INTRODUCTION

Indigenista Inquiries and the Formation of Cracks

> The development of the indigenista current does not threaten or paralyze other vital elements of our literature. Indigenismo does not aspire to preempt the literary scene by excluding or blocking other impulses and manifestations. It represents the trend and tone of an era because of its sympathy and close association with the spiritual orientation of new generations who, in turn, are sensitive to the imperative needs of our economic and social development.
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> **José Carlos Mariátegui,**
> ***Siete ensayos de interpretación de la realidad peruana*,**
> **translated by Marjory Urquidi**

> This polemic of the white and Indian *cholaje* is a mestizo literature. Cholo and neo-Indian writers engender an artful ideology: *indigenismo* and *cholismo*. . . . But the time will come, as it already has, when the authentic and true Indians, Indians of blood and spirit, will irrupt into the "republic of letters," and Indian brains will appear, producing Indian thought. And then, one must be sure of it, that the mourning prayer will be sung for "indigenismo" as well as for "cholismo." Leaving the "vital space" free for *indianista* literature.
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> **Fausto Reinaga,**
> ***El indio y los escritores de América*, translated by the author**

In the 1920s, *indigenismo* was emerging as a cultural, literary, and political current in reaction to some conservative and racist discourses propagated by the dominant criollo society. Relocating discussions about the challenges of Latin American national

projects in the realms of Indigenous societies, Mariátegui's words reflect the sense of novelty, openness, and disruption that this Peruvian *indigenista* gives to his own interpretation of this school of thought in the literary sphere. However, as Bolivian Indigenous intellectual Fausto Reinaga (formerly identified as an indigenista) wrote in the 1960s, indigenismo is presented as a literary trend that eclipses the emergence of purely Indigenous writers who were meant to develop an "indianista literature." Although Reinaga's critique of indigenismo is not consistent, the fact that it embraces several of the revolutionary ideas forged by indigenismo—including some of Mariátegui's—is highly indicative of my intentions in this book: the stimulus which that indigenista critique incarnates for the emergence and consolidation of an *Indigenous decolonial critique* (in the case of Reinaga, *indianismo*).[1] Ultimately, this book is, among many other things, an account of how the decolonizing ideas forged by indigenista writers traveled over time and influenced, were overturned by, or were fermented in the processes of intellectual consolidation that took place in Indigenous literary constructs such as the one posited by Reinaga.

Indigenismo had—and perhaps continues to have—many incarnations in Latin America. Particularly influential in the first half of the twentieth century in the Andean countries (Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia) and Mesoamerica (Mexico and Guatemala), indigenismo emerges as a discourse that puts Indigenous peoples in the spotlight and questions the marginal role imposed on them by the modernizing national projects led by criollo mestizo elites. Furthermore, there is not much consensus on the definition of indigenismo. Although in this work I refer to the indigenista movement and its porous periodicity as a singular concept (*indigenismo*) in a practical lexical decision, I am fully aware of the variety of indigenismos that unfolded in these countries. Therefore, in this work I use the term "indigenismo" as more than a favorable body of opinion ("corriente de opinion favorable") and a protectionist discourse of Indigenous people as defined by French anthropologist Henri Favre (*El indigenismo*, 7). Indigenismo is a variety of approaches to what Mariátegui defined as the Indian problem ("el problema del indio") embodied by intellectuals, artists, and politicians of criollo mestizo roots who, with different ideological components and institutional commitments, tried to

respond to some of the questions raised by Indigenous movements. Along the way, as Jorge Coronado (*Andes Imagined*, 5) points out, the term implied a critical position toward the dominant society and a denunciation of the cultural degradation of Indigenous nations. However, indigenismo is characterized by its amplitude and ambiguity ("amplitud y ambigüedad"), as pointed out by Ángel Rama, who, referring specifically to indigenista literature, defines it as a regionalist movement motivated by a desire for social justice (*Transculturación*, 138–47). We can interpret this definition as a sense of vindication of the Indigenous nations in Latin America. In the end, many indigenismos are formed around this definition.

