males higher on the scale and Jews and women on the opposite end of the spectrum (Hunt 2007, 150). On this scale we can think of natives in colonial societies at the very bottom, seen as closest to nature and where the question was not as much self-evident rights as it was the category of human itself, evident in the famous debate between Bartolomé de las Cases and Sepúlveda of 1550-51 (see Calhoun 2010).

Thus, inclusion in Western humanity and its public sphere has always entailed that subjects walk the line of the nature/culture continuum; as "the object of policies of improvement, only through a process of transformation (e.g. through which they should deny the social relations they held with plants, rivers, or mountains) could the 'naturals' gain natural and legitimate access to politics" (de la Cadena 2010, 345). For de la Cadena, this constitution of the Western theory of politics is what "banned earth-beings

from politics." (2010, 341). In other words, rooted in colonial practices that viewed indigenous worldviews as bound to nature (and thus outside the realm of human reason), western scientific reasoning gradually came to be naturalized and seen as a universal form of truth that disregarded legitimacy of indigenous epistemologies. While multiculturalism represents the recognition of alternative practices and worldviews, operating within liberal frameworks they are framed as "beliefs," which were are best tolerated "as long as they did not claim their right to define reality" (ibid. 346).

Legal forms of cultural rights and recognition also reproduce the hierarchical divisions of western political and scientific theories by demanding that subjects make themselves "pliant" to liberal frameworks (Povinelli 2011, 26). Such frameworks also create "social divisions of tense," best elaborated in Povinelli's distinction between what she refers to as the "autological subject" and "genealogical society," or the separation between "discourses, practices, and fantasies" between the value of individual freedom and social constraints based on notions of an inherited past (Povinelli 2006, 10). Such a tension is apparent the recognition of indigenous autonomy in the new Bolivian constitution. Article 2, for example, defines the right to indigenous autonomy as pre-existent to, yet confined within the nation-state itself: "Given the pre-colonial existence of the Indigenous nations and peoples and their ancestral domination over their territories, their self-determination *within the framework of the unity of the state* is guaranteed" (emphasis added).

The tension in the right of genealogical society to claim its autonomy within a framework of liberal universal rights produces multiple effects. First, to access cultural

rights, groups must prove their "culture" or "tradition" in a way that can be measured and evaluated. Povinelli cautions

> [As] the state and public demand that indigenous people demonstrate that they come from a lineage associated with a particular territory and that cultural genealogy connects their present beliefs, desires, and hopes to the beliefs, desires, and hopes of their pre-colonial ancestors…[they] are also demanding that indigenous people dehumanize themselves relative to a discourse of freedom and self-elaboration. (2003, 10)

The division of values of individual freedom and a social constraint based on inheritances is not only evident in the language of cultural rights in the new constitution, but also in public performances of indigeneity such as Morales' inauguration ceremony. As mentioned, these social divisions lead society to evaluate the situation of social difference in particular ways, a "past perfect being" that has the "potential to stop being what they are still in essence…while the truth of others would be judged from their potentiality" (Povinelli 2011, 27).

This potentiality also shapes particular imaginaries of nation in post-colonial societies, reproducing Euro-centric notions of modernity and progress. As elites asserted independence from European colonial centers and sought to construct new nations, they came to experience themselves as the original and justifiable prior occupants of colonial territories. Through a social and temporal abstraction, what Povinelli refers to as "the governance of the prior," the right to rule passed to the non-native descendants—the beneficiaries of colonialism—who saw themselves as oriented towards the future potentiality of the nation (ibid., 36). This division of tense acknowledges the prior occupancy of indigenous peoples yet diminishes their legitimacy to govern by orienting them towards a past from which the nation is moving away. In this sense, Povinelli

suggests that "although all people may belong to nationalism, not all people occupy the same tense of nationalism" (ibid., 37). The next chapter will draw out official narratives of nationhood produce such social divisions of tense, also considering how counter-narratives challenge such stories by questioning the logic and effects of violence, dispossession, and marginalization.

In addition to shifting the burden to groups to prove their genealogical culture relative to a discourse of freedom, cultural rights and recognition does so in a way that places judgment on social difference based on universal notions of human rights. Commenting on the recent responses to the incorporation of indigenous practices in liberal institutional frameworks in the Andean region, de la Cadena notes that customary practices are policed as

> 'beliefs' honored only when they do not express an epistemic alternative
> to scientific paradigms (ecological and economic) and their cognate
> policies, working towards the production of the common good (productive
> efficiency, economic growth, even sustainable development) designed to
> satisfy a homogenous humanity benefiting from an also homogenous
> nature. These are the nonnegotiable limits of the Modern Constitution (cf.
> Latour) and indeed of the modern state. (349-350)

These "nonnegotiable limits" are evident in the language of international cultural rights institutions such as Convention No. 169 of the International Labor Organization, which grants indigenous people "the right to retain their own customs and institutions, where *these are not incompatible* with fundamental rights defined by the national legal system and with internationally recognized human rights" (Engle 2010, 135; emphasis added).

In practice, the limits of tolerance assign good and bad values across the distribution of tense, which can then be reversed back and forth to evaluate and manage cultural difference (Povinelli 2011, 61). In other words, notions of what is tolerable

allows for a "temporal suspension of judgment," as "moral reason must draw red lines across which difference cannot proceed, or a bracket must be put around the difference so that it can be removed from public debate until its time to challenge can be managed" (ibid., 77). These social divisions also operate alongside notions of eventfulness: whereas crises and catastrophic events demand ethical reflection and response, the "ordinary, chronic, and cruddy" forms of existence within the brackets of recognition must endure as "quasi events," or "noise" that do not evoke such empathy (ibid. 134). In this context, empathy and notions of sacrifice shape questions of "who or what" is to blame for suffering in the present moment (if it even goes noticed at all), and consequently determines "what is to be done" in such a way that forecloses justice to an unforeseen future (ibid. 136).

In Bolivia, popular uprisings such as the "water war" in 2000 and "gas war" in 2003 called attention to the failures of neoliberal economic reform and demanded public attention and response. Following a water privatization scheme in 2000, for example, which caused a 400 percent increase in the cost of water in local communities, a series of 'wars' broke out between social organizations and the Bolivian government that lasted for three years (Lucero 2008, 154). Protests, blockades, and marches gained nation-wide appeal after a rise in commodity prices made it more apparent that foreign companies were receiving a disproportionate share of rents from natural gas, causing an ever-growing number of Bolivians to demand inclusion in controlling the country's resources (Lehoucq 2008,115). During Morales' presidential campaign in 2005, the MAS was able to build a large coalition of supporters through a strategy of what Raúl Madrid (2008) refers to as "ethnopopulism," making symbolic appeals to indigenous demands for

political inclusion, education, and land reform, but also incorporating the broader concerns of a wide array of voters over questions of economic and national sovereignty (see also Van Cott 2008).

While the protests at the turn of the twenty-first century made visible forms of dispossession and exclusion affecting the country's indigenous population, the next chapter will highlight how the public response to such events creates brackets around what is deemed doable in allowing for radical social difference. The stakes for crossing the "red lines" of toleration are tied to the very moral fabric of society itself, framing radical alterity as a threat to the nation. These examples reveal the relationship in the gap between politics and policing: a politics that rupture the distribution of the sensible—exposing the miscount of the part that has no part—and the effort by elites and politicians to readjust and manage the terms of inclusion. Andrew Canessa's recent work on problematizes notions of indigeneity, pointing out how the category of indigenous has become relatively neutral in the context of urban highland politics in Bolivia, which may signify no more than agreement with forms of progressive policies, anti-globalization, or notions of national authenticity (2012, 10). Thus while Morales has proclaimed "We are all indigenous now," Canessa cautions us to "remember and recognize that whereas there are many urban people and intellectuals who embrace their newly found indigenous identity, there are still many people who are regarded as indios—even by those who proclaim an indigenous identity" (ibid).

This returns me to my point about the undecidability of the relationship between policing and politics. As a space is often "characterized by a continual oscillation between belonging and estrangement" (Arditi 2007; 23), the conditions imposed by the

police order may (or may not) lead to new "world-making activity" (Povinelli 2011, 129). Indeed, the state-led project of decolonization in Bolivia, built on social movement challenges to neoliberal multiculturalism, has brought about significant economic growth in Bolivia that has largely been reinvested in social programs and infrastructure projects (Neuman 2014). However, as the next chapter will examine further, there continue to be disagreements over the meaning and scope of change.

I also suggest that we might think about "alternatives to modernity" in a similar light, as a project that already posits a project of defining a new police order: fixing radical alterity in a particular way that may (or not) lead to emancipation for some; unintentionally (or deliberately) create new forms of exclusion for others; and potentially (or actually) produce new modes of being (or not being). What is it that we are looking for when we seek alternatives to modernity? How might we imagine these so-called "worlds otherwise" without prescribing a fixed end that fails to recognize this undecidability, or glorifies utopic visions of alterity that obscure the material conditions that shape peoples' worlds? Considering that the potential for alternative social worlds to emerge in the spaces between policing and politics is undecidable, contingent, and uneven, what gets excluded as groups articulate and organize around liberal categories of social difference to advance their claims? What potential excess might emerge in the process?

From Identity Politics to a Politics of Undecidability, Potentiality, and Endurance

In addition to understanding the implications of locating and bolstering alternatives to modernity, there are several questions over the viability of the MCD framework in fully grappling with the meaning and scope of coloniality and decolonization. First, as historian Fredrick Cooper (2006, 404) suggests, a central focus on colonialism that is tied to modernity privileges a "generic," "singular" colonialism over a thorough investigation into the specific, dynamic, and heterogeneous processes of colonialism and its contestation spanning hundreds of years. Seen as a political project that seeks to diagnose the power structures that shape the present moment to imagine a different future, Cooper asks, "might not this generic colonial history produce an equally generic postcolonial present?" (ibid., 404). The risk of generalizing the past makes it especially important to locate contemporary decolonial struggles—highly contingent and fragmented—in their specific contexts (Asher forthcoming).

