

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

SITE: PERU

**Transcript of Tania Pariona Tarqi
Interviewer: Karen Bernedo Morales**

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Tania Pariona Tarqui, born in 1984, is an indigenous activist, Quechua leader, feminist, politician, human rights activist and former Congressperson. As an activist, she works to establish social equality for indigenous youth and women. She began her community work with National Movement of Organized Working Children and Adolescents of Peru (MNNATSOP), an overarching umbrella for many children's working groups. She was chosen as a Latin American delegate and had her first experience of international representation at age 15 at the "World Summit for Children" at the United Nations in New York. She studied Social Work at the San Cristóbal of Huamanga University, graduating in 2009, and then Human Development at the Pontifical Catholic University of Peru in Lima. She went on to work with the Centre for Indigenous Cultures of Peru (CHRIAPAQ), collaborating on several projects aimed at indigenous youth and women nationally and internationally. In 2010, with Andean and Amazonian sisters, she helped form the Organización Nacional de Mujeres Andinas y Amazónicas de Perú, (ONAMIAP) that promotes the participation of indigenous women and fulfillment of their individual and collective rights. She was the first youth secretary for ONAMIAP. She was elected to the Peruvian Congress in 2016 by the Broad Front for Justice, Life and Freedom, coalition of political parties. In September 2017, she joined the New Peru movement. From 2018-2019, she was the president of the Commission on Women and Family, which promoted the first thematic plenary session focused on a women's agenda and equality between men and women. Her parliamentary work was dedicated to the defense of the rights of indigenous and native peoples against mining companies, the human right to water and reparations for the victims of the armed conflict, and working against impunity of the perpetrators of crimes, including compulsory sterilization under Alberto Fujimori's government. She is currently assuming responsibility for the Indigenous Women's Program in CHIRAPAQ and has concerns for the indigenous populations of the Sierra and jungle coast, in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic.

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: Well then, now we'll start with the interview. Actually well, the points we're going to address are a bit about your life history, right? Then about your work, your work in relation to the women's movement and some reflections on feminism. Those are more or less the general points that we are going to address.

Tania Pariona Tarqui: Yes.

KBM: Yes, in general it usually lasts about an hour, sometimes a little longer. But that's more or less the time... of the interview.

TPT: Yeah, that's fine.

KBM: So, don't forget the consent form as soon as you can. Similarly, right now in this oral conversation, you're agreeing that this material may be used for the project. But don't forget to send it to me...

TPT: Yeah, okay, yeah. I'll send it to you soon, written. But verbally we are in agreement with the terms.

KBM: Well, I know that everybody asks you about your organization or about your work as a congresswoman, but I would like to start with your life story. What memories from your early years or, what memories do you consider important for who you are now? What contexts? What things about your life?

TPT: Well, it's... I always think of my family history, personal history, as a starting point because my family environment, which not only has Quechua¹ origins but is from a Quechua-speaking family-- has grandparents who have a cultural richness in various lines. Various lines in the cosmovision, agriculture, some collective values, literature, and language itself, some knowledge that we don't necessarily learn in the formal educational environment. These are what have given me the foundation to have confidence in myself and to reaffirm myself as an indigenous woman, coming from an original culture. But also, because my family environment comes from people who, maybe not consciously, but when you reflect on them, realize how powerful that knowledge is and that they have a lot of wisdom.

¹ A language used by Quechua people, a South American people ("Quechua." Oxford Learner's Dictionaries. <https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/quechua>. Accessed 17 July 2021.)

For example, my mother knew a lot about traditional medicine. My grandmother, who is still alive today and is with us, has many cultural practices typical of the Andean² people. And so, these are the elements that in some way are cultural references that allow me to have the security to say what I say, to express what perhaps within the debate on respect for identities, does not always make a big impact if one doesn't say them in the first person. This includes expressing this to others. So, I am from an Ayacuchana family, from the province of Victor Fajardo³. There are seven of us kids, five women, two men, and I think we were lucky and had the opportunity... I say lucky because a displaced family after the violence here in Huamanga⁴, didn't always attain many opportunities... mainly regarding education. And we managed to have that basic right to go to school, to high school, to college. Which is another element that is put into question, when we talk about indigenous identities or native people, right? Because it is understood that an indigenous woman is someone who did not study or is someone who does not know, that didn't go to college, that isn't capable. One that lives in ignorance of the past, in backwardness, etc. So, it's all these stereotypes that are somehow converted into a burden of multiple discriminations. They end up making differences into barriers and not riches. So, I think that there should be a broader view and above all in generations like mine, which come from families living in urban areas and a context of forced displacement. But we have somehow managed to get ahead like many families in Peru and Ayacucho⁵. So, I identify as a Quechua woman of Andean origins. My condition as displaced did not mean that I was cut off from my territory or culture. On the contrary, we always maintain the urban-rural, the urban community and also this relational cultural identity. This is something very, very important to me when I refer to my own history, perhaps my personal condition, but which then extends to a collective condition.

KBM: And can I know a little bit more about the displacement?

TPT: Yes, let's see... I... have memories, from when I was perhaps already here in Huamanga. Yes, when I started in PRONOEI⁶, which in this case is (inaudible) in the initial level. I studied from the initial level here in Ayacucho, Huamanga but my parents migrated maybe between '84, '85, after I was already born. And I was born in Cayara⁷ but I grew up in Huamanga. And (pause) that context has been so difficult, because of course, you come to an unknown territory. My father speaks perfect Spanish, he was an alternative basic

² Native occupants of the South American Central Andes area, spanning areas of Ecuador, Bolivia, Peru, Chile and Argentina. ("Andean peoples." Encyclopedia Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Andean-peoples>. Accessed 17 July 2021.)

³ The province of Victor Fajardo is one of the eleven that make up the department of Ayacucho in Peru. It is in the center of the Ayacucho Region. ("Victor Fajardo Province." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/V%C3%ADctor_Fajardo_Province. Accessed 16 July 2021.)

⁴ A province located in the northern area of the Ayacucho Region. ("Huamanga Province." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Huamanga_Province. Accessed 19 July 2021.)

⁵ The capital of the Ayacucho Region and Huamanga Province, Peru. ("Ayacucho." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ayacucho>. Accessed 19 July 2021.)

⁶ PRONOEI is a flexible educational program aimed at young children living in rural areas of Peru. ("PRONOEI" Minister of Education. <https://www.ugel01.gob.pe/pronoei/>. Accessed 20 July 2021.)

⁷ The district of Cayara is a district of the province of Victor Fajardo, located in the department of Ayacucho in Peru. ("Cayara District." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cayara_District. Accessed 20 July 2021.)

education teacher, now retired. But my mother barely spoke Spanish, and she had not gone to higher education, she remained at an incomplete primary level. But she had to forcibly learn how to speak Spanish, to move around the city, to make money from jobs as a means of survival, and in reality, we were all part of that form of survival because from a young age, we began to work. In my family we have a culture of work, especially from a young age, which also hasn't been something that we carry like a weight on our shoulders and feel like maybe we were mistreated, in no way, on the contrary. Perhaps it comes from the origin of our family, because everyone in the community cooperates, everyone works, similarly the children do activities in the fields. So, for us it was something normal, something that was necessary to get ahead [in life].

