

**GLOBAL FEMINISMS
COMPARATIVE CASE STUDIES OF
WOMEN'S AND GENDER ACTIVISM AND
SCHOLARSHIP**

SITE: PERU

**Transcript of Gahela Tseneg
Interviewer: Karen Bernedo
Morales**

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Gahela Tseneg Cari Contreras, born in the early 1990s, is a transgender woman who began participating in politics in 2015 in the National Youth Congress held in Huaraz. Gahela grew up in a rural area of the Ica region. Her early life reflects much of the upheaval of Peru's recent history. Her mother was a peasant leader, native of Ayacucho, who was saved from forced sterilization ordered by the government of Alberto Fujimori. Her father was forced to flee Peru because of threats from terrorists, who besieged the work of union leaders. Both became immigrants, as did another 7 million Peruvians who mobilized internally for political or economic reasons. At age 27 she ran to become the first transgender woman in Peru's Congress in the January 2020 elections, campaigning with what has been described as one of the most courageous and intersectional programs of the emerging and diverse Peruvian left. Although she did not win a seat, she has continued her political activism to transform issues of equity and discrimination among LGBTI individuals.

Karen Bernedo Morales is a curator and researcher of Visual Anthropology and Gender Studies. She is professor at Universidad Científica del Sur and a founding member of the award-winning peripatetic Museum of Art and Memory. She has directed documentaries on memory of the internal armed conflict of Peru: *Ludy D, women in the armed internal conflict*, *Mamaquilla, threads of war* and the series *Other memories, art and political violence in Peru*, and has curated visual arts projects with a gender perspective such as: *María Elena Moyano, texts of a women on the left* (2017), *Collaborative Carpet of Visual Resistance* (1992-2017), *Pedro Huilca, let's struggle for a cause that is superior to our lives* (2017), *Las Primeras, women encounter history* (2018, 2020), *Emancipadas y emancipadoras, the women of independence of Perú* (2019). She is currently completing the documentary *The invisible heritage*, which explores the fewer representations of women in monuments in the public space in Lima.

The interviews for the Peru country site were conducted in summer 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic. These interviews were conducted over Zoom, and due to this format, there were some interruptions in the interview due to problems with connectivity. Many of these interviews discuss life and activism during the pandemic.

Karen Bernedo Morales: I thank you very much for agreeing to be part of this project. These are interviews that are being done with feminists around the world. Around their contributions of their lives, and what they have... of their contributions, right? In eight different countries, and I am the interviewer in Peru. So, I have interviewed other colleagues too and still have to interview some more so I am happy to interview you now Gahe dear. Well, we are going to be talking about your personal history, okay? your work, your reflections about the work you do and your work in relation to the women's movement, your reflections about the feminist movement. So, all those more or less are the themes that we're going to touch on, okay?

Gahela Tseneg: Great. Okay, perfect.

KBM: So, let's start with the first part, I know that you are probably interviewed a lot in relation to your activism. On, those flags you raise, right? But I would like to know a little bit about your personal history, okay, your life history, what in your life has made you do what you do now. What memories do you have? Whatever comes to mind.

GT: Great. I've been walking around, I think, on all the channels talking about where I come from, right, my roots, and that's complicated in a society that educates you to hide your origins, that shame you about who you are, right? And I have done absolutely the opposite, haven't I? But I have done absolutely the opposite thanks to a decolonial, anti-racist feminism that came into my life. And now I know. However, I haven't always been like this, I have lived through difficult times, I have lived through complicated stages of my life. I am the daughter of farmer parents, I was born and grew up in the sand, among the *tejido*¹. The first coins that I earned were from cultivating in a foreign farm, out of necessity, right? I have suffered in my own flesh the consequences of inequality, of poverty, but also of corruption, and above all of violence. Violence that has impacted my life since I opened my eyes. Because not only is there a physical violence, but there is also a structural violence, an economic violence. And this violence has had a direct impact on my life since I opened my eyes when there was a lack of things for the house, when my mother had to leave the house to go work on other people's land and come only on weekends or every two weeks, right? When they forced her to do that, because my mother would have possibly, she would have liked to stay. I had to take on many tasks at that time, I had to assume the role of mother in the house, and of having to study, work in the fields, while I also made my own brothers study. I think it was a very complicated moment and it came just at the moment when I was discovering my gender identity. I always knew that I was different, I always knew that I was different from the time I went to kindergarten, from the time, from my first years of

¹ 'Tejido' meaning textile or fabric in the English language. (See "Tejido." SpanishDict. <https://www.spanishdict.com/translate/tejido>. Accessed 08 September 2021.)

school. There were always different things in relation to the rest of me. From my way of being, dressing, talking, saying, walking, laughing. And everybody noticed it. My... especially adult people, right? It was the adult people who told my classmates not to walk with me because I walked a certain way, I walked a certain way and I could infect them. "Don't hang out with such a person". (pause) It was the adult people who, when they came to pick up the children, told them, "don't hang out with so-and-so because so-and-so laughs like that, so-and-so laughs like that". And those children in the garden who didn't discriminate against me, didn't push me aside, didn't play with me, little by little, they grew up and what adults told them became evident and impacted them, and little by little they began to exercise, without realizing it, violence on me, right? Normalizing these violent and racist behaviors, right? I have suffered from... bullying at school, not only because I am sexually diverse, but also because of my ethnic diversity as an indigenous person, right? There are two very strong things in my life, right? The first is that I was burned in elementary school, my chest, and I have the scar here. I have, so far, the scar here and it's something I don't like to talk about much. In fact, the first time I talked about this was a couple of days ago in an interview that Fabiola Granda ² did for an alternative medium, addressing the, the case of Vania Torres with Carlos Foelsche ³. It was only a few days ago that I was able to talk about this because I was talking about many things in my life, but I couldn't, uh it was complicated for me to talk about how racism had impacted directly on my life right? And it was doubly complicated because when they started to beat me up; they told me that I was not only an animal [goat] but I was also still a *serrano* ⁴. On top of being a faggot I couldn't even speak Spanish well. Because I couldn't speak Spanish very well, right? And not alone-it wasn't enough to hit me, right? They had to burn me, and they had to look at me very bad to just run away scared. But who was left there or what they destroyed at that moment was my indigenous identity, right? my sexual identity, my gender identity. And that made me understand that what I am is wrong, and for a large part of my adolescence I had to hide who I am. I had to start taking care of how I walked, to measure how I dressed, to regulate myself to what society wanted, to those social mandates that are imposed on us, to those colonial rules, right? And I think it was a very hard time because I had to live the life that the rest wanted me to live. I was not living my life. After the... after all that stage I took refuge in my studies, in the library, in the first positions which was, I believe, what adults liked most. And so, I was able to get them to take care of me or protect me, right? or the minimum of protection. Because if I got very good grades my mother was happy, the teachers were happy with me, and that generated some circle of protection, minimum, but something. And I ended up liking studying, I applied to university, I applied to the institute, and by then I knew I was different, but I didn't know exactly who I was. I began to discover

² Fabiola Granda is a photographer and founder of *elfoco*, a non-profit association featuring opinion articles, multimedia, reports and more. Granda has also worked for *Caretas* magazine covering events in Argentina and Peru. (See "Fabiola Granda Cruzado." LinkedIn, "About us." *elfoco*. <https://elfoco.pe/nosotros-quienes-somos-elfoco/>. Accessed 01 September 2021.)