While the MCD espouses a relational ontology approach as a means to challenge the underlying assumptions of modern knowledge production, it is important to consider the heterogeneous and contradictory ways coloniality shapes, and is shaped by, divergent actors in the present moment. In his work with Aymara shamans and apprentices in the highlands, for example, Burman noted that when they "speak of Colonialism, they express themselves in the idiom of modernity. However, this does not mean they necessarily embrace the logics and the semiotics of modernity; the semantic, semiotic or cosmological meanings of Colonialism cannot be assumed" (2009, 119). Arguing that we place "Colonialism in its context," Burman notes that these meanings differ from those

imposed by decolonial intellectuals such as Escobar and Grosfogel. He choses to

capitalize Colonialism to encompass the Aymara conception of colonialism as an

"apparatus of domination—in the past and the present—that implies loss, imposition, and

incompleteness," as well as processes of coloniality and colonialism, a distinction which

carries no weight in Aymara narratives of exploitation in the past and present (2011, 36).

Burman's work brings up an important point about articulations of coloniality,

indigeneity, and decolonization: even when explicit, they might illustrate what Viveiros

de Castro (2004) calls "uncontrolled equivocation," or "a type of communicative

disjuncture where the interlocuters are not talking about the same thing, and do not know

this" (cited in Blaser 2009, 883). We can also think about this through what Rancière

would call a disagreement:

> Disagreement occurs wherever contention over what speaking means
> constitutes the very rationality of the speech situation. The interlocutors
> both understand and do not understand the same thing by the same words.
> There are all sorts of reasons why X both does and does not understand
> Y: while clearly understanding what Y is saying, X cannot see the object
> Y is talking about; or else, X understands and is bound to understand, sees
> and attempts to make visible another object using the same name, another
> reason within the same argument. (1999, xi)

The central issue in disagreements is thus one of "radical interpretation;" how actors

make sense of "noise" in the context of radical alterity without producing serious

distortions of its significance (Povinelli 2001, 321). As Povinelli notes, the problem

stems from Habermasian notions of public reason, which assumes particular forms of

reason and judgment are necessary to establish collective notions of moral obligation and

shared culture in liberal democratic societies. Thus, radical translation takes as its starting

point conceptions of what fundamentally doable or conceivable in maintaining the social

fabric of society:

> If the message addressing the liberal public might be 'begin with the doable,' the message addressing radical worlds is 'be other so that we will not ossify, but be in such a way that we are not undone, that is make yourself doable for us'" And the message conveys the stakes of refusing to be doable, and, thereby, the stakes of forcing liberal subjects to experience the intractable impasse of reason as the borders of the repugnant—actual legal, economic, and social repression. (ibid., 329).

In the power-ladden spaces of translation, we see again the limits of toleration for social difference that assesses and aggregates the stakes of social struggles. De la Cadena (2010) makes a similar point in describing mountains as a site of disagreement in protests over mining concessions in Peru. Indigenous protesters may articulate with environmentalist activists or use terms such as "cultural patrimony" to legitimate their claims (referring to tourist sites such as Machu Pichhu), but these "ethnic" and "environmental" issues do not capture the full significance of meaning for all of those involved. For others, the mountain is "well known in Cuzco as a powerful earthbeing, the source of life and death, of wealth and misery," and "obtaining a favorable outcome requires maintaining proper relationships with it and its surroundings" (ibid., 138). However, debates over mining concessions are often framed in terms of political economy, environmentalism, or cultural patrimony, obscuring an underling disagreement over what is at stake. Thus, rather than problem becomes one not of enduring radical social difference but one in which the dominant logic of liberalism "renders technical" (Li 2007). In this context, de la Cadena notes:

> the problem would then be settled from one perspective alone, that of universal nature. Every potential danger accounted for if not controlled, razing mountains to mine them for metals while ignoring the other socionatural world to which the mountains also belong would not be a political conflict—and one of political ontology at that—but the cultural

problem modernity has "always" shrugged shoulders at with hegemonic complaisance and a resigned sigh. (ibid., 352)

Approaching articulations as equivocations allows us to view politics—not as constituted through power relations and silenced antagonisms—but, borrowing from Rancière, as "made up of relationships between worlds" (Rancière 1999, 42). Borrowing from Marilyn Strathern, de la Cadena proposes we view ethnic categories such as indigenous-mestizo as "partial connections:" "Neither indigenous nor mestizo, it is an indigenous-mestizo aggregate that we are talking about: less than two, not the sum of its parts (therefore not the "third" result of a mixture) and indeed not one—let alone a pure one" (2010, 348). In other words, while the language of cultural rights or enviromentalism may have "allowed Andean indigeneity a presence on regional and national political public stages" they are "connected to the historically shaped discourses through which they appear (class, ethnicity, and the current confrontation with neoliberalism) *and exceeding* them at the same time." (ibid, 348; emphasis added).

In considering the historical legacies of colonial violence and marginalization, we might also be able to approach this question through the frame of what Luis Martín-Cabrera (2011) calls "Radical Justice." In his work on state terror and disappearances in Spain and the Southern Cone, he highlights that the violent, often unspoken acts of terror under state regimes in both cases leave "an excess of signification in the rest of society, something deeper than a wound or a scar" (2011, 19). Martín-Cabrera uses Derrida's notion of the specter to call attention to a different kind of justice that is beyond the "incapacity and unwillingness" of the state and the market to reconcile these traumatic histories, as "specters of the past haunt the present and bring different demands for

justice" (ibid.). To index these "spectral memories" he has created the concept of the "non-place," which "refers both to the heterogeneous and incommensurable temporalities of the dictatorial past—noisy silences, holes of memory, spectral traces, and other non-ontological markers—and to the (im)possibility of connecting these excluded temporalities to the achievement of justice" (ibid., 20).

As worlds become partially connected through cites of equivocation—articulated within a regime of liberal rights and recognition—a central problem for us to grapple with what is at stake in political struggles: How are excess stories of coloniality rendered commensurate by liberal forms of governance? (Povinelli 2001) "How are these new ethical and epistemological horizons aligned or not in the complicated space and time of global capital and liberal democratic regionalisms and nationalisms?" (ibid., 320). Rather than offer a definitive framing of coloniality and decolonization, I employ the concept of storytelling coloniality to allow disagreements and excess meaning emerge and be visible in political debates. As stories circulated in national and international audiences, these narratives "provoke thought" about the problems and situations shaping this process, as well as our assumptions about its outcome (Stengers 2005).

The question of equivocations points also towards another challenge in the MCD research project over who, exactly, gets to speak and thus provide the supposed alternatives to modernity. The particular focus on social movements and their leaders runs the risk of silencing other important voices. In searching for alternative to modernity, Asher cautions us to resist the seduction in turning towards subaltern knowledges to fulfill a "desire to create a just world for humans and non-humans" (forthcoming, 17). She notes that is not only because doing so is bound up in a

complicated politics of knowledge and representation, but also, drawing from Raúl

Zibechi's work on social movements, because these groups may not be in the position to

offer such alternatives in the first place (ibid., 21). Zibechi highlights that

> Organizing on the basis of modes of everyday life is slow, and using it to
> make decisions can be a time-consuming process…we can't ask this
> model for more than it has already provided. For instance, we have the
> crisis of he social forums that have lost a lot of their steam because,
> among other things, they were taken over by those who were "most
> capable" of leading assemblies and raising money for travel and so on—in
> other words, by professionals from universities and NGOs. This reveals
> one of the limits of this new "way of doing" (a name I prefer to
> organization, which always retains an air of Taylorism to it). (cited in
> Asher forthcoming, 21)

Moreover, when decolonial theorist do engage with social movement and activist

intellecutals, they tend to do so in "largely in abstract, theoretical, or textual/rhetorical

terms, and from within the academy" (ibid., 10). This academic rhetoric has real effects

on the subaltern intellectuals to whom border thinking seeks to provide voice. In her

critique of decolonial thinkers such as Mignolo, for example, Bolivian intellectual and

activist Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui suggest that, rather than the "geopolitics of knowledge"

that the group emphasizes with border thinking, we should be more attentive the

"political economy of knowledge," referring to the ways in which the economic structure

of academic accreditation shapes knowledge production in hierarchical forms that

"entangles and paralyzes their objects of study" who have limited access to the northern

academy (2010).

The geopolitics of knowledge also calls attention to the implications of rendering

the narratives, practices, and epistemologies of radically different social worlds

"intelligible." Considering the implications of radical translation in the context of radical alterity, Povinelli suggests we shift our line of inquiry:

> We do not ask how a multicultural or plural nation (or world) is sutured at the end of some horizon of liberal institutionally embedded communication. We ask instead how the incommensurateness of liberal ideology and practice is made to appear commensurate. (Povinelli 2001, 327-328)

Produced and circulated within local and international academic audiences, storytelling coloniality grapples with the geopolitics of knowledge and liberal debates over identity politics by shifting focus towards a politics of undecidability, potentiality, and endurance as a means explore the space in which social worlds emerge and thrive. In storytelling I am interested in how heterogeneous and contradictory narratives seek to make sense of coloniality and decolonization. These narratives make rupture the social tense of late liberalism, provoking their audiences to consider their relationship to forms of suffering and harm in the present moment; challenging modern assumptions while also exposing ongoing forms of policing radical alterity.

