

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

SITE: PERU

**Transcript of Tarcila Rivera Zea
Interviewer: Karen Bernedo
Morales**

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Tarcila Rivera Zea is a Quechua activist who has dedicated nearly 40 years of her life to defending and seeking recognition for the indigenous people of Perú. She was born in the community of San Francisco de Pujas, Ayacucho, capital of the province of Huamanga, Peru. During the 1970s, she worked as a specialized secretary in archival and library science at the Ministry of Culture of Peru, studying at the Vatican City and Argentina. She also served as secretary of Martha Hildebrandt at the National Institute of Culture. Years later she collaborated as a journalist for the Pueblo Indio magazine of the Indian Council of South America (CISA). In recognition of her work in collecting testimonies of Indigenous women raped during armed conflicts, she was invited to pursue specialization courses in human rights at the Institute for Social Studies (ISS) in The Hague, The Netherlands, and the International Center for Education in Human Rights in Charlottetown, Canada. In 1987 she began to participate in international processes on the rights of indigenous peoples, as well as in United Nations conferences on Women, which led her to be invited by UN Women in 2012 to be part of her International Advisory Group on the Civil Society. Rivera Zea is the founder of the Continental Link of Indigenous Women of the Americas (ECMIA) and the International Forum of Indigenous Women (FIMI), two networks that promote the empowerment and political involvement of the world's indigenous women. As a result of all her years of activism, defending and making visible the cultures and indigenous peoples of Peru, the Permanent Workshop of Andean and Amazonian Indigenous Women of Peru and of the Center of Indigenous Cultures of Peru (CHIRAPAQ) was created. She was president of CHIRAPAQ and is currently the vice president, coordinator of the Continental Liaison for Indigenous Women of the Americas (ECMIA), member of the Board of Directors of the Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples of the United Nations between 2006 and 2011. She has also collaborated in the creation of the International Indigenous Press Agency (AIPIN).

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: So, I know that you are always asked about your organization, but we would like to start by asking you about your life history, a little bit about how the context you have had to live in is important for who you are now. If you have stories from your childhood or from when you were young, what were those memories?

Tarcila Rivera Zea: Look, I think, a lot of it is floating around, not to be redundant but I kind of see my life in several stages, right? From when I was a child up until I was 10 years old, in the community, I was taking in everything from the local culture, monolingual. And then when I was 10 or 11 until I was 21, which was the stage of inserting myself in the urban environment, let's say western, through domestic service just during my studies, or, primary and secondary school.¹ During that process, I learned a lot and I didn't end up having many bad experiences because after I turned 21, I started working for the state, through a public competition during Velasco Alvarado's time² which I say because it was a time when we didn't need to have certain connections.

Then I applied for a position as a secretary and won the competition. So in that stage from when I was 21 to 32 or 33 years old, we can say that it was the stage of learning, knowing, absorbing, but also strengthening that learning, my understanding of what Western culture and national society are. And because from that time on I also took part in.. well, not limiting myself as an indigenous person, discriminated and marginalized against because I never accepted that status. I have a different experience. So it was more like trying to learn and get to know everything. So my first trip abroad in 1975 with a scholarship to Argentina opened my eyes and my understanding of another world where class, let's say, the poor or the working class, is regarded differently than here in Lima³ because in Peru everything is very stratified, right? And for me, that first trip stood out in opening up a different horizon. And why? Because I had also just finished business high school and all of my classmates were all professionals, historians, directors of historical archives and honestly they [laughter] wrote a letter to [laughter] the people who ran the course saying "how was it possible that they had awarded a course to a secretary"

Well, I don't know if I wasn't aware of any of that, but that marked my desire to continue growing and learning because for me everything in life has been a challenge, right? And so,

¹ Primary school is roughly equivalent to elementary school and the beginning of middle school in the American school system. Secondary school is similar to a combination of the end of middle school and all of high school in the American school system. ("Educational stage." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Educational_stage. Accessed 28 April 2021.)

² Juan Velasco Alvarado was a general in the Peruvian military who led and executed the coup d'état of October 3, 1968, overthrowing President Fernando Belaúnde. He served as president of Peru during a dictatorship that lasted until 1975. ("Juan Velasco Alvarado." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Juan_Velasco_Alvarado. Accessed 28 April 2021.)

³ Lima is the capital of Peru. The city is located east of Callao, a port on the Pacific Ocean, and west of the Andes Mountains. Lima has a population of over eight million people. (Robinson, David. "Lima." Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/place/Lima>. Accessed 28 April 2021.)