³ In August of 2020, social media networks exploded with images of professional surfer Vania Torres and actor Carlos Foelsche painting their faces to "play" indigenous characters, ultimately engaging in *brownface*. (See "Más que una lucha simbólico." *elfoco*. <https://elfoco.pe/especiales/mas-que-una-lucha-simbolica/>. Accessed 01 September 2021.)

⁴ *Serrano* refers to the indigenous and native people of the state of California in the United States. (See "Serrano people." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Serrano_people. Accessed 01 September 2021.)

myself; I was always part of the social organizations since elementary school, I have been part of the NATs⁵, of the Movement of Adolescent Working Children. Then I ran for mayor of the school. I was mayor three times at the school. And this continues in my life, despite all the violence, despite all the discrimination and all the difficulties that I had, I never left the side of building the social movement, right?

KBM: Do you have any recollection of when you decided to get involved, in an organized way?

GT: I think it was the... this one, at... would be at eleven when I was very young but what really motivated me, I was not very aware of the poverty, the discrimination, the inequality, the killer system that we are in, nor the lack of democracy that we are in, but I was very sorry at that time and up until now, right? the animals. I saw many little animals in the street, and I would pick them up, and take them to my house, and my mother didn't like to have the animals in, the house. So, what did I do? I collected their clothes, I made their house, I cooked for them. And I began to organize without realizing it, other children like me. And it was curious because it wasn't something that someone had told me, hey, get organized, come, do, build, take care of. No, it was something that came from here, from my chest, from my heart. But I quickly understood that if we managed to group together, we could carry out several little things, couldn't we? And I transferred that to the school, and I continued it in the university, right? I never left the social movement, but I do remember that from a very young age, right? I knew in the university that it was different, I knew that it was different. I continued in animalist and ecological organizations. I entered other activities and little by little, uh, I immersed myself in the processes of youth in youth organizations. The youth organizations allowed me to go to a congress in the Mancomunidad Regional de los Andes⁶. And in that congress, I was elected president of the Youth Council of the Mancomunidad Regional de los Andes. And that forced me to assume certain functions of the organization. And one of them was to represent the largest youth event in Peru, right? The National Youth Congress.⁷ And it was a world that was opening up to me that I never looked for, right? I arrive at the National Youth Congress and in that

⁵ NATS is an abbreviation for the Spanish term “Niños, Niñas y Adolescentes Trabajadores”, meaning working children and adolescents. NATS are groups of Latin American children who have mobilized in a social movement that seeks to create their own goals while referring to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), as well as demanding respect and participation in their work. (See “Movements of working children and youth.” ProNats. <https://pronats.org/en/information/the-childrens-movements/childrens-movements>. Accessed 01 September 2021.)

⁶ The Mancomunidad Regional de los Andes (MRDLA) or Regional Commonwealth of the Andes is an institution that “unites regional governments for project implementation, local development and the improvement of services to citizens” while also promoting “decentralization and connects macro-regionally with the central government”. (See “Integrantes de la Mancomunidad.” Mancomunidad Regional de los Andes. <https://www.mancomunidadregionaldelosandes.gob.pe>. Accessed 01 September 2021.)

⁷ The National Youth Congress is an event sponsored by La Secretaría Nacional de la Juventud (SENAJU) del Ministerio de Educación or the National Youth Secretariat of the Ministry of Education. The National Youth Congress implemented the youth strategy in 2012 which created a ‘National Agreement’ for youths and the steps needed to implement the strategies. (See “Peru.” Youth Policy. <https://www.youthpolicy.org/factsheets/country/peru/>, “¿Quiénes somos?” SENAJU. <https://juventud.gob.pe/quienes-somos/>. Accessed 01 September 2021.)

National Youth Congress there were more than 1200 young people from all over the country, from the twenty-five regions, working on different topics. It was the first time that I had seen... well, I had seen feminists before in several of the marches that we were doing in Ica, but in the animalist movement when we were trying to get close to the feminists, they began to tell us that feminists are bad, that they eat fetuses. In the peasant movement, which I am part of because of my mother, right? which I never left, they also looked at feminists with very bad eyes, right? and they said that feminists are against men, they want to annihilate them, they want to be in charge of everything and so on and so forth, right? But, when I went to that National Youth Congress, they were only young people, there were no adults, right? And from that youth congress, two things or two groups caught my attention. Among them were young people who were fighting for health, for work, for education, for the environment, for etcetera, a thousand types of organizations, right? But one of these groups was made up of women who walked around in purple. And those women that wore purple were very happy, they protected each other, they got upset yes, when people bothered them, but they all responded. I was very impressed by that, and another group that caught my attention, and then I found out that they were feminists, right? And another group that caught my attention was a compact group between the LGTBI and Afro movement where I was [inaudible] this one, and many other comrades. And within that group, they always carried a flag full of colors and they were always laughing, happy, cheerful, but when there was a discussion they also stood up, right? And they said very naturally "My name is such, I'm young, my problems are these but I'm also homosexual", "My name is such I'm a lesbian and my problems are these". And on the last day of that congress there was a plenary session, they began to present the agreements and among those agreements there were no things in relation to the LGBT youth. Then so-and-so stood up and said, "I'm gay, I'm young, and I think this should go." So-and-so stood up and said, "I'm young, I'm a lesbian, I think this is not in that system. Then a hand raises and asks to speak, and nobody was paying attention to her, and since she raised her hand and nobody listened to her, she stands on a chair or a table, I don't know, and starts screaming and says, "My name is Paloma, I'm a young trans girl and I'm amazed at how you can... can make a document that only talks about Cisgender youth, that doesn't talk about trans people at all when Cisgender youth are the ones that are in precarious poverty when while we are in a warm environment, my sisters have to give up their body for a plate of food right now. That's hypocrisy, isn't it?" And I was amazed, for the first time I saw a trans person who said, "Isn't it? "I'm young, I'm Paloma, etc." I went back to Ica⁸ because that congress was in Huaran⁹. [inaudible] I returned with many doubts, I didn't sleep for several days, several days [inaudible], I didn't sleep like eight days, Karen I was investigating right? And I began to investigate the processes. Everyone said that the processes of, trans people are this and the gender identity is that. I said, "So I'm a trans person," no wonder I never fit in this, or this, or this. And I also started reading about hormones, about surgical processes, right? And I think a lot of the things that I read announced to me that transitioning was going to be difficult. So I decided to do it after I finished my career. However, one day I was with my sister and I said, "Roxana, I'm not gay, I'm a trans woman, I'm a trans person,

⁸ Southern Peruvian city and capital of the Department of Ica, established by native peoples. (See "Ica, Peru." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ica,_Peru. Accessed 03 September 2021.)

