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Article

## The missed encounter of *turupukllay*: Marxism, indigenous communities and Andean culture in *Yawar Fiesta*

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### Abstract

This article takes as its point of departure a discussion of José María Arguedas's engagement with Marxism, the ideas of José Carlos Mariátegui and the journal *Amauta*. It argues that Arguedas's distance from official party politics should not be confused with an abandonment of politics as such. It also underscores Arguedas's reflections on the relationship between lived experience, socialist theory and literary writing. This sets the stage for an exploration of a core problem in Arguedas's oeuvre: the missed encounter between Marxist organisations and indigenous communities, which is to say, the failure to form an alliance between these groups based on mutual understanding and reciprocal enrichment. The article turns to Arguedas's first major novel, *Yawar Fiesta* (1941), and traces its portrayal of such a missed encounter as it occurs around the celebration of *turupukllay*, an Andean translation of a Spanish bullfight that commemorates Peru's independence from colonial rule. The wager of the article is that *Yawar Fiesta*'s capacity to illuminate key contributing factors of the missed encounter enables Arguedas to advance an immanent critique, a critique of a certain tendency of Marxism from within Marxism itself, and that, as a result, the novel supplements socialist theory by simultaneously exposing its limits and enhancing its claims.

**Keywords:** José María Arguedas; José Carlos Mariátegui; *Amauta*; Andean culture; indigenous communities; lived experience; Marxism; missed encounter; *turupukllay*; *Yawar Fiesta*

## Introduction

In 1931, a year after the death of José Carlos Mariátegui, a young José María Arguedas enrolled as a student at the University of San Marcos in Lima, Peru. The Peruvian Socialist Party that Mariátegui founded in 1928 had by this time already been converted into the Peruvian Communist Party. Once a very experimental and heterodox organisation, it had become yet another outpost of the Stalinist Third International.<sup>1</sup> According to Marco Martos, it was around this same time that Arguedas, likely unaware of the aforementioned changes, ‘signed up as a militant’.<sup>2</sup> But his involvement with the organisation was short lived. As Martos goes on to relate:

One fine day a group of *comuneros* appeared who were scissor dancers and Arguedas got ‘lost’ with them, forgetting that he had a meeting with the party cell. The leader of the group confronted him a few days later and said: ‘We will have the right to happiness once we have taken power.’ The sensitive type, Arguedas resigned from the party.<sup>3</sup>

In Martos’s perhaps fictitious but no less revealing anecdote, Arguedas is described as caught in the middle of a *desencuentro* or missed encounter that would haunt his thoughts and actions for the rest of his life.<sup>4</sup> On one side there was a political party aiming to liberate the masses from conditions of servitude. On the other side there was a group of indigenous commoners performing a popular Andean cultural practice. The party sought control of the State but also of its members by espousing an ethic of self-sacrifice for the promise of a better, happier tomorrow.<sup>5</sup> The *comuneros*, in contrast, led Arguedas to lose control, to ludicrously get lost in the present moment and set aside his obligations.<sup>6</sup>

The militant’s automatic prioritisation of the party meeting over the meeting of the scissor dancers and his dismissal and trivialisation of a popular Andean culture practice ought to be read as indicative of the abyss that has historically separated the Peruvian Left’s aspiring vanguard leadership from the predominantly indigenous masses and a dogmatic form of Marxism from traditional beliefs and customs.<sup>7</sup> Mariátegui’s theoretical and political practice attempted to bridge this divide by foregrounding the ‘problem of the Indian’ and the communal social form known as the *ayllu* in the ‘heroic creation’ of Indo-American socialism.<sup>8</sup> Yet these aspects of Mariátegui’s project did not survive in the communist political organisation that replaced his socialist experiment. The party leaders imitated rather than critically translated the Marxist orthodoxy of the period by returning the indigenous peasant majority and its sociocultural formations to the subservient position of mere support for the urban proletariat of the modern industrial factory.<sup>9</sup>

