

Articulating Body, Territory, and the Defence of Life: The Politics of Strategic Equivalencing between Women in Anti-Mining Movements and the Feminist Movement in Peru

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In Latin America, rural and indigenous women have mobilised in defence of their territories and built strategic alliances with urban and mestiza feminist movements. This paper focuses on how these processes have played out in Peru, tracing the development of the discourse on ‘body as territory’, which articulates sexual and reproductive rights with territorial autonomy. It discusses the ‘cosmopolitics’ of translating the distinct concerns and worldviews of the women involved, arguing that this discourse has enabled partial recognition and strategic equivalencing but that it has failed to fundamentally transform the underlying asymmetric relations of power and privilege.

Keywords: extractivism, Latin American feminism, Peru, political ontology, social movements, women’s activism.

Most mining projects in Latin America have been confronted with the mobilisation of rural and indigenous communities (Bebbington et al., 2008; Arellano-Yanguas, 2016). Peru has been no exception. Ever since the neoliberalisation of Peru’s economy under President Alberto Fujimori in the 1990s, the prospecting, opening, and extension of open-pit mines has been ongoing (Arellano-Yanguas, 2011: 619). Nowadays, 14.07 percent of the country’s territory – and in some departments nearly half – is under concession to mining companies (Cooperación, 2017). Even though the prices for natural resources have decreased since 2014 (see Peters, 2016: 31), the relevance of the extractive sector for the country’s economy has ensured the continuing centrality of mining for both government policies and society’s self-understanding.

In the mobilisations against these extractive projects, rural and indigenous women have increasingly become more visible and, drawing on previously existing relations but also forging new connections nationally and transnationally, they have built spaces of support within and beyond anti-mining movements. The discourse on ‘body as territory’ has been central in enabling a certain level of convergence with urban and mestiza feminist movements, which to an extent transforms previously existing relations that were often based on patronising logics.

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In this article, I discuss the role of the discourse of body as territory in these partial convergences. Applying the concept of cosmopolitics as politics between ‘partially connected heterogeneous social worlds’ (de la Cadena, 2015: 84), I examine the limits of recognition, the moments of strategic equivalencing as well as the possibilities for solidarity that the discourse on ‘body as territory’ has engendered.

The article is based on committed research in which I examine the politics of solidarity between heterogeneous social movements. I worked closely with the Programa Democracia y Transformación Global (PDTG, Program Democracy and Global Transformation), a collective of popular educators and eco-feminists based in Lima, Peru (Leinius, 2020). Throughout my research, which started in 2012, the notion of body and territory or, rather, body *as* territory emerged as a key issue for understanding the possibilities, but also challenges of the cross-movement mobilisations I observed. The analysis I put forward in this paper is based on 31 qualitative interviews with feminist, indigenous, rural, and urban activists of all genders as well as my involvement in several inter-movement encounters (see Leinius, 2020). Moreover, I have traced the discourse of body as territory in the documents and proclamations of women’s anti-mining transnational activist networks as well as in Latin American feminist debates.

In what follows, I analyse the emergence of the discourse of body as territory as a cosmopolitics that links the urban and mestiza worlds of feminist movements with the rural and indigenous worlds of women organised in anti-mining movements. Firstly, I discuss the notion of cosmopolitics to then, secondly, trace the history of divergences and convergences between the Peruvian urban and mestiza feminist movements and organised rural and indigenous women, showing how the discourse on body as territory has emerged through actual encounters that fostered alliance-building. Thirdly, I trace the conceptual underpinnings of the discourse to argue that it is sustained by relations of equivocation that do not necessarily transform unequal relations of power. I end by reflecting on the potential, but also the limitations of the discourse of body as territory.

Shifting the Gaze through Cosmopolitics

I borrow the concept of ‘cosmopolitics’ from the anthropologist Marisol de la Cadena. She is one of the instigators of what has been called the ‘ontological turn’ in anthropology and the social sciences (Blaser, 2013; Holbraad, Pedersen and Viveiros de Castro, 2014). Assuming radical difference as an epistemic, methodological and political starting point, the proponents of political ontology argue that when modernity is equated to the present, ‘radical difference is (again) mapped out against a temporal grid’ (Blaser, 2013: 549). Difference that is not easily subsumable under the logics of majority society because it draws on other ways of being in the world that, for example, do not set the divide between nature and culture as absolute, is cast as belonging to the country’s past and thus, as not as contemporary as modernity (Aparicio and Blaser, 2008: 64). As a countermove, the proponents of political ontology underline the relevance of assuming the pluriverse – a world composed of many worlds (de la Cadena and Blaser, 2018) – as a baseline for analysis that does not assume the existence of a uni-verse.