CHAPTER 2

STORYTELLING COLONIALITY: THE POLITICS OF
POTENTIALITY AND ENDURANCE

Act 1: Ta iñ fijke xipa rakizuameluwün: Our Different Ways of Thinking

The first story of coloniality, an autobiography by fourteen Mapuche scholars
(2012), reclaims of their role as experts in producing knowledge over the history of
colonialism and nation building projects in Chile. With colonialism as the central frame
of reflection and organization, the book provides a story of radical alterity from which to
understand the implications of indigeneity, liberalism, and global processes of capital
accumulation and dispossession as forms of domination and governance. Unfolding in the
contemporary context of neoliberalism in Chile, a central aim of the narratives is to
rupture an official history of integration and extermination, illustrating the underlying
structural effects of coloniality in disarticulating the social and territorial world of the
Mapuche Nation, or *Waj Mapu* or *Wajontu Mapu*.[iii] For the Mapuche, the "'colonial
phenomenon' in Chile has implied "demographic disintegration, the occupation and
exploitation of their territory by Chileans and other foreigners, and, up to the present, the
influence of state power in all levels: physical, economic, and spiritual" (Nahuelpan
Moreneo et al., 2011, 20).

I first came across this book at the annual meeting of the Latin American Studies
Association (LASA) in Washington, D.C. in May of 2013. Members of the project

presented their book during a two-panel round table meeting, asking academics tocritically engage in discussions over the production of the text. A key discussant in the second panel was Charles Hale, one of the leading scholars promoting activist and collaborative research from the University of Texas at Austin.[iv] The participation of the Mapuche in the LASA meeting represents a shift in the field towards collaborative research and increasing the presence of "civil society-based intellectuals" at such events to bolster dialogue and exchange among civil society and academic-based intellectuals (see Stephen and Hale 2013).

Occupying a subordinate position in modern knowledge practices, the Mapuche have often appeared as the object of study, solely given voice as "native informants" in modern stories that claim to be "true" representations of the history and culture (ibid.) A central aim of the Mapuche project of storytelling coloniality is thus to "exercise epistemological sovereignty:" generating practices and spaces of diffusion for a form of knowledge production that will "prevail in the contemporary battle to recuperate physical, economic, and spiritual agency" in the "global economy of knowledge" (ibid., 20). The Mapuche authors build on a growing critique among Latin American intellectuals of the asymmetrical power relations of knowledge production, which, as discussed in Chapter Two, have also been directed at largely theoretical and abstract decolonial projects emerging from within the academy (see Rivera Cusicanqui 2012). Emphasizing a fundamental disagreement over what is considered expert knowledge (and who is entitled to produce it), the Mapuche phrase *ta iñ fijke xipa rakizuameluwün,* or "our different ways of thinking," underlines a project of decolonization that is capable of acknowledging the plural and contradictory nature of knowledge practices in the face of

simplified and homogenous representations of an indigenous "people" and their "culture" (ibid.).

In reclaiming and asserting their role as experts, a central task for many authors is to rupture the official narratives of integration and extinction in Chilean history.[v] This aim builds on an important trend that emerged from Subaltern Studies, which critiques structuralist and functionalist approaches for rendering the agency and voice of the subaltern invisible (see Spivak 1988). From this perspective, Mapuche historian Jimena Pichinao Huencheleo asserts that the "through the extension of their own cultural practices, the Mapuche demonstrated a great capacity of control and response, including the incorporation and regeneration of new elements" (2012, 27). Moreover, as Mariman Quemando suggests in his revisionist history of the early Republican period, Mapuche tactics of negotiation, adaptation, and resistance played a fundamental role in shaping the modern Chilean nation state:

> The Mapuche not only took sides—and massively on the side of the crown—but also divided rival *criollistas*…Above all this has provided a breeding ground for studying the organization of the state, showing us that the Mapuche actor was a political subject that negotiated or confronted the enemies of their nation across his own interests. It is this dynamic that the Chilean ruling class *made blank* in the political reflection that for so many years has carried their nation-state. (2012, 87; emphasis added)

Since the 1990s, conflicts in Chile have intensified in Mapuche territory over the expansion of neoliberal resource extraction and exploitation intensified struggles for cultural and territorial rights, resulting in a wide range of debates over how to incorporate the Mapuche into the national life of the country. Responding to calls to extend multicultural rights and recognition, for example, formal General Canessa stated

…I sustain that the push to separate Chileans according to their ethnic
origin, which I consider an expression of racism, will turn out to be
artificial. As I indicated, due to an unfortunate combination of good
intentions, which undoubtedly are, along with electorate calculations and
foreign-born ideological motivations, the conditions are being established
for the most significant phenomenon of the Chilean twenty-first century:
the ripping apart of national   unity, with the internal and external
consequences that one can imagine… if there is agreement that the
Chilean Nation is singular and indivisible, the Constitution can maintain
itself as such, concentrating its energy on overcoming the problems that
affect the sectors of the population in most need of aid and protection.
(cited in Mariman Quemenado 2012, 66)

Delivered in 2003, the General's charged public statement came as a response to

mobilizations that called attention to ongoing forms of coloniality—dispossession and

marginalization through processes of neoliberal capitalism—calling for cultural rights

and publically questioning official narratives of integration and progress. His narrative

also illustrates how late liberal forms of governance respond and assess the challenges

posed by such mobilizations through social divisions of tense. First, the discourse of

national unity draws its legitimacy from a particular mode of governance operating in late

liberalism, which Povinelli refers to as the "governance of the prior," or "the priority of

the prior across political, market, and social relations," discussed in the previous chapter

(2011, 34).

 In Chile, this logic is maintained through official narratives of history that

obscure the historical role of the Mapuche in shaping the nation-state, ignoring dynamic

processes of engagement, resistance, adaptation, and negotiation with the state relative to

narratives of integration and elimination. In this context, the rupturist counter-narratives

of Mapuche scholars such as Mariman Quemenado challenge the viability of such

narratives to explain and justify ongoing forms of colonliality, acting as s a site of disagreement and enacting a politics of decolonization.

Second, when the General Canessa called for the nation to harness its energy to "overcome the problems" of those "in most need of aid and protection" (cited in Mariman Quemenado 2012, 66), he was drawing upon particular liberal arrangements of empathy and tense that justify the position of elite beneficiaries and the arrangements of the police order. In late liberalism, teleological and eschatological discourses frame events relative to an already given end (telos), or in anticipation of "'extreme' or 'ultimate' moments and events that immediately precede or accompany the end of history" (ibid.). The discursive frame of General Canessa's statement justifies the present harm against Mapuche in terms of a sacrifice for the future: The ethical values of the nation, and the very survival of the nation itself, are at stake in his narrative. Despite the ethical "good intention" of concern for the suffering of others, the "unfortunate combination" of foreign ideologies and poor politics will undoubtedly lead to the most "important phenomenon of the Chilean twenty-first century:" the ultimate destruction of social harmony and unity of the nation. However, future salvation is possible. In agreeing on the "singular and indivisible" nature of the Chilean Nation, society can maintain the police order and, united, harness its energy to (eventually) overcome the problems of those "most in need of aid and protection" (cited in Mariman Quemenado 2012, 66).

As Povinelli suggests, this narrative of suffering and sacrifice forms part of a variety of "techniques of social tense that are at hand when accounts of ongoing structural social harm are explained from a neoliberal or late liberal perspectives…[they] continually deflect moral sense and practical reason from the durative present" (Povinelli

2011, 13). In the context of neoliberal capitalist expansion in Chile, the beneficiaries of

modern coloniality are able to legitimize and justify the police order by rendering

narratives of structural inequality and ongoing dispossession unintelligible. Furthermore,

those who challenge or reject these liberal terms of cultural rights and recognition are

positioned in opposition to discourses of sacrifice and freedom, facing concrete material

implications. In 2003, for example, Chilean officials passed antiterrorist legislation to

address "situations of conflict—of unknown origin" in response to Mapuche struggles

against encroaching development and extractive industries on their territory (Mariman

Quemenado 2012, 66). Here we can see the limits of toleration discussed in the previous

chapter, which through legislation produces a distinction between the "indio permitido"

and "indio prohibido" in multicultural rights and recognition (Hale 2004).

Enduring in a precarious space between the police order of liberal cultural rights

and a politics of radical justice and social difference, Mapuche stories of coloniality make

a stark critique of such limits:

> In this context, the opposition *Mapuche bueno/Mapuche malo,*[vi]
> entrepreneur/terrorist, is no more than a strategic renovation of power that
> allows for exclusion by enshrining itself in legality, at the same time it
> allows for manipulation of the question of human rights, even more modes
> of communication. This last one is a great danger. Moreover, we cannot
> forget that the political economy of colonialism—including the present
> moment of neoliberal multiculturalism—does not only work by
> annihilating and disintegrating, but also coopting and subsuming subjects
> through a logic of integration-exclusion, selective and functional to
> colonial and racial hierarchies and inequalities. (Nahuelpan Moreno et al.
> 2012, 366)

In enacting a politics of knowledge, the Mapuche stories of coloniality in *Ta iñ fijke xipa*

rakizuameluwün (our way of thinking) engage in a politics of decolonization through

claiming their own knowledge practices, unsettling the naturalized, paternal discourses of

nationhood that police social difference across liberal distributions of tense and

eventfulness. However, as their statement reveals, challenges to the police order are met

with a shifting logic of "integration-exclusion" that preserves colonial power relations.

Yet the undecidability of this terrain may create new possibilities for a politics of

decolonization to emerge. In this context, the Mapuche narrators enact a form of

storytelling that seeks to make visible ongoing forms of coloniality to shape the terms of

endurance in the present moment:

> The Mapuche have lived a history of subjugation of the *Gülu Mapu* and
> our people. We are not able to silence this. Even so, we do not wish to see
> ourselves under a static structure of colonized, of victims, or as remnants
> of a 'culture of extinction.' For us, decolonization is an imperative. Our
> self-governance is not a project or future utopia, but a present vindication.
> (ibid.)