And little by little, the Fajardinos also occupied some territorial space here in Huamanga, in fact, there are some areas where there are many Fajardinos in the province of the central south. And the entire periphery of Huamanga is occupied by provincials, that is, huamanguinos. Huamanguinos who perhaps are from very specific families, they are from the center of Huamanga but the periphery is displaced. And so, when I started going to school I began to learn about this new formal knowledge. Of course, I didn't learn Quechua in school, much less about questions of identity or culture or anything else. Some subjects as an exception, but it's not in school where I learned Quechua. Rather, it was in a communal family space and well, we have been living here for many years. Of the seven brothers and sisters, for example, the six of us have been attended to by midwives. And my father, who helped with labor along with a midwife, this for example, is interesting because within the discussion of intercultural health and how this knowledge of midwifery has validity and significance, within the right to health... it becomes relevant. Because of course, you say let's see how we [women] have been treated, how the right to maternal health has been exercised by many women.

And for the last daughter in the family, she was able to go to a health center, but it wasn't the best either, nor the correct, adequate, or affectionate treatment. And so, in one's own flesh [from first experience], one has been able to see all these cultural barriers, for example, within the right to health.

So, from the year '84 onwards, we have made let's say, life in the city, but always in contact and connection with the people. We have an organization here in Huamanga and also nationally with the headquarters in Lima⁸. And everyone in the process of displacement has begun to make contact with the new inhabitants, new inhabitants in the sense of inhabiting the new city but with a Fajardine origin. And since a very young age, I have been incorporating myself into these organizational processes. When I was 11, I started making art, making Ayacucho *retablos*⁹, drawing and painting, getting to know the waist loom,

⁸ The capital and largest city of Peru. ("Peru." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lima>. Accessed 22 July 2021.)

⁹ A *retablo* is a devotional painting inspired by art of the Catholic church. *Retablo* also refers to a large altarpiece painting or structure above an altar. ("Retablo." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Retablo>. Accessed 20 July 2021.)

recovering natural dyes through a program that CHIRAPAQ¹⁰ had. CHIRAPAQ is the indigenous association that has been working here in Ayacucho for years.

But in those years, that experience also allowed me to create networks of children and adolescents with others on a national level. And then I also promoted my own, in my town for example, we created a student organization, *Hijos Cayarinos*. And our purpose was to educate ourselves, that is, go to school, to college and then to return to the village to motivate the children to continue studying, or to share what we had learned from literature, mathematics, social sciences... And so, at a very young age, I got involved in organizational processes in the Net Ñucanchic¹¹ and then in *El Frente Estudiantil Hijos Cayarinos*. We then had already created a more intercultural space with other networks of children and adolescents. We promoted indigenous youth networks in Peru in 2011 and beyond. In 2010, with Andean and Amazonian sisters, who were already engaged in a process of meeting and affirming indigenous identity in Peru, we formed the *Organización Nacional de Mujeres Andinas y Amazónicas de Perú*, (ONAMIAP)¹². I was the first youth secretary that ONAMIAP had. In 2010, we promoted the youth process that is still active today, with many difficulties coordinating due to geographical issues, distance, logistical support, resources needed to strengthen each base, but we are there building the movement. And at the international level, with the continental liaison of indigenous women since 2004, we had already begun to participate in international spaces. For me 2004 was a defining moment, and I always say this because it was the first time that I was able to meet indigenous sisters from all over the world. From the American, Asian, and African continents, and so for me that was a way to see myself reflected in my own history, in my own dreams, in my own life, and I said, "it is spectacular to be here." So, I felt like part of that process and to this day we continue to participate in it. And, well, along the way, you have some difficulties, right? In exercising this empowerment, which is not so easy to exercise. That's how it is.

KBM: Wow, so you've been... since you were little, you entered and have been in contact with the intercultural social movement, right? And what would you say has inspired you to do this work that you do?

TPT: I think that it's always this possibility that one has to create change together with others. Since I was very young, I always had the idea that by being together we could be stronger. By being organized we could have a stronger voice, by being organized we can

¹⁰ The Centre for Indigenous Cultures of Peru (CHIRAPAQ) is an indigenous association which has been promoting the recognition of indigenous identities and protection of indigenous rights for the past 30 years. ("About Us" CHIRAPAQ. <http://chirapaq.org.pe/en/who-we-are/about-us>. Accessed 20 July 2021.)

¹¹ CHIRAPAQ runs Ñuqanchik cultural workshops for children of indigenous families forced to flee violence. The workshops teach indigenous children about their culture and identity through art. ("Tania Pariona Tarqui: Soy activista indígena, política, feminista y Ex Congresista De La República Del Perú." Celats. <https://www.celats.org/19-publicaciones/nueva-accion-critica-7/237-tania-pariona-tarqui-soy-activista-indigena-politica-feminista-y-ex-congresista-de-la-republica-del-peru>. Accessed 13 August 2021.)

¹² The National organization of Andean and Amazonian Indigenous Women of Peru (ONAMIAP) was founded in 2009 to promote the participation of indigenous women and the fulfillment of their individual and collective rights through training programs, projects, and proposals. ("Who We Are." ONAMIAP. <http://onamiap.org>. Accessed 20 July 2021.)

show that we can also request proposals. And my conviction to do things, not only thinking of myself but of others, is what I feel has led me to this. But I didn't plan it either, because there are things that you don't plan, but they happen in your life. However, I have not given up some personal priorities like higher education, training in some courses, in some subjects, where I have accessed some very key opportunities in the process of leadership. For example, training on indigenous rights and international procedures, all thanks to a scholarship I obtained in 2009 and which has allowed me to learn about the international legal framework and the entire United Nations system and the complaint procedures. So, this has strengthened the necessity that everything you learn does not stay with you. That is, start implementing them, sharing them, applying them. So, you come after finishing a course and you don't stay with that, you say "what do I do?" If we have the right to land and territory, how are we not going to defend what is happening in the territory? Right? How are we not going to defend the consultation process if Convention 169¹³ recognizes the right to consultation? If the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples¹⁴ recognizes the right to collective property, to territorial rights, to self-determination with indigenous peoples. So, it has been several elements that have somehow shaped my personal commitment, always thinking about the collective. I have not had ambitions for positions or titles, that is to say, it's something I say openly without fear of anything. Because, deep down that's not what someone looks for, right? Because what you are always looking for is what you do to have a positive impact. That you feel happy, you feel satisfied that what you do makes a change to improve living conditions, to be well, to generate a culture of peace, to claim the rights that are written, and everything that can be said in the discourse, can be materialized in a concrete way, right? I think that's it.

KBM: Tania and... do you feel that your work has modified your own personal life experience?

TPT: Yes, quite a lot, personal and family too (pause). Because one is also unlearning things in the process. Not everything that one acquires in the academic space, nor in the immediate environment is the absolute and the last word. And for me it has been a process of self-questioning, even starting from the construction of my identity or the recovery of the indigenous identity and the affirmation of other identities that one goes on maintaining in the process of life itself. So, it's been permanent questions and answers, and doubts as well. Also fears, perhaps doubts that have been deliberated along the way. And me for example, I did not assume that I was indigenous before learning about the experience of the world's indigenous peoples. Before I had the space to develop, the practical exercise and

¹³ The Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169) acknowledges Indigenous peoples' right to self-determination and creates rules for national governments for protecting indigenous people's rights. ("ILO Convention 169." https://indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca/ilo_convention_169/. Accessed 21 July 2021.)