It would appear from Martos’s anecdote that this is what propelled Arguedas to abandon official party politics. But it did not lead him to retreat from politics altogether. Instead, he dedicated much of his life to diagnosing the root causes of such missed encounters between Marxist groups and indigenous communities, while at the same time attempting to imagine alternative scenarios based on mutual understanding and reciprocal enrichment. This assertion may come as a surprise to some readers, since Arguedas has not always been sufficiently recognised – especially within academic circles in the English-speaking world – as a writer profoundly impacted by and committed to Marxism.<sup>10</sup> It could be argued, in fact, that much of contemporary literary criticism on Arguedas reproduces the missed encounters staged in his novels insofar as discussions of his representation of indigenous communities and Andean cultural practices are so rarely paired with adequate accounts of his literary and theoretical reflections on Marxism, socialism, communism and class struggle. This distorts and de-politicises Arguedas’s project, which in turn leaves his oeuvre vulnerable to critiques of its supposedly static, culturalist and ethnographic narratives.<sup>11</sup> The aim of this article is to challenge such misreadings, to re-politicise Arguedas and to reintroduce Marxism into discussions of his body of work.

Arguedas’s assessment of the ‘two principles’ that inspired his work ‘from the beginning’ is germane.<sup>12</sup> In his 1968 acceptance speech of the Inca Garcilaso de la Vega Prize, Arguedas gives the following account of his discovery of the first principle:

In my early youth I was full of great rebelliousness and great impatience and I was eager to fight, to do something. . . . It was by reading Mariátegui and later Lenin that I found a permanent order in

things; socialist theory channeled not only my whole future but also whatever energy there was in me, giving it a direction and making it flow even stronger by the very fact of channeling it. How far my understanding of socialism went I really do not know. But it did not kill the magic in me. I never sought to become a politician, nor did I think I was capable of practicing party discipline; but it was the socialist ideology and my being close to socialist movements that provided direction and permanence, a clear destination for the energy I felt being unleashed during my youth.<sup>13</sup>

After reading Mariátegui and Lenin, Arguedas found in socialist theory a worldview that helped him understand his surroundings, just as socialist ideology and socialist movements helped him channel the rebellious and impatient energy of his days as a student. However, in contrast to the political militant of Martos's anecdote, Arguedas, 'like a cheerful demon', proudly affirmed both socialist theory and magic, both struggle and happiness, both change and tradition.<sup>14</sup> Whereas the Peruvian Communist Party sought to control and discipline its members, Marxist socialism gave Arguedas direction and purpose. Instead of killing the magic inside him, it coexisted with this magic and even enhanced it.

Arguedas goes on to describe the second principle that inspired his work from the beginning as the conviction that Peru represents 'an infinite source of creativity'.<sup>15</sup> He then lists a number of important people, cultural practices and religious and natural entities as examples, from Pachacamac and Pachacutec to Tupac Amaru and César Vallejo to the Festivals of Qoyllur Riti and El Señor de los Milagros to the 'ducks who speak in highland lakes where all the insects of Europe would be drowned, and hummingbirds who rise up to the sun to drink in its fire and to flame over all the flowers of the world'.<sup>16</sup> What is of note in these closing lines of Arguedas's speech is how he puts these sources of inspiration on equal footing with Marxist socialism, forming a 'living link' of reciprocity between them or what he elsewhere describes as 'narrow zones of confluence'.<sup>17</sup> Arguedas's understanding of his own writing practice thus points to a specific mode of relationship – a kind of horizontal alliance – that, if 'universalized' and 'extended', could serve as a model for how to overcome the missed encounters of his novels.<sup>18</sup>

Arguedas's proximity to socialist theory and politics begs the question of why he chose to dedicate so much of his time to writing literature.<sup>19</sup> Although he makes use of various genres to address the issues discussed thus far, including anthropological studies, political tracts, open letters and cultural criticism, Arguedas does consider the specificity of literature and its particular relationship with socialist theory. He addresses this matter during a series of round table discussions at the 1965 Encounter of Peruvian Narrators, held in Arequipa, Peru, which included interventions by a number of famous writers and critics, including Ciro Alegría, Sebastián Salazar Bondy, Oswaldo Reynoso and Antonio Cornejo Polar. If Arguedas begins by insisting that writing is the product of lived experience, he will go on to maintain that socialist theory is also required if experience is to be properly understood and transformed into writing.<sup>20</sup>