I come from a family tradition in which we were always taught to be better and that we were all capable but we had to face whatever life put in front of us right? So, when I came back I wanted to apply to college. I tried and tried, but nothing because, of course, they asked me to solve problems on things that I had never seen before. Letters with numbers [laughter] so I never got in [pause]. But you know what? In '75 I said, " First the world, then anything else". Then I applied for another scholarship to Europe until finally, in '82, '81, '82 I got a scholarship to Italy and I went there to do a course at the Vatican's ecclesiastical archive,⁴ where I took two courses because it was for one year, librarianship⁵ and archival science.⁶

Discovering everything about that system, learning things that I had never heard about before, but in the end, I also had to work there because the scholarship hardly covered anything. So.. but I discovered the world for myself and also another way to be considered an employee, another outlook. And then I got totally involved in the indigenous movement, and there, how can I say it, I was setting up the whole process of my life. But also what I had been taking in from the women's and feminist movement because I also participated, in them since I started working for the State, participating in the unions. So all that learning for me was foundational, right? And at the age of 32, 33, when I came back from Italy, I mean, since the 1980s, I was an activist, and then I completely dedicated myself to it, first as a volunteer in the Indigenous movement and then participating actively. And I never wanted them to consider me as a leader, but just to see the contributions I made because there were all male leaders.

So that's when I started to have these conflicts because my way of being was not that of a submissive woman, waiting for men to tell her what to do, this clashed with, let's say, the leadership style which was totally macho, right? And then in '86, I began to look at it differently and we founded Chirapaq.⁷ I always saw everything from an Indigenous perspective and I would say from a gender equity perspective. I mean knowing that there are conflicts and there is an imbalance in our relationships and all of that, so we decided to create Chirapaq but in a context that has to do with political violence in Peru. I mean, in 86, I'm from a community in Vilcashuamán in Ayacucho⁸ [short break] and so I looked at the original community, the context of a big family and everything that was happening in

⁴ The Vatican is a sovereign nation ruled by the pope, the head of the Catholic Church. It is located in Rome, Italy. The Vatican's archives contain documents and artifacts collected by the Church from as early as the 13th century. The archives contain approximately 16 million pages of documents. ("Vatican Apostolic Archive." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vatican_Apostolic_Archive. Accessed 28 April 2021.)

⁵ Librarianship is the science of topics related to books and libraries. ("Librarian." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Librarian>. Accessed 28 April 2021.)

⁶ Archival science is the techniques of conserving and cataloguing archives. ("Archival science." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Archival_science. Accessed 28 April 2021.)

⁷ Chirapaq, Centro de Culturas Indígenas del Perú, is an Indigenous association that was founded in 1986. The group supports indigenous communities by running soup kitchens that serve nutritious native foods, hosting cultural programming, and more. Chirapaq advocates for policies which support women's rights and indigenous rights. ("History." CHIRAPAQ. <http://chirapaq.org.pe/en/who-we-are/history>. Accessed 28 April 2021.)

⁸ Vilcashuamán is a city in Peru, located on an ancient archaeological site. It is the capital Vilcas Huamán Province in Ayacucho, Peru. Vilcashuamán is located at an altitude of 3,490 meters above sea level on the eastern slopes of the Andes. ("Vilcashuamán." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vilcashuam%C3%A1n>. Accessed 28 April 2021.)

Ayacucho in this tremendous violence between the State and the Shining Path,⁹ in which the more traditional communities were unaware of that battle, for example, my community was totally unaware of that battle and they didn't know what was going on and they died, like cannon fodder, between the two groups.

So, all of this meant that people who had never left the community had to go out and fight for their lives, and so this context had a great impact on us, and we got a small group together and founded Chirapaq, first thinking about how the creators and producers of culture saw their lives and cultural continuity threatened in this conflict in a war that was not ours. Then we emerged strategically, I don't know who enlightened me and accompanied me, but I survived The Shining Path, I survived Montesinos,¹⁰ I survived everything because I'm Ayacuchana¹¹ well, everyone questioned if I was a facade of Sendero, Sendero said that I was promoting petty bourgeois tastes and I hope to survive Covid-19.¹²

KBM: In what year do you found Chirapaq, Tarcila?

TRZ: In '86

KBM: And during that time, I mean, from '86 until today, you have gone through many diverse political and social contexts, how do you see that change in relation to Chirapaq or your own work?

TRZ: We, as Indigenous women and as Chirapaq itself have had conflicts within the movement and from outside. Within the movement we were seen as an NGO,¹³ and the NGOs, at that time, were often questioned because the traditional leaders said that working with projects and with money in this form of association, was to take advantage of the people and take advantage of the issue economically. And because the only ones who said that we are authorized voices are the representative organizations. And so it was very difficult for us, it was very difficult for me to resist [laughter] explaining and making people

⁹ The Communist Party of Peru, also known as the Shining Path (*Sendero Luminoso*), is a revolutionary group in Peru. The organization was founded by Abimael Guzmán. Guzmán spent the 1960s enlisting armed members from indigenous communities in rural and poor urban areas. In 1980, the group carried out bombings, assassinations, and other forms of violence in the Andes and larger cities such as Callao and Lima. The group aimed to liberate indigenous people across Peru. In 1992, Guzmán was arrested and sentenced to life in prison. ("Shining Path." Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Shining-Path>. Accessed 28 April 2021.)