*Act 2: Descolonizacion Aymara: Sickness and Curing Coloniality in Twenty-first Century
Bolivia*

In the Bolivian highlands, Anders Burman's collaborative work with Maestros

and Soldados from 2006-2010 underlines various notions of coloniality and,

subsequently, ways in which a meaningful decolonization might be carried out. The ritual

practices and cosmologies that are enacted by his interlocutors often carry very different

existential implications—as well as an understanding of politics itself—that do not reflect

the official discourse of the state nor international regimes of rights and recognition.

Burman suggests that understanding the meaning of Aymara ritual practices, also a form

of political activism, is essential to understanding the historical, symbolic, and

cosmological dimensions of decolonization in the present moment in Bolivia (2011, 223).

From this perspective, what is at stake in decolonization takes on a much different meaning than what is often apparent in state discourse and the media: a form of ritual curing practice that seeks to address deep-seated notions of loss, imposition, and incompleteness that are contagious and occur in individuals, landscapes, buildings, society, and the state itself (ibid). However, in the Bolivian context this "excess" of meaning is difficult to grasp. Recent officially sanctioned public ceremonies of indigeneity (often led by Maestros) are interwoven with durable symbols of national patriarchy and (contradictory) imaginaries of the historical struggle of indigenous activists to challenge exclusion and marginalization under colonial, and later, republican regimes. By approaching the narratives that emerge from Burman's ethnography of Maestros and Soldados as storytelling coloniality, I suggest that ritual practices and indigenous activism in Bolivia reveal ongoing forms of policing and bring new disagreements over the meaning of decolonization to the fore.

For Aymara Maestros and Soldados, colonialism is seen as an "strange" being or spirit (*ñanqha*): both an illness (*usu*) in itself and the source of illness encompassed by states of "worry, stress, fear, envy, individualism, negligence in the face of the *ajayus uywiris* [generative and protective spirits] that inhabit the landscape [*pacha*]" (Burman 2011, 253).[vii] Burman describes how a common treatment that Maestros provide for individuals is to address the loss of one's spirit (*ajayu*), a prevalent risk of everyday life that manifests itself in various symptoms and results the loss of social personhood. The loss of one's spirit is related to notions of imposition, as the "native being" can then be replaced by an "other," "strange being" that acts as a bad influence and creates illusory visions of reality while simultaneously making one's own reality seem foreign. States of

loss and imposition also result in a sense of estrangement, or incompleteness in the physical, social, and spiritual wellbeing of a person (ibid., 254-255).

As Maestros and Soldados "enact" (Blaser 2010) coloniality and decolonization through notions of sickness and ritual practices of curing, they seek to shape the contemporary moment of transformation in Bolivia in particular ways. Aymara cosmology is related to how Maestros and Soldados—and Indianista-Katarista activists alike—diagnose colonialism in the present moment, seen as a pathological state of loss of identity (Burman 2011, 255). The imposition of a "strange being" in society results in the imposition of particular ideas, norms, and values that are foreign to the Aymara worldview (ibid.) However, Burman argues that, rather than a unidirectional line of reasoning between Aymara notions of illness and conceptions of colonialism, the two should be viewed as interrelated and shaped by the same "cosmological dimensions of significiance" (2009, 122). I agree with his assessment, and suggest we view Aymara ritual practices as "ontological conflicts," a concept Blaser (2010, 3) uses to highly how knowledge practices "perform" different social worlds that do not fit within the categories of modern ontology. In other words, rather than view Aymara notions of illness as mere symbols for making sense of centuries of colonial marginalization and exploitation in the present day, it is important to consider how, concretely, these practices seek to shape decolonization in a particular way.

Maestros often discuss notions of loss, imposition, and incompleteness in three contexts—the individual, the world, and the state—that they simultaneously treat with curing rituals to "prepare the terrain for the arrival of *pachakuti,*" a notion of upheaval and renovation that will restore the cosmological balance of the Aymara world (Burman

2011, 258). Postero (2007) has discussed the multiple meanings of pachakuti in the Bolivian context, especially salient following the social upheavals at the turn of the twentieth century and the subsequent election of Evo Morales. Historians such as Flores Galino (1987) have shown how Indians hoped for a "return of the Inca" that "would bring an end to Spanish rule, reverse the unjust order, and recuperate Andean supremacy" (ibid., 3). In late liberalism, the articulation of relationships to customary practices and land since "time immemorial" legitimates the claims of groups to have priority over forms of governance, yet it also creates a social division of tense that places groups in a degenerative past relative to a progressive and modern autological subject, in Povinelli's sense.

However, from the perspective of political ontology, when Maestros speak of a return to the past, their desires call upon a different notion of "tense" than that of a strict opposition between traditional/modern, non-modern/modern subjects. Maestros often speak of being "connected" with the spirits and ancestors of the past (*ajayus, uywiris, achachilas, and awichas*), who offer protection and rejuvenation of the social and natural world in the face of "strange sprits" (*ñanqha ajayus*), which are not necessary deemed evil or malignant yet must be treated with caution (Burman 2011, 122). *Ñanqha ajayus* have always existed. Yet, for many Maestros, colonialism has established "bad connections" between Aymara people and their protective spirits and the *ñanqha,* allowing new links to be formed but now on the own terms of the *ñanqha* (ibid., 123). To enact rituals of decolonization, then, Maestros enact specific curing practices to rejuvenate and strengthen connections with the *ajayus:* "strange *ajayus* are expelled; native *ajayus* are summoned; the "other being" is rejected and the appropriate being

reasserted; *pacha* and the original virtue of the landscape are reasserted and the colonized world reconquered" (ibid., 255).

The way Maestros and Soldados grapple with *ñanqha ajayus* also provides a different view of identity politics. Similar to one's spirit, for example, identities can be lost and imposed upon by outside forces and are a site of struggle: "political activism is reinforced with healing rituals that exorcise foreign spirits, showing that it is possible to expel that which has been imposed; that colonial spirits, strange identities and institutions can be overthrown" (ibid., 185). Moreover, Indianista-Katarista activists and Maestros do not view Aymara identity as something fixed or necessarily in opposition to the "other," but shaped in relation to such forces and contingent upon particular situations (see also Canessa 2012). Especially among Soldados that are born and raised in the urban contexts of La Paz and El Alto, narratives of realizing the path towards becoming a Maestro typically begin with personal struggles against their own experiences of "strangeness:" either in terms of feeling alienated from particular Aymara forms of knowledge and ritual or by higher class Aymara merchants and politicians seen as corrupt and "strange" in themselves (ibid., 257).

Interacting with these "strange spirits" is also an important aspect of healing rituals, such as the *chullpa misa*,[viii] which one Maestro described as a way to evoke threatening spirits to "guide and control" them, "as the ancestors rise up and demand justice" (ibid., 179). Burman suggests the practice of *chullpa misa* is a central part of how activists and Maestros enact decolonization in the present moment, a form of "conditional incorporation," in which *ñanqha ajayus* "could be, under certain conditions, reincorporated within the Aymara community" as a means of ritual healing (ibid.). In this

sense, the articulation of ethnic and cultural categories of belonging—the "indigenous voice" that is audible to national audiences (Tsing 2007)—is not merely a means to advance claims to cultural rights under liberal regimes of recognition but rather a way to utilize and control "strange" structures, categories, and symbols of power (Burman 2011, 179).

 Historically, indigeniety in the Andean region—historical state policies shifting from assimilation to multicultural recognition—has been formed in relation to categories of difference as a potent source of governance (see Rivera Cusicanqui 2003). While articulation with modern categories of belonging has been central to shaping notions of an "Aymara people" as a cohesive culture in the highlands in relation to the Bolivian state and society, for Maestros, this "partial connection" (Strathern 2004) serves as a potent source of struggle for radical difference. De la Cadena (2010, 350) suggests that engagement and articulation with the "nonnegotiable limits" of liberal rights regimes should not be viewed as the end of politics, but rather as the terrain where fundamental disagreements emerge. This argument resonates with Bolivian sociologist and Katarista activist Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui discussion of *ch'ixi*, a coexistence of radical alterity as opposed to hybrid notions of mestizaje and assimilation or multicultural recognition:

> [Ch'ixi] It is this heather gray that comes from the imperceptible mixing of black and white, which are confused by perception, without ever being completely mixed. The notion of ch'ixi , like many others (*allqa, ayni*), reflects the Aymara idea of something that is and is not at the same time…A ch'ixi color gray is white but is not white at the same time; it is both white and its opposite, black. The ch'ixi stone, therefore, is hidden in the bosom of mythical animals like the serpent, the lizard, the spider, or the frog; ch'ixi animals belong to time immemorial, to jaya mara, aymara, to times of differentiation, when animals spoke with humans. The potential of undifferentiation is what joins opposites… ch'ixi combines the Indian world and its opposite without ever mixing them. (2012, 105)

The central challenge for many Maestros and Soldados is not always to reject "other," strange spirits, but to find means to make them "less strange" and control the terms of relation with them (Burman 2011, 185). As a form of decolonization through ritual healing, renegotiating the terms of connecting and engaging with the "other" relates more broadly with how some Maestros and Soldados engage with the state. While some of the more radical strands of Indianista-Katarista activism have sought a radical break with the nation state by calling for a return to the *Qullasuyu* nation under the Inca Empire, many Maestros have been highly visible in conducting and legitimating state sanctioned performances of decolonization, such as the inauguration of Evo Morales at the ancient site of Tiwanaku in 2006. Burman suggests that this strategy of "conditional incorporation" with the state has been central in shaping the meaning of decolonization emerging in the present moment, however, this dynamic process is not always within the control of Maestros in the face of the powerful forces of the *ñanqhas:*

> If "lo extraño" is conditioned by "lo nativo," there is nothing inherently alien in the changes that cause its incorporation within the indigenous world. However, when "lo extraño" is too powerful, its incorporation completely transforms "lo nativo" or inverts the power relation in a way that "lo nativo" is incorporated within "lo extraño." (ibid., 260)

While the election of Evo Morales signified a rupture in the historical legacies of colonialism in Bolivia, for many Maestros colonialism cannot be cured through the state, itself a source of illness. Moreover, through hundreds of years of "strange domination, state oppression, and *mestizo-criolla* control," strange spirits—*ñanqhas, saxras, or añchanchus*—"fill the rooms, corridors, streets, and plazas affecting the thoughts, sentiments, behavior, and politics of the people who are within these places" (ibid. 242).