However, this book is not one more exploration of the ideological and aesthetic diversity of indigenismo. Instead, it is an effort to evaluate and historicize the dialectical bridge that connects indigenismo with the intellectual development that runs through Indigenous literature and Indigenous decolonial movements in two areas where these connections explicitly took place: the Andes and Mesoamerica. In light of the decolonial agenda unfolded by various Indigenous movements on the continent, it is necessary to evaluate the dialectical links that exist in the indigenista essayistic literature of the region (which, quite straightforwardly, defines the programmatic commitment of these intellectuals) and the literary production of the Indigenous writer activists that emerged from the 1960s onward.

In turn, this literary corpus engages with social movements such as the autonomous processes of the zapatista movement of Chiapas in Mexico, the Regional Indigenous Council of Cauca in Colombia, the territorial autonomy of the Wampís Nation in the Peruvian Amazon, and the territorial and cultural resistance of the Mapuche Nation in southern Chile and Argentina, among many other examples. My aim in this book is to establish this symbolic connection between the indigenismo of the early twentieth century and the subsequent development of a distinctly Indigenous decolonial discourse through the study of a large and heterogeneous indigenista and Indigenous literary archive. The argument that structures the successive chapters is that, in spite of its contradictions and limitations (starting with being an essentially criollo mestizo movement), indigenismo contributed directly to the ideological empowerment that Indigenous intellectuals

and movements began to develop toward the end of the twentieth century.

In the first half of the twentieth century, Mexico, Peru, and Bolivia experienced periods of social turmoil that coexisted with, and in some cases were fostered by, the intellectual agitation promoted by diverse indigenismos. The Mexican Revolution between 1910 and 1920 and the Bolivian Revolution of the Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario (Nationalist Revolutionary Movement, MNR) in 1952 are two historical events in which Indigenous social mobility played a central role, which explains why both revolutions were followed by self-declared indigenista administrations. Without the scope of a national-scale revolution, Indigenous uprisings also took place in Peru during this period, especially in the southern Andes.

At the intellectual level, in the case of Peru, indigenismos created sites of discussion to problematize indigeneity, such as the debates provoked by the rediscovery of Machu Picchu in Cuzco in the 1910s and 1920s, which developed in parallel with the indigenista humanitarian activism of the Peruvian German scholar Dora Mayer who, alongside activists and intellectuals Miguelina Acosta Cárdenas and Pedro Zulen, founded in the 1910s the Asociación Pro Indígena, an entity dedicated to the defense of Indigenous rights. Mayer and Acosta Cárdenas were also regular contributors to the magazine *Amauta*, a key publication in the formation of José Carlos Mariátegui's Indo-Marxist agenda. In the field of literary creation, the major precedent is the work of Clorinda Matto de Turner, and in particular her *Aves sin nido* (*Birds without a nest*, 1889), an emblematic novel that anticipates many of the topics articulated by the indigenista narrative during the twentieth century.

With different ideological approaches and degrees of commitment, Indigenous populations in these countries became indispensable agents of national debate. And yet, it is problematic to claim that the insertion of indigeneity in the national agenda of these three countries meant a form of social and political autonomy for the Indigenous society. Members of that society continued to experience the mediation of criollo mestizo segments who attempted to incorporate them paternalistically into modern national projects.[2]

In this study I concentrate precisely on illuminating this dialectical formation embodied by Indigenous writers, intellectuals, and movements from the second half of the twentieth century onward. Despite the epistemological limitations with which the various indigenismos attempted to include Indigenous peoples of the region, I shed light on how the debates, concerns, and agendas inaugurated by indigenista writers opened—though not always intentionally—paths for the consolidation of Indigenous writers and intellectuals through what I call *indigenista decolonial cracks*, a concept that I anticipate is constituted as a form of symbolic fissure opened from within the hegemonic criollo mestizo structure through the critique of the oppressive trinomial modernity/coloniality/capitalism formulated by indigenista intellectuals.[3]

Turning back to the idea of a symbolic bridge connecting indigenista tradition with Indigenous writer activists, the one who walks through it most explicitly is the Quechua Aymara intellectual Fausto Reinaga (1906–1994) who, at an early stage of his intellectual development, took part in communist indigenista parties, dedicating the first part of his essayistic work to studying figures such as Franz Tamayo and Alcides Arguedas, two mestizo intellectuals and foundational figures in Bolivian indigenismo. Later, disappointed with the indigenista administrations of the 1950s, Reinaga went through a process of ethnic consciousness awareness, embracing his Quechua Aymara identity, and positioned himself as an Indigenous intellectual detached from indigenista schemes. This process modified his political subjectivity, after which he took advantage of some of the insurgent proposals formulated by indigenista intellectuals, mainly the Peruvians Luis E. Valcárcel and José Carlos Mariátegui, to design a dialectically Indigenous alternative in the form of indianismo, a decolonizing school of thought that would influence Bolivian Indigenous mobilizations toward the end of the twentieth century.