¹⁰ Vladimiro Montesinos served as the chief advisor of Peru's National Intelligence Service and advisor to former president Alberto Fujimori between 1990 and 2000. Using Peru's secret police, he censored the media, bribed politicians, and committed various human rights violations. In 2000, secret videos showing Montesinos bribing members of Congress to leave the opposition and support Fujimori were broadcast on television. ("Vladimiro Montesinos." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vladimiro_Montesinos#Political_repression. Accessed 28 April 2021.)

¹¹ "Ayacuchana" is the feminine singular of "Ayacuchano", referring to someone of the Ayacucho region. ("ayacuchano." Wiktionary. <https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/ayacuchano#Spanish>. Accessed 28 April 2021.)

¹² The Covid-19 pandemic led Peru's government to instate a strict lockdown on March 16, 2020. The first lockdown lasted until June 2020, longer than most other countries. However, the number of deaths from Covid-19 in Peru remained high due to spread in markets and banks, among other locations. (Pighi Bel, Pierina. Horton, Jake. "Coronavirus: What's happening in Peru?" BBC. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-53150808>. Accessed 3 May 2021.)

¹³ NGOs (non-governmental organizations) are nonprofit entities that are not run by any government. They often aim to address a social or political issue. ("Non-governmental organization." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Non-governmental_organization. Accessed 28 April 2021.)

understand that we, too, as women, have a role in building the movement.

And we have a role in the external dialogue, right, so it was very hard, it took many years, but now, for example, as I was talking yesterday with the other webinar with some leaders of Colombia, I was saying "it is encouraging to hear some male leaders, say that gender violence does exist, that there is inequality within the communities and that we have to put it on the agenda." But the important thing is that we don't just say that because the conditions are set by the donors, but that a process of convincing people is still needed so that the rights of girls, young women, and women are actually included in the proposal of the Indigenous movement itself, that is, it is still a work in progress.

So, for example, Chirapaq emerged from the outside, and of course, I am not a professional in the social sciences. Traditionally in Peru, an NGO was not led by any person like me, so I fought, and fought and fought because we are an NGO that does not consider itself an NGO, we consider ourselves an association. We consider ourselves part of the movement, we consider ourselves an important arm to contribute to the movement and I think that Chirapaq has fulfilled the role well. For the movement itself, contributing to the international scenarios where international policies are more advanced than in our countries, that's the other challenge, isn't it?

And this one has also called for us to maintain a dialogue of mutual respect although at the beginning it was very difficult with the women's movement and the feminist movement. It has been a work in progress since perhaps 1994, but on those terms, right? And so we have fulfilled our role as women, as a bridge of communication and understanding with the women's movement, but from the Indigenous perspective, and in the indigenous peoples' movement as women, making them understand that we are strengthening the movement and that indigenous women, if tradition says that we stand behind men advising and making decisions, then what we want is to have a chair beside the men who decide the destiny of the family or the community or the village.

So with, what would you call it?.. very simple conversations and speeches, we have managed to make it clear that we are not their competitors, nor enemies, nor are we going to divide the movement. So at this point, Indigenous women's feminism is enriched with a very clear vision of the complementarity and indivisibility of the collective rights as Indigenous women and individual rights as people and as women. So maybe it is not so easy to understand but now that there is so much talk about natural resources, the impact of climate change and so on, that is where it is most clearly seen. Collective rights, in relation to territory, natural resources, language, and cultural expressions and not being violated in your body, in your life, or in your territory. In other words both situations, I think this example summarizes both aspects, because Indigenous women also define the act of dumping toxic waste on their land or in their river as violence that violates a collective right, but if that person does not have clean water and is also physically abused, violated in one way or another within or outside the family or community context, it also has repercussions on life and health. So these are two concepts of rights that for us, after almost 30 years, we can say are a contribution and a clarity for ourselves as well, right?

KBM: What would you say has been the importance of feminism for you, for your work?

TRZ: For me personally, it... it has been a situation of empowerment based on the examples that I brought from my community. But since we do not say feminist concepts like they are understood from outside, I have also been questioned as to whether I should speak properly, etc., but I did not come from academia or theory, because I come from a family tradition where women work side by side the men. For example, my mother has instilled in us strength, security, that we shouldn't depend on men, that we shouldn't depend on others, but that we are capable of achieving these specific things and having the freedom to decide what to do, for example, with what you earn, if you earn your money. It is something that I look back on, because my mother was a feminist, she was an empowered woman who never submitted to just washing her husband's clothes, I mean, not only the traditional roles, but she always conveyed her own strength, capacity and authority at home because she also had the security that she contributed to the family's income.