Considering the personal trajectory of Evo Morales (from union leader to "indigenous" president), his path of "internal decolonization" is relatively recent (ibid. 115). In this sense, Morales "is compared to a child whose *ajayu* can easily leave his body" in the context of powerful and influential "strange spirits" that continue to occupy the spaces of government buildings and administrative institutions (ibid. 115). In other words, it is not the state as much as Maestros and Soldados, those experienced in dealing with the powerful forces of strange spirits, that are most capable of addressing the ills of colonialism (ibid.).

While Morales may share similar sentiments with the Maestros and Soldados, Burman suggests his "diagnosis" of colonialism is distinct in two fundamental ways. First, the official discourse of the MAS government identifies the persistence of colonialism in the lack of individual and collective indigenous rights, as well as lack of social and political integration. Second, colonialism is tied to questions of national economic sovereignty and the role of transnational companies in exploiting the country's natural resources (ibid., 114-115). Both of these notions resonate with broader meanings of decolonization today, which call attention to persistent forms of inequality, racism, and marginalization within former colonized societies, as well as processes of neocolonialism in the context of global capitalism. Although important, addressing colonialism merely through reforming state institutions fails to address deep-seated notions of loss, imposition, and incompleteness—a contagion and ongoing source of illness—as the Maestro and Soldados narratives of storytelling suggests. However, many of the Maestros with whom Burman works have been called upon by Morales to guide official public healing rituals. Don Valentín, for example, was one of the Maestros charged with

carrying out the inauguration ceremony at Tiwanaku in 2006, summoning the *ajayus* of this sacred place (*wak'a*) for the president to be guided by and obey.

However, as discussed in the introduction, public spectacles of indigeneity also serve as a site of policing, silencing forms of radical difference. From the perspective of Maestros and Soldados, important questions remain over "who controls who, who determines the conditions of socialization [with strange spirits], and who incorporates who" (ibid., 248). Some of the radical Indianista-Katarista have been critical of the Maestro's participation in state-sanctioned rituals, pointing towards the colonial nature of the Morales administration and viewing its policies as assimilationist and a "multicultural spectacle" that acts as a "smoke screen that conceals the continuity of colonialism" in the present day (ibid., 236). As a form of governance, decolonization incorporates radical social difference and seeks to render it invisible. This form of "policing," in Rancière's sense, has important effects that resonate with notions of tense, eventfulness, and sacrifice in late liberalism.

In what Burman refers to as the "grand narrative of the *patria*," or the official history of Bolivian nationhood, the ongoing suffering of marginalized groups has been justified relative to a story of sacrifice: "the experience of institutionalized racism, exclusion, and poverty acquire meaning for the population in front of heroic suffering that the nation has born: wars, defeats, territorial loss, exploitation by foreigners…all of which serves to enliven exploited people to accept in a conformist way their situation" (ibid.,103). Challenging this grand narrative has been one of the central aims of the Indianista-Katarista movement, which, through oral history workshops, pamphlets, and Aymara language radio stations, has emphasized the critical role of historical

consciousness as a source of indigenous empowerment. An important symbol of this

counter-narrative has been the "collective memory" (Rivera Cusicanqui 2003) of the

dismemberment of leader Túpak Katari following the indigenous uprising against

Spanish colonial forces in 1781, whose body was quartered and distributed across the

highlands.

Evo Morales has brought the grand narrative of the patria and the counter

narrative of indigenous activists together in his political discourse. The day following his

ritual inauguration at Tiwanaku, for example, Morales delivered an extensive inaugural

speech that promised to re-found the nation and decolonize Bolivia via a "cultural

democratic revolution," venerating the historical struggles of Tupac Katari alongside

heroic national figures such as Simón Bolivar (*Notisur*, 2006). A couple of years later,

Morales elaborated in a national speech on the notion of "*originario,*"[ix] a category that

many indigenous peoples in the highlands employ to distinguish themselves from

mestizos as well as lowland "indigenous" groups:

> Those who are born in Bolivia are originarios, all of us are originarios.
> The problem is that some are millennial orginiarios and some are
> contemporary originarios. The millennial originarios: many but poor. The
> contemporary originarios: few but rich. By way of a new political
> constitution of the Bolivian state, we wish to all be equal, all originarios.
> This is what we are looking for. (cited in Burman 2011, 232)

In recent years, the MAS government has emphasized national development, economic

redistribution, and sovereignty in its discourse of decolonization, often symbolically

drawing from a historical archive of both grand narratives of the patria and counter

narratives of struggles for radical justice to mark large-scale state development projects.

This is evident in the recently launched *Satélite Túpac Katari* or the *Libertador* station,

inaugurated as part of the *teleférico,* or cable car system that aims to connect Zona Sur to El Alto in 2015, which at once creating a vision of the state as the driving force of change that is linked to a modernizing project linking.

This is not to say that indigenous peoples do not have their own ways of imagining and contesting modernity. But, for sociologist and Katarista activist Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, this type of cultural appropriation neutralizes the decolonial struggle and indigenous projects of modernity, as it "bestows rhetorical recognition and subordinates, through patronage, the Indians into purely emblematic and symbolic function, a kind of cultural *pongueaje* [or obligatory domestic labor required of indigenous tenants] in the service of the pluri-multi spectacle of the state and mass communication" (ibid. 62).

While distinct from the context of settler colonial societies that Povinelli (2011) examines in her work on late liberalism, the "governance of the prior" operating in the terrain of decolonization echoes many of its effects. This was apparent in a recent transportation campaign, for example, *La Paz, Nada Nos Detiene* ("La Paz, Nothing Stops Us"). The Chinese manufactured *Puma Katari* buses are the first phase of an integrated urban transportation system plan by the La Paz municipal government, which promotes it as a modernized system of "efficiency," "security," and "dignity" to "improve the quality of life" of middle-class and marginalized groups alike.[x] In an Opinion article on the program, one woman stated in *Pagina Siete*, that she "longed for the change from a chaotic, disorderly, filthy, disrespectful, and informal system" in La Paz. In place of her occupation, her name was followed by the words "Bolivian Citizen."[xi] This vision stands in contrast to the current system of *taxis*, *trufis, mini,* and

microbuses that zip around the city daily for a low cost, which also has implications for organizations such as the Transport Workers Confederation that maintain significant bargaining power vis-à-vis the government. Underlying the discourse of modernity and nationalism that has emerged under the Morales administration is a "social division of tense," along with "eventfulness" and "ethical substance" that is "available across all modes and levels of practicing late liberalism, of justifying its exclusions and inclusions, of making good of its goods and good of its harms" (Povinelli 2011, 42).

These dynamics are evident in the frustrations that Maestros and Soldados expressed to Burman as they have attempted to enact healing rituals of decolonization in relation to the state and "others" in Bolivian society. Since the ritual inauguration ceremony at Tiwanaku in 2006, the Bolivia press has promoted distorted images of "Andean religion" by emphasizing the "baffling characteristics" of ritual healers or animal sacrifice (Burman 2011, 109). Burman notes that one article in particular "insinuated that the Maestros were embarking on a battle against the Catholic Church with the support of the Ministry of Foreign Relations and even the President himself" (ibid). Don Cancio, a Maestro then working at the Ministry of Foreign relations, charged with integrating "indigenous ceremonies" into official state acts, was forced to explain his position to his superiors and, "demonstrating that the radical Indianista-Katarista discourse was not meant to be part of the governmental discourse, and if it appeared as such their would have to be explanations" (ibid.). Don Valentín, one of the Maestros who conducted the ritual at Tiwanaku, perhaps suffered the worst outcome in the public arena. In 2010, police found a large quantity of liquid cocaine in his house in El Alto, which he maintains was placed there by an unknown guest renting a room. The following day,

front-page news headlines announced the "*narco-aumauto*" (drug shaman) of the President had been convicted along with two Colombians, leading Vice-President Garcia Linera to later deny his participation in the ceremonial event (ibid., 78).

In this context, Maestros and Soldados must maintain a balance in the eyes of the public: "a little publicity can boost the reputation of a Maestro; but too much exposure can make people 'begin to talk'" (ibid., 243). In other words, Maestros stand to gain (and provide) legitimacy in relation to the state and society, provided they are perceived as personifying a particular type of "indigenous" person or "tradition" that fit within the symbolic social order of the nation. Navigating a terrain of ontological conflict, Maestros and Soldados operate in the space between police—official discourses of decolonization tied to the great narrative of the patria—and a politics of radical difference enacted through healing rituals that often appear as noise in the public realm of the nation-state. Burman notes that many Maestros still maintain a level of ambivalence towards Evo Morales, and the state more broadly. As Don Cancio stated, "500 years is not a short time. Thanks to colonialism, cultural alienation has been very severe; our head, our entire mental model is other now" (ibid., 110). While the constitution has signalled a dramatic political reconfiguration of the relationship between the nation-state and indigenous peoples—advancing indigenous cultural rights and recognition as well as incorporating ethical values into the state model—the experience of Maestros and Soldados reveals ongoing disagreements over the meaning and scope of decolonization in Bolivia. Despite their frustrations, many Maestros continue to participate in healing rituals of the state as a means to control the *ñanqhu* on their own terms. Through the "excess practices" (de la Cadena 2010) of treating a pathological illness of alienation and disintegration, Maestros

and Soldados enact a particular story of coloniality that is much different (yet integrated) into the great narrative of the patria.