I would be nothing without *Amauta*, the journal directed by Mariátegui. I would also be nothing without the social doctrines that circulated after World War I. *Amauta*, the theoretical possibility that man himself can make all social injustices disappear from the world, this is what makes our writing possible and what gives us a theoretical tool, an indispensable light with which to judge these experiences and to make of them good material for literature.<sup>21</sup>

For Arguedas, socialist theory serves as a tool for literary production. Its vision of self-emancipation in the face of injustice illuminates experience – the raw material of writing – in such a way that said experience can be deciphered and remade as literature. Arguedas even goes so far as to state that *Amauta* and the social doctrines that it helped circulate throughout Peru in the 1920s and 1930s function as the very conditions of possibility for his own writing.

This is not to say, however, that Arguedas construes the relationship between theory and literature as merely one-sided, with theory contributing to literary production but in no need of literature for its own formation. On the contrary, for Arguedas, literature acts as a kind of *supplement* to theory by simultaneously exposing theory's limits and enhancing its claims.<sup>22</sup>

There [in *Amauta*] we discovered much of the interior world of the Indian, the mestizo, and even the *señores*, to whom we will not deny the possibility of also contributing to the construction of a great

Peru. In the stories that I have written, I describe the *gamonal* not as a beast or cruel instrument but rather as a human being that has both defects and virtues, just like the Indian. This capacity to judge with lucidity is nonetheless the work of, let's say, my own labor, since at times the aforementioned doctrines fanaticize people. In *Amauta*, I read descriptions of the *gamonales* that were as monstrously deformed as the descriptions of the Indian. I therefore thought that it was necessary to describe the Andean world, not only the Indian, just as I knew it, from life and not from conscious observation, since conscious observation is posterior, it comes after getting to know the world through life.<sup>23</sup>

Literature's openness to lived experience – prior to conscious observation – is what enables it to function as a supplement of theory. In this example, *Amauta's* obsession with the contradiction between Indians and *gamonales* does not allow it to recognise that both aspects of this contradiction are themselves contradictory and cannot be fanatically construed as containing a wholly positive or wholly negative valence.<sup>24</sup> Arguedas's more robust literary description of the Andean world, a labour grounded in his own experiences, thus reveals these internal contradictions rather than obfuscates them. If socialist theory's light can be illuminating, it can also be blinding. This is the primary lesson to be gleaned from Arguedas's attempt to think the supplementarity of literature, and it will be a lesson staged again and again in his literary analyses of the *desencuentro* between Marxist groups and indigenous communities. In what follows, I will turn to Arguedas's first major novel, *Yawar Fiesta* (1941), to investigate how the text portrays this missed encounter as well as what provokes and sustains it.

### **The *turupukllay* of Puquio**

*Yawar Fiesta* takes place in 1930s Puquio, an Andean town of Peru in the rural province of Lucanas. The novel quickly reveals that it is a town split in two, divided between the town centre where the *mistis* (white elites) live and rule and the outlying *pueblo indio* (Indian town) composed of four *ayllus*: Pichk'achuri, K'ayau, Chaupi and K'ollana. While the novel's opening chapter offers a symbolic description of Puquio's landscape that connects the distribution of space to the distribution of power, the second chapter delves into the prehistory of this spatial arrangement with a vivid literary account of the dispossession of the Indians from the common land of the Andean sierra.<sup>25</sup> It was this enclosure of common land that set in motion what Mariátegui famously theorised as *gamonalismo* or the economic and political hegemony of Peru's semi-feudal landed estates.<sup>26</sup>