So I come from an experience of that kind and then when I look at the other side it is simply to say, "Well, I'm no less than anyone else," but it had a lot to do with the fact that now we're talking a lot about racism, right? I didn't understand it much at the time, but this is another issue that we deal with in Peru with indigenous people and afro-descendants together. We were leading an inter-ethnic commission and since 1997 we have been able to put the issue of racism in our midst, and now everyone is talking about it and with what is happening in the United States,¹⁴ racism is being addressed with the discrimination we face. So in the women's movement, it was hard to understand that discrimination was not only gender-based, because if I am a non-academic Andean¹⁵ woman, not a social scientist, who does not know theoretical concepts, no, my word, my opinion did not have the same weight. Now things have changed quite a bit and I think that all the feminists from my generation and I, along with them, have also been learning, and I have been learning from them.

So I can't say I can't deny that, actually the opposite, I admire for example and I will always have a special affection for Ana Maria Portugal.¹⁶ She was the first feminist who, for example, I don't know, thought that I should be there participating in different spaces. So I have been modestly and humbly learning, getting to know everything, and after Beijing,¹⁷ I

¹⁴ Beginning on May 26, 2020, protests against police brutality and racism began taking place across the United States, following the murder of George Floyd, a black American man killed while being arrested by Derek Chauvin, a police officer in Minneapolis, Minnesota. During the summer of 2020, an estimated 15 million to 26 million Americans participated in these protests. ("George Floyd protests." Wikipedia.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Floyd_protests#Use_of_social_media. Accessed 29 April 2021.)

¹⁵ An Andean person is from the Andes Mountains in South America. Part of the Andes Mountains are in eastern Peru. ("Andes." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andes>. Accessed 3 May 2021.)

¹⁶ Ana Maria Portugal is a native of Arequipa, a writer and journalist, and a pioneer of feminism in Peru and Latin America. ("Ana Maria Portugal." Feminist Archives. <http://feministarchives.isiswomen.org/categories/author/399-ana-maria-portugal>. Accessed 7 June 2021.)

¹⁷ The Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace was held in Beijing, China in 1995. At this United Nations (UN) conference, 17,000 participants including activists and representatives of governments, the UN, and international agencies gathered to discuss women's rights internationally. ("World Conference on Women, 1995." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_Conference_on_Women,_1995#Attendees. Accessed 29 April 2021.)

began to look a little bit at what the women's movement was, the feminist movement, and with time I looked at why the feminist movement was almost an elite group and what was happening with the movement of women from the working sectors that we met with and talked with in other settings. For example, the component of cultural identity or its origins, how the union of domestic workers, I'm talking about, has been around since the 80s, and then all that has gone...for me, for example I still don't have it written down and hopefully one day I will have time for, the emergence of meal centers, the emergence of soup kitchens, I mean, how did they start? What is the burden on those women who are located in the working-class neighborhoods and then find a solution for the lack of food, for unemployment and for supporting their family?

These days, when we see how women suffer who go out every day to sell quail's egg with boiled potatoes and hard-boiled eggs, and who make 10 to 15 soles¹⁸ a day to support their family and who are seen as the messy ones, the undisciplined, come on, how much do we need to know and understand each other among Peruvians? So, this, all of this, this way of looking at and comparing one situation with another, this, understanding one actor and another, this, is the richest thing for me up to this moment, you know? And that's what I got from moving around on the two stages. Not leaving where I'm from, but looking at the other side and trying to see what future we want for ourselves, right? So that's my goal, that is, everything adds up. I understood this because in difficult times they asked me why I didn't have class hatred.

And [laughter] recently someone asked me, right or left? "I don't know," I said, "red, white, or black. I tell him "human rights have no color. And they have neither right nor left." If human beings believe that we all have rights because we are human, we shouldn't be separating ourselves by color. And because maybe I, I have gotten support from upper-class people, from white people, who were not from my class. So what I've seen is a little bit beyond the things that divide us or the ideas that divide us, but I've been focusing on the positive aspects. That's the life experience I have, isn't it? And when young women ask all these questions, I tell them "Well, you are in another situation, as Indigenous women, now you are professionals, you have gotten to know academia, and you have a series of opportunities that of course is also a temptation." But what do we as women who have begun this process want for our daughters and sons? Exactly that.