De la Cadena (2010) shows the consequences of this analytical strategy by examining how indigenous communities in Peru articulate the presence of what she calls ‘Earth beings’ in social protest. She argues that seeing the interpellation of mountains, water, or nature as either cultural expressions or environmentalist strategies means perceiving these practices only from hegemonic logics. Taking these practices seriously as

expressions of other worlds in which mountains can act as subjects provokes a paradigm shift that, she holds, can pave the way for cosmopolitics as the politics of ‘ontological disagreement’ (de la Cadena, 2015: 276) between worlds that have co-constituted each other within the context of asymmetrical power relations.

Such a perspective holds that shared meanings cannot be presupposed even when the same words are used, as they might be the sites of what the Amerindian anthropologist Eduardo Viveiros de Castro has called ‘relations of equivocation’: equivocation, according to him, does not denote a failure to understand, but ‘a failure to understand that understandings are necessarily not the same, and that they are not related to imaginary ways of “seeing the world” but to the real worlds that are being seen’ (Viveiros de Castro, 2004: 11). The ontological difference that indigenous or rural worlds potentially enact, proponents of political ontology hold, is either benevolently ignored or subsumed under notions of cultural or religious difference in both research and activism. In my analysis of the discourse on body as territory, I show the repercussions of such a view: equivocation happens when hegemonic logics are not decentred, and privileged actors continue to hold the right to choose to not engage with the full consequences of taking seriously the pluriverse. Indigenous and rural understandings of body and territory as intrinsically intertwined in the reproduction of life are, then, merely included in counter-hegemonic notions of struggles against capitalism and patriarchy.

Organised Women in Peru: Between Fragmentation and Alliance-Building

History of Divergences ...

Feminist and women’s activism in Peru, the feminist scholar Gina Vargas argues, is constituted by the three currents of political, feminist, and popular organising that sometimes intersect, but generally function according to their own logics (Vargas, 2008: 35–36). Women mobilising within political parties, trade unions, and other institutionalised forms of political organising are, according to her systematisation, part of the political current but do not necessarily self-identify as feminist (Vargas, 2008: 35–36).

Though not free from internal tensions, the Peruvian feminist movement focuses on the struggle for reproductive rights, political participation and visibility in the public sphere (Barrientos and Muñoz, 2014). It is strongest in urban centres like Lima and Arequipa and amongst members of the mestiza middle class (Vargas, 2004: 10). Internally, at least four groups can be identified: first, there are the feminists who have struggled to establish and maintain feminist organising against sometimes impossible odds for decades. Nowadays, they mainly work for different NGOs, in governmental institutions or institutes of higher education (see Barrientos and Muñoz, 2018: 288–291). Second, self-identified ‘autonomous’ feminists, represented nowadays mainly by the *feministas comunitarias* (communitarian feminists), see the institutionalisation of feminism as the de-radicalisation of the feminist struggle (Martínez Andrade, 2019: 54–57). Third, young feminist activists, mainly located at universities and in urban centres, have organised under the banner of queer identities and rights. They use social media and other digital modes of communication to build a multitude of independent collectives

with an enormous potential for mobilisation that does not rely on institutionalised structures (Barrientos and Muñoz, 2018: 285).