¹⁴ The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) was adopted in 2007 by the General Assembly to establish a universal framework of the minimum standards for the survival, dignity, and well-being of the indigenous peoples of the world which elaborates on existing human rights standards and fundamental freedoms. ("UNDRIP." United Nations. <https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/declaration-on-the-rights-of-indigenous-peoples.html>. Accessed 21 July 2021.)

reflection on specific cases and indigenous rights. That is, before that, your awareness of identity is passive. You live nevertheless... you live speaking Quechua, you live singing, you live eating traditional food, but there is no deep reflection, there is no critical evaluation. But access to information, access to training spaces, helps a lot and it has also allowed me to question many aspects of my personal and family history. And in the family environment it also means a turn in relation to how we see ourselves, who we are, where we are from, and what we want. Which are the basic questions that one asks oneself when one also sees oneself as part of a collective. I didn't assume that I was a feminist for example, but I was able to share a lot of space with feminist sisters in the international and national world. For me it was very complex to understand the very term of feminism, because of course the concept, which is also misunderstood, badly disseminated, badly developed in the common people, is that feminism is against men. And so, one says "well we are not going to fall into an understanding of this nature", if we do not understand what feminism really is and what streams of feminism have also developed throughout history. And what references do we have to feminism? Are all of them white? Are there also black women? If there are also indigenous people? If there are also processes from various identities that converge in one person, for example, those who are in the community of sexual diversity.

I have been learning all of this along the way, spending time with others, learning by defending my rights as a woman. And so today I can say with confidence... of course I also have different perspectives on some issues and that is not bad because there is lots of everything. There are positions within positions, but I think that this does not diminish, it does not affect the sense of feminism itself, which has to do with this vindication of the rights that we have as women. So, it's been a slow process, the truth is that you have to give a lot of self-understanding about yourself, about your own personal, family, community and organizational history. And to date I can say that it's not a finished process because there are also new themes that invoke us and that call us to make deep reflections. So, it's not something that has ended with knowing or having participated with feminist sisters and being in the struggle in the streets for substantive equality for women, because I believe that there are other new themes that place us to continue deepening reflections and to continue looking at ourselves, with other eyes or with new eyes.

KBM: Tania, what is feminism for you?

TPT: Well, I consider that feminism is (pause) to claim the rights that we have as women, but it does not refer only to a right of gender equality for example. I know that it's a focus that leads us to reflect on gender relations and the power relations that are generated between the genders, but it also goes beyond that. For us, indigenous women, and for me, feminism also needs reflection from the racial-ethnic approach, from the territorial approach. And the feminism that becomes the affirmation of one's own being with rights, with aspirations, with dreams, with differences, is what I feel can make us an equal society. Equal in the most substantive sense of equality. That is to say, it's not to say equal with equal and then we are all equal, as a simple glance. In other words, it's not equality that happens because we are all equal and we all follow a pattern of education. On the contrary, equality is where differences are recognized. And for me feminism also means transforming those patterns that patriarchy has been imposing on all our societies and

even on the original peoples. Transforming means that one can claim the space where one is, recognizing that one is a subject of full rights, that one is also a subject of full freedoms... to exercise them, to live them, to share them.

KBM: And what has feminism meant for your work?

TPT: Do you mean the work we do with indigenous women, or...?

KBM: Exactly, your work from an intercultural theme, intercultural rights, indigenous peoples...

TPT: Yes, for us talking about feminism is complex. Dealing with multiple, diverse, and different cultures because they don't imply an appropriation of the term itself. But of the significance and impact of talking about the right as women and the right to substantive equality, from the right to non-discrimination and the right to exercise freedoms from a particular context. For example, in an Amazon community, when a case of violence is addressed, it's not simple. It's not even simple for a woman leader who is empowered and who knows her rights (pause). To resolve the case, let's say, resorting to a communal instance, because in the communal instance you may have a leader who does not understand the dimension of violence suffered by women and who feels that the issue should be solved within the community, and that it should not be denounced outside and that it should be solved inside. Then you need to have authorities who speak about the issue, that it's not only a matter of women, that it's not only a matter of empowered women, nor of women who assume themselves to be feminists, but also of a greater collective transformation. And I believe that this implies previous processes, before having, let's say, a response or a development of the gender focus as we normally understand it from an urban society [inaudible]. And those challenges, challenge us Indigenous women to be much more critical and self-critical of ourselves. It's like, for example, a Mexican sister, who told us "Sister, but here we have to do a cultural autopsy, because it's not possible that today in our villages, girls are sold, they are negotiated into marriage to an adult, to someone who she obviously doesn't even have the decision of what she's doing or what her life is going to be". So, I think there are many elements which in the name of tradition and cultures have been sustained and argued that occur and then you have to accept them.

And one of the first aspects that indigenous women, including myself from my own personal experience, have questioned is precisely those traditions that undermine and violate human rights, such as those that should not continue to be reproduced in previous generations. And that becomes even more complex, to develop them in an indigenous territory, because you do not live alone, it's not only you as a woman, you belong to a collective and there are rights that intersect, and you need to look at them. For example, when we talk about forms of violence, violence in plural, because it's not only gender violence that in itself already affects us tremendously, but it's also environmental violence, it's territorial violence, it's that institutional violence that is also exercised against women's bodies when they go out to defend water, when they go out to defend their lands. So, you can't disconnect one from the other. And you can't give up one of them to prioritize the other. And this is what we collectively always reflect on, it cannot be possible for us to

defend the territory when the first territory that is violated is our body. In other words, we defend the territory, mother earth, nature, while we defend our own territory as body, spirit, and everything we want, defining and valuing from our own Andean Amazonian culture. But I do believe that feminism in our case takes those previous processes that are not simple and sometimes are difficult to understand from other lenses. From other announcements of feminism, which I respect very much, I join them because they are fair, but it can't be the recipe nor the formula that will resolve in the same way as it does in a city space, if you do it in a rural indigenous community space. So, then we are in this great challenge, from feminism which includes all these struggles, demands and personal and collective transformations, which also become tools to unlearn, to generate feminism from within, from the same identity. And feminism that begins to question terminologies that have been generated around gender equality, around violence, around the specific rights of women. So yes, there are several elements that I think we are putting on the table from the indigenous movement about the discussion on feminism but it's not necessarily to contradict or not to endorse what another or the other sisters do, but rather to call us mutually to a construction of feminisms that also responds to specific realities and conditions that make discrimination. Not only gender, but also ethnic-racial discrimination, age discrimination, poverty, this triple or quadruple force of discrimination that is also necessary to place within the debate.

KBM: Tania, and you have mentioned several organizations you have been working in for a long time. How has your experience been as a woman working there? Have you felt discrimination or prejudice for being a woman?

TPT: I believe that all of us have moments in our personal history, situations, in which we feel permanent, latent, current and even justified discriminations. And not justified by us, but by society, by the environment, and by those who exercise these discriminatory practices. I think that from our spaces, from school, we grow up seeing how boys and girls are treated differently. How certain privileges are assumed for those who are men and that environment where, although you go against the tide, you always have to fight against it. For example, a couple of years ago in the youth space, with other partners, we would say, "well, we are aware that this must change, but how can we make it change because we seem empowered but alone." And there are also other barriers that are institutionalized, that are part of the normalized structures. And so, one is permanently facing very unequal treatment. For example, when you are not seen as the same, and I mean this in the sense of having the same rights. But if you are from a certain place, you will not realize you are not being seen as equal. So, you see these critical discriminations as well, in the work environment too. Not necessarily in the present space where I work because we are fighting and working specifically to prevent these inequalities [in the workspace and in any other space] from becoming standardized practices. These occurrences instead, have happened in other spaces where I have worked. Whether in the state space or in the more private space or even in the informal space, right? Whether it's an economy of survival or whether you see the treatment that is in your environment and in that daily relationship you suffer from that kind of discrimination. By age, by your appearance, by your way of speaking, by various reasons that cross themselves. Then you ask yourself why this happens. Why has it been normalized? In my political experience, this is something that is

experienced differently because when you're not a public personality, no one knows what you're living through. All of a sudden you are experiencing discrimination that you are resolving on your own, that you face alone. And if you have an organization to back you up, and you know that what is happening is wrong, you can take action to change that reality. Maybe I have the experience in those two dimensions. The organizational space has been a support for me to not allow these violations, especially discrimination, to end up diminishing capacities. On the contrary, reaffirming them with more strength in order to impact this situation. But also, there are things that you personally live through, you face them, and you have to process them because you know that it's not going to change, you know that it's going to happen, and it ends up happening in everyday life.