For them to be universal citizens without prejudice, without being discriminated against, and that they feel confident in their abilities and act with dignity and are treated with dignity. That is what we want and that they aren't told "you are only there for the community or you are only there to be in the kitchen, or you are only there to have a husband and have him provide for you". No, now husbands don't even provide for us. I mean, we no longer have to ..[laugh] or stop to take care of our husbands, right? We no longer want that for any reason, and like the first thing that we Indigenous women

¹⁸ The sol has been the legal tender in Peru since 1991. This currency replaced the inti that circulated between 1985 and 1991. Initially, it was called "nuevo sol" to differentiate it from the "viejo" sol that circulated between 1931 and 1985. ("Peruvian sol." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peruvian_sol. Accessed 29 April 2021.)

understood after Cairo in 1994 and 1995,¹⁹ and for every year for example, this is why and how to understand sexual and reproductive rights. And the first thing is to see, to be clear that we don't want our parents to decide who we should marry, when we should get married, and what we should do with our lives anymore. And so that for example is a huge step because both men and women when they think about it already want different situations for their daughters. They don't think that girls who are thirteen, fourteen or twelve years old should pair up with older ones because they see it as a tradition. That's not tradition. They come to the conclusion that it's not tradition.

Now they tell you "we are worried because they already started to menstruate and if they have sex, they get pregnant and many times the men do not take care of them and then there are no more fish, there are no more fish in the sea and then we do not have the same opportunity of seeing our daughters and sons. In other words, the context is changing and we get to a point where all men and women, for example, want better opportunities for their daughters. No one is saying anymore, "It is our tradition that we give thirteen-year-old girls to adults to take care of them." No. Some conditions force them to do so, such as poverty, exclusion, and a series of historical denials, right?

KBM: Tarcila, and could you tell me a little about your work with Chirapaq, what strategies have you used over the years?

TRZ: Look first, [laughter] we participated, we made this statement of what the theory says in the worldview that women are the axis of family and the axis of culture. That's why we started a strategy of strengthening the abilities of the women themselves. So what ONAMIAP²⁰ is today took almost 15 years from Chirapaq, because, without knowing how to do it, we began to get together and I began to call on female leaders, Andean and Amazonian,²¹ simply to talk about our role, our abilities, but also to reflect on and analyze our specific identity as Quechua²² speakers or Aymaras²³ or Amazons. It took a long time then, about 15 years, and today we can say that this is one of our greatest contributions, right, with leadership and having put on the table that there is a need to talk about the empowerment of indigenous women. But it has also allowed us to look at the barriers that

¹⁹ The United Nations International Conference on Population and Development took place in Cairo, Egypt in September 1994. The attendees of the conference adopted the Programme of Action, a guide to population and development programs that center women's rights and reproductive rights. ("International Conference on Population and Development." United Nations Population Fund. <https://www.unfpa.org/events/international-conference-population-and-development-icpd>. Accessed 29 April 2021.)

²⁰ The National Organization of Andean and Amazonian Indigenous Women of Peru is a non-governmental organization founded in 2009 in Peru that promotes the individual and collective rights of indigenous women. ("National Organisation of Andean and Amazonia Women in Peru ONAMIAP." International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs. <https://www.iwgia.org/en/iwgia-partners/30-national-organisation-of-andean-and-amazonian-women-in-peru-onamiap.html>. Accessed 29 April 2021.)

²¹ In Peru, Amazonian people are from the portion of the Amazon rainforest contained within Peru. It is located east of the Andes Mountains and accounts for 60% of the country's territory. ("Peruvian Amazonia." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peruvian_Amazonia. Accessed 29 April 2021.)

²² Quechuan languages are a family of indigenous languages spoken most in the Andes. ("Quechua." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quechua>. Accessed 29 April 2021.)

²³ Aymaras are part of an indigenous group that resides mostly on the Altiplano, a plateau in the Andes that is in both Peru and Bolivia, and speaks Aymara. ("Aymara." Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Aymara>. Accessed 29 April 2021.)

we have and try to think together and look for ways to remove those barriers.

That has been the main thing and the other proposal that has to do with cultural identity and self-esteem that was developed with the refugee children, affected by the violence, in Ayacucho* where we had the... I don't know if it is the prosperity for me to have had wonderful people who never charged us, like Dr. Maria Rostworowski,²⁴ our guide, Dr. Antúnez de Mayolo.²⁵ I mention both of them because a proposal to improve nutrition with local products also had an impact on the school and cultural identity. So we had cultural affirmation workshops in the neighborhoods where language was the vehicle for communication and the arts, right, of our elders with these children and the two of them also talking to the rural teachers about identity and food culture, combining the two. So that has been a wonderful experience and from that proposal comes Tania Pariona,²⁶ she was very..she was still a child, and she has followed her path. For me, she is the best example of our strategy. Since she was a child, she affirmed her identity, affirmed her cultural expressions, and her leadership because she too has been a leader since she was a child, an adolescent, a young person and now an adult, right?

So we would like, for example, all these strategies that we have initiated and that we see as valid to exist. We are still dreaming that they become public policy from the districts and we don't just see the side of conflict and delinquency of adolescents if we as a society are not doing anything for them to have welcoming spaces and grow up well, right? So our proposal is still valid after so many years. The other thing is what we called for the recognition of the food culture 30 years ago, but this is to point out the importance of all the pre-Hispanic foods that have a high nutritional value, and that's why Dr. Antúnez de Mayolo joined us, who has since passed away. He has a wonderful book, and he told the students and rural professors that instead of drinking soda, we should drink chicha de jora²⁷ because it has specific components. And that instead of eating rice and noodles, we should eat quinoa, we should eat this.