Popular women's activism includes rural and indigenous women, but also women living in the shantytowns of Lima and other Peruvian cities. By moving to the urban centres, people have hoped to leave behind indigeneity and rurality – and the inequalities adhering to these ascriptions (Alcalde, 2010: 48–50). Often finding themselves in the shantytowns, or *barrios populares*, women have then started to organise under the label of *mujeres populares* (popular women). Their activism has focused on collectivising women's responsibilities: since the 1980s, the *comedores populares* (collective kitchens), in which women prepare food to then distribute it in their neighborhoods, have functioned as spaces for fostering women's activism. Contrary to the *comedores populares* that have developed in the context of various organisations and often rely on donations, the '*vaso de leche*' (glass of milk) programme has been established by the municipalities, which provide milk powder to local committees run by women that ascertain that every child and expectant or breastfeeding mother in their neighbourhood receives a daily glass of milk (Boesten, 2010: 49). The *clubes de madre* (mother's clubs), often established by political parties or churches (Blondet and Trivelli, 2004: 36), have also fostered the collective organisation of women and often provided the basis for establishing *comedores populares*. During and after the internal armed conflict, victim-survivor organisations emerged (de Waardt and Ypeij, 2017). Organisations like the Asociación de Mujeres Afectadas por las Esterilizaciones Forzadas (AMAEF, Association of Women Affected by Forced Sterilisations) have also gained visibility. The Fujimori government's 'Reproductive Health and Family Planning Program 1996–2000' led to the alleged sterilisation of 300,000 people, mostly rural and indigenous women. Reports of abuse, deception and pressure on the women targeted to undergo a sterilisation procedure already emerged during the Fujimori regime, and in 1996, Giulia Tamayo León, a feminist Peruvian lawyer, published a report that revealed the systematicity and scope of these forced sterilisations (Alcalde, 2010: 65–66). In the wake of the report, the victims of these forced sterilisations have begun to mobilise to claim justice and reparations.

Women have also been active within agrarian organisations and anti-mining mobilisations, sometimes drawing on previously established connections, sometimes being part of new initiatives and collectives like, for example, the *Frentes de Defensa*, local organisations have brought together heterogeneous actors in anti-mining struggles (De Echave, Hoetmer and Palacios Panéz, 2009: 15). Their commitment is both fostered and socially legitimated by their feeling of responsibility towards others; drawing on their roles as mothers and caregivers, they see themselves as protecting their children and the wider community (see Jenkins, 2015; Grieco, 2016). They also perceive the decision to participate in anti-mining activism as embedded in larger generational and collective histories of resistance (Llamoctanta, Caruajulca and Cercado Chávez, 2013; López, 2013). Activism, however, has to be added to their daily routines and chores, which result in them working more and longer hours than men (Llamoctanta, Caruajulca and Cercado Chávez, 2013, López, 2013). They are also criticised for neglecting the care of their homes and families (Cumbre de las Mujeres frente al Cambio Climático, 2015) and have been subject to violence and intimidation (Jenkins, 2017: 10–12); amongst the sixteen leaders that were charged with 'aggravated kidnapping, assault, and insult to patriotic symbols', after protests in the northern province of Cajamarca against the Minas Conga mining project, five were women (Blanco Vizarreta, 2013: 8). Women's experience of violence, however, is not limited to anti-mining activism; women around

the world have reported on the difficulties of engaging in activism in patriarchal societies. The risk of experiencing domestic violence is also higher for women active in communal organisations, as a study on domestic violence in Lima has shown (Boesten, 2006: 371; see Gonzalez de Olarte and Gavilano Llosa, 1998).

Taking on leadership roles, learning about women's rights and having to negotiate between different political actors, many women have become political (and some also feminist) activists through their involvement in these organisations. The relation of the latter to the feminist movement, however, is complex (Moser, 2004: 212; Schroeder, 2006; Vargas, 2008: 57; Jenkins, 2009; Ballón Gutiérrez, 2014). Historically, there have been relations between all Peruvian currents of women's and feminist activism in Peru. As Pasha Bueno-Hansen argues, however, in the 1990s in particular:

[F]eminists' emphasis on [individual] autonomy and constructing their own space made it especially difficult to collaborate with groups engaged in social struggle for basic needs. (Bueno-Hansen, 2015: 35)

The connections between feminists and popular women, including rural and indigenous women, also took on a strong tutelary connotation with the NGOisation of Peruvian feminism: feminists, often in the context of international development projects, have acted as consultants for indigenous and peasant organisations, and have accompanied the organisation of women's congresses and the bureaus for women's issues within agrarian federations like the Peasant Confederation of Peru (CCP) or the National Agrarian Confederation (CNA) (Olea Mauleón, Manrique, Corcuera and Ilizarbe, 2012: 134). Functioning according to project logics and often with the explicit aim of empowering the participating women and educating them about women's rights, the fostering of mutual dialogue has not been the main aim of these encounters (Olea Mauleón, Manrique, Corcuera and Ilizarbe, 2012: 134–135). Within these logics, feminists have struggled with recognising the lived realities of popular, rural, and indigenous women's lives and with perceiving their activism as emancipatory (Moser, 2004: 229; see Gómez, 2004).