After these preliminary scenes of Puquio's geography and history, the reader is introduced in the third chapter of the novel to the main focus of the text: the *yawar fiesta* or blood festival that takes place every year on 28 July to commemorate Peru's independence from Spanish colonial rule. On this day, the four *ayllus* of Puquio compete in *turupukllay*, an Andean translation of a Spanish bullfight, which consists of Indians using their ponchos to tauntingly play (*pukllay*) with a number of wild bulls (*turu*; the Quechuanised pronunciation of the Spanish word *toro*) that are released in the Pichk'achuri square. The strongest bulls have silk saddlecloths embroidered with silver and gold coins sewn directly onto their skin, which participants attempt to rip off during the fight, and sometimes a condor is strapped to a bull's back to further provoke it. The event explosively draws to a close when the bulls are blown up with dynamite.<sup>27</sup> While Puquio's spatial division coincides with the class, ethnic and cultural divisions that characterise the Andean region in general, both *mistis* and Indians, landowners and *comuneros*, come together in the town square to celebrate the *yawar fiesta* of *turupukllay*.

Yet this apparent unity across division is deceptive, since the significance of the popular Andean cultural practice is contested throughout the novel. Members of the four *ayllus* conceive of *turupukllay* as a communal ritual informed by indigenous customs of friendly competition, communal labour and demonstrations of strength and courage. To risk one's life in this way is to participate in a struggle for dignity, honour and recognition. The *mistis*, on the other hand, construe *turupukllay* as a thrilling, violent spectacle that affords the opportunity to perversely revel in the death of indigenous peoples. The hegemonic gaze of the town's 'leading citizens' converts the Indians into animals that are just as 'savage' as the bulls that they taunt.<sup>28</sup> As one character in the novel puts it, *turupukllay* 'is something to see ... because the Indians are also like wild beasts'.<sup>29</sup> The Andean bullfight is thus portrayed as a highly contradictory cultural practice interpenetrated by multiple, opposing significations.<sup>30</sup>

The Subprefect, who comes to Puquio from the city of Ica, represents the modernising and civilising authority of the national government in the rural town. For this reason, he predictably disapproves of the tradition of *turupukllay* and, at the beginning of Chapter 5, announces that he has received an edict from the National Ministry ‘prohibiting bullfights without trained bullfighters’.<sup>31</sup> Anticipating that some of his constituents would not welcome such interference in the annual festivities, the Subprefect explains:

I think this prohibition is for the good of the country, because it puts an end to a custom that was a savage survival [*salvajismo*], as you yourselves have informed me, because the bulls caused deaths and injuries. As you realize, I have to enforce this order. And I’m letting you know in good time, so you can hire a professional Spanish-style bullfighter in Lima if you want to hold a bullfight for the national holidays.<sup>32</sup>

Statist modernisation is thus figured in this passage as a kind of return or, more precisely, as a practice of un-translating *turupukllay* by recovering the original, Spanish roots of bullfighting. Peru’s development, from the perspective of the State, depends on purifying the cultural practice and prohibiting its contamination with savagery. Although there is some dissent among the *mistis*, the most powerful voices of Puquio, including its religious authorities, argue in favour of the edict because they ‘respect the law’ and wish to live in a civilised and holy country, free of the ‘Satanic feast’ that is *turupukllay*.<sup>33</sup> The Indians, devastated by the news, appear to be on the verge of outright rebellion, at which point they receive a false promise from the Mayor of Puquio that there will be a traditional Andean bullfight on 28 July just as every other year.