And that instead of thinking about other things, we should eat guinea pigs again because it has something that supports the cerebral membrane. And he told the men, "When you think about procreation, you have to think about the quality of your semen, [laughter] so you have to eat well."

²⁴ María Rostworowski was a Peruvian historian and social researcher, famous for her thorough studies of the pre-Hispanic cultures of Peru and the Inca Empire. ("María Rostworowski." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mar%C3%ADa_Rostworowski. Accessed 29 April 2021.)

²⁵ Santiago Antúnez de Mayolo was a Peruvian physicist, engineer and mathematician. He was a candidate for the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1943. Graduated in mathematical sciences from the University of San Marcos, he traveled to France to obtain the title of Electrical Engineer at the University of Grenoble. ("Santiago Antúnez de Mayolo." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santiago_Ant%C3%BAnez_de_Mayolo. Accessed 29 April 2021.)

²⁶ Tania Edith Pariona Tarqui is a Quechua leader, social worker, member of Congress, and activist for human rights, especially for indigenous people, youth and women. ("Tania Pariona Tarqui." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tania_Pariona_Tarqui. Accessed 29 April 2021.)

²⁷ Chicha de jora is a fermented drink native to groups in the Andes. There are diverse regional varieties, but the drink is traditionally made with a type of yellow maize. It is a corn beer and contains a small amount of alcohol. ("Chicha de jora." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chicha_de_jora. Accessed 29 April 2021.)

So he told us that if we ate healthy again, and well, as our ancestors did, he said that our brains and qualities would be like the people who built Machu Picchu²⁸ and the people we see in museums. So why not transmit that through formal schooling. That is why we undertook what would be called education with dignity, mainly for the indigenous people, so that you don't have to go to school and disown your culture, which my experience, because I arrived at the national school, at the public school, and sincerely I fell silent, and I was a Quechua speaker for almost 40 years [short pause]. So now things have changed quite a bit, well, since the 80's, right?

KBM: And what projects are you currently involved in now? Currently

TRZ: Well, we continue as Chirapaq with the same programs. More with the intention of having one strategy to influence public policy because firstly, the proposals are valid and we have wonderful examples. However, we continue to make a contribution at the local, national and international levels to taking a stance on the rights of young women and Indigenous peoples in different scenarios. So we go in very deep, for example, when we talk about girls or women, the situation Indigenous women or girls are in, for example, who are raped or sexually exploited in the face of a system that still does not include them or respond appropriately. So it is a pending agenda and we work inter-generationally from the local to the global levels.

Due to the area, we have real experiences and real work, we almost never get the funds we need to develop our own initiatives but we do not give up. I mean, we can't change our priorities every time we are offered funds, quite the opposite. So we have this part of gender equality within and outside the movement, right? Inter-culturally and inter-generationally. And then we have everything that has to do with, for example, the recognition of the contributions of Indigenous women, Indigenous peoples, now that the 2030 agenda²⁹ is seen as an opportunity. With the ODS-5,³⁰ how can we as Indigenous women insert ourselves or use this article so that our initiatives do not continue to be pilots but rather become government policies. It is a very difficult job, it's long, because of one thing that is important.

As a product of racism and colonialism in our countries, we Indigenous people believe that we are worth less than others. And changing that has to do with self-esteem, with strengthening cultural identity and with rights, is a long process that no one wants to invest

²⁸ Machu Picchu is an Inca citadel located in the Andes mountains in Peru, in the Urubamba River Valley. It was built in the 15th century and then abandoned. The site is now famous for its sophisticated dry stone walls that are built without the use of a mortar, and its panoramic views. ("Machu Picchu." Wikipedia.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Machu_Picchu#Cultural_artifacts:_Dispute_between_Peru_and_Yale_University. Accessed 29 April 2021.)

²⁹ The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted by the United Nations in 2015. The plan details 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets. ("Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development." United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. <https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda>. Accessed 29 April 2021.)

³⁰ Sustainable Development Goal 5 (Goal 5 or ODS-5) is one of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals established by the United Nations in 2015. This goal focuses on empowering women and girls to reduce gender inequality, in order to avoid the social stagnation that the latter causes. ("Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development." United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. <https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda>. Accessed 29 April 2021.)

in because it says, "training, training." Training in rights, knowledge of rights, and we are interested in that, for example, that the girls and boys who finish high school leave with an awareness of the rights of that basic education, knowing that they should not be discriminated against or excluded and that they know how to make clear and appropriate decisions when they turn 21 years old. And that women know that they do not have to depend on men, and that men leave knowing that they should not mistreat or violate any woman.