⁹ City located in the region of Cusco, Peru

please keep this a secret for now. Later on, I want to talk about it with the family, I want to see how I can start the transition process". And, uh, my sister did absolutely the opposite because as soon as I left my house and started taking the bus, I had my mom calling me on my cell phone telling me how it was possible, why I was thinking about these things, and my family at that time... I had come out of the closet as a gay before and my family didn't mind, I mean it bothered them, but they could live with that, they didn't say, "But just in case you don't go dressing like a woman, you're not going to walk like that, you're not going to walk ..." and so on and so forth. But this time when I said I was a trans person, they said, no, family reunion, the next day they started telling me the same thing. And I said, I stood by my decision, and that day they threw me out of the house, they threw me out with what I had on, without money, without my things. My mother told me something that until now has not been erased from my mind but that I no longer remember with a grudge, right? I used to remember it with a lot of resentment, with a lot of anger, with a lot of rage. And now I remember it more as a learning experience, right? My mom... the day she threw me out of the house at that meeting, she said, "It hurts me to throw you out, but I have to do it because you're the bad apple, and the pastor has told me that if I leave the bad apple in the box, it's going to contaminate the other apples and I don't want your brothers to end up like that. It was hard to use one of those analogies, to compare ourselves to rotten fruit when all we're looking for is love. I left with what I had on and started from scratch, but I thought I'd have a little time to get my things back, to regain my stability, or I even thought that everything would continue as before, right? But as soon as I started to grow my hair, and I started to wear clothes associated with the feminine, I could see in front of my eyes, I haven't read it in a book, I haven't read it on a website, but I lived it in my own flesh, I have seen how this society started taking away the privileges it assigned me for seeing me as a man before. And at the moment I started to transition as well, just as it was taking away my privileges, it was putting me in front of limitations and violence.

I was working in one of the most prestigious law firms in Ica and I had a salary, I was earning very well, even though I had not yet finished university. That's why when my mother threw me out, I said, "Well, I'm leaving," right? But it wasn't like that, my mom threw me out of the house and at work my immediate boss tried to rape me, and even though there were cameras there. When they did the, when they did the... the survey and the meeting they passed the cameras and the video and on video you can clearly see how this guy, or the doctor, pushes me, pulls me, strains me, and as I say "Doctor, I don't want anything with you please". And even though I said it several times in the video, the only thing that interested those who were in that meeting or that assembly, was that I hit him with a pot on the back of his head to let me go and I ran away. So those people valued two things: one that I gave him a spot on the back of his neck, and two that I left him with the poor man in pain, convalescing, and I didn't help him, and I ran away. So, I don't know what they expected, I think they expected me to let anything happen to me. And they kicked me out of work, and not only did they kick me out of work Karen, but on top of that they started calling all the law firms and telling them that I had hit a doctor's head. That I had acted violently. And I knocked on the door of almost all the law firms in Ica and none of them wanted to hire me and my friends, my classmates, told me that was why. Without my telling them, they knew the story and they knew it in a different way. At that moment I

knocked on all the doors you can imagine. I went to ask for work in restaurants, hotels, nightclubs, in many places, right? Even in the countryside.

KBM: And do you remember what your first contact was with, let's say, an organized militancy with the LGTBQ community, with the diversities?

GT: I think my first contact, uh, was after that, after that National Youth Congress I'm telling you about, because I came back, I questioned all that and I immediately started to develop a process in Ica, right? I began to push back at people, assert myself verbally and tell them "there are people like us who organize and fight to have a different society, because we are respected", right? So, it was curious because, within the animalist movement, there are a lot of fags, lesbians, and even *tratas*, people, but they don't necessarily raise the agenda, right?¹⁰ And I started identifying these people, or looking for them, meeting with them. We formed what was called the Shameless LGBT Collective in Ica. And we were the ones who promoted the first pride march there, right? We began to talk about these issues, but it was uncomfortable because there were a couple of collectives in Ica many years ago that were still in existence, but activism reduced them to meeting in a room to talk about this, right? And we, as young people, believed that it was necessary to get out of our closed spaces and face the management, right? It was also complicated because we were facing a Fujimori administration¹¹, right? We were under the management of de Cillóniz¹², right? A guy who left the high figures of anemia, of poverty in Ica, right? But he also didn't care, he didn't care about public policies, for example, on youth or gender, right? So, we are facing this government, aren't we? And it was when we were entering as *Sin Vergüenzas*¹³, everyone was "you guys have no shame." Yes, we have no shame, that's why we have the name, right? We are Shameless. And people were indignant, weren't they? But it was difficult, I mean, Shameless was born at a time when we were all just starting out, we knew absolutely nothing, right? We started from scratch. We didn't have, we didn't have references, we didn't have, this one, directors... Because we were also doing an activism for rural LGBTI, from the countryside. An LGBTI activism of people from the region, of immigrants, because not all of them were from there, right? I, for example, am from Ayacucho¹⁴ and grew up in Ica. And just like me there were several, this one, babies like that, right? So, I think that was my first contact with the LGBTI agenda, right? And then, I entered the EMPODERA¹⁵ school,

¹⁰ 'Tratas' refers to trans people who do not undergo a transition/surgery or who do not express their gender identity.

¹¹ Alberto Fujimori served as the controversial Peruvian president from 1990-2000. His political ideology named Fujimorism supports neoliberal economics and opposition to political left social and cultural ideals including LGBTQ+ rights and gender equality curriculum. (See "Alberto Fujimori." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alberto_Fujimori. Accessed 01 September 2021.)

¹² Fernando Eillóniz was governor of the Ica region from 2015-2018. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fernando_Cillóniz?

¹³ The term 'sin vergüenzas' means without shame in English.

¹⁴ Capital of the Ayacucho region, Peru. (See "Ayacucho." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ayacucho>. Accessed 03 September 2021.)

¹⁵ EMPODERA is a LGBTI Political Training School located in Lima, Peru that seeks to provide a training space to the LGBTI community in preparation for participation in government decision-making. (See "EMPODERA." CVC Diversidad Sexual. http://cvcdiversidadsexual.org/buenas_practicas/empodera/. Accessed 03 September 2021.)

I met this... and, without realizing it, I ended up here.