Over the last decades throughout Abya Yala, different Indigenous movements, intellectuals, writers, and artists have emerged who, like Reinaga, did not burn bridges with their indigenista intellectual past but, on the contrary, drew inspiration from them or learned from their mistakes to formulate their unique decolonizing agendas.[4] Thus, I consider those criticisms of indigenismo that are limited to pointing it out only as a modernizing, alienating,

and homogenizing movement of Indigenous populations (Bonfil Batalla, "Del indigenismo"; Portocarrero, *La urgencia*; Vargas Llosa, *La utopía*) to be exhausted. Undoubtedly, indigenismos had dialectical and teleological limitations in their different approaches and attempts to represent Indigenous societies. These limitations (many of them explored in this book) in some cases serve as lessons for several of the Indigenous writer activists I analyze who capitalize on those limitations so as to design their own strategies of antagonization toward modern national projects. The confluence of some echoes of indigenista ideology and their resonance in the cultural and dialectical creation of Indigenous writer activists justifies the need for a study that shows how these connections significantly sustained the development of the sense of insurgency that nowadays inspires multiple Latin American Indigenous agendas, as well as how said agendas unfolded, mutated, and evolved.

ABOUT THE DECOLONIAL TURN

To work with the history of Indigenous peoples after republican emancipation from the European metropolis is to work with the history of coloniality—that is, with the perpetuation of colonial modalities in the social, economic, political, ecological, and cultural life of Latin American nation-states. In that sense, a decolonial approach (seen as a branch within the broad spectrum of the anti-colonial critical tradition in Latin America) is a crucial instrument in my analyses. The structure of domination, exploitation, and marginalization experienced by Indigenous societies since the establishment of American republics implies an undeniable historical link with the social model implemented during centuries of colonialism. In other words, the problems of Indigenous societies have followed the same historical path since the sixteenth century. Thus, as a theoretical instrument, coloniality refutes the existence of a postcoloniality, or at least the emancipatory extension of the term, insofar as political and economic independence from the European metropolis did not mean cultural and epistemological independence from the habitus imposed during the European occupation of American territory.[5]

In this sense, the discussion established by Aníbal Quijano ("Colonialidad y modernidad") when he points to the coloniality

of power as an extension of the colonial modalities of intersubjective domination is a useful perspective not only because it goes beyond the critique of an asymmetrical economic model (capitalist modernity). Rather, this theoretical turn centralizes the modernity/rationality binomial as the dialectical pillar of Eurocentrism, the ideology on which continued colonial oppression is based in spheres that extend beyond materiality, but without leaving economic matters behind. For this reason, in this essay, the decolonial perspective is fundamental in the terms proposed by Quijano ("Coloniality") who, without abandoning his desire to historicize underdevelopment within a dependency theory perspective, sustains decoloniality as the theoretical and practical effort exerted by subalternized subjects to comprehensively escape the model of oppression to which the modernity/coloniality/capitalism trinomial submits them.

These continued colonial practices brought together in this theoretical framework will be responded to by the decoloniality cultivated by activists in their cultural production who antagonize the different forms of existing domination. And this is precisely another reason that a decolonial framework is particularly useful for a thorough exploration of the dialogue between indigenista discourse and Indigenous literature in recent decades, as it highlights how the decolonizing arguments are forged that unite or dissociate both traditions.