... and Convergences

A convergence between the different currents can, however, be observed, which, on the one hand, has its basis in conscious efforts by parts of the Peruvian feminist movement to foster dialogues with indigenous and rural women (Olea Mauleón et al., 2012: 134–135). These efforts can be situated, on the one hand, in relation to the increasing prominence of debates concerning the white, academic, middle class, eurocentric and urban character of the Peruvian, but also Latin American feminist movements (Curiel, Falquet and Masson, 2005; Vargas, 2008: 154–158). On the other hand, the political climate in Peru – and Latin America more generally – has increased the necessity to build cross-cutting alliances to fight against the increasing levels of violence and femicide, continuing impoverishment, and the explosion of eco-territorial conflicts (Hoetmer, 2012; Barrientos and Muñoz, 2014: 644).

Rural and indigenous women, on the other hand, have founded their own organisations and have sought to build strategic alliances with other organised women nationally and transnationally: the Federación Nacional de Mujeres Campesinas, Artesanas, Indígenas, Nativas y Asalariadas de Perú (FENMUCARINAP, National Federation of Peasant, Artisan, Indigenous, Native and Salaried Women of Peru), a

national indigenous-rural women's organisation (Olea Mauleón, Manrique, Corcuera and Ilizarbe, 2012: 71–74), has been a crucial actor in this regard. Since its founding in 2008 by women previously part of the CCP (Rousseau and Morales Hudon, 2017: 181–183), FENMUCARINAP has rapidly built a network of local chapters in many regions of Peru and linked to the networks of the transnational agrarian movement La Via Campesina and the World March of Women (WMW). Striving to build a transnational mass movement of grassroots women that would at the same time be feminist, the WMW has strategically linked women's and feminist issues (Masson, Paulos and Beaulieu Bastien, 2017). Organisations like FENMUCARINAP and the WMW have acted as brokers for channelling and articulating indigenous and rural women's concerns with feminist movements, but also for translating feminist issues to an audience that is generally sceptical of feminism. The reasons for this scepticism range from the representation of feminists in the Peruvian media as 'men-hating lesbians' (Silva Santisteban, 2008: 141), the long history of urban activists visiting the countryside to educate and organise the 'peasant masses' (de la Cadena, 2015: 75), and the fear of rural and indigenous leaders – both men and women – that contact with feminists would mean that '[las mujeres indígenas y campesinas] se van a volver feministas [que les] van a mandar' ([rural and indigenous women] would turn into feminists [who] would order [them] around), as an indigenous activist recounts (Daza et al., 2016: 83).

These and other points of commonality and contention were negotiated in inter-movement spaces that served as arenas in which activists got to know each other and share their struggles. One of the first collectively created spaces, the encounter *Mujeres Enlazando Alternativas* (Women Linking Alternatives), emerged from a shared experience of marginalisation: it was organised in reaction to the perceived invisibility of women's demands during the Peoples' Summit – Linking Alternatives III (Daza et al., 2016: 74–75). Organised as a counter-summit to the meeting of the governments of Latin American and Caribbean states and the European Union, the People's Summit took place from 13 to 16 May 2008 in Lima and convened a large number of Peruvian and transnational NGOs and social movements (Bebbington, Scurrah and Bielich, 2008). Even though various attempts to institutionalise the relations that were built during the counter-summit failed, the following years brought the participating activists together on a number of occasions – for example, in June 2009, when indigenous activists blocked the central highway in the Amazonian province of Bagua and the government responded by declaring a state of emergency, large mobilisations occurred in solidarity with the Amazonian protestors (Hoetmer, 2012: 235). In 2011, social movements converged again in the campaign that aimed to prevent Keiko Fujimori from winning the presidential elections and in 2012 in the '*Gran Marcha Nacional por el Derecho al Agua y la Vida*' (Great National March for the Right to Water and Life) that, in the concluding demonstration in Lima, drew 35,000 people (Taddei, 2013: 130).

These convergences mainly responded to antagonistic logics; but the temporary alliances that were sparked provided the basis for more sustained processes of dialogue such as those explicitly sought in the Women's Inter-Movement Dialogues. Organised by the PDTG, the Dialogues took the form of a series of workshops, taking place from 2009 to 2010, that explicitly attempted to foster recognition across difference (Daza et al., 2016: 79). Women from the indigenous, the popular women's, and the Afro-Peruvian movement as well as activists from the feminist, lesbian, and transsexual movement took part. They were also the blueprint for the *Diálogos entre Saberes y Movimientos* (Dialogues between Knowledges and Movements) that have taken place

since 2010 at irregular intervals, bringing together representatives from heterogeneous social movements from Peru and abroad (Daza et al., 2016: 83). Similar encounters have included workshops organised by the feminist organisations Centro de la Mujer Peruana Flora Tristán, the Movimiento Manuela Ramos (Manuela Ramos Movement) and the feminist human rights organisation DEMUS.