When you have a public function and have a position of power or authority, it is up to you to ensure that these practices are punished, reported, and made aware of, and that you have to be the first to report what you are experiencing. On the one hand, it's something much more complex because you have a commitment not to yourself but to others. So, it helps you to have that strength, to always carry the challenge of not allowing that to be a standard practice. And surely, in parliament for some who normalize discrimination, I wouldn't have experienced any situation of discrimination. But if you go deeper and reflect, and in each relationship that you establish with others and see how treatment is, how public qualifications are given, without mentioning the use of the media in social networks, because you wear a hat, because you wear a suit, or because you claim your identity, or because there is a conception of identity that is quite folkloric. It's several elements that one faces more maybe in a public way. In my organizational process, we denounced cases of discrimination, we started campaigns against racism and discrimination, together with our Afro-descendant brothers and sisters, in *La Paisana Jacinta*¹⁵, and *El Negro Mama*¹⁶. We made another international denunciation before the United Nations. We were part of the process of reflection, and of debate. How can we ensure that Peruvian television is not an instrument for reproducing discrimination or the denigration of the Andean or Afro-Peruvian image? But look, so many years have gone by since 2005, since I think *La Paisana Jacinta* program has started, and up to now these are the same topics that are being discussed, debated, and we have come across people who are repeating the same practices that we had already identified years ago as harmful to the affirmation of the cultural diversity of our country. So, I think that there are various scenarios in which one goes measuring the level of empowerment, and the capacities that remain in certain limited forms that don't have that collective social support. And for me to act in the role that I had in Parliament was possible thanks to the social support, collective, the organizations, the

¹⁵ *La Paisana Jacinta* (1999-2015) is a Peruvian television program depicting Peruvian comedian Jorge Benavides dressing in drag as a poor indigenous woman. The program is surrounded in controversy, as the character perpetuates racism and harmful stereotypes of indigenous peoples. ("The Paisana Jacinta Controversy continues to divide Peruvians." Peru Reports. <https://perureports.com/paisana-jacinta-controversy-continues-divide-peruvians/6553/>. Accessed 21 July 2021.)

¹⁶ *El Negro Mama* is a character played by comedian Jorge Benavides on the television show "The Humor Special". The character continues racist stereotypes by representing Afro-Peruvians as criminals and cannibals. ("Peru's 'El Negro Mama' TV station penalized." New York Amsterdam News. <http://amsterdamnews.com/news/2013/sep/05/perus-el-negro-mama-tv-station-penalized/>. Accessed 21 July 2021.)

collectives of women, the indigenous peoples, all of them that obviously motivate you to not lower your guard, nor to feel that you are alone, right? However, there are processes in which you also feel that you are alone, because there are processes that have not finished their cycle and therefore are not necessarily as strong as you would like, but the challenges are always permanent, and you have to fight against them.

KBM: Of course, and now talking a little bit about your work, what are the strategies you have used when working from your organizations?

TPT: For us, strengthening the organization has always been one of the priorities, because we knew that by having a strong organization, we could promote the next level of organization. We began as adolescents from suburban neighborhoods and then we formed a regional network that includes provinces which includes not only displaced-migrant youth, but also youth who are in their places of origin and then articulate with Amazonian brothers, Aymaras¹⁷ at the level of Peru. So, we have always considered that strengthening the organization has to be the first task, and perhaps as a strategy, that today becomes a methodology and institutional proposal of Chirapaq, which I am a part of, is to work on training, on rights, on identity and on instruments that allow this recognition as subjects with rights, with responsibilities, with dreams, but who have the sufficient tools to promote what they propose. And so, the formative part we have had, has had an entrance from identity. And it's not, an entry from identity where we understand identity as unique, as pure, as static or as something that has to be preserved and protected, and cared for, no. Rather, it is a construction of identity that is dynamic, changing, recreational, innovative and of multiple affirmations, of multiple forms, of these identities and it doesn't get rid of other identities that one can also be a part of. And this openness to understand identity as within the widest, most diverse spectrum, I believe, also allows us to be much more inclusive and on the one hand, not fall into fundamentalism or idealism, with respect to other cultures, but to have critical evaluations of these cultures. That is an entry that Chirapaq has developed from different areas of intervention, local, national, with women, with youth, and with indigenous peoples. And I can say that it's something that has allowed me to be more open-minded, to converse and to have respect for diversity. And in the educational field, which is something, where of course, it's in the hands of teachers who are in charge of the school, of specific subjects, we believe that this educational environment should not be divorced from the community environment. Moreover, I do believe that the actions we do as a collective and in organizations, should have a certain place in the formal education environment.

For example, if we talk about fighting racism and discrimination in the educational field, these should be topics that are addressed as part of the curriculum to prevent children from reproducing the same practices that their parents, their elders, and the citizens around them practice. To value that like something normal. I believe that the educational field is one of the spaces where we have also been able to have a presence, in the work of linguistic revitalization for example. And I am part of that process because I didn't speak

¹⁷ Indigenous people in the Andes and Altiplano regions of South America. ("Aymara people." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aymara_people. Accessed 21 July 2021.)

Quechua, I learned it after ten years, at about eleven, twelve years old, traveling to my village with my grandmother, with my parents. It's not the language that we normally use in everyday life but when you meet your fellow countryman, suddenly he has the natural need to speak [Quechua] and you speak it. But when you haven't been taught the language, you have that limitation. And the linguistic revitalization has made people like me feel that language is not only a means of communication, but it's also part of cultural affirmation and political vindication and self-esteem and citizen security. That is, security in your citizenship, or as an intercultural citizen. And those who do not learn Quechua today at school should have the opportunity to learn it. This is something that we have been proposing for a long time so that not only rural schools, or those identified as intercultural schools, learn Quechua, but also urban areas and children who want to learn Quechua. So, for us indigenous women, we do believe that these cultural elements are the entrance to an empowerment that can transform histories and also, larger collectives. Let's say these three: the organization, the space in the schools, and the theme of identity, is fundamental for us. For that reason, many times when we speak of feminism, we coin identity as part of that feminism, feminism with identity, a feminism of our own, a feminism that affirms being indigenous, without the need to, let's say, necessarily contradict the struggles of other sectors. No. We need to begin to reflect critically on the things that need to be done, to discuss them. In that sense, I think that we have been growing both indigenous and non-indigenous feminists and non-feminists. So, I think it's very positive.

KBM: Tania, and if you had to choose between two of the most important projects you have participated in, which would they be?

TPT: (Pause), what do you mean projects?

KBM: From your organization, or as a parliamentarian.