In the first stage, which we could attempt to date to the 1990s, decolonial critique pointed to social asymmetries embodied mainly in the economic and political spheres. The focus of the influential essay cowritten by Quijano and Immanuel Wallerstein, "Americanity as a Concept, or the Americas in the Modern World-System" (1992), is on historicizing the subalternity of civilizations of the Western Hemisphere sustained through the economic domination exercised by European empires (e.g., economic dependence and international division of labor). Both authors endeavor to affirm that the insertion of America as a factual and symbolic space—economically dominated through the exploitation of its inhabitants and the extraction of its resources—is itself the inauguration of the modern/capitalist system that, with variations, extends to the present day. Although I consider this interpretation to be quite accurate in historical and economic terms, I must point out that its

encompassing impetus eclipses some areas where coloniality also exercised—and still exercises—dominance with colonial characteristics. Quijano ("Coloniality") complements this vision by including *race* as a defining variable of social classification in the peripheries of the world, something for which he takes up some of the ideas of a communist indigenista writer such as José Carlos Mariátegui.

Yet, the evolution traced by decolonial critics describes the versatility of decoloniality as an analytical tool with which I engage in this study. One of the first to expand the theoretical horizons of this corpus was María Lugones, who points out the limitations of the coloniality of power in the terms proposed by Quijano, insofar as it privileges variables such as race and the capital-wage relationship to explain the social asymmetries that constitute the modern/colonial system.[6] In response, Lugones questions whether Quijano's myopia to sexual dissidence implies a tacit biologization of gender and sex. Thus, Lugones posits the "modern/colonial gender system" ("Heterosexualism," 189–200) as an adequate platform of analysis to exhibit these same asymmetries in the spheres of gender and sexuality, where the latter are not only categories of classification as race and salary would be but also instruments of dehumanization of dominated subjects that are embodied in the imposition of heterosexuality and the marginalization of sexual dissidence. This contribution by Lugones not only complements the scope of the decolonial critique opened by Quijano—although not only by him, Enrique Dussel and Walter Mignolo should also be included in this genealogy—but also reaffirms her own theoretical project pointed out years earlier when, in asserting her vision of intersectionality, she argues in favor of the inseparability of race, class, and gender as the central variables of domination for the study of subalternized populations in Latin America ("The Inseparability"). She inaugurates a strong intersectional current in decolonial critique.

A further extension of this theoretical sphere refers to the relationship with nature and the reformulations caused in it by Western perspectives of the *self*. The contribution made by political ecology and the reevaluation of the relationship between humans and nature are worthy of note in a conversation that intersects decolonial philosophical critique with cultural anthropology. A good

illustration of this intersection is the work of Arturo Escobar (*Designs for the Pluriverse*, *Territories of Difference*) who has been making efforts to theorize the refraction of worlds that emanates from the interaction between Indigenous peoples and nature.

This is a paradigm shift that draws much inspiration from the ideas promoted by French philosopher Bruno Latour (*Politics of Nature*) and the arising of Indigenous philosophies. The shift, which in this work I refer to as an *ontological turn*, transcends the initial debates, which were limited to pointing out and reinterpreting the human-nature relationship with an interest in dismantling the modern Western separatist binarism.[7] The decolonial perspective applied to political ecology allows us to explain teleologically the dialectic that runs through Indigenous ecologist literature as mobilities that, in their links with nonhuman entities, aspire to construct a decolonized space in epistemic and ontological terms within an Indigenous socio-natural framework. In this work I examine this framework in the literatures of Buen Vivir. Therefore, the contributions of Marisol de la Cadena ("Indigenous Cosmopolitics") and Mario Blaser ("Political Ontology") are particularly useful for the purpose of establishing this as an ontological debate in which Indigenous writers articulate decolonizing arguments.

INDIGENISTA DECOLONIAL CRACKS

My conceptual use of the term "crack" is inspired by the multiple definitions that scholar, activist, and theorist of decolonial thought Catherine E. Walsh formulated for it throughout her influential writing:

> To crack coloniality means, for me, to open fissures in this totalizing system or matrix of power, and to widen further the fissures that already exist in coloniality's supposedly impenetrable wall. The fissures and cracks are about the situated and embodied questions and work we need to do with ourselves and about the questions and work to be done with respect to social structures, institutions, and practices. . . . The fissures and cracks evidence actionality, agency, resistance, resurgence, and insurgent forms of subjectivity and struggle; they are the spaces of creation against and despite the

> system, of hope against despair, of life living up against coloniality's present-day project of violence-dispossession-war-death all intertwined; of re-existence in times of de-existence. The fissures and cracks are not the solution but the possibility of otherwise, those present, emerging, and persistently taking form and hold. (Walsh, *Rising Up*, 7)