### **Migrant vanguards and immanent critique**

Chapter 7 interrupts the flow of the narrative to describe a ‘communal work project’ of the 1920s, which consisted of the indigenous communities of Puquio building a 180-mile-long highway in 28 days – just in time for the 28 July festivities – that would connect Puquio to the coastal city of Nazca. Although similar projects would soon be co-opted by the national government of Augusto B. Leguía, the novel insists that this one started ‘by popular initiative, without government support’, as a competitive response to the indigenous communities of Coracora who sought to build a similar highway from their Andean town to the coastal port of Chala.<sup>34</sup> An unintended consequence of these highways is that waves of Indians and mestizos would migrate from Peru’s countryside to the city of Lima for education and work. The novel depicts these travellers as preserving their Andean cultural practices and affective bonds in the urban metropolis through the organisation of sporting clubs and cultural groups, including the Lucanas Union Center. Led by a student named Escobar, the Lucanas Union Center is composed of workers, students, and former *comuneros* from the province of Lucanas who undergo what Arguedas elsewhere characterises as ‘a real revolution in norms’ because of their exposure to new ideas, new ways of life and new forms of political mobilisation.<sup>35</sup> These migrants accordingly cross not only the territorial border that divides the sierra and the coast but also the socio-economic, political and cultural borders that separate yet connect the urban and the rural, *lo criollo* and *lo andino*.<sup>36</sup> While transporting Andean customs and celebrations to the city, they also aim to bring back what they have learned to their counterparts in the countryside. In this way, the members of the Lucanas Union Center, although more diverse in their social standing, resemble Mariátegui’s radicalised indigenous migrant workers, tasked with spatially and linguistically translating socialist theory, carrying it with them into the Andean mountains as part of a wider effort to create an Indo-American form of socialism.<sup>37</sup>

Escobar and his comrades also resemble Arguedas himself, whose personal trajectory led him to relocate from the Andes to Lima, where, as a student, he underwent a process of change and discovery not unlike the members of the Lucanas Union Center. It would be tempting, given these parallels, to read Escobar as embodying the horizontal relationship of reciprocity between socialist theory and Peruvian creativity that Arguedas envisions in his acceptance speech of the Inca Garcilaso de la Vega Prize. And yet, a closer reading reveals that the geographical distance Escobar travels to arrive in Lima is accompanied by the introduction of another kind of distance – vertical or hierarchical in nature – that becomes palpable

when he discusses plans to disseminate his knowledge and experience to others. Consider Escobar's statement on the eve of the Lucanas Union Center's formation:

There are now more than 2,000 of us Lucaninos in Lima, and we're all asleep. Meanwhile, the big landholders and the petty politicians keep on exploiting the *comuneros*, just as they did 200 years ago, by putting them in the stocks and by flogging them. We who have already had our eyes opened and our consciousness freed should not let them get away with skinning our brothers alive.<sup>38</sup>

Although the Lucanas Union Center is not an official cell of the Peruvian Communist Party, the well-intentioned Escobar participates in the same top-down vanguardism characteristic of the latter organisation and much of inter-war Marxism in Latin America.<sup>39</sup> Escobar fits within this paradigm insofar as he assumes epistemological superiority over the supposedly ignorant indigenous masses and denies their own consciousness and agency while claiming to be their saviour. Put another way, Escobar's 'fraternalism', his big-brother disposition, leads him to view indigenous peoples still living in the Andes as intellectually inferior, politically dormant and in need of enlightenment and awakening.<sup>40</sup>

A telegram from the Mayor of Puquio requesting that members of the Lucanas Union Center contract a professional Spanish bullfighter for the 28 July national holiday presents an opportunity for Escobar and his comrades to become what they believe themselves destined to be: the defenders of helpless indigenous peasants. Escobar calls a meeting of the group's governing board, and they collectively decide to hire the bullfighter, travel to Puquio and support the national government's edict insofar as it represents a blow to the landowners' perverse tradition of brutality against Indians. As Escobar exclaims: 'Never again shall the Indians die in the Pichk'achuri square to give those pigs pleasure!'<sup>41</sup> Acutely aware of *turupukllay*'s significance for the landowning elite, the group appears completely out of touch with its significance for the indigenous communities of Puquio. Just as in Arguedas's critique of *Amauta*, a fanatical hatred for the *gamonales* distorts the group's perception so that anything tied to the economico-political class, including *turupukllay*, is portrayed in a wholly negative light rather than in its contradictory complexity. The meeting likewise evokes the *desencuentro* that opens this article, for an organisation not unlike a Leftist vanguard party confronts a very different party, the *yawar fiesta* of *turupukllay*, and its members disparagingly dismiss an Andean cultural practice in which indigenous communities participate and find meaning.