TPT: Ok, well... (pause) for me as... I would say, those places that have allowed me to establish my commitment, perhaps a leadership with identity, has to do with my organizational experience as a child in a cultural, identity, indigenous space, promoted in this case by Chirapaq, which I have been a part of and to this day am working with the institution. And the next space that I had, and that has allowed me to understand the diversity of childhoods at the time when I was an adolescent, is the National Movement of Working Children¹⁸, which is a social movement that has been going on for more than forty years in Peru. Also because of my experience of working as an adolescent because the space allowed me to learn another reality, not only the local indigenous culture of Ayacucho, but also [the culture] on a national level and with a spirit of social protagonism, marked by rights since childhood. We would say "empowerment must begin in childhood", it's not an empowerment of adults, it's also empowerment and protagonism since

¹⁸ The National Movement of Organized Working Children and Adolescents of Peru seeks to legalize children's work and make it socially acceptable. They campaign for a policy that would allow children to work while continuing their education and being protected from exploitation. ("Supporting working children as social, political, and economic agents." Open Democracy. <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/beyond-trafficking-and-slavery/supporting-working-children-as-social-political-and-economic-agents/>. Accessed 21 July 2021.)

childhood. And the third space that has been a milestone that has had a substantial change in my life and in me, has to do with my political experience. This political experience, being my first [experience] in the parliament, is quite relevant because it allows one to continue having political authority. There is a commitment in process, not concluded, it doesn't finish, on the contrary, I think there are new issues, new aspects that one begins to commit to from our own identity. That is, it's not only the work that I do, that refers to the indigenous, there is also a commitment from other sectors. For example, my fellow domestic workers, whether they are Indigenous or non-indigenous, they are committed to the rights of Afro-Peruvian and non- Afro-Peruvian peoples, to the rights of the community, to sexual diversity, to the rights of persons with disabilities, whether these people are Indigenous or non-indigenous, and I believe that there is a commitment beyond that. And this is a greater commitment that is also linked to the commitment [to create] a country that is much more equal, more just, where this logic of cultural diversity is not a barrier. That it's not a limitation for generating public policies or governance, that ends up excluding people in the same way as they have done in all periods of government. Instead, [we advocate] for a country who begins creating change from political decisions as well.

KBM: Since you have been working for a long time on these issues from different organizations and backgrounds, having gone through different political climates and contexts... what are the main changes you have seen in relation to your work? How have those contexts been affected in different ways?

TPT: Mmm [long pause] I've been able to see how the citizens have begun to recover their own voice, their presence to continue raising some issues that many years ago didn't begin to have any relevance with a strong defense. For example, from the Human Rights Movement to defend democracy, to defend justice, memory, it's also something that I have grown up with. Because in Ayacucho the events and the actions that human rights organizations have taken to defend memory and justice, have been from the most regional space. But I have been able to notice that in the context, for example, of the previous parliamentary period, where impunity was again the response of the State, you suddenly have a citizenry that goes through that memory and comes out to defend its memory, its democracy, its justice, and to me it seemed to be really valuable, powerful. And that must be a reaction, not necessarily a circumstantial one, but a permanent exercise to continue defending what is just, to continue defending that memory that allows us to have that better scenario of a culture of peace, of justice and reparation for all of us who in general have been affected and for the direct victims. That is something that I have been able to see as a change, I don't know if it changed, but suddenly the political context and the situations we have had to face in parliament have also changed for the citizens in such a way that one can feel that the Peruvians are not asleep. They are not passive, they are not satisfied, there is an attitude of resistance, I would even say of rebellion against injustice. And the other thing has more to do with this problem of corruption with which we permanently fight from all aspects where we see it and where we condemn these types of acts. Because in the end we are the great majority, the affected ones. And the vast majority of us are poor people, from precarious economies and so people have identified with this fight against corruption. We have seen how actions have had a backlash and an impact on the reactions of citizens, but not necessarily of parliamentary majority because we were not the majority.

So, you have the fight for justice, for a memory with truth and not impunity but also the fight against corruption, it's important.

The third, let's say event or response that I think is valuable to highlight, has to do with the defense of women's rights and the fight against violence, which we face. From within different spaces, women's collectives and the "*Ni Una Menos*" march¹⁹ and other marches that followed, which have also been replicated at the national and global levels, have marked quite relevant milestones in the history of women, not only those who defend rights, but all women. I'm sure that a girl who goes to school and who suddenly finds out about a case, about a complaint or a situation that is happening in her school, that involves inappropriate touching, sexual harassment, rape, etc., is also wondering why they are experiencing this and why they cannot go out and march. And seeing other women march they feel that there is a need to have a voice. We have seen this, for example, in different marches where girls have participated, and we, from the Women's Commission, have had tables to work with children and adolescents. The truth is that I totally thought it was correct to be able to listen to the children, it was like a small parliament, and all of them were strongly voicing their opinions and saying "it is not possible that girls in schools don't have the right to announce. We don't even know the page of SISEVE²⁰. The director fills the cases we don't know." So of course, one says how powerful that voice is, because these are the impacts of the struggles that are generated by multiple women from leadership. And this is also having an impact on other spaces not seen before. In the rural space, in the workspace, in the community space, in the promotion of women's organizations on their own initiative. So, it's no longer the NGO that goes and organizes them, it's the women who ask the institution for support because they want to do things. From those cases we have always seen how those changes take place. So, I would propose those four scenarios that also mark milestones in the history of women, that in some way we are part of this collective political action, but I believe they don't have to be circumstantial. Hopefully they're not because there are situations that force us to [be circumstantial] but making them permanent demands over time and making them practices that allow us to continue weaving that diverse unity. It's necessary and we have left convinced that without an organized citizenship, a collective that raises its voice without the support of citizens, is nobody in parliament and although you think you are, you're really not. I have left totally convinced of that and because our work has always been referred to the people, there was not a single bill that occurred to us that was not presented but because there is an express demand, there is a need, because we validated it with them, because it had to be done at the right time and not wait any longer. Some of them did not pass, they did not get approved, and I believe that these are permanent challenges that must continue to be met within politics.

¹⁹ Ni una menos ("Not one [woman] less") is a grassroots feminist movement in Latin America that protests against femicide and gender-based violence. After protests in Argentina on June 3, 2015, the hashtag #NiUnaMenos became known nationally. A #NiUnaMenos march also occurred on August 13, 2016, in Lima, Peru in front of the Palace of Justice, and is considered the largest demonstration in Peruvian history. ("Ni una menos." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ni_una_menos. Accessed 22 July 2021.)

²⁰ Specialized System for Reporting Cases of School Violence (SISEVE) is a system launched in 2013 that aims to monitor school violence cases. ("Using Technology to End Bullying in K-12 Schools." i-Sight. <https://i-sight.com/resources/using-technology-to-end-bullying-in-k-12-schools/>. Accessed 22 July 2021.)

KBM: Tania and now, what projects are you working on?