Walsh defines cracks as "fissures" (she sometimes uses both terms as synonyms), which manifest as "spaces of creation against and despite the system." Underlying this sense is a dual notion of spatiality: a factual one (visible in the decolonial praxis she claims) and a symbolic one (rooted in the agency and subjectivity of the crack-maker). What interests me is that she does not define "cracks" as an end but, rather, as a means to a sort of transformation, the tacit recognition of an intolerable present: coloniality and capitalist modernity. The crack opens a fissure in coloniality that can be capitalized upon to activate decoloniality ("The fissures and cracks are not the solution but the possibility of otherwise"). In her theorization, cracks are fissures through which there runs the hope of destabilizing the patterns of domination of the modernity/coloniality/capitalism trinomial. That is why she says: "The crack weakens the structure, weakens the wall; as such, could the crack not also weaken the structure of the wall that sustains the systemic intertwinement of coloniality, capitalism, racism, and heteropatriarchy? Are the cracks not suggestive of decolonial potential and possibility?" (53). The way I understand and employ her conceptual use of "crack" is that of a symbolic construct that creates a sense of insurgency.

A few years earlier, in an interesting text cowritten with Walter Mignolo, Walsh anticipated some of the details of how cracks manifest themselves in praxis. Reflecting on her own intellectual militancy, she notes that her personal vision of crack-making was "to provoke, encourage, construct, generate, and advance, with others, critical questionings, understandings, knowledges, and actionings; other ways of thinking and doing with" (Mignolo and Walsh, *On Decoloniality*, 83). The metaphor of the "crack" as an opening of spaces for political action—and the integral recognition of the subaltern, which antagonizes the inferiorizing colonial contexts in Abya Yala—entails an implicit sense of interiority with

respect to the hegemonic structure. Although cracks can be the result of external input, they take place only within a dominant structure, because it is also from within that structure that the pillars of modernity/coloniality/capitalism can be fissured. This is precisely the case of the *decolonial cracks* opened by the indigenista intellectuals whom I explore in this book.

Most of the indigenista writers, artists, intellectuals, and politicians who emerged in the first half of the twentieth century in Latin America, regardless of their ideological commitments, were mesocratic criollo mestizo subjects who enjoyed certain structural privileges within their national projects. Not all of these indigenismos proposed a subversion of the dominant structure. However, the specific corpus of indigenista writers who are studied in Part I is distinguished by offering, from a plurality of approaches, frontal critiques against the model of subjugation implicit in the prevailing national projects of the Andes and Mesoamerica. As a whole, and despite their differences, these authors constitute a type of discourse that I define as *indigenista decolonial cracks* insofar as their arguments from within fissure the apparent solidity of the modern/colonial/capitalist model imposed by the criollo mestizo elites. By centralizing the marginalized subjects of these projects (Indigenous societies), they already destabilize the basic hierarchical pattern of their respective nationalities. But they also go further and construct a frontal critique of the asymmetries of the coloniality of power, something that some of them even tried to modify by working as officials within the state apparatus, finding it impossible to operate from more inner positions.

Thus, indigenista decolonial cracks run through indigenista texts as critical formulations, racial theories, telluric claims, pessimistic and degenerative readings, proposals for inclusion, and revolutionary claims that from different fronts and with different impetuses antagonize the dominant model of colonial features that inferiorized Indigenous societies. These ideas were not solutions but instead they generated possibilities. In that sense, in this book I prove that they were successful decolonial cracks insofar as several of them reappear in the creation process of a *decolonial Indigenous critique* (Part II). However, under the limited objective conditions of the first half of the twentieth century, the indigenista intellectuals who are analyzed here embodied a crucial contribution

to Latin American critical thought (and to decolonial discourse) through provocative notions such as an Indigenous-rooted cosmic race, a destabilizing pessimism of the present—historicizing again formulations of peripherality, telluric *andinismo*, and a revolutionary *Indo-Marxism*. In their unique forms, all these tenets opened fissures in a structure of coloniality embodied in national projects that were celebrating their first hundred years of emancipation from the metropolis without having overcome—and in some cases having aggravated—the patterns of social injustice and subjugation of Indigenous societies.