KBM: Tarcila and from your experience what has been your relationship with other women's organizations?

TRZ: Of mutual respect and dialogue. In other words, we are not exclusive. If we are invited, we go and we are, like Chirapaq, part of the Latin American women's group that influences the Commission on the Status of Women,³¹ where we try to include the Indigenous perspective and also the Indigenous women as actors, right? Now we also participate intergenerationally. In other words, most of the investments of time, initiatives, effort and resources that we are trying to achieve are going towards that part. We aren't invisible anymore, I mean we have already entered the scene. It has taken more than 35 years, but we made it, right? That is to say, on this basis, the new generation must continue to grow and must also continue to broaden its actions.

KBM: What would be your assessment of the feminist movement in Peru? Your evaluation, your diagnosis, how do you see it?

TRZ: Well, when they talk about the feminist movement, I see a problem. Because I know very few feminists and the feminists I know are those women who are in academia who have that commitment to visibility and empowerment and everything else with women. But I don't know if the feminist movement also includes the women of the working class movements. From the neighborhoods, that is, we need to work on articulating the differences because one thing I always said to the feminist sisters is "why don't we look at equality between the same gender?" And of course sometimes it clashes. Why? Because I am not a feminist, like the great Gina Vargas.³² I don't know why in my head [laughter], when we talk about feminists, we have an image of who the feminists are.

When people ask me, "are you a feminist?" I get conflicted. Because I don't feel like a feminist in the traditional way of meeting feminists. For example, Diana³³ is a feminist, an

³¹ The Commission on the Status of Women is a commission of the United Nation's Economic and Social Council. It is devoted to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. ("Commission on the Status of Women." UN Women. <https://www.unwomen.org/en/csw>. Accessed 1 May 2021.)

³² Virginia "Gina" Vargas is a Peruvian sociologist and a leading activist for women's rights in Peru. Vargas founded the Flora Tristán Center, a non-governmental organization that advocates for women's rights in Peru. Vargas has also campaigned for reproductive rights and run educational workshops on women's movement theory and practices. ("Virginia Vargas." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Virginia_Vargas. Accessed 1 May 2021.)

³³ Diana Miloslavich Tupac is the coordinator of the Political Participation and Decentralization Program of the Flora Tristán Center. She is also the author of *The Autobiography of María Elena Moyano: The Life and Death of a Peruvian Activist*. ("Ms. Diana Miloslavich." The Nairobi Summit Commitments on ICPD25. <https://www.nairobisummiticpd.org/speaker/ss14diana-miloslavich>. Accessed 1 May 2021.)

academic, she participates, she is listened to, she is wonderful. And she makes an effort and she is present through Flora,³⁴ right? She's a historian, she has a relationship with women from the popular sector. But it's true that Diana is Diana, and our Mrs. Souza is a feminist, she's one of the self-managed organizations, etc. These are two opinions that should, indeed, have a conversation, that should be on the same page and be building a feminism that perhaps reflects this diversity of women's ways of acting but that are looking at one side. Women should not be left behind in this diversity. Because the issue of power, for example, during the last five years, I have been thinking about. In other words, how do we exercise power, man or woman, how do we exercise power? So a woman in power, if she doesn't exercise inclusive and democratic power, we haven't gained anything. [laughter]

KBM: Tarcila, you have mentioned a lot about the trips abroad and this sort of connections that you have created. What lessons can you tell us about these networks that you have built over the years, internationally?

TRZ: I am satisfied because my first outing to a space like, well I was always close to feminism, to the women's movement in Peru since '79, '80 but in '85 I arrived in Nairobi³⁵ and I saw another situation. Then in '94, and then in '95, I'm still investigating, what has made me further develop my collective being, because I would find a door and I would try to pull it until two or three others came to help open it. So that's what has guided me in life. And if first we had the permanent workshops for Indigenous, Andean, and Amazonian women of Peru, today ONAMIAP, how could I convince the male leaders to allow women from the CNA's,³⁶ CCP³⁷ go to do the training. That I don't know, I have to look back on it.

Then we have the Continental Link of Indigenous Women³⁸ and I'm always pushing forward and after the Continental Link, we have the International Indigenous Women's Forum³⁹ which is global. So what I have done is try to carry out the learning and do it

³⁴ The Flora Tristán Peruvian Women's Center was founded in 1979 as a non-profit with the mission of empowering Peruvian women politically. The organization advocates for legal reforms, runs educational outreach programs, and more. ("Mission and vision." Flora Tristán. http://www.flora.org.pe/web2/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=198&Itemid=27. Accessed 1 May 2021.)

³⁵ The World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women was held in Nairobi, Kenya in 1985. More than 140 countries participated in the conference. The group found that the UN Decade for Women had only accomplished some of its goals. They established that improvements in gender equity globally were hindered by a worsening economic situation. ("Nairobi 1985." United Nations. <https://www.un.org/en/conferences/women/nairobi1985>. Accessed 1 May 2021.)