These resonances are not coincidental. The link between the migrant group and the post-Mariátegui Peruvian Left is made explicit when the narrator reveals that the club's meeting convenes at Escobar's residence, where a 'photograph of Mariátegui, nailed to the wall at the head of the bed, dominate[s] the room'.<sup>42</sup> Drawing upon this detail, Horacio Legrás rightly notes that both Arguedas and Escobar 'found a stable order in Mariátegui and in the critical Marxist tradition Mariátegui had inaugurated in Peru'.<sup>43</sup> However, the dramatisation of Escobar's uncritical vanguardism suggests that his is a very different Mariátegui and that *Yawar Fiesta* can be read as an immanent critique of a certain tendency within Peruvian Marxism. This theoretical tendency, rather than illuminating the contradictory character of *turupukllay*, blinds Escobar and his comrades with its one-sidedness. The novel accordingly supplements the very form of Marxism that circulates within its narrative by constructing a literary representation of *turupukllay* that exposes the blind spots of Escobar's theoretical framework while revealing the aspects of the Andean cultural practice that remain invisible within said framework.

At one point during the meeting, Escobar turns to Mariátegui's portrait and speaks directly to it, 'as if the picture were one more member of the Lucanas Union Center. "You'd like what we're going to do, *werak'ocha*. You haven't just spoken to us for the pleasure of it – we're going to put into practice what you have preached".'<sup>44</sup> In this passage, Escobar conceives of the group's plan to uphold and defend the State's edict as an act in agreement with Mariátegui's teachings. The strategic alliance between radicalised migrants and government officials thus allegorises a deeper resonance between a certain (mis)interpretation of Mariátegui and the Peruvian State's project of national development.<sup>45</sup> To form this alliance, Escobar and his comrades identify *turupukllay* as an obstacle not only to Statist development but also to its socialist alternative. The entire scene should therefore be read as an alarming encounter between Marxism and the bourgeois State predicated upon a missed encounter between the distorted

socialist theory of a particular Marxist group and the ideals and political will of Puquio's indigenous communities.<sup>46</sup>

### Competing worldviews and unresolved contradictions

To underscore this *desencuentro*, the narrator explains how, at the very same moment that the Lucanas Union Center is singing to the portrait of Mariátegui, insisting that the misery of *turupukllay* will be no more, members of the *ayllu* K'ayau are eagerly making plans to go into the woods and capture the dangerous and mythical bull Misitu for the upcoming bullfight. Misitu is located in the woods of the Negromayo Canyon, the land of the Koñani Indians, and guarded by the *auki* or mountain spirit Ak'chi. A *layk'a* (sorcerer) accordingly asks permission from the *jatun* (great) *auki* K'arwarasu, known as 'the father of all the mountains of Lucanas', to enter these woods and capture the bull.<sup>47</sup> After receiving permission from K'arwarasu, members of the *ayllu* successfully capture Misitu, but the *layk'a* is killed in the process. The Indians of K'ayau interpret his death as an exchange for Misitu's life, a gift that K'arwarasu offers to Ak'chi out of friendship. The Chief Staffbearer of K'ayau, gazing up at the K'arwarasu mountain, thanks the *jatun auki* for its guidance and support: 'Here's your *ayllu*, intact. By your will. There's Misitu, your animal. For you we're going to fight the bulls in Pichk'achuri, with great rage, so you'll be K'ayau's guardian, always. Thank you, *jatun auki!*'<sup>48</sup>

When members of the Lucanas Union Center arrive in Puquio, the streets are empty because the locals have received word that the mythical bull, now captured, will soon be dragged into town. While one member of the group disapprovingly states that it will take 'a thousand years to save the Indians from superstition', referring to the widespread belief in the bull's magical powers, Escobar responds: 'It depends, brother. A friendly national government, one of our very own, for example, would uproot sooner, much sooner, that awe the Indian has of the earth, of the sky, even of the valleys and the rivers. We know their soul; we would enlighten them from close by.'<sup>49</sup> In line with the party militant of Martos's anecdote, Escobar trivialises indigenous beliefs by reducing them to superstitions that, like weeds, must be uprooted or torn out for socialism to find fertile soil in Peru.<sup>50</sup> Although he hints at the formation of another kind of State, a State that would function otherwise, Escobar's imagination is confined to the present model of statehood, for his vision of a future national government represents merely an intensification and acceleration of the current one, responding to development, as John Kraniauskas would say, with more development.<sup>51</sup>