Act 3: De cuando en cuando Saturnina (Saturnina from Time to Time): Temporality, Tense, and Endurance in Oral Histories of the Future

Set roughly in the year 2070, the oral histories of *De cuando en cuando* describe the fictional world of "ex-Bolivia," or *Qullasuyo Marka.* Following the expulsion of *q'aras* (mestizo-criollo elites) in an Indianista revolution in 2022, *Qullasuyo Marka* was established as a "freed zone:" a state-less society governed by Aymara sociopolitical organization, or *ayllus*, based on local forms of communal representation and the rotation of political leadership.[xii] In 2025, the borders of *Qullasuyo Marka* were closed from the rest of the world, only passable by members of the Space Engineering and Applied Astronomy Corporation, or *Sindicato*. A central narrator throughout the novel is Saturnina Mamani Guarache, also known as "la Satuka," who works for the Sindicato and is also leader of the radical anarco-feminist group Comando Flora Tristan. Organized as an oral history project—a series of stories and conversations produced in collaboration with the main characters—the novel is presented as a means to open the 'Iron Curtain of the Andes,' providing readers with a look into the "mysterious and legendary" people of the region (Spedding 2004, vi).

Approaching the theme of coloniality from the genre of science fiction allows Spedding to engage with the concrete promises, strategies, and challenges of decolonization unfolding in Bolivia today. She draws from the historical struggle of Aymara activists in the highland region to challenge official historical narratives based on

assimilation that naturalize the marginalized position of indigenous peoples. In 1983, for example, Katarista intellectuals at the Sociology Department of the Mayor de San Andrés University founded the Andean Oral History Workshop *(Taller de Historia Oral Andina*, or THOA) to investigate the history of indigenous sociopolitical organization in the rural highlands through oral history workshops, pamphlets, and Aymara language radio stations, emphasizing the critical role of memory historical consciousness as a source of indigenous empowerment (see Rivera Cusicanqui, 1993). The Aymara phrase "to walk ahead while looking back" (*quip nayr uñtasis sarnaqapxañäni)*, underlines the important role of memory in shaping contemporary struggles. Seen as a vital tool for political activism, memory acts as "a past capable of renovating the future, of reinventing worldly situations" (ibid., 44). Analytically, Hylton and Thomson employ the concept in their study of revolutionary movements in Bolivia, arguing that the social upheaval that ultimately led to the election of Evo Morales in 2005 "unfolded as it did because of previous historical cycles dating back over decades and centuries in the territory today known as Bolivia…history also provided a set of signs and scripts by which protagonists understood their world, their actions, and their aims" (2007, 7).

Put another way, memory, as a look towards the past, is projected towards the future, "towards the strengthening of ethnic identities and the political struggle against colonialism" (Soux, 2007, 244). Just as the Katarista movement takes its name from the from the Túpac Katari rebellion against Spanish colonial forces in 1781, the narrators of the book commonly reference organizations, such as the militant fighting group the "Felipe Quispes," that draw upon the history of activist movements in the region. Also, a central point of departure in the book is a moment of upheaval and renovation, signified

by the Aymara concept of *pachakuti.* While written before the election of Evo Morales in 2005, the book came out of a historical moment of political resistance and transformation in Bolivia that carries significance for many as a form of pachakuti (see Postero 2007b). However, by creating a world of radical transformation beyond the organizational structures of the liberal nation state and elite beneficiaries, Spedding allows readers to explore questions of coloniality and decolonization that go much deeper than the official discourse and policy of change in Bolivia under the MAS government.

In addition to pushing readers to consider more pervasive forms of coloniality, the organization of the book itself "enacts" (Blaser 2010) Aymara conceptions of rupture, memory, and temporality. Spedding ruptures linear conceptions of time through a shuffled sequence of stories (arbitrarily "imposed by the editors"), inviting readers to play a game of "hopscotch" as they navigate a constantly shifting series of stories and recollections spanning over seventy years (Spedding 2004, vii). In addition, who speaks to whom, when, and how they describe events changes throughout the book. At times, for example, the narrator recalls events ranging from the distant past to near present, while other stories emerge through conversations between two characters, sometimes even the dead.

As Povinelli has explained, "languages demonstrate a wide variety of ways of configuring the temporal relationship between what is being narrated and the act of narrating it" (2011, 11-12). She suggests this has had concrete effects by shaping experiences and their articulations, or what she refers to as "narratives of belonging, abandonment, and endurance," framing events as part of a given end or "ultimate" end to history (ibid., 12). Thus in place of the teleological and eschatological discourses

characteristic of late liberalism (Povinelli 2011, 12), what emerges in *De cuando en cuando* is a fluid and circulating set of relations between the events and their narrators: ever shifting dialogues from the future; making meaning about events of their daily lives in relation to the past; speaking to an audience in the present moment.

The hypothetical decolonization that the novel's interlocutors describe pushes the audience to imagine the possibilities and challenges of a radical politics of social difference. Their stories challenge the "distribution of social tense" that Povinelli (2011) has described in late liberalism in several ways. First, the Aymara subjects that readers encounter—and their claims to social justice—are temporally located in the future, rather than rooted in a distant past. This is even the case in stories that relate events of the "past," which take as a point of departure the revolution of 2022. Second, citizenship in *Qullasuyo Marka* is articulated in the context of a "freed zone" liberated from the liberal regime of rights and recognition. The rupture from the division between the autological subject and genealogical society highlights the plural, relational, and fluid of notions belonging and identity that people grapple with in their daily lives. This move away from homogenous categories based on race, ethnicity, and class—audible and intelligible forms of the "indigenous voice" (Tsing 2007)—allows different types of disagreements to come to the fore, a point I will return to below.

Finally, Saturnina's life and experiences challenge the durable images of indigenous people as "backwards" and "traditional," illustrating instead the potentialities of harnessing a world of advanced technology and "modernity" to advance a struggle grounded in Aymara morals, values, and principles. As a member of the Sindicato, Saturnina is a skilled engineer and navigator, utilizing the technology of space travel to

engage in "terrorist" acts against the *Estados Judidos,* or "Damned States" that continue

to pursue colonial expansionism and exploitation in the globalized age. Speaking of a

mission to assassinate the Minister of Education, a "soft target" to reject bilingual

education, Saturina describes the ease with which she uses her position as a skilled

spacecraft navigator and fighter to manipulate border crossings and outwit a male

jodidense[xiii] arms dealer (Spedding 2004, 21-46). Overconfident, the arms dealer bets

Saturnina he can outdo her at a shooting range, but quickly folds after she hits every

bullseye:

> J: I take back the bet
> S: You can choose the white one, the gun that you want[xiv]
> J: It would be easier to give you my salary
> S: You're intimidated?
> J: Yes. (ibid., 46)

 "It was this 'yes,' this apparent sincerity and humility," she reflected, "that made me able

to accept him…we would say, as a person" (ibid.). While carrying tones of personal pride

and victory, Saturnina's humorous story of an Aymara woman defeating a white, corrupt,

boisterous arms dealer also illustrates a sort of politics; a moment in which the

naturalizing discourses of gender and ethnicity are challenged. Granted, the radical

anarcho-feminist agenda of Saturnina reinforces images of an "Andean political culture

of insurrection" (Postero 2007a). However, her narrative is framed as one of ethical and

moral superiority, taking advantage of the apparent backwards and violent logic of the

Western world to advance her cause. "The jodidenses have prohibited smoking for being

a nail in the coffin, but maintain their right to arms" Saturnina added, "Kill your neighbor

before you kill yourself" (ibid., 45).

In describing the hypothetical post-nation state territory of *Qullasuyo Marka,* Spedding also disrupts the tradition/modern divide underlying many discussions of contemporary indigenous autonomy movements in the highland region. Centered on calls for *ayllu*-based forms of governance,[xv] the struggle for indigenous autonomy has often been framed in terms of a struggle to return to pre-modern traditional practices tied to land vis-à-vis a progressive and mobile modern society. This division is compounded by the fact that institutional frameworks of cultural rights require groups to legitimate their claims based on linkages to the past. For Povinelli (2003), it is this form of legitimization that reifies temporal divisions between the autological subject and genealogical society. For indigenous groups, the relationship between the past, present, and future is much more dynamic, shaping present day struggles for decolonization. As Rivera Cusicanqui suggests,

> we indigenous were and are, above all, contemporary beings and peers, and in this dimension [*aka pacha*], we perform and display our own commitment to modernity…There is no post or pre in this vision of history that is not linear or teleological but rather moves in cycles and spirals and sets out on a course without neglecting to return to the same point. The indigenous world does not conceive of history as linear; the past-future is contained in the present. The regression or progression, the repetition or overcoming of the past is at play in each conjuncture and is dependent more on our acts than on our words. The project of indigenous modernity can emerge from the present in a spiral whose movement is a continuous feedback from the past to the future—a "principle of hope" or "anticipatory consciousness"—that both discerns and realizes decolonization at the same time. (2012, 96)