KBM: Gahe, and you've already told me something about what that transition from being a woman and the prejudice and discrimination has meant to you, but working in organizations so far in the work that you do, have you felt prejudice about being a woman?

GT: Of course, I have felt prejudice in different spaces. Not only for being a woman, but also for being an indigenous woman, a trans woman, a poor woman, a migrant woman, right? So, I think there are a lot of prejudices, right? I heard, for example, when I joined the indigenous movement, how they questioned Lourdes, right? FENMUCARINAP¹⁶ turned fourteen yesterday and is an organization of indigenous women, the first to bet on a decolonial, anti-racist, rural feminism, right? But it has also been the most questioned, right? from the beginning it was looked upon with suspicion and when I joined FENMUCARINAP... everyone, several from the indigenous movement said to Lourdes "Hey Lourdes and why do you have to allow a man dressed as a woman, a goat dressed as an Andean woman in the organization? That's wrong, that's it, this one, this one... what do you call it? Eh, gender ideology, right? It's wrong. We can't allow that". And when I asked to speak, for example, they wouldn't give it to me, until I remember very much the process of the Law of Prior Consultation¹⁷ in which we participated. And there I defended the need to have a law of prior consultation, right? And I was also very critical because I think that the current law on prior consultation is a law on half consultation, right? Because it allows you to decide only on things that have already been decided, right? It's like, you and I decide to build a house, or I go to your house and I break it, I build it, and I put cement, iron, everything, and when the house is built, I tell you, "Let's see, Karen, I want to ask you what color you want me to paint the house". When I already decided absolutely everything. That is the previous consultation here, isn't it? So, when I talked about it, the people in the movement were impressed because I had never heard anyone talk, someone so young, because I'm talking about a couple of years ago, now I'm quite old.

But at that time, I was talking about those things and people were saying "Wow, that's nice. And I remember a lot of national indigenous leaders saying to me, "Wow, buddy (masculine), you've spoken well". "I'm not a man, I'm a woman," I would tell them. "Oh no

¹⁶ The Federación Nacional de Mujeres Campesinas, Artesanas, Indígenas, Nativas y Asalariadas del Perú (FENMUCARINAP) or the National Federation of Peasants, Artisan, Indigenous, Native and Wage Women of Peru was established in 2006 with the goal to "organize, empower, and support rural women's rights and leadership across Peru." (See "Empowering women's rights and leadership." Thousand Currents. <https://thousandcurrents.org/partners/federacion-nacional-de-mujeres-campesinas-artesanas-indigenas-nativas-y-asaliaradas-de-peru-fenmucarinap/>. Accessed 03 September 2021.)

¹⁷ The Law of the Right to Prior Consultation to Indigenous or Native Peoples, which is recognized under Convention 169 of the International Labor Organization (ILO), ensures the right to prior consultation and free, prior, and informed consent. Peru has ratified this law, however there are still barriers present in the right to prior consultation including poverty and illiteracy and the lack to enforce ILO Convention 169. (See "The Right of Indigenous Peoples to Prior Consultation." OXFAM. <https://s3.amazonaws.com/oxfam-us/static/oa3/files/the-right-of-indigenous-people-to-prior-consultation-exec-summary.pdf>. Accessed 02 September 2021.)

no no no excuse me, this and that", a lot of prejudice comes with it. So, I think I also opened up a space, and it was difficult, it was full of prejudice, full of discrimination, full of violence, right? There were moments when I would say, "What am I doing here? Why don't I go to a more comfortable space, an LGBT space, right? where no one is going to question me?" But at the same time, within the LGTBI movement, I was no longer... in the indigenous movement I was questioned for [inaudible] right? and the LGTBI movement, I was discriminated against, or there were moments when normalized racism was exercised. Or for example, when I demanded the presence of voices from regions or the presence of LGTB, indigenous, native, Asian, and Afro-Latino voices, they would say, "But there aren't any". And I would say, "What do you mean there aren't any? There's a lot of them, right?" And I would start giving names. And I think that's also racism, isn't it? Not making an effort to guarantee all the voices, isn't it? That's why I asked Shelly if they had seen, if they had had that cross-cultural approach. And I loved, for example, the photo exhibit that I participated in, the photo that you took of me because there was such a rich diversity there. I looked at the photos and it was like looking at the diversity of women in age, in skin tones, in background, and that's something that motivates people, isn't it? And I think that in general there have been many difficulties and limitations, right? For example, at home, in rural contexts, in rural organizations, because in addition to forming the LGTB Sin Vergüenzas collective, in Ica we also formed... I am from Ica, but I grew up in the Pisco area, right? and my mother is an agricultural leader. So, we try to talk to or bring together young farmers, right? the children of indigenous leaders and non-indigenous leaders, right? because the majority of those who were running the agricultural cooperatives or the farmers' organizations are adults and people who are already sometimes *a la justa*¹⁸ right? and they don't worry about a generational change. So, we tried to promote a process like this and when we started talking about ... they were people I knew, people I had known for a long time, and I convinced them to start an agrarian and peasant process and that along the way I knew feminism, right? I am very grateful to feminism because I believe that feminism and feminists, sisterhood, saved me, didn't it? It gave my life meaning. And in the process of building AJOCAVP¹⁹ which was the Association of Young Farmers of the Pisco Valley, I met feminism and I never left it, right? But it was complicated because these young people who were building with me at that time began to despise me, to attack me, to distrust me, to look at me with suspicion, because I was a feminist. In other words, they accepted me as a farmer, as an indigenous person because they are also indigenous, but what they could not stand was me being a feminist, or me saying, "Well, suddenly there are no female comrades, but that's our mistake too. The fact that there are no female partners here is also our mistake because we are doing something wrong." So, I think discrimination has been everywhere, transphobia is everywhere, right? And that...

¹⁸ 'A la justa' translates to 'for the just' in English.

¹⁹ La Asociación de Jóvenes Campesinos del Valle de Pisco (AJOCAVP) or The Association of Young Farmers of Pisco Valley fights for human rights and land rights through a feminist lens. AJOCAVP was co-founded by Peruvian transgender activist Gahela Tseneg Cari Contreras. (See Hago política para luchar contra la violencia de género en Perú." El País. <https://elpais.com/internacional/2021-04-03/hago-politica-para-luchar-contra-la-violencia-de-genero-en-peru.html>. Accessed 03 September 2021.)

KBM: Gahe, and what is feminism for you?