The *XIII Encuentro Feminista Latinoamericano y del Caribe* (13 EFLAC, 13th Latin American and Caribbean Feminist Encounter), which was celebrated in Lima, Peru, from 22 to 25 November 2014, has also been central. The Feminist Encounter traditionally is one of the arenas where Latin American feminisms meet, debate, clash, and forge common identities (Alvarez, 2000: 4–8) and the Peruvian organisers saw the fostering of dialogue between the different struggles of diverse women as the central aim of the 13th Feminist Encounter. They strove to underline their vision through three thematic axes: critical interculturality, body and territory, and sustainability of life (13 EFLAC, 2014b). Their strategies of mobilisation were also linked to their aim of reaching a broad constituency; pre-encounters in Chiclayo (North-West Peru), Huancayo (Central Peru) and Cuzco (South Peru) were organised and grants for Peruvian activist women from rural and indigenous backgrounds were given, facilitating their participation in the main encounter in Lima (13 EFLAC, 2014b: 31–42).

The Emergence of the Discourse on Body as Territory

The discourse on body as territory has been crucial in fostering dialogue between feminist and indigenous and rural women. The discourse on body as territory is increasingly common in Latin American social movements (Cabnal, 2010; Bidegain Ponte, 2014; Hayes-Conroy, 2018: 1301) and is anchored in the concrete experiences and struggles of Latin American women's movements, especially, that mobilise against mining and for food sovereignty (Vargas, 2017; Masson, Paulos and Beaulieu Bastien, 2017: 10–11). In Peru, the regional chapter of the WMW in the province of Cajamarca, the Macro-Norte March in particular has become central in articulating the discourse to strategically connect the struggles against extractivism and violence against women (Masson and Paulos, 2018). It has drawn on, and contributed to developing, the discourse within the WMW transnationally: 'This territory is mine, this territory is ours (my body, our land)' had been proposed as a slogan for the 2015 International Action, the main global campaign of the WMW, but was rejected after a heated internal debate (Lebon, 2018). The WMW International Meeting in 2018 in Bilbao, however, took up the discourse again in its slogan 'Batu Indarrak, Urrutira Goaz: Construyamos soberanía sobre nuestros cuerpos y territorios' (Marcha Mundial de las Mujeres, 2018) (Joining Forces, Moving Forward: Let us build Sovereignty over our Bodies and Territories).

The discourse on body as territory has also come to the fore in other transnational networks. Since 2005, the Red Latinoamericana de Mujeres Defensoras de Derechos Sociales y Ambientales (Latin American Network of Women Defenders of Social and Environmental Rights) has been organising women active in struggles against mining, and in its newsletter of April 2019 calls on women to join its campaign for 'la Defensa de Nuestros Cuerpos y Territorios' (the Defence of Our Bodies and Territories). The Colectivo Miradas Críticas del Territorio desde el Feminismo (Collective Critical Views of Territory from Feminism) has compiled a manual for 'Mapeando el Cuerpo-Territorio: Guía Metodológica para Mujeres que Defienden sus Territorios' (Cruz et al., 2017)

(Mapping Body-Territory: A Methodological Guide for Women who Defend Their Territories), holding workshops in many Latin American countries as well as, in 2018, in Spain, Germany, and the Netherlands. In the 14th Feminist Encounter in Uruguay in 2017, one of the ten thematic axes of the Encounter was called: 'frente a la guerra contra nuestros cuerpos-territorios-tierra: abrazamos nuestros territorios desde un feminismo antirracista, comunitario y decolonial' (Celiberti, Fonseca and Zelikovitch, 2018: 101) (in the face of the war against our bodies-territories-land: we embrace our territories from the perspective of an antiracist, communitarian and decolonial feminism).

Latin American scholarship has responded to the emergence of this discourse within women's and feminist movements; CLACSO has established a working group on *cuerpos, territorios feminismos* (bodies, territories and feminisms) that, in the period from 2016 to 2019, has striven to reflect on the role of the body and of emotions in the defence against extractivist activities on the Latin American continent.