TPT: Right now, I am assuming responsibility for the Indigenous Women's Program in Chirapaq. From that program we accompany organizational processes from the community level to the most international level, in this case the continental level. Chirapaq in this period until 2023, has the coordination of the Continental Network of Indigenous Women²¹. On the one hand, we are also influencing international spaces, but making those international spaces reach the local space. And that the agenda of Indigenous women is part of the public agenda of women's rights in general throughout the country. There is a training process that Chirapaq has had since 1995, that we are taking up again. We have been able to develop different training modules on different topics related to Indigenous women's rights, international tools, and also on economic enterprises. One of the most important lines of action has to do with the struggle against violence, it's about the physical autonomy, economy and also the free decision of the people. What part [inaudible] also territorial collective rights. And we have not lost the link with the organizational bases. On the contrary, I think that the work in the parliament allows me to continue being in contact with different sectors such as domestic workers, organizations of victims of violence from the 80's to 2000, and migrant women in Lima. It's one of the themes that we want to promote because there is a necessity to do so. [This was during] my stay in Lima, because I started living in Lima in 2015 until the parliamentary period. I am currently in Ayacucho. I have been able to see that in Lima, many of the women as well as men, are from indigenous cultures, who currently inhabit different parts of Lima's territory. It would surely be very daring for some to say that we need intercultural policies for indigenous people in urban areas. I believe that we do. I have seen very particular situations of sisters, Ayacucho women in Lima of Quechua-speaking, Aymara-speaking²², Amazonian language origin, who have to face a set of barriers to access public services, and of course, since they do not belong to a region, we would say that Cucho²³, which has more than eighty percent Quechua speakers, did not have the right to demand [inaudible] without discrimination. Nevertheless, they are of important need, to see our sisters in Cantagallo²⁴ for example, to advocate for basic services and express that they have been without housing for years, without drinking water, without electricity, without access to internet communication, not even for the children to learn virtually today. It seems to me that it's one of the gaps having ten minutes to the Government Palace²⁵, these would not be translated into intercultural

²¹ The Continental Network of Indigenous Women (ECMIA), founded in 1995, is a transnational indigenous organization that works within the UN system to advocate for the rights and participation of indigenous women and children. ("ECMIA." IWGIA. <https://www.iwgia.org/en/iwgia-partners/74-enlace-continental-de-mujeres-indigenas-americas.html>. Accessed 22 July 2021).

²² The Aymaran language is a Native American language spoken by the Aymara people of the Bolivian Andes. ("Aymara language." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aymara_language. Accessed 22 July 2021.)

²³ Cucho is a region in Peru located in the Andes mountains in the Puno region. ("Ancayoc Cucho." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancayoc_Cucho. Accessed 21 July 2021.)

²⁴ An urban settlement located in the Rímac district of Lima, Peru. ("Cantagallo (Lima)." Wikipedia. [https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cantagallo_\(Lima\)](https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cantagallo_(Lima)). Accessed 22 July 2021.)

²⁵ The Government Palace, also called the House of Pizarro, is the headquarters of the executive branch of the Peruvian Government and the residence of the President. ("Government Palace (Peru)." Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Government_Palace_\(Peru\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Government_Palace_(Peru)). Accessed 20 July 2021.)

policies that cover this population that lives in capital urban areas. These are the issues that we have been developing and beginning to build an intervention in the capital city. And hopefully, in the future, this will be linked with indigenous women, not only from the rural community perspective but also from the space where the women live.

KBM: Tania and you have also been in academia at the university, how do you see this relationship between research and activism?

TPT: I think that from some time here, there are some very interesting changes going on. For example, you can notice the presence of indigenous actors and indigenous education in secretive academic spaces that before we were able to see with the naked eye. Or a very selective space in the configuration of certain panels, including addressing indigenous rights. I remember in 2011 there was a debate about the right to consultation²⁶, and the great debate about who is Indigenous and who is not Indigenous and who are Indigenous peoples. There were panels organized by scholars, who of course, we respectfully valued the contributions that they had, but they didn't have an Indigenous person present. Whether that person was a leader, an activist, or a scholar. In other words, it was not so obvious. Today I think that little by little, education is beginning to understand that the views from the indigenous perspective and from the actions of indigenous people themselves, are fundamental.

Education cannot be divorced from the indigenous perspective, on the contrary, I do believe that the indigenous perspective, what is better than addressing it with the subject itself, can significantly transform the contribution from education into new knowledge. [This knowledge] will allow us to be the country that we are from now on. Because, for example, when someone talks about racism and discrimination, which a couple of hours ago, I think I saw a flyer going around about a panel about racism and discrimination in Peru and someone said "hey, everyone is a man to begin with. There are no indigenous people," of course these are practices that one always ends up observing, even objecting. It would be powerful to hear someone who also lives these situations, these events where they are affected, and not only from the theoretical view or the view of the suspected or subordinate position where you have no voice. So I think there are certain changes that are still not enough, that I think academia has to open its mind, its gaze, its vision, even the methodology of addressing the issues. In the master's degree that I was able to complete, I could see with much satisfaction how, from the approach of human development, it is possible to approach different topics linked to the development of the indigenous perspective while contemplating an intercultural approach. And I believe that this is a huge contribution because they could have an impact on public policy, even in conceptualization itself from some aspects such as those who first develop the right to identity. How do we

²⁶ The debate concerning prior consultation with indigenous communities during natural resource extraction and infrastructure projects. ("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 22 July 2021.)

understand the demand of an awajún²⁷ brother when he asks that his ID card define him as awajún and that his ID card include an image of his territory, a natural resource or fauna in the seal that he has on his ID card? What significance does it have for indigenous people that their ID card says they are indigenous? In other words, how do we understand that? And of course, I think that it's not something that we've necessarily thought about, but I think it's important to listen to it... to listen to them, because it's not just the ID card, it's much more than that.

KBM: And in relation to research and feminist activism, do you have any reflections (pause), or have you seen any relation in the work you have done?

TPT: (Pause) Well, I know from experiences of indigenous sisters, activists, and also scholars who start writing in the first person. This includes about indigenous feminism, our own feminism or how we unravel these knots that do not end up being understood from the indigenous worldviews or from the indigenous organizations with respect to feminism. And it seems fundamental to me to have this type of literature, of research, that is, research and activism are not so different. I do believe that activism can add, fundamentally in the generation of new theories, new knowledge and new reflections. In fact, this is not new. Some sisters in Guatemala and Mexico have begun to say, "Listen, my experience is not only of activism, I don't come to tell you about my experience. I come to propose a theory of change, I come to propose a methodology to address the view on sexuality, sexual rights and reproductive rights in indigenous communities.

And when you read literature and of course you understand it perfectly, you know what you are saying. And what [the literature] is saying is that we do not need to be read, nor interpreted, what we need is to establish these intercultural dialogues without denying the identity or intellectual property or authorship of the people. We can generate a greater powerful knowledge, without censorship or obscuring, or without underestimating these contributions. In other words, I believe in something more truthful, that education can be transformed even from this intercultural perspective. For example, when one receives a book and it says, "Peru mestizo", you read the book and start to question the *mestizaje*²⁸ in Peru. You understand that it's an identity that surely many people identify with and it's good that they identify themselves as mestizo, but it cannot be the only view of mestizo Peru. So, it needs to generate a much more reflexive reading, it needs to be more profound in respect to what Peru is, or about the bicentennial and about the role that women played

²⁷ The Aguaruna (or Awajún) are a Peruvian indigenous people, a majority of whom reside on the Marañón River and tributaries. ("Aguaruna people." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aguaruna_people. Accessed 20 July 2021.)

²⁸ The noun *mestizaje* is derived from the adjective *mestizo* which is a twentieth-century term for racial mixing. *Mestizaje* is used to denote the positive unity of race mixtures in Latin America. In Peru, *mestizaje* denotes those people of "mixed" ethno-racial descent and access to secondary education. ("*Mestizo*." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mestizo>. Accessed 22 July 2021.)

in the bicentennial²⁹. So, it can't be a simple reading about the struggle of Realists³⁰ against Patriots³¹ and all of a sudden you have emblematic figures that are mostly masculinized and the history of women, indigenous women, ends up being marginalized. I do believe that we do need to establish these open dialogues from different spheres, from activism, from research, from leadership, from education as an institution, from civil society organizations, and hopefully the state could be part of this great collective. Sometimes the state's view is totally opposed to the view of all these sectors mentioned above and that's the problem. We're looking from a different side, with different views and we don't end up putting together a realistic coherent proposal.