GT: For me, feminism is a historical struggle, isn't it? It's a kind of lens that allows us to see everything differently, that allows us to look at things from a gender perspective, right? For me it has questioned everything, and I think I had a process of resignation with my mother thanks to feminism, right? Before that, I told you that I remembered what I told you a moment ago with a lot of resentment, anger, rage, even hatred, right? But when I entered feminism I started to think about my mother. How sad it must have been for her to have to throw me out of the house even though she loved me. How difficult it is that we have to force the parents of LGBT people to... throw their children out, right? It's too hard because you're forcing them to give up people they love, it's like mutilating them, it's carrying them, it's making them carry a cross, it's putting them through a very painful process of the cross, isn't it? And I began to understand my mother. And when I came home, I saw how much she had suffered, how much she had cried, how much she had gone through, right? But without feminism it would have been impossible for me to get close to her, right? So, I think that feminism is also healing, feminism is freedom, feminism is struggle, feminism is equality, for me feminism is a tool of transformation. It is a political response to everything that is happening to us right now. That is what feminism is for me, and I am talking about a feminism that I learned in the streets, that I learned in the sorority, that I learned from my companions when they took me out of the worst moment of my life.

KBM: Gahe, and in the organizations you have worked in, what has been your strategy, to work from there?

GT: I have bet on pedagogy, and on speaking from experience, right? And sometimes it has worked for me, sometimes in very few opportunities it hasn't. There are people who, in spite of all this, don't want to go back, are not willing to unlearn. And to a certain extent I understand them, ah, without justifying it, I am not going to justify violence or discrimination, but I do understand that it is complicated when you live in a system that educates you to discriminate, to violate, and to reproduce violence, right? So, it's so internalized that sometimes a lot of what we do is violence or discrimination or racism and we don't realize it. So I understand, but at the same time I don't give up the possibility of being able to, uh, question and yet question from affection, question from affection. And it's something that costs, yes it costs, but it works. I think that my mother is the best proof of this, that today she is in our struggle.

KBM: And what are the most important issues you would say you have worked on so far? Because you are very young.

GT: I think we've, to begin with, I don't think I've ever worked alone, right? I think I come from a collective point of view and I think there have been several things we've done. And I say we because I think that the things that we can do have to do with what women have

started throughout history, right? So, what Micaela Bastidas²⁰ has done is what Adela Montesinos²¹, María Jesús Alvarado²², Zoila Aurora de Cáceres²³ and many others have continued to do. It has helped us to talk about these issues today, so that we can participate in social organizations, so that we can participate in political parties, so that we can vote, so that we can demand, so that we can even have a voice to speak out and make demands, right? It may sound very simple now, previously there was a struggle, and I think that since that struggle, I have come, that I have participated in a congressional list, I think, is an achievement, right? The fact that we have been so close is another achievement and it is not an individual achievement, it has to do with an achievement of women like María Jesús Alvarado, but also like María Elena Moyano²⁴, it has to do with the work that Rosa Mavila,²⁵ Verónica Mendoza²⁶ has done, with which Indira Huilca²⁷, Marisa Glave²⁸ has continued in

²⁰ Micaela Bastidas (1744-1781) was a primary actor in the Peruvian independence movement as an advisor and strategist to her husband, Túpac Amaru II. Micaela also led the indigenous women struggle against Spanish rule. (See “Micaela Bastidas.” Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Micaela_Bastidas Accessed 06 September 2021.)

²¹ Adela Montesinos (1910-1876) was a co-founder of the Socialist Party in Arequipa. In the 1930s she joined the Peruvian Communist Party where she was the first woman to speak at a political demonstration on behalf of her party. Montesinos often wrote in newspapers under pseudonyms including “Alma Moreva” and “Fernanda Martínez”. She also founded Acción Femenina with Alicia del Prado in 1936 which was deemed illegal. (See “Adela Montesinos.” Wikipedia. https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adela_Montesinos. Accessed 07 September 2021.)

²² María Jesús Alvarado Rivera (1878-1971) was a rebel Peruvian feminist, Professor of Geology at the National University of San Marcos, and writer in multiple newspapers including *La Prensa* and *El Comercio*. Rivera was recognized by the Council of Women of Peru as the “first modern champion of women’s rights in Peru”. (See María Jesús Alvarado Rivera.” Wikipedia.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mar%C3%ADa_Jes%C3%ADs_Alvarado_Rivera. Accessed 06 September 2021.)

²³ Zoila Aurora de Cáceres (1877-1958) was a prominent feminist writer linked with *modernismo*, a literary movement in Spain and Latin America during the end of the 19th and early 20th century. (See “Aurora Cáceres.” Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aurora_C%C3%A1ceres. Accessed 02 September 2021.)

²⁴ María Elena Moyano Delgado (1958-1992) was an Afro-Peruvian feminist and president of FEPOMUVES or the Popular Federation of Women of Villa El Salvador which equipped women with career training and led multiple community efforts including the establishment of neighborhood cafes. Delgado criticized the Fujimori government in Peru which led to her assassination by members of the Communist Party of Peru, known as the Shining Path. (See “María Elena Moyano.” Wikipedia.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mar%C3%ADa_Elena_Moyano#Activism. Accessed 03 September 2021.)

²⁵ Rosa Mavila (1952-present) is a lawyer, education, and the former Congressman of the Republic of Peru from 2011-2016. (See “Rosa Mavila.” Wikipedia. https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosa_Mavila. Accessed 03 September 2021.)

²⁶ Verónica Mendoza (1980-present) is a French-Peruvian psychologist, professor, and member of congress from 2011-2016. In 2017, Mendoza founded the left-wing political party New Peru, for Democracy, Sovereignty, and Justice. (See “Verónica Mendoza.” Wikipedia.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ver%C3%B3nica_Mendoza. Accessed 06 September 2021.)

²⁷ Indira Isabel Huilca Flores (1988-present) is the former Congressman of the Republic of Peru from 2016-2020 where she was the Chair of the Committee on Women and the Family where she works for women’s rights, LGBTI rights, and workers’ rights. (See “Indira Huilca Flores.” Wikipedia.

https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indira_Huilca_Flores. Accessed 02 September 2021.)

²⁸ Marisa Glave Remy (1981-present) is a former Peruvian member of Congress from 2016-2019 and founding member of the leftist political coalition, the Broad Front for Justice, Life and Liberty. (See “Marisa Glave.” Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marisa_Glave. Accessed 03 September 2021.)

the last congress, right? Tania Pariona,²⁹ women who continue that, right? We can have discrepancies and differences, we cannot agree on everything, but I think there is a key factor, structural that unites us, right? Breaking this murderous system, and I believe that the wave is bigger and bigger, the snowball is growing, and at some point, we will be so many that they will not be able to contain or silence us.

KBM: And what projects, for example, if you had to rescue two projects in which you feel proud to have participated, which would they be?