In sum, the discourse on body as territory seems, at least within the community constructed by these activists and scholars, to have become 'common sense'. But what do 'body' and 'territory' actually mean? And how is their connection negotiated within these spaces?

In the following section, I will analyse the discourse on body as territory from a cosmopolitical perspective, showing the different social – and potentially also ontological – worlds that together have constituted the discourse, and argue that instead of complete intelligibility, strategic equivalencing has been the basis for the construction and dissemination of the discourse.

The Cosmopolitics of 'Body as Territory'

Conceptual Underpinnings

The discourse on the body in Western feminisms emphasises the corporeal autonomy of women against, for example, sexual violence or society's dominant standards of beauty (Butler, 2004; Petchesky, 2014). The body has been a site of struggle and of resistance in fighting for sexual and reproductive rights, food rights, and against racism, ableism and heterosexism (see, for example, Gallop, 1988; Halberstam, 2005; Phillips, 2011). The notion of self-ownership drawing on a 'propertied conception of identity' (Cooper and Herman, 2013: 67) has been a powerful discourse that centres on the struggle for the free and autonomous decision of women⁷ about what to do with and to their body (see Petchesky, 1995). From this perspective, the body belongs to its 'owner'; it is a discourse on autonomous subjects and their individual rights. The notion of property has also been central in how land became national territory with the rise of the modern nation-state through colonialism and conquest, cartography and claims to exclusive sovereignty. Since then, territory has come to denote a specific parcel of land characterised by clearly demarcated boundaries within which national society develops (Elden, 2013: 323; Sassen, 2013: 22).

This discourse has been challenged by postcolonial, queer, and feminist Science and Technology Studies (see Haraway, [1985] 2016; Davies, 1999). They converge in their challenge to individualistic notions of the body, claiming that '[o]ne is too few, but two are too many', as Donna Haraway has famously challenged the dualistically understood self-Other relation in Western metaphysics (Haraway, [1985] 2016: 60). The myth of

self-ownership is transformed in favour of a more relational understanding, 'an identity which is owned and developed in common with others' (Davies, 1999: 347).

Latin American indigenous, lesbian, and Black feminists have similarly put forward a more collective and situated understanding of the body, anchored in activist struggles in both urban and rural spaces: the body is seen as space situated in a specific place criss-crossed by relations of power that allows the experience of emotions as well as physical sensations (Vargas, 2017; Hayes-Conroy, 2018). In this sense, the body is the 'primer territorio' (first territory) that one avails oneself of, but one that is inextricably tied to one's 'territorio histórico, la tierra' (Cabnal, 2010: 23) (historical territory, the land). It is shaped by its temporal, geographical and social context but also active in shaping it in return (Cruz, 2016). As 'first territory', what happens to the body and what happens to the land one inhabits are intertwined: 'cuando se violentan los lugares que habitamos se afectan nuestros cuerpos, cuando se afectan nuestros cuerpos se violentan los lugares que habitamos' (Cruz et al., 2017: 7) (when the places we inhabit are violated, our bodies are affected; when our bodies are affected, the places we inhabit are violated). Far from a romanticising notion of relationality, this metonymy is used to reveal the historical expropriation of rural and indigenous women and it is argued that

es imprescindible que las mujeres indígenas recuperemos la expropiación histórica de nuestro primer territorio de poder que es el cuerpo, para poder entonces buscar transformaciones colectivas en nuestro territorio tierra. (Cabnal, 2012: 60)

it is indispensable that indigenous women overcome the expropriation of our first territory of power which is the body, to then search for collective transformations in our territory-land.

The body functions as anchoring point of a broader network of connections and exchange in space and time. It is not individual, because the individual subject does not exist without the inter-subjective ties that bind it to collectively imagined social and territorial geographies. Territory stands in for the varied processes between human beings, non-human living beings, spirits, and non-living elements in a particular place and time that reproduce life (Escobar, 2014: 101–118; de la Cadena, 2015: 43–45). The body is but an extension of these ties in which community, and thus life itself, is (re-)produced.