In sum, indigenista decolonial cracks both open and *are* simultaneously symbolic spaces fostered by indigenista writers who express their discomfort with the social injustices articulated by their respective national projects. Hence, conceptually reading the crack in a broad and permeable way, but maintaining Walsh's decolonizing sense, in this study I examine how indigenista writers of the early twentieth century fostered the propagation of these symbolic spaces. They anticipated some of the conceptual frameworks in which decolonial thought developed or inaugurated dialectical trends on which Indigenous writer activists later capitalized.

In this way, I am in conversation not only with decolonial theoretical production but also with existing scholarship in the field of Indigenous literary studies in Latin America—and those who also dialogue with the indigenista tradition—such as the two volumes of *Recovering Lost Footprints* (2018) by Arturo Arias and *Indigenous Cosmolectics* (2018) by Gloria Chacón. In these works both scholars undertake deep philological explorations of a vibrant Indigenous narrative corpus from Mexico and Central America, and in doing so they dialogue in more than a few instances with concerns or arguments raised by the respective indigenista tradition of this region. In a similar vein, the arguments presented here interact with some recent publications that have revisited the indigenista literary tradition, such as *The Andes Imagined* (2009) by Jorge Coronado and *The Impure Imagination* (2006) by Joshua Lund in which the authors explore the alternative forms of modernity re-created by the imaginaries that run through a heterogeneous indigenista corpus in Latin America.

GENEALOGY OF A DISCOURSE

In this work, the use of the term "genealogy" has very little to do with other definitions with which it circulates in the humanities.[8] Here the term refers to the most basic acceptance of the concept: the study of the ancestry and descent of a specific type of discourse in the literature of Latin America. In this book I historicize the emergence of a decolonial discourse through a sequence of texts that are linked progressively throughout the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

The book is divided into two parts, in which I explore two specific corpora and describe the periodicity with which the progressive emergence of an Indigenous decolonial discourse is constructed that dialogues with its indigenista decolonial forerunners. In the introductory chapter I describe the theoretical approach that accompanies this study and a base definition of the concept *indigenista decolonial cracks*. The exploration of cracks begins in chapter 1, where I introduce early indigenista discourse as a critique, reimagining and pathologizing the failures perpetrated by criollo national projects in Mexico and Bolivia, and examine the works of Manuel Gamio and Alcides Arguedas, respectively. Through a decolonial reinterpretation of the books *Forjando patria* (Forging fatherland, 1916) and *Pueblo enfermo* (Sick nation/people, 1909), I argue that both indigenista writers open decolonial cracks in their frontal critiques of criollo cultural politics and its failed attempts to incorporate Indigenous societies under homogenizing criteria.

In chapter 2 I move from merely blaming the criollo national project to re-historicizing and revalorizing indigeneity through utopian indigenista constructs such as those formulated by public intellectuals Mexican José Vasconcelos in *La raza cósmica* (*The Cosmic Race*, 1925) and Peruvian Luis E. Valcárcel in *Tempestad en los Andes* (Storm in the Andes, 1927). In their vibrant texts, packaged as racial theories (*raza cósmica*) or telluric invocations of an Inca revitalization (*andinismo*), these writers oppose the positivist readings that minimized the role of Indigenous cultures in the historicization of Latin America. These writers struggle against a one-dimensional sense of modernity by envisioning the emergence or a radical resurgence of an Indigenous-based new race. If

the 1920s is a period in which the indigenista discourse begins to construct features of a political dialectic, taking literature as an instructive device, it is because these are years in which the writers come into contact with the consolidation of socialist structures in the Andes and in Mesoamerica.