GT: I think that, uh, one of the most beautiful projects has been the struggle in the school when I was very young to continue with the school mayor's offices, right? when they wanted to close. Eh, and also for, to prevent the erasure of the Ordinary Council of the Youth in Ica, right? And on the other hand, the other achievement... because those have been configured as spaces and I think that from there more Karen Bernedos,³⁰ more Gahelas, many more comrades are going to be part of this struggle, right? and more comrades allied. On the other hand, something that I think is beautiful is the campaign that we had in February, the congressional campaign in 2020 [inaudible] in which we participated. I think that, uh, this campaign has been full of good, bad, ugly, difficult, but also very nice things, right? There have been from trans-phobic aggressions, racists in social networks, to physical violence in the streets, right? while campaigning. I've been beaten up more than once at bus stops, right? or even a guy spat on me when I was talking to him about the candidacy on a bus, at a traffic light. There have been attempted rapes by cab drivers, right? It's been very difficult, hasn't it? And that's just for talking about gender violence. We could even talk about the economic violence that we suffered during the campaign, not even having a panel in Lima when there were candidates who put up thousands of panels, right? Or we didn't even have a poster to put up. Or when we didn't even have Karen to pay for a bus to go to a radio interview on a channel, to walk around, right? And having people on the side who were with me at that time made it all worthwhile, didn't it? And just as there were such difficult moments, there have also been beautiful moments that made everything make sense, right? For example, one day we went to the RENIEC³¹ to demand gender identity in the middle of all this process, and we were outside with Arture and other guys there from the RENIEC and a mother comes in and from far

²⁹ Tania Pariona Tarqui (1984-present) is a Quechua human rights activist and member of the Congress of the Republic of Peru for the Department of Ayacucho from 2016-2019. Tarqui was also elected president of the Women and Family Commission of the Congress in 2018. (See "Tania Pariona Tarqui." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tania_Pariona_Tarqui. Accessed 03 September 2021.)

³⁰ Karen Bernedo Morales is an acclaimed documentary filmmaker, anthropologist, and professor of visual arts. Morales co-created a collective project which was awarded the 2012 National Human Rights Award. (See "Art and Political Activism: A Conversation from Peru." University of Washington. <https://cinema.washington.edu/calendar?trumbaEmbed=view%3Devent%26eventid%3D150780513>. Accessed 03 September 2021.)

³¹ Registro Nacional de Identificación y Estado Civil (RENIEC) or the National Registry of Identification and Civil Status is a Peruvian constitutional body founded in 1933 with the mission to establish eligible voter rosters, and maintain marriage, divorce, death, and birth records. (See "National Registry of Identification and Civil Status." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Registry_of_Identification_and_Civil_Status#Functions. Accessed 03 September 2021.)

away she sees me with my hat on, and she runs, and she hugs me, and she hugs Arturo. And she starts crying, right? The lady when she takes off from hugging me, I see her with tears in her eyes. And I tell her, "What happened, lady, are you okay? What can we do for you?" And the lady says to me "I don't need you to help me in anything, you already helped me a lot. And I was like this, I was frozen because I had never seen her, and in my head, I was saying, what have I helped you with, right? And the lady began to tell us that she had seen me in several interviews on TV, right? with Nicolás Lúcar³² with, this, with Patricia Del Río³³ and other channels, discussing with those who are now even congressmen. Then, the lady told me "I saw you on TV, in this interview, in this interview, and you reminded me of my son, right? And I called him and told him to come to the house, and he came, and we talked, and we hugged, and we apologized, and he came back. And I think that was the most beautiful thing, wasn't it? And I think that was the most beautiful thing, right? [voice breaking] because that makes it all worthwhile, that makes it unnecessary for us to go to this congress to make changes, I think that's very strong, right? very beautiful. Or, for example, what happened one day, the morning of the elections, right? The morning of the elections they began to write to us on the fan page, it was bursting at the seams, and among all those messages we found one from a transgendered person who said "I almost never go to vote, several years ago because I have suffered violence, I have suffered transphobia, they have taken photos of my ID and they are exposing it, right? I don't want to go and vote, but this time I want to go and vote, I'm sure I will go and vote even though I'm a male trans guy I don't care what they do with my ID, this time I have the courage to stand up to them, this time I'm going to print the, this, the rule eh the Court ... the advisory opinion of April 24th I'm going to defend my rights and I'm going to defend my votes, I want to vote because I want to see someone like me in Congress!" That Karen, at that moment in the early morning, those of us who were with this team that accompanied me, made all those nights that we stayed up to go with a clear and simple, understandable speech, worthwhile, right? and I think that's an achievement. And it is not an individual achievement, it is a collective achievement of the feminist movement, it is a collective achievement of the LGTBI movement, it is a collective achievement of the indigenous movement, right? And I think that it's worth celebrating while continuing to fight, right?

KBM: Gahe and what project are you in now?

GT: I have undertaken several projects, one of which is to continue the process of building the political party that I founded together with other valuable comrades: The new Peru. I believe that we do not need one congresswoman, two congressmen in it, but what we really need is a solid party that represents our struggles, or various solid parties in any case that allow us to convey our demands, that allow us to be able to build a society with equal

³² Nicolás Lúcar is a controversial Peruvian journalist who, in the 1990s, had a popular investigative TV program similar to the US's *Sixty Minutes* in style and format. In 2005 he initiated a similar program with a new name. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nicol%C3%A1s_L%C3%BAcar

³³ Patricia Del Río (1970-present) is a Peruvian journalist and anchor at WFSB in Connecticut, United States. (See "Patricia Del Río." WFSB. https://www.wfsb.com/site/station_info/patricia-del-rio/article_d6200abc-bcf0-11e8-abe1-039609422902.amp.html?fbclid=IwAR00a7vRr5-KuZ5ochqKDZDoL8kYdrVFdwdHNHDgcPjMt03BfVNCMjlm_j8. Accessed 03 September 2021.)

opportunities and conditions for all and everything, right? In other words, we do not need an electoral party, what we really need is a political instrument that goes beyond elections, that goes beyond our lives, that goes beyond our own existence, right? And that involves time, money, effort. But in the midst of all this I have found pleasure in what I do. I think that what I do gives meaning to my life, I think that it is one of the projects to which I am putting a lot of effort, and it has also brought me many inconveniences, hasn't it? In other words, I think that it comes as no surprise that doing politics is difficult, but doing politics as a woman, a trans, an indigenous person, a poor person, a migrant is something much more complicated. They close doors on you, they close job opportunities on you, I have gone to many jobs, this one, looking for work and they tell me "Yeah, but we would like you to stop participating in a political party, we would love to have someone like you, but we don't want anyone from the left, right? we don't want a feminist. So in practice it closes many doors, it puts many limitations on you and it's difficult Karen, it's difficult. You should know better than me, doing decent politics without mortgaging yourself to the big mining companies is complicated. From February until today, we have received about ten proposals from companies and individuals who don't want to give any information, who want to contribute to my future candidacy, but without names. So we say, if there's nothing wrong with your money why don't you want to make it public? But...