³⁶ The National Agrarian Confederation is an organization of producers of small-scale agriculture in Peru. It was founded in 1974 in the framework of the Agrarian Reform, under the government of General Juan Velasco Alvarado. ("¿Quiénes Somos?" Confederación Nacional Agraria: Inicio. <https://www.cna.org.pe/>. Accessed 2 May 2021.)

³⁷ CCP, La Confederación Campesina del Perú, is a farmer's movement founded in 1947. ("Confederación Campesina del Perú." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Confederaci%C3%B3n_Campesina_del_Per%C3%BA. Accessed 3 May 2021.)

³⁸ The Continental Network of Indigenous Women of the Americas, ECMIA, is a network of women's and indigenous peoples' organizations that promote recognition and respect for the rights of women, youth, and indigenous peoples throughout the Americas. ("Enlace Continental de Mujeres Indígenas." IWGIA. <https://www.iwgia.org/en/iwgia-partners/74-enlace-continental-de-mujeres-indigenas-americas.html>. Accessed 2 May 2021.)

³⁹ The International Indigenous Women's Forum is a global network that connects Indigenous women's organizations and human rights activists from around the world to ensure that indigenous women are included in conversations about human rights. ("About us." FIMI. <https://fimi-iiwf.org/about-us/?lang=en>. Accessed 2 May 2021.)

collectively and I think that Chirapaq has been an inspiration for many Indigenous associations that now exist, right? So, for example, I never called myself a leader or a director, no no I did not like to be told that I am a director because I don't direct anything. I just carried out [laughter] my initiatives and then Mayor Andrade⁴⁰ invited me and he said "no, we should invite Tarcila because I've been told that she is an excellent leader.

So I said, "What do you mean leader? Where is this coming from, sir? I'm not a leader. "No," he says, "you are well known." And well then, there were two situations that made me think, what does it mean to be a leader? Because you don't do it knowing that you want to be a leader or such. You have initiatives that you share, you carry them out, and in that sense, look at the international forum of Indigenous women, we are, the geo-cultural regions of the world, we are, I don't know, Africa, Asia, and we already have common priorities. It's almost 40 years of life totally dedicated to it.

Enlace Continental turned 23 years old because we were formally born in Beijing. Hey, we as Chirapaq are turning 35, but I was totally in the movement since the 80s. So it's a process, right, that is building and we feel happy and quite hopeful with the new generation. I have to go, it seems...

KBM: I know I know I know I know, and there is one more question that has to do with the health crisis, which is, how do you feel your work has changed since the COVID health crisis but also if you see that this health crisis has had a special impact on women? That's it.

TRZ: I think that, look for us, when one as an Indigenous person says "there is no meat, there is no this, there is no that." In the city they do not listen to us. Because they do not imagine the shortcomings that exist and I think the most important thing that has happened to the Indigenous communities, Andean and Amazonian is that it has actually exposed the gaps and historical and structural deficiencies that exist. We have to learn from this in order to have greater clarity and greater security in our demands, but also in the proposals that we have as Indigenous women and Indigenous peoples. And our country must really learn not to look only at the small center. We have to look at this diversity and this society that has, well, people who are perfect, who can order by delivery, who have their wine, who have their computer, who have everything, and that person has to come to think about who lives on that hill, that you see coming out of their buildings, surrounding Lima, and that there is almost no space left on the hills.

How will a policy reach them? That's what we lack and we have to learn. I don't know. The great challenge as a country is to look at ourselves from the side and not just from the top. Let's look at ourselves horizontally and build that wonderful thing that the ancient people left us during our civilization: to recognize everything we inherited in biodiversity, in natural resources, in knowledge, in wisdom and, above all, a wonderful food culture that, if we give it importance and respect it and empower it together with its creators and producers, we would have something to contribute to the world with food, for example. No,

⁴⁰ Alberto Andrade was a Peruvian lawyer, businessman and politician. He founded the political party Somos Lima. He served as the mayor of Lima from 1996 to 2002 and a member of congress from 2006 to 2009. ("Alberto Andrade." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alberto_Andrade. Accessed 2 May 2021.)

then I'll leave it here because the pandemic is terrible, it has beaten us all down but we have to learn, as a country, as a society, as individuals, as sectors and hopefully the politicians will learn.

KBM: Thank you very much Tarcila, I know that you are on limited time and that you have to go to another meeting, so I thank you again and I will communicate with you to that on the website there is an opportunity to put a photo, a bio, that I will later ask you for it. Thank you very much.

TRZ: Call me or send me a note. Thank you very much and I say goodbye to..

KBM: To Shelly?

TRZ: Yes, ya thank you. Bye.

KBM: Ciao.

TRZ: Ciao Ciao.