KBM: Tania, and what is your analysis, your expectations about the feminist movement in Peru?

TPT: Em (pause) the feminist movement in Peru... I think it has regained important strength especially in the fight against violence and advocacy in relation to women's political participation, as well as sexual and reproductive rights too. They are the agendas with the most priority in the feminist movement, where we agree and also fight for the same thing. And from different fronts, we have added that this can be raised as a global demand from women. I believe that there is a generation that is quite open to feminism, the mere presence of young feminists in the educational and academic spheres means that this is not only a matter for the organization or the movement, but also becomes a public issue within the educational, labor, institutional and political spheres. I do believe that this contribution is a construction in which the feminist movement has been permanently visible, present and contributing. I have a positive reference from sisters in institutions that have been working on these issues in Peru for years who have raised women's rights, and we have been able to be part of several of the projects that they have promoted to achieve parity and alternation in the spaces of political participation at the three levels, which is now being celebrated. But I do believe that feminism needs to not be so urban or only in Lima. I think that the strongest group, the strongest collective of feminism in Peru is in Lima. I feel that way, I have perceived it that way. However, some voices are also beginning to be heard in other territories and from youth collectives, from women who are raising the experience of struggle from feminism and with very concrete demands. For example, sexual and reproductive rights or legal and safe abortion or the right to gender identity, or the recognition of the identity of the LGBTQ community. I think it needs to be strengthened and nurtured, not only by that path, which is positive, but it's still very urban. And so maybe that doesn't allow connecting with other women organizations such as rural, indigenous or Afro-Peruvian women. However, there are spaces that we share, where we debate themes,

²⁹ The bicentennial of the Independence of Peru will take place on July 28, 2021, celebrating 200 years of Peru's independence. ("The Bicentennial of the Independence of Peru." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Bicentennial_of_the_Independence_of_Peru. Accessed 22 July 2021.)

³⁰ The Royalists (Realistas) were people in support of the Spanish Monarchy during the Spanish American wars of independence between 1808 and 1833. ("Royalist (Spanish American independence)." Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royalist_\(Spanish_American_independence\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royalist_(Spanish_American_independence)). Accessed 20 July 2021.)

³¹ The Patriots were those who supported independent juntas, as well as full independence from Spain. ("Royalist (Spanish American independence)." Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royalist_\(Spanish_American_independence\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royalist_(Spanish_American_independence)). Accessed 20 July 2021.)

we raise proposals, and we influence each other, and we are visible together. But maybe this space is needed much more to understand each other, to get to know each other, to have conversations, to open up that mind, that heart, those thoughts. But I do believe that it has left positive outcomes from years of work and that we owe several things to these struggles such as norms and laws that are translated.

KBM: And in relation to that, how has your work been with other women organizations in the country?

TPT: Yes, in our case the relationship we have with women is diverse. From women who are dedicated to agriculture, artisan women from rural community settings, women who are dedicated to informal employment, for example the women of the Huancaro Market in Cusco³², just like these women. If you see, for example, these diverse groups of women who are organized, who have their own union, who have their own board of directors, they are carrying out a different process. I asked myself what would happen if they had the opportunity to meet other diverse women and women leaders, fighters, strong women, surely these spaces would be strengthened even more. And that is what I mean when I mention that feminism is very urban, very focused on the urban. You have to go to those spaces and not be afraid or not have a preconceived idea but go and get to know that reality. So, we have been able to relate with women from different fields from the public service. I have also noticed that many of these women have very interesting processes, very rich, let's say because you don't see them as something that needs to be deeply reflected upon, you don't see them as victims, that is, they have developed a level of agency, of capacity. And you say, "how did they manage to get ahead?" Without a background, without technical or financial support, and suddenly they have their own money, and suddenly they are women organized in the trade of handicraft products, and they are totally capable of all the opportunities that you normally see when someone is empowered. And I look at myself and I say, "of course I've had this and women here are doing the same, which is good and better that they have it." So, we have diverse women, that shows you that we have diverse women and in the relationship as an authority or as an activist where there are various things combined, you also connect these commitments. Something we would say from the office is "okay, let's go do what we have to do with the congressional office. What are they asking for, what are the women demanding? Okay, we are going to study, we are going to create a document, we are going to say it publicly." But I have always had this need not to leave it alone in management, there is a need to reach out to the women, to have the space to talk to them, to articulate ourselves as that diverse country where those differences in processes are not like those that classify us, those that define who we are, but what we really want to change as a country as women.

KBM: And you've already mentioned some of the connections or networks you've managed to have with women's organizations in other countries. Could you talk a little bit about that?

³² The Huancaro Market, located in Cusco, Peru, is a local market with a small audience. ("Huancaro Market." Machu Travel Peru. <https://www.machutravelperu.com/blog/markets-in-cusco>. Accessed 22 July 2021.)

TPT: Through the Enlace Continental de Mujeres Indígenas (ECMIA), we are articulated at the level of Latin America, Mexico, Central America, and the North. In these regions, there are different processes compared to Peru for example if we take a reflective look from global learning. In Mexico, you have indigenous scholars who have affirmed their identity from the academic world and have generated a great deal of literature, a great deal of written knowledge, their own research, and you see that there is a technical capacity, not only of pure activism, but also a technical-professional capacity that has been formed and has a great deal of experience in the international sphere within institutions, such as state, private, and international organizations. In Peru, this is perhaps becoming slower, from Mexico, we do see a great advance in the presence of indigenous people and indigenous women, in creating a conversation with the state. And of course, you have more presence of indigenous women in parliament. Something similar is happening in Central America, especially if you look at countries like Guatemala, more or less Panama. It's been many years since Panama had an indigenous parliamentarian and this year, they just had their first Guna woman³³ taking charge of the parliamentarian in Panama. In Guatemala, they have had several indigenous women, even less in proportion to non-indigenous women, but you have a Mayan politician woman, Rigoberta Menchú³⁴, with an indigenous party and an indigenous women's movement in the political arena. In Peru maybe we are just developing but there are very substantial advances in relation to other regions. In the north, it seems strange they don't seem very credible but, I see that in the north, Canada and the United States, there is a more visible leadership of indigenous women. But with an important historical trajectory, we don't always see indigenous women, or because it is the United States or because it is Canada, we believe that in these countries there are no indigenous people. On the contrary, in Canada, indigenous medicine and indigenous midwifery is institutionalized. Even education is part of the research on the subject and you have a professor who is an indigenous doctor, so you say "wow!" In Canada, in a space, in a territory that seems totally westernized, and it's not necessarily like this. In the United States, you also have many historical leaders who have quite instructive careers because they have had to live with the denial of rights, the oppression and permanent repression by the State, the territorial dispossession, the criminalization, and also racism not only based on color, or towards African Americans. That is, the racism and discrimination against indigenous people is also strong, very strong. And so, from the continental link we have been able to learn about this differentiated range of realities and contexts and processes of female leadership. And in the indigenous women's movement, these reflections are also deep. For example, women began to have a place and a voice of their own within a mixed movement, where men began to question the leadership of women, or said they were feminists who were breaking with the unity of indigenous people. Or that they were traitors because they were against the mixed indigenous organizations because they were raising issues of women and that was seen as a betrayal.