While Escobar's statement re-enacts the same epistemological elitism and top-down vanguardism as before, what follows reveals their source:

But what do you expect, brother, with governments that support all the beastly, hardhearted, landowning exploiters like Don Julián Aragüena? Those guys are pushing harder and harder all the time, and with hellishly deliberate calculation they force the Indian to become rooted in that dark, fearful, and primitive life, because it's to their advantage; that's why they command and rule. . . . They drive the Indians headlong into darkness, into what we call 'the mythical fear' at the University. . . . Contemplating him [K'arwarasu], what does the Indian say? He kneels, his heart trembles with fear. And the landowners, the priests themselves, all the people who exploit them, who make money at the expense of their ignorance, try to confirm the belief that the Indians' fear of the great forces of the earth is good, is sacred. But if we were the national government, brothers! What would happen? We'd smash the causes that have made primitivism and servitude survive for so many centuries.<sup>52</sup>

In Escobar's analysis of the situation, the Indians' cultural beliefs and practices are not in contradictory tension with their exploitative instrumentalisation. Instead, he envisions a neat correspondence between primitivism and exploitation and therefore, more broadly, between an ideological superstructure and its economic base. From this perspective, the Indians' material position in society inevitably leads to ignorance and can only be rectified by some outside, modernising force capable of introducing enlightenment and the freedom to which it corresponds. Vulgar economism, in other words, authorises the group's particular form of elitism and vanguardism and propels its developmentalist project.

Escobar's interpretation of Misitu's capture accordingly varies greatly from how it is experienced by the members of K'ayau. For Escobar, the Indians were tricked into going after Misitu by Don Julián, who had previously tried and failed to capture the bull. Escobar nevertheless endures a moment of cognitive dissonance while visiting Puquio, which leads him to self-critically reflect upon his initial understanding of the situation:

When I learned that K'ayau was going after Misitu, I was angry and sad. It would be a slaughter of Indians. But now that we're going out to meet the *ayllu*, I'd like to shout with joy. Do you know what this means, brothers – that the K'ayaus have dared to go into the Negromayo Canyon? That they've roped Misitu and dragged him all the way across the puna to the Pichk'achuri bullring? They've done it out of pride, to show the whole world how strong they are, how strong the *ayllu* can be when it wants to. . . . What does it matter if Misitu may have ripped the guts out of ten or twenty K'ayaus, if in the end they've lassoed his horns and are dragging him along like any old wild highland bull? They've killed an *auki*! And the day they kill all the *aukis* who are tormenting their minds, the day they become what we are now – 'renegade "chalos"', as Don Julián says – we shall lead this country to a glory no one can imagine.<sup>53</sup>

Instead of perceiving the Indians' actions as he did before, as fuelled by superstition and merely perpetuating their own domination, Escobar now interprets the capture of Misitu as a deliberate and wilful display of collective strength that prefigures the Indians' eventual liberation. Yet Escobar's more nuanced and revised interpretation of Misitu's capture still deviates in important ways with how the members of K'ayau understand it. Escobar substitutes the will of the mountain spirits for the will of the Indians and the latter's sacred reverence and loyalty toward their *jatun auki* for a secularised notion of communal pride. He accordingly stages what Dipesh Chakrabarty describes as the problem of 'translating diverse and enchanted worlds into the universal and disenchanting language of sociology'.<sup>54</sup> For Chakrabarty, this problem of translation is inevitable within the social sciences, since historians and sociologists, due to the very nature and limits of their disciplines, cannot accept a religious or supernatural account of human experience. The challenge is therefore to translate in such a way that other modes of experience, other life-worlds, are not obliterated or subalternised in the process. But this is precisely what Escobar accomplishes. His account of Misitu's capture erases how this event is lived by its actors; he kills the magic of the event by claiming that the Indians kill an *auki*. What's more, his interpretation of Misitu's capture implicitly advances a unilinear narrative of historical development that moves from unenlightened superstition to enlightened secularism. Escobar positions himself and his comrades at the other end of this unilinear process, which suggests that the Indians are developmentally behind the members of the Lucanas Union Center and must catch up to their renegade counterparts.<sup>55</sup> In sum, even during this moment of self-critical reflection, traces of Escobar's epistemological elitism, top-down vanguardism and modernist developmentalism remain.