In framing the oral history project of *De cuando en cuando* as a glimpse behind the "Iron Curtain of the Andes," Spedding (2004, vi) highlights for readers the distinction between a "world out there" (Blaser 2010) that can be known and the lived reality of daily experiences, strategies, and practices. Readers of the oral histories describing life in

Qullasuyo Marka learn of a pragmatic world in which *ayllu* governance is shaped by the

tactics and pragmatic strategies of those living within its borders. A conversation between

Saturnina and Feliciana, a woman from the lower part of Peru, outlines this dynamic:

> F: There are many things that I had not imagined when I broke out of Peru
> S: Such as?
> F: Look, you know from the outside they admire liberation from colonial
> racism, self-sufficient food, the recovery of ancestral knowledge, suitable
> technology…
> S: Pesky technology…adapted to obligatory improvisation, you would say
> F: However it is. And also we know that the priests, evangelicals,
> everyone might have been expelled, and you yourself have told me the
> reason for the prohibition of carrying out ritual acts outside the Zone. And
> besides, it is a recuperated Tawantinsuyu but without the Inka King…
> S: A true paradise combined with an anarchist utopia, yaa.The archaic
> utopia [*utopia arcaizante*].
> F: Perhaps I am naïve, but the truth is that I never imagined a clandestine
> theocracy, with sessions of *ch'amakani* [who calls upon and speaks to the
> spirits of the earth] in the place of assassination trials, and prisons directed
> by *yatiris* [or shamans].
> S: An uncomfortable but apparently stable combination with online
> neoliberalism and an economy of remittances, no?
> (Spedding 2004, 275).

The "archaic utopia" that Saturnina and Feliciana describe points towards an

underlying tension in the contemporary *ayllu* movement, as idealistic notions of the past

encounter the reality of heterogenous interests and lived material experiences. For many

Bolivian intellectuals, the "restoration" of the *ayllu* has been seen as fundamental step

towards indigenous empowerment in the Bolivian highlands. The emphasis on the *ayllu*

was based on idealized notions of communal sociopolitical organization during the Inca

empire, or Tawantinsuyo, which stemmed from the observations of European chroniclers

during the colonial era and were later influenced by ideologically driven academic

interpretations of the *ayllu* as a model communist agrarian system (Alvizuri 2009, 195).

Tracing the relation between Andean peoples and colonial powers, historian Alberto

Flores Galindo has outlined how these encounters shaped notions of what he calls

Andean utopia (see Postero 2007b, 9-10). Rather than reflect the conflict and domination

that most Andean peoples experience under the rule of the Inca empire, Flores Galindo

describes how narratives of social harmony in an imagined pre-colonial past served as a

means to reject Spanish exploitation and offer a sense of hope for social justice and

equality in the future (Postero 2007b, 10). Bolivian intellectuals have often elaborated on

these interpretations as part of their political projects of indigenous emancipation. In his

influential essay *Tupak Katari vive y vuelve…carajo*, for example, militant *katarista*

leader Felipe Quispe (1988) referred to Tiwantinsuyo as a "socialist republic of *ayllus*,

where Aymara men and women were happy because they did not have to live in hunger

and misery" (quoted in Alvizuri 2009, 196).

　　The narratives of *De cuando en cuando* speak to Spedding's broader ethnographic

research and experience as a coca grower (*cocalera*) in the Yungas of Bolivia. Her work

consistently intervenes in idealized discourses of indigeneity such as *suma qamaña* (*vivir*

bien, or living well), which uphold indigenous people as close to nature (*pachamamísmo*)

and inherently opposed to (or outside of) neoliberal capitalism (see Spedding 2011). In

recollections of the "Liberation" of 2022, the expulsion of *q'aras* was relatively easy. Yet

in place of utopian communitarian ideals of harmony, the post-liberal society of

Qullasuyo Marka described by the narrators of the novel reveals a much more

heterogeneous and unstable reality, marked by internal factions, envy, and corruption

(*tráfico de influence*). Many conversations between Feliciana and Saturnina over the

legitimacy of *amawt'a* and *ch'amakani* leaders stand as a critique of pervasive forms of

coloniality, which a *pachakuti,* or reversal of the police order, has failed to address

F: It is not important what you say about the *tráfico de influencias*. I don't believe that it [corruption] has disappeared, only that they have to do it in a more concealed way.
S: That's true, but there is a lot of envy. The *q'aras* did not take it with them when they left. (Spedding 2004, 267).

The hypothetical decolonization of *Qullasuyo Marka* enacted by the stories in *De cuando en cuando* also reveals the gap between policing and politics. Despite a radical transformation of society based on the principles of shared rotation of power and male-female complementarity (*chachawarmi*), the narratives of Saturnina and her companions in the anarco-feminist group Comando Flora Tristan also underline how decolonization also acts as a powerful form of governance. As Saturnina describes,

It is true that since the Liberation we have not had a government as such, we are not recognized as a state, there is not a President nor army…The *Amawt'a* organization is supposedly no more than an organization, occupying itself with religion and spiritual wellbeing, also managing education. But everyone knows that for them religion and education is very broad. With the zeal of a principle to eradicate Christianity, they intervened in everything and later decided that war was also a form of religion, it was with this they successfully spoiled the Felipe Quispes and the rest of the armed organizations. Apart from Christianity they say that there is freedom of religion, but it is prohibited to be *layqa*, to do witchcraft. With that they convict anyone that performs *yatiri* without their authorization…they take them to Tiwanaku and punish them. (ibid., 108)

Saturnina's description of the growing power of *Amawt'as* in speaks to contemporary disagreements over the meaning and scope of decolonization unfolding in Bolivia. From the perspective of Rancière (1999), the emerging police order of decolonization in *Qullasuyo Marka* points towards one of the fundamental dilemmas of politics: the impossibility of eliminating a police order that is constantly reshaping itself relative to a radical politics of justice. However, the gap between disagreement and new distributions of sensibility also create space for new social worlds—and the politics of enacting them–

–to emerge, as the police order "cannot saturate social worlds in such a way that no potentiality remains within the actual world" (Povinelli 2011, 72).

While presenting a much more radical rupture with the liberal police order, notions of who is permitted to speak and act in the context of a "clandestine theology" in *Qullasuyo Marka* mirrors a familiar distinction between the acquiescent, permitted, acquiescent indian (*indio permitido*) and the more radical, prohibited indian (*indio prohibido*) under neoliberal multiculturalism (see Hale 2004). In this context, the radical politics of Comando Flora Tristan seek to challenge the growing power of *Amawt'as* in the post-liberal context of *Qullasuyo Marka,* also rupturing the emergent police order by illustrating that notions such as *chachawarmi* are no more than a shallow recognition of gender inequality. Calling for a double decolonization—against imperialism and patriarchy—the organization brings the question of gender to the fore, reflecting many of the claims advanced by the Bolivian feminist activist organization *Mujeres Creando* (see Galindo 2013).

By grounding contemporary debates in a fictional radical alternative world, *De cuando en cuando* experiments with the possibility and challenges of decolonization. The organization of the book enacts Aymara notions of space and time that is radically different from liberal "distributions of social tense" and linear temporality (Povinelli 2011). In place of teleological and eschatological narratives, for example, the female narrators of *Qullasuyo Marka* describe a plural world of uncertainly and endurance, underlining the undecidability of politics itself. In their struggle against coloniality, they suggest that the elimination of the nation state is merely a starting point, calling for a

"permanent revolution" in the face of ongoing structures of inequality and emergent

forms of governance.

CHAPTER 3

CONCLUSION
STORYTELLING RADICAL ALTERITY

The versions of storytelling coloniality under consideration in this thesis reveal

profound disagreements over the meaning and scope of decolonization in the present

moment. While formed in a wide range of contexts—from the neoliberal multiculturalism

of Chile to state-led decolonization in Bolivia and the radial ex-Bolivia territory of

Qullasuyo Marka—the politics of radical justice and social difference in all three cases

reveals the heterogeneous and fluid nature of narratives of decolonization emerging in the

Andean region today. These stories also provide insights into the implications of

coloniality, shedding new light on historical critiques of dispossession, assimilation, and

extinction of radical social difference. From the perspective of political ontology, we can

also envision these processes as "ontological conflicts" (Blaser 2010). For the Mapuche

scholars, coloniality has meant not only demographic disintegration and exploitation, but

also a denial of the physical, economic, and spiritual existence of their people and ways

of life, or *Waj Mapu*. Viewing the Mapuche as objects of study, historical analyses of the

Mapuche present simplified, homogenized narratives of integration and extinction in

place of the plurality of knowledge practices shaping the world around them. For the

Mapuche, as well as the early Indianista-Katarista movment in Bolivia, official narratives

of nationhood and belonging enact forms of governance through particular forms of

tense, which utilized images of martyrdom and sacrifice to justify ongoing suffering in the present and obscure the role of marginalized groups in shaping the modern nation-state. From this liberal historical framing, resistance to ongoing forms of coloniality become intolerable—seen as a threat to the benefit of the nation—or a utopian return to a distant past, seen the antithesis of modernity, technology, and progress.

At the heart of such ontological conflicts—historically imbued conflicts over modes of being in the world—is a politics of knowledge, disagreements over what counts as knowledge; what it means to be a known, knowing, and knowable subject; and what ways of knowing and being in the world are deemed as legitimate and valuable to humanity (Blaser 2010)., which also surface in epistemological debates over what counts as knowledge; what it means to be a known, knowing, and knowable subject; and what ways of knowing and being in the world are deemed as legitimate and valuable to humanity (Produced and circulated within local and international academic audiences, storytelling coloniality grapples with the geopolitics of knowledge and liberal debates over identity politics by shifting focus towards a politics of undecidability, potentiality, and endurance as a means explore the space in which social worlds emerge and thrive.