The arrival of mining projects and their effects – from environmental pollution to the changes in social and economic relations within villages and families – directly threatens the relationships that weave bodies and territory together into the dynamic web of life. Defending territory therefore signifies defending not only its human members, but also its non-human members, such as water, and, indeed, nature and life itself (Llamocanta, Caruajulca and Cercado Chávez, 2013). Women active in anti-mining mobilisations in Latin America consequently refer to themselves as 'defensoras de la vida' (defenders of life), underlining their central role in the reproduction of life in their territories (see CENSAT Agua Viva, 2015). The relation between body and territory has become metonymic, as exemplified by the slogan of the Xinka-women displayed in the report on the National Encounter of Women Defenders of Life in the Face of Extractivism: 'Si nos tocan la tierra nos tocan la sangre, si nos tocan la sangre nos tocan la tierra' (CENSAT CENSAT Agua Viva, 2015) (If they touch our earth they touch our blood, if they touch our blood they touch our earth). Being able to inhabit and use one's body as one wishes is consequently

not seen as an end as such or as an individual achievement. On the contrary, it is a first step to better be able to engage in collective struggles to defend 'territory-land'.

The Politics of Strategic Equivalencing

The discourse on body as territory has been strategically applied both by organisations like the WMW that strive to link feminist issues with anti-mining struggles and organised indigenous and rural women: For the latter, it has opened the possibility to talk about how the well-being of their bodies is interconnected with the well-being of their communities. Well-being is, according to the women's understanding, not limited to physical well-being but explicitly includes affect and emotions, as:

No cabe duda que sobre el cuerpo queda impreso lo que ocurre en los territorios: la tristeza por la explotación, la angustia por la contaminación, pero también hay alegría en nuestro corazón por estar construyendo otros mundos pese a tanta violencia. (Cruz et al., 2017: 7)

There is no doubt that what happens in territories is imprinted on the body: the sadness of exploitation, the anguish of pollution, but there is also joy in our hearts for building other worlds in spite of so much violence.

The 'somatic' relations (Hayes-Conroy, 2018) that the discourse enables have been crucial in motivating women activists to talk about the importance of self-care, a preoccupation seldom visible in the activism of indigenous and rural women that emphasises sacrifice and abnegation. This holds true also for how the discourse on body as territory has emerged in Peru: in an interview on her activist trajectory, one of the leaders of FENMUCARINAP has told me how in the encounter with feminist activists, she was introduced to the notion of sexual pleasure and well-being:

también hemos participado en las reuniones feministas, entonces escuchamos – hablamos así, ¿ya? – la palabra orgasmo, escuchamos la palabra quererse y para conocimiento nosotras no - muchas mujeres nunca se han visto su cuerpo, NUNCA. (Interview with leader of FENMUCARINAP, 21 November, 2014)

as we also have participated in feminist meetings, we then heard – let's talk openly, okay? – the word 'orgasm', we heard the word 'to make love' and to our knowledge, we do not – many women have never looked at their body, NEVER.

She continues by claiming that, as a reaction to these moments of learning, employing the discourse on body as territory was a conscious decision by the FENMUCARINAP leadership to make feminist arguments commensurable to indigenous and rural women's life worlds:

yo decía entonces: y ahora este punto cómo lo toco? [...] Bueno, si nosotras defendemos el territorio, la tierra, el agua, enganchemos entonces la palabra 'el territorio del cuerpo de la mujer' porque así va a entrar [...]: 'Porque defendemos la tierra y nuestro cuerpo es territorio también'. (Interview with leader of FENMUCARINAP, 21 November, 2014)

Therefore, I said: and now, how do I touch on this point? [...] Well, if we defend the territory, the land, the water, let's link the words 'the territory of a woman's body', because like this, it will catch on [...]: 'Because we defend the land and our body is territory as well'.

The campaign 'Somos 2074 y Muchas Más' (We are 2074 and Many More), which claims justice for the victims of forced sterilisations, has also applied the discourse, with its supporters chanting and holding signs that read 'Mi cuerpo, mi territorio' (My body, my territory) during demonstrations. The campaign has relied on the shock value of young women pulling up their skirts during manifestations, revealing images of bloodied uteruses, with red paint the colour of blood running down their legs. Created by the feminist organisation DEMUS, it is run by young urban and mestiza feminists, with little participation from the mainly rural and indigenous activists of the victim-survivor organisations. The focus is on the violence perpetrated against women's bodies, understood as the property of the individual, and on seeking justice through the legal system. The repercussions of the forced sterilisations on community relations – for example the abandoning of collective traditions like weaving (Ballón Gutiérrez, 2014) – is not part of the campaign.