KBM: Gahe and before that you spoke, when, just as we were talking to Shelly, you were saying about this important thing of being able to somehow reconcile academia with activism. Do you have any thoughts on this? Besides, you, who are, have gone through the academy, have gone through the university, but you also have a commitment to activism, political, right? of the social movement.

GT: I really believe that there cannot be an academy without... detached from the street experiences, right? But neither can we, but neither can people from the countryside, from the street, from the social movement be detached from the academy, right? I think we have to find a balance there that allows us to feed back and forth, don't you? I mean, I don't think that we should sweep away our fellow students from the academy, for me that, at least for me, that's not something that I think is convenient, right? On the contrary, I think we have to complement it. And in that way, I'm also trying to open up a step within the academy without losing, uh, the, the, the (sic) where I come from, without losing my identity, my identities, right? So, this, I think, is a process in which many of us are unlearning, we are opening paths, continuing on that path, right? So I'm trying to write a book, for example, I'm trying to write some articles. I would love to write a couple of books, but it is very complicated because sometimes there is not even time to look for food. Then it also ends up being very difficult. There are so many things to write about but so little time, or so few resources to survive, right? At some point we will find a solution to this, but for now we have to work with what we have. It is not that there is going to be a perfect climate, there is not and there is not a perfect climate, ideal in which we have A, B, and C... Z at least here we lack things, but we have minimum things and minimum instruments to be building on what there is.

KBM: Gahe, you also mentioned earlier about those diversities, different feminisms, different kinds of women, you also emphasized at the beginning of the interview that if the

project was capturing these diversities, do you think feminism or the women's movement is handling those inequalities well, those different agendas?

GT: I'm sure and convinced that the feminist movement is trying, I think that is enough. I mean, I think feminism wasn't born intergenerational, it wasn't born intersectional, right? Feminism was born of white female partners, right? of middle-class feminists, well off, with compound surnames. No, I don't think it's wrong. I think those companions laid the stones that were necessary for us to be here. And I think there has been a lot of omission, I think they lacked a lot, but by the time they were here, for the historical process they were here, they challenged a much more complex system. And I think that without what they did, a Karen Bernedo or a Gahela would have been impossible, right? I mean, it would have been impossible for us to even be talking about these issues, wouldn't it? And I think that something that should be moving the thread of feminism is the spirit of continuing to deconstruct, to listen, of empathy, of sisterhood, right? Just as it was difficult for our African colleagues to contribute to the afro-feminist agenda, right? It was not easy, it was not simple, they had problems, some said "No, this one, we will still see it later. But they were [inaudible] they fought, they debated, they demanded, and I think they questioned feminism. And did they destroy feminism? No, they fed it and then the lesbian colleagues came, and everyone was horrified, right, the feminists, and they went into battle. And the lesbians, did they destroy feminism? No, they fed it. And the same thing happened with indigenous women, the same thing happens now with trans women, the same thing happens with sexual diversity, the same thing happens with intersectionality. I think feminism is the movement that is most ready to try to achieve intersectionality. And that's what encourages me, isn't it? Once you're a feminist there's no turning back. You end up questioning everything. For example, I have a rural, farmer, street feminism, a decolonial, anti-racist, ecological feminism, right? A feminism that is not against men, a feminism that fights mainly for women, of course, in all its diversity, but that beyond people, fights for harmony between everything around us. Not only do I fight for women, or not only do I fight for people, but... [connectivity issues]

KBM: Gahe, there has been a connection problem. I'm going to wait for you here.

GT: Baby, what was I saying?

KBM: Dear I see you turned around. I see you turned around. you have to turn the camera, yes.

GT: Yes baby, better?

KBM: [Laughter] Yeah, like that.

GT: yea.

KBM: Now I wanted to ask you about what is your vision, your... how do you see the feminist movement in Peru?

GT: I think it is, we are growing, right? and that is really encouraging, motivating, I can't find the exact word but in general terms I am very optimistic, right? I think that more and more young people, more women, more peasants, more unionists, more workers are entering feminism and breaking down the prejudices that revolve around feminism, right? I told you a moment ago, for example, that when they spoke to me about feminists, they told me that feminists were like that, bitter, bad, violent etc. But they didn't talk about why they were reacting, [laughter] they don't tell you that, or they don't tell women like us, for example, how we support each other, right? How are we able to create bonds of sisterhood that can save lives? The males don't tell you that. So I think that we have to continue with this task, and at least in Peru I see that we are advancing, right? Everyday feminism is growing no?

KBM: Hey, how has your relationship been with other women's organizations?

GT: I think that in general women's organizations are the fields in which I have felt the best, right? I think I don't know if it's a lack of appreciation, but I've felt much better with women's spaces, women only, right? because I think women develop empathy and we don't need to step into a university for that, right? So, where I have felt affection, where I have felt accompaniment, where I have been able to express myself has always been with women. For example, FENMUCARINAP is a space for women, for example feminism, or [inaudible] which was my feminist space, or which continues to be my feminist space in Ica, right? I think that in general, I think that the women's space has been the one that has sheltered me the most.

KBM: And have you met other organizations from within Peru besides the ones you mentioned from FENMUCARINAP, and the ones in Ica, have you had contact with other organizations?

GT: Ah, of course. I live, well not now, but before the pandemic I lived accompanying formative processes in all of Peru, right? And I used to go a lot to Ayacucho, to Cusco, to Purima, to [inaudible] to different parts of Peru, right? Above all, the Sierra³⁴, which is the part of Peru that I love most. But for example in Cusco³⁵ we have been working on training processes, I have been teaching for Quichihu which is an LGTBI organization, for Género Rebelde which is a feminist organization, for the colleagues of Lesbia³⁶ in Arequipa, for the Peruvian LGTBI network in Arequipa³⁷, for [inaudible] also in Apurímac³⁸, for the

³⁴ Andean highland region of Peru. (See "Sierra." Encyclopedia. <https://www.encyclopedia.com/humanities/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/sierra-peru>. Accessed 07 September 2021.)

³⁵ A southeastern city in Peru and capital of the Cusco Region. (See "Cusco." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cusco>. Accessed 07 September 2021.)

³⁶ Lesbia is a the first openly lesbian group of the Andean region of Peru, founded in 2013. The region notably experiences institutional violence and LGBT hate crimes powered by religious fundamentalism. (See "Movimiento Lesbia." ASTRAEA. <https://www.astraeafoundation.org/stories/movimiento-lesbia/>. Accessed 05 September 2021.)