Chapter 3 is dedicated to the scrutiny of the Indo-Marxism posited by the Peruvian writer and intellectual José Carlos Mariátegui and its connection with his countryman writer José María Arguedas. Navigating back and forth between the arguments elaborated in Mariátegui's canonical book *Siete ensayos de interpretación de la realidad peruana* (*Seven Interpretive Essays on Peruvian Reality*, 1928 [1952, trans. 1971]) and his controversy with the Communist International, Mariategui's Indo-Marxism ended up opening a pathway for the rethinking of revolutionary dialectics within a Marxist and decolonial perspective. This dialectical intersection was key for an indigenista and socialist writer such as José María Arguedas, whose public interventions in the form of speeches and monographic texts such as "El indigenismo en el Perú" (Indigenismo in Peru, 1965) and "No soy un aculturado" (I have not been acculturated, 1968) not only constitute an attempt to conceptualize indigenismo but also were one of the most clear iterations of the indigenista decolonial cracks as the intersection of decolonial thought and Marxist critique.[9]

Part II begins with a succinct and mainly informative historical passage titled "Interlude," revisiting two relevant historical moments that, although they could be considered "indigenista occurrences," triggered the almost immediate emergence of a decolonial Indigenous discourse between the 1930s and 1960s. I refer to the indigenista administration of former Mexican president Lázaro Cárdenas del Río (1934–1940), crowned with the First Inter-American Indigenista Congress of Pátzcuaro (Michoacán) in 1940, and the Bolivian Revolution of 1952, carried out by the MNR, a socially based Indigenous organization but led by a criollo mestizo elite of intellectuals who governed this country for more than a decade. I illustrate that—more for their failures than their achievements—these historical indigenista milestones generated the material conditions for the consolidation of an Indigenous decolonial critique that would emerge from the cracks anticipated in Part I.

One of those who emerged most explicitly from this scenario was the Bolivian Quechua Aymara writer Fausto Reinaga. I devote chapter 4 to shedding light on how he created, in indianismo, one of the first deliberately decolonizing Indigenous dialectics. By analyzing his books *El indio y los escritores de América* (The Indian and the writers of America, 1968) and more in depth *La revolución india* (The Indian revolution, 1970), I show the dialectical empowerment of Indigenous decolonial thought embodied in the epistemological claims made by Reinaga, which had a direct influence on the Indigenous mobility that, years later, would lead to the triumph of Evo Morales as the first Indigenous president of Bolivia with a straightforwardly decolonizing agenda.

In Chapter 5, I trace how zapatista literature—subjected to the Mayan imperatives of the autonomy-seeking project of the zapatista communities and the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN) in Chiapas (Mexico)—created through the texts signed by Subcomandante Marcos (now Galeano), the particular form of an author constituted as a decolonizing Indigenous device. Thus, contrasting the limits of author theory and the conventional Eurocentric sense of authorship, I argue that Marcos-author personifies an Indigenous symbolic entity that, through texts such as *Relatos de El Viejo Antonio* (Tales of Old Antonio, 1998), *Cuentos para una soledad desvelada* (Tales for an unveiled solitude, 1998), and *Don Durito de la Lacandona* (1999), conveys an intellectually Indigenous content arguing against what decolonial theory has defined as the colonial matrix of power.

If, by the end of the twentieth century, Indigenous literature in Latin America already vocalizes its decolonial teleology, the emergence of Buen Vivir as an Indigenous eco-social paradigm adds complexity and sophistication to Indigenous decolonial discursive constructs, which in chapter 6 is illuminated in the poetry of Quechua writer activists Ch'aska Anka and Washington Córdova. By a theoretical combination of decolonial critique and political ecology, I close-read books of poetry such as Ninawaman's *Poesía en quechua. Chaskaschay* (Quechua poetry: Chaskaschay, 2004) and Washington Córdova's *Parawayraq chawpinpi / Entre la lluvia y el viento* (Between rain and wind, 2019) to argue that, each from their own worldview, they both interrogate political and ontological conventionalisms such as the society/nature binarism, and they

posit alternative forms of political activism through the vibrant intervention of nonhuman *actants* under their respective cosmological commitments.[10]

In the Afterword, I bring together arguments presented in Part II to illuminate how the corpus of Indigenous texts studied here forges a singular Indigenous decolonial critique that resides in the Indigenous enunciation of a decolonizing dialectic that contests the imperatives of modernity/coloniality/capitalism through the refutation of these ideological and epistemological imperatives. In all these chapters as a whole I historicize the various paths of Latin American decolonial discourse. In a way, I illuminate decolonial critique as more than an alternative way of questioning the nation-state but, rather, as a propositional school of thought that expands the old insurgent axiom "destroy to build" by adding other modalities that range from expanding, overturning, questioning, fissuring, to flipping and bypassing, among other possible routes.