For the Mapuche scholars, the first step to decolonization is the reclamation of their role as expert and historian, producing revisionist histories that rupture official narratives of nationhood. This form of politics is enacted not only by the assertion that they are not a dying culture, but also that they have always had agency and voice in fundamentally shaping the Chilean nation. In Bolivia, oral history workshops such as the THOA, combined with activism from groups such as the Indianista-Katarista movement, offer a historical critique of colonialism through the critical role of memory and

alternative knowledge practices as a source of indigenous empowerment. From the perspective of many activists, Maestros, and Soldados, the experts capable of carrying out a meaningful decolonization in Bolivia do not belong to traditional state institutions––in and of themselves a source of illness—but rather those who have experience dealing with powerful and influential forces "strange spirits" that generate the ills of colonialism.

As a site of politics, what these disagreements also reveal is the undecidable nature of struggles against a police order that is constantly reshaping itself. Forms of this "mutating imagination" (Blaser 2010) are evident in the recent incorporation of counternarratives into the "great narrative of the patria" in Bolivia. When Morales marked the transformation in Bolivia "from resistance" to "taking power," for example, he also closed the gap between politics and policing in decolonization. Moreover, employing a language places the struggle in the past, the official discourse of decolonization in Bolivia pushes justice to a distant and untold future, "search for equality and justice, a new millennium" (Morales cited in Postero 2007a). For the MAS administration, the "diagnosis" of colonialism is tied to a lack of indigenous rights and social and political integration, as well as questions of economic national sovereignty.

In the context of recent transformations, the excess or surplus of meaning that goes beyond the official discourse of decolonization requires us to "slow down reasoning" (de la Cadena 2010) to better understand the stakes involved in indigenous social movement struggles. For Rancière, this excess is the true logic of political subjectification: "Political subjects are surplus subjects. They inscribe the count of the uncounted as supplement" (2004, 305). From this perspective, we can see storytelling coloniality as a form of politics, a way of making visible a fundamental "miscount" over

what is deemed visible and audible in the world. Thus, for Maestros and Soldados, state-led decolonization may resonate with broader meanings of decolonization today, but it fails to address deep-seated notions of loss, imposition, and incompleteness that form a fundamental part of personhood and belonging in many parts of the Aymara world.

This surplus of meaning also calls for a rethinking of identity politics. Rather than view the participation of Maestros in public ceremonies of indigeneity as merely a strategic claim to emergent forms of Andean indigenous citizenship, we might also view them as "partial connections:" not merely a means to advance cultural claims and rights under liberal regimes of recognition but rather a way to utilize and control "strange" structures, categories, and symbols of power (Burman 2011, 179). De la Cadena (2010) suggests that such articulations should not be viewed as the end of politics, but rather the terrain where disagreements might emerge. Politics, in this sense, are particularly important in challenging the ongoing and shifting forms of liberal governance that are apparent in each story. While the terrorist/entrepreneur distinction in the case of discourses surrounding Mapuche activism speaks more directly to the *indio permitido/ indio prohibido* notions of neoliberal multiculturalism, these divides also persist in emergent forms of policing decolonization in the case of Bolivia and the hypothetical radical decolonization of *De cuando en cuando*. On the one hand, popular response to the participation of Maestros in state-led rituals of indigeneity reveals the "non-negotiable limits" (de la Cadena 2010, 350) of society to tolerate radically different social worlds. From this perspective, the *indio prohibido* is not only that of an activist whose interests run counter to national economic development, but also of a radically different social world that "expresses an epistemic alternative to scientific paradigms and their cognate

policies" of deeply imbricated social, political, and economic notions of the "common good" (ibid.).

On the other hand, in the imaginary world of *De cuando en cuando,* Spedding explores the implications of a radical decolonization, illustrating that a radical departure from the "modern constitution," as Latour (1993) has framed it, is merely a starting point for a radical politics of justice and social difference. In a post-nation-state context, free from liberal categories of rights and recognition, disagreements still emerge over who, and what, is entitled to speak and enact a decolonial project. The *indio prohibido* in the imaginary world of *Qullasuyo Marka* is no longer the Maestro, Soldado, or radical Indianista-Katarista of the present-day Bolivian discourse of decolonization, but rather those whose actions make visible a "miscount" in the emerging police order of decolonization—the witchcraft and militant actions of the anarcho-feminists of Comando Flora Tristan or armed organizations such as the Felipe Quispes. What this hypothetical radical decolonization underlines is that the outcome of alternatives to modernity is undecidable; that one group's politics may very easily become a form of policing another's social world. This argument is central to contemporary feminists activist groups in Bolivia such as Mujeres Creando, which call for a double decolonization that can address the legacies of both imperialism and patriarchy beyond the coloniality of modernity and liberalism. My interest in storytelling coloniality has been to explore this undecidable, heterogenous, and contradictory nature of decolonization as a radical politics of difference in relation to emergent (yet familiar) forms of governance through the policing of decolonial struggles. As the narratives examined here illustrate, stories are told from various "enunciative positions" (Blaser 2010) and across uneven terrains.

By shifting focus away from alternatives to modernity to the gap between police and politics, my aim has been to explore various forms of potentiality that emerge in disagreements over the meaning and scope of decolonization. Rather than the specific demands of political programs, or the inclusion/exclusion of identity politics, what emerges in a focus on disagreements over decolonization is an emphasis on the ways in which politicians and activists readjust and manage the terms of inclusion through struggles over the social distributions of tense and narratives of belonging, abandonment, sacrifice, and endurance. For the Mapuche, enduring in the context of neoliberal multiculturalism signifies a politics of making visible a history of subjugation and dispossession. But this visibility ruptures with the "indigenous voice," refusing to claim the role of victim or be seen as remnants of a fading world of social difference. For the Mapuche scholars, "decolonization is an imperative…not a project or future utopia, but a present vindication" (Nahuelpan Moreno et al., 2011, 366). In Bolivia, the story of don Valentín's transition in popular media from an Aymara religious authority figure— assisting in public rituals of the state—to a "narco-aumauto" arrested on drug charges underlines the challenge of sustaining "potentiality," in Povinelli's sense, in the context of material and structural inequality.

The difficult balance of visibility that Maestros and Soldados must maintain in Bolivia also underlines some of the implications and risks of storytelling coloniality from the position of academia. What is it, exactly, that we are looking for when we seek alternatives to modernity? How might we imagine these so-called "worlds otherwise" without prescribing a fixed end that fails to recognize the undecidability of politics, or glorifying utopia that side-steps questions of ongoing material poverty. Rather than seek

out proposals that seek a prescriptive end, my aim in storytelling coloniality has been to "provoke thought" (Stengers 2005) about what is at stake for different actors as they engage in and shape disagreements over decolonization today, shifting attention to the ways in which radical alterity is envisaged, enacted, articulated, and aggregated within the context of contemporary global processes and power relations, of which we ourselves are also a part of.

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NOTES

[i] Cited in Postero 2007a, 2.

[ii] For more on the Aymara concept of Pachakuti, see Rivera Cusicanqui 1993.

[iii] *Waj Mapu* or *Wajontu Mapu* reference Mapuche notions of the universe as well as territorial and political forms of organization, often employed in heterogeneous ways to reference historical processes of colonialism (Nahuelpan Moreno 2012, 19).

[iv] For more on Activist Anthropology as a research agenda, see Hale 2001.

[v] See for example, Pichinao 2011, 25-44; Mariman 2011, 65-91.

[vi] This opposition resonates with Charles Hale's (2002) distinction between the *indio permitido* and *indio prohibido*, which many working in the context of Latin America draw from to consider how neoliberal multiculturalism operates through multiple forms of governance.

The Aymara concept of Pacha refers not only to spiritual notions of landscape, but also time/space, cosmos, and nature that are intertwined between human and nonhuman spirits.

[viii] *Chullpas* refer to spirits that reined in the era of "darkness;" strange spirits seen as a threat to the social order that were expelled to live a clandestine existence beneath the earth (Burman 2011, 173)

[ix] see Albó and Romero 2009

[x] For a municipal commercial on the new buses, see http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MszFHTf3Qn8

[xi] Pagina Siete, "Enhorabuena, Pumakatari" (Ángel Viscarra), September 27, 2013. http://www.paginasiete.bo/opinion/2013/9/27/enhorabuena-pumakatari-1515.html

[xii] *Q'ara* is an Aymara term that means bare, or peeled, and is used in opposition to *jaqi*, which simply translates as "people" and is often used to describe members of an Aymara community (see Canessa 2012).

[xiii] Member of the *Estados Jodidos* (Damned States), a play on words with the Spanish translation for United States, or *Estados Unidos*.

[xiv] A semiautomatic riffle with a precision telescope

[xv] According to a 1995 THOA publication, the *ayllu*, with its internal system of labor, reciprocity, and rotation of power, is attributed to an Andean practice during the reign of the Inca Empire. More recently, it evokes a sense of resistance against ethnic violence and marginalization under Spanish Colonial and Republican rule. Multiple *ayllus* within a larger territory constitute a *marka,* which are both governed by the logic of the *thakhi* (*camino*, or path, referring to an upward system of service through the annual rotation of power) and the principle of *chachawarmi* (*complementaridad, mallku-Mallku Tayka,* or shared male-female leadership). Political representation is direct and participatory, and elections are held through the traditional form of public voting by forming a line behind the candidate of choice (Taller de Historia Oral Andina, 1995). Since the mid-1990s, the symbolic performance of ritual and commemoration, combined with the use of traditional attire, such as the red ponchos (*wayrurus*) and woven leather whips (*chicotes*) worn by indigenous leaders (*mallkus*), have been a central aspect of the return to *ayllu*-based practices (Colque and Cameron, 2009).