³⁷ A city and department in Peru. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arequipa>

³⁸ South-central region of Peru. (See "Department of Apurímac." Wikipedia. Accessed 06 September 2021.)

colleagues in Ayacucho³⁹, also the feminist LGTBIs. So to give some examples, or Taganaguarni in Tacnas⁴⁰, right? The colleagues from Tacna, and different collectives, organizations, spaces at the national level, right? For example, [inaudible], Género Rebelde, [inaudible] are organizations, some of the LGTBI organizations, but in addition to LGTBs, they are made up of indigenous LGTBIs, right? in the southern part of the country. These are people that I am supposed to teach, but I end up learning a lot by listening to them. They question me every time I go. As I was challenged by the women, for example, I belong to FENMUCARINAP and like FENMUCARINAP there are other indigenous women's organizations like ONAMIAP⁴¹ and in some processes we meet. I remember very much that at one event, I went to talk about parity, to defend parity, to share parity, to see why it was necessary, and one of the colleagues from Puno stood up and said to me, "colleague Gahela, but why parity? How many indigenous women guarantee us parity?" And I said, wow, parity guarantees the participation of women, but it doesn't guarantee the participation of women in diversity, that will depend on the political organizations, it will depend on the advocacy that we do, right? But the political organizations are not obliged to put lesbian women, farming women, or workers, they can put white women, or Fujimorism can continue to put closeted women, right? So, it's true, I felt challenged, but at the same time I also feel that these processes of reflection are not necessary. That is to say, we can't just build from the desk, we have to build there in practice, where women are going through these types of situations, right? Where they are facing disputes within the communities, where the places where they take office, and the men stop going to the assemblies just to sabotage their efforts, right? So, it seems to me valid to reflect on this, and don't think that it is something that attacks parity. No, quite the contrary. I think it is something that forces us to have a much more reflexive process of what this implies and how we implement mechanisms that guarantee the participation of women in all their diversity, or how we guarantee the participation of young women, LGTBIs, in these spaces, right? I think that this is a concrete example of how feminism in the field also feeds feminism, right?

KBM: Gahela, and in the same sense, have you had the opportunity to connect with international organizations or networks of activists?

GT: Yes of course, I have been attending some international events, as a participant, as a facilitator, as a speaker. And we have articulated with some feminist organizations from Argentina, from Bolivia, from Ecuador, with some LGTBI movements as well. In fact, I am part of the Latin American Litigants Network⁴², right? with people who do strategic

³⁹ Capital of the Ayacucho Region in Peru. (See "Ayacucho." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ayacucho>. Accessed 06 September 2021.)

⁴⁰ City located in southern Peru in the Tacna Region. See "Tacna." Wikipedia. Accessed 07 September 2021.)

⁴¹ La Organización Nacional de Mujeres Indígenas Andinas y Amazónicas (ONAMIAP) or the National Organization of Andean and Amazonian Indigenous Women of Peru was founded on the International Day against Violence against Women in 2009. ONAMIAP encourages indigenous women's political participation, as well as the defense of individual and collective rights as indigenous peoples and women. "¿Quiénes somos?" ONAMIAP. <http://onamiap.org/nuestra-historia/>. Accessed 07 September 2021.)

⁴² The LGBT Litigants Network of the Americas is an international network of social organizations that work to guarantee LGBTI rights across the American continent through litigation and advocacy. The Latin American Litigants Network is a member of the broader network along with 14 Latin American and Caribbean

liquidation on gender issues, right? at the international level and we push steps to be able to support the processes, right? as amicus. I believe that it is valid if the attack of the anti-rights is global, it is coordinated internationally, the loving response of feminism also has to be international, it also has to be thought of from a coordination that crosses borders, right?

KBM: And finally, with these times of COVID, these times of health crisis, how has your work changed?

GT: WOW! The COVID has changed everything, hasn't it, and I think on a personal level I don't like to talk about it much, but I think it's necessary. On a personal level, I've lost two of the jobs I had, right? I would go to give a lot of talks, conferences, workshops, and that brought me some resources to survive, right? I also animated events, didn't I, I animated events in discos, bars and that brought me other ways to survive, didn't I? And apart from that, I gave classes, didn't I? But I can't do either of the first two jobs because public events are forbidden. Now I continue teaching, they pay me less than what they used to pay me, 50%. And I continue doing it because it is something that comes to me and because I think it is also my contribution to those women who need training processes, right? I do it because I believe in it. And no longer because of the money, because the money is not enough for me, right? On the other hand, the pandemic has made me lose these job opportunities or these forms of self-management that complicate everything, right? I can't do it anymore, I mean, month after month I end up getting into debt to be able to cover the expenses of the room where I live, it's more like we have opened a temporary shelter here where we live because in the campaign the reports of discrimination, of violence continued and there were many people who called us and said, "I need you to help us with lawyers, with this process." And we were helping but at the same time those people couldn't continue living in the homes and with the families that were violating them, we didn't know where to take them. We tried to take them to NEC, but NEC is not prepared to receive trans women, it is not prepared to receive lesbian women, it is not prepared to receive gay women, it is not prepared to receive heterosexual women, even heterosexual women who are experiencing violence, right? And we opened this space, but that involves a cost, but I think that despite how difficult it is, I think that despite how difficult it is, it's worth it, isn't it? Because it's a political response to a society that wants us separated, to a society that wants us selfish, isn't it? And I think that the pandemic has made everything difficult, it has endangered my economy on several occasions, as I have told you, month after month I end up asking for a loan in order to be able to pay the previous one, and that's how it's growing, right? But I think that at some point we will recover, right, all this happens, and I think that in the end the only thing that remains is the satisfaction of giving everything, with everything, if not for what?

KBM: [Laughter] Oh, Gahela dear, I thank you very much for the generosity with which you have spoken in this interview, your time, your work, everything and very happy that you have decided to be part of this project. Well, the interview, as Shelly mentioned, will be

countries. (See “¿Quiénes somos?” Red de Litigantes LGBT de las Américas. <https://litiganteslgbt.org/quienes-somos/?lang=en>. Accessed 08 September 2021.)

hosted on a public access website, right? where the interviews of the other women who have been interviewed in other countries and also here in Peru will be posted. And on the website, there is a possibility that we will put a photo of you and also a text, a short bio. So when I remind you about the consent form, I will remind you to send me the photo and the bio as well?

GT: Perfect.

KBM: Already? Thanks again, Gahe, it's so nice to hear from you. You know, we've been together, but sometimes you don't know everything, how much history is behind your work. I congratulate you very much and thank you.

GT: Oh baby, I admire your work, you don't know how long. since I've been in Ica, I've seen from afar the little things that you did, that you published, and the truth is that sometimes people in the region look at feminists from afar, don't they? I would never have thought of meeting you, meeting Diana, meeting Carmen, meeting Lie, meeting so many people, right?

KBM: On the contrary. The privilege is mine [laughter] Well, Gahela, my dear, I'll leave you to do your thing, and I won't keep you any longer. Thank you very much for everything, bye!