The feminists of the Macro Norte March in Peru, in turn, have made use of the discourse on body as territory to strategically foster relations with rural and indigenous women. Masson and Paulos (2018) argue in this context that the activists of the March have been quick to translate the latter's concerns into a supposedly shared discourse of struggling against extractivism that identifies capitalism as the common enemy.

Latin American feminists, in general, have approached the discourse on body as territory from a perspective that reclaims 'nuestra soberanía y autodeterminación al capitalismo, al patriarcado y a la colonialidad' (Celiberti, Fonseca and Zelikovitch, 2018: 102) (our sovereignty and self-determination against capitalism, the state and coloniality), as the report on the 14th Feminist Encounter states. From an anti-capitalist position, body-territory has been applied to link critiques of neoliberalism, militarism, violence and exploitation with a transformative notion of 'defender la vida frente a la guerra del capital' (Celiberti, Fonseca and Zelikovitch, 2018: 103) (defending life against the war of capital).

Connecting a discourse that seems familiar to actual territories in resistance has made the struggles of rural and indigenous women visible to feminists and has led to the recognition that 'la violencia es específica e intensiva contra las mujeres organizadas en procesos de resistencia territorial' (Celiberti, Fonseca and Zelikovitch, 2018: 102) (violence is specific and intensive against women organised in processes of territorial resistance).

It is not certain that those implicated in the construction of the discourse actually talk about the same things. The extracts from the report on the 14th Feminist Encounter quoted above show that Latin American feminists have incorporated the struggles of rural and indigenous women mainly under an anti-capitalist and anti-extractivist framing, invisibilising the excess produced by the relational ontologies that are often the basis of rural and indigenous women's activism. In the 13th Feminist Encounter in Peru, the discourse on body as territory has been subsumed under the notion of violence against women as shared experience providing a common point of reference (13 EFLAC, 2014a; Vargas, 2017).

These relations of equivocation, when not critically reflected on, can lead to situations in which those in a position of power do not actively listen to what Others are actually saying, hearing only that what is more easily commensurable. In the 13th

Feminist Encounter, for example, the thematic axis of body and territory was supposed to open a dialogue between feminist and eco-territorial struggles. In the plenary, however, the experiences and demands of sex workers and trans activists dominated the debate, pushing indigenous and rural women to the margins (see Babb, 2018: 163).

Nonetheless, the emergence and broad dissemination of the discourse show that there seems to be a willingness and need to foster relations across deep differences. Both sides have pushed for convergences and have been willing to (at least partially) translate from their own contexts and search for possible points of convergence (Masson, Paulos and Beaulieu Bastien, 2017: 11). The continuing power differentials have been part of the debate (see, for example, Celiberti, Fonseca and Zelikovitch, 2018: 103–104); how they will be dealt with in the future remains to be seen.

Conclusion

Defending body, territory and therefore life has become a point of convergence between rural and indigenous as well as feminist activists not only in Peru, but in Latin American feminist and women's movements in general. The discourse on body as territory has served as a transmission belt that has allowed convergences based on strategic equivalencing: on the one hand, feminist preoccupations with corporeal autonomy and sexual and reproductive rights have been translated to the life-worlds of indigenous and peasant women. The focus on the integrity of women's bodies has created spaces for sharing experiences of violence that have challenged the available gender roles in eco-territorial conflicts that equate women's activism with abnegation and sacrifice. On the other hand, the centrality of territory for the reproduction of life has been put on the feminist agenda. The feminist movement has been opened up to recognising collective cultural and territorial rights as well as other ways of living and being that, previously, have been either dismissed or attempted to change.

These convergences have not been contingent but the result of a conscious process of cross-movement alliance-building that has aimed to articulate feminist as well as rural and indigenous women's experiences and demands in a way that translates well to both feminist and rural constituencies. Complete intelligibility has not been the aim of these convergences and is far from guaranteed. Different understandings remain, and the use of the same words can only partly mitigate the distances remaining when the underlying conflict – the subordination of some worlds by the other and the distances existing between them – has not been resolved. But by strategically choosing to presume commonality instead of searching for difference, alliance-building has become possible. In the struggle against mining projects, these partial connections might be sufficient for strategic alliances. Whether the face-to-face encounters that have ensued can foster the recognition of the distance yet to be crossed and lead to more sustainable solidarities is, to a large extent, based on the capacity of the actors involved to critically reflect on how to deal with the deep differences that remain, not as a hindrance to be overcome but as a valuable resource in fostering pluriversal struggles.

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Interviews

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