³³ Petita Ayarza Pérez is a Panamanian indigenous political leader who, in the 2019 general election, became the first Guna woman to be elected to the National Assembly of Panama. Guna are indigenous people of Panama and Colombia. ("Petita Ayarza." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Petita_Ayarza. Accessed 19 July 2021.)

³⁴ Rigoberta Menchú Tum is an indigenous activist from Guatemala who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1992 in recognition of her activism. ("The Nobel Peace Prize 1992." The Nobel Prize. <https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/peace/1992/summary/>. Accessed 22 July 2021.)

KBM: Of course.

TPT: This has happened, it happens, and unfortunately the new generations are still witnessing it, perhaps not to the same extent as the sister leaders who preceded us and have lived through it, but it is experienced in a certain way. This idea that "why only women?" Or "why do they want to divide or make a separate space?" "You are dividing the collectivity", but well those are the problems that have been confronted, that we are confronted with permanently. And in Peru, I think we are in a process of strengthening and affirming our identity, which is becoming clearer and stronger. And perhaps because of the hard context that touches the lives of both Andean and Amazonian peoples, the denial, indivisibility, repression, territorial dispossession, the extractive presence, where there is always social and environmental responsibility, is making the indigenous leadership emerge with force. What becomes oppression and a problem, for us also becomes an opportunity. And that opportunity that unfortunately was generated by the Baguazo in 2009³⁵, because we were finally visible to the Peruvian State, they finally realized that there was a different vision of development and of the country. They finally looked at the people as subjects of rights for prior consultation. So that marks this history of the indigenous movement, of the organized Indigenous women, with more solid leadership that emerges from different spheres, from the community to the national and international. I believe that this will be an advancement and I am very happy to be part of and witness these processes because one could not imagine this. It's beautiful to see that this occurs.

KBM: Tania dear, and finally, and speaking of those difficult contexts, how do you think COVID has affected indigenous women? What has been the specific impact?

TPT: Yes, this is one of the issues that we have been addressing since Chirapaq from the Continental Link, making it visible. In fact, we put together a regional report on the impact of the pandemic on the rights of indigenous women. And well, you have perhaps three dimensions or spaces. On the one hand at the internal level, within the indigenous organization or the people, the violence that women suffer in this context of the pandemic is not necessarily recorded, there is no disaggregated data, nor is there any visible data on what is happening. In Peru that is happening. The records kept by the mixed indigenous organizations on cases of people infected and killed by COVID-19 do not show women differently either. So, the first internal barrier is that the record disaggregated, differentiated, according to gender, ethnicity and age, is not being addressed in the best way. And we, women, are there fighting for this to happen and for it to happen and for us to have that data as evidence.

³⁵ The 2009 Peruvian political crisis resulted in a confrontation between the National Police and indigenous residents who protested Petroperú's oil development in the Peruvian Amazon. The military intervention, known as *Baguazo*, ended with 23 police deaths and 10 native/civilian deaths. ("2009 Peruvian political crisis." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2009_Peruvian_political_crisis. Accessed 21 July 2021.)

In the second space, from the State, from public institutions, this is an issue that is repeated because you do not have the records or the approach to violence that has provided specific protocols on how you will treat a case of violence in indigenous areas. How do you get to a territory to address a case when you have the area blocked? When no food has arrived, when the bonds have not arrived, when the staff has stopped moving from a rural strategy for the prevention and eradication of violence, an environment more ruralized and Amazonic. So, we have verified that one of the problems that women face is the invisible violence, that is not registered, not approached, not attended. That is, in all the countries, in Mexico, in Peru, in Guatemala, in El Salvador, in Chile, in Colombia, we have had some terrible cases, including sexual violations to a minor by agents of the State in Colombia. That is, enormous, terrible things, and why? Because you have militarized territories in Colombia. In the Amazon region, you have the presence of extractive companies, which have not stopped in times of a pandemic. The people who are not part of the territory come out, come in, freely. In exchange for this, companies conditioning the operation of their extractive project, don't come out if the oxygen doesn't come in. Conditioning the entry of oxygen if they let them operate and not conditioning it if they don't let them enter. This is a really difficult and adverse situation.

The other space, which I think has more to do with international advocacy, is how the voices of indigenous and global networks have been able to have a very important presence in relation to the pandemic and have conversations with the institutions of the United Nations, with the agencies of the United Nations. Whether it is the UNFPA³⁶, or the UNDP³⁷, or the WHO³⁸ itself, or the FAO³⁹ for the issue of agriculture, the secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Peoples in New York⁴⁰, that is, the visibility has been quite visible, they have not lowered their guard, and there is, an organization that is empowered at these levels, at the global level. And like Peru, from Chirapaq and from ONAMIAP and other leaderships, we have also been working to make visible what is happening in Peru. To make what is happening at the regional level and on the issue of violence visible. But you also have the case of maternal health, and midwives have had a very important role in the front line of attending cases of childbirth in Indigenous

³⁶ The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), founded in 1969, seeks to provide all people, especially women and young people, access to high quality sexual and reproductive health services that allow them to decide how many children they want to have, when to have them, their right to have safe pregnancies and children, and understand and enjoy their sexuality without fear and violence. ("Who we are." UNFPA. <https://peru.unfpa.org/es/unfpa-en-el-peru>. Accessed 20 July 2021.)

³⁷ The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) aims to reduce poverty and inequality globally by focusing on sustainable development, democratic governance and peace building, and climate and disaster resilience. ("Who We Are." UNDP. <https://www.undp.org/about-us>. Accessed 22 July 2021.)

³⁸ The World Health Organization (WHO), was founded in 1948 with the goal of expanding universal health coverage, coordinating response to health emergencies, and promote healthier lives through science-based policies and programs. ("What we do." WHO. <https://www.who.int/about>. Accessed 22 July 2021.)

³⁹ The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), founded in 1945, is a branch of the United Nations that seeks to end hunger internationally, working in over 130 countries. ("About FAO." FAO. <http://www.fao.org/about/en/>. Accessed 21 July 2021.)

⁴⁰ The United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) was established in 2000 with the mandate to deal with indigenous issues related to economic and social development, culture, the environment, health, and human rights. ("Permanent Forum." United Nations. <https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/unpfii-sessions-2.html>. Accessed 22 July 2021.)

territories. Where you have a collapsed space that has no space to attend to births, the midwives are doing it. However, they do not receive a monetary incentive, nor public recognition, but they are the ones who are acting. To mention these two issues, they are issues that do not always come up in the balance we make about the reality we are living. But I think that later on, we will be able to have evidence because it's being recorded, the Indigenous organizations are doing interesting work in this regard. The information is being systematized, from civil society as well, and hopefully these reports will allow us to also achieve some programs [inaudible] to restore rights, to recognize and to value, and not leave as painful scenes that we live, and we then return to this normality which we do not want. This normality where people are treated unequally as second-class citizens if we do not build a new normal from these lessons right?

KBM: And it's a very complex theme and the work you are doing is important Tania. It really is a job with major importance which I think, like you mentioned, we will be able to see in the future how it's particularly affecting the Amazon peoples, the indigenous peoples. And that we are not seeing the truth. I thank you very much for your time Tania. It has been a very nice interview; I have learned a lot. There were many things that I did not know about your career, but talking to you, well I admire you more and more, and I am getting to know you more every time...

TPT: Thank you, Karen.