When the members of the Lucanas Union Center finally meet the K'ayau Indians in Puquio, embracing each other triumphantly and standing 'shoulder to shoulder' like equals as they collectively drag Misitu into town, their physical *encuentro* quickly reveals a deeper *desencuentro* of worldviews.<sup>56</sup> The narrator relates that Escobar and the others,

wanted to make the K'ayaus understand [*hacer entender*] that Misitu had fallen because the *comuneros* were resolute, because Raura [a leader of the *ayllu*] was courageous, because man could always overcome the *salk'a* [savage or wild] bulls. The K'ayaus seemed to believe them. But the mestizos realized that it was not easy, that the *comuneros* were certain the great K'arwarasu had protected the community, and that all of them would die worshipping the *auki*, as the father of the *ayllu*.<sup>57</sup>

The same impulse that opens this article, the top-down vanguardist impulse to control how others understand and experience the world, asserts itself in this scene when Escobar and his comrades stand beside their potential allies. Unable to negotiate between distinct worldviews, the migrant group opposes the Enlightenment ideal of man's domination over nature and of man's freedom from myth to a competing

understanding of the relationship between man and nature founded on the myths of Quechua cosmology.<sup>58</sup> The Lucanas Union Center's inability to adopt a different position toward the *comuneros*, one that might allow for a relationship of mutual understanding and reciprocal enrichment between these groups and their respective worldviews, foreshadows the ultimate failure of Escobar and his comrades to grasp the significance of *turupukllay* in its contradictory complexity. The novel shows how they cannot conceive of Andean bullfighting as anything other than the perpetuation of *misti* domination and therefore as a roadblock to socialism's realisation in Peru. As a result, they support the edict prohibiting *turupukllay* to the very end, but, after a pathetic performance by the Spanish bullfighter from Lima, the Andean elites break their agreement to respect the National Ministry's prohibition and call upon the Indians to enter the ring and fight Misitu. The Indians jump into the ring without hesitation, Misitu gores one of the K'ayaus and the bull is killed with dynamite. The novel ends with the Mayor of Puquio leaning over to whisper into the Subprefect's ear: 'You see, Señor Subprefect? This is how our bullfights are. The real *yawar punchau* [bloody day]!'<sup>59</sup>

According to Antonio Cornejo Polar, the Lucanas Union Center's failure to provide an alternative to *turupukllay* makes possible a recomposition of the 'traditional model' of the Andean world.<sup>60</sup> This model entails a contradictory 'we' (for example, 'our bullfights') – composed of both *mistis* and *comuneros* – that resists the State's modernising and civilising project. Kraniauskas contends that this interpretation of the novel's ending implies that the 're-Indianization' of the bullfight in response to the State's 'de-Indianization' of *turupukllay* 'reproduces – that is, both feeds and guarantees – *misti* domination'.<sup>61</sup> Kraniauskas proposes an alternative interpretation that conceives of the Indians' actions as evidence of another 'we', of 'an agency or collective subject of history' that emerges out of their dislocation from both *misti* domination and the developmentalist alliance between the Lucanas Union Center and the bourgeois State.<sup>62</sup> In this way, Kraniauskas demonstrates how Cornejo Polar's interpretation of the novel's ending veers dangerously close to Escobar's epistemological elitism insofar as it suggests that the Indians are once again the unknowing fabricators of their own chains. It would seem, though, that Kraniauskas's interpretation veers too far in the opposite direction by portraying the re-Indianising actions of the *comuneros* in a wholly positive light, not unlike *Amauta*'s one-sidedly negative depictions of anything associated with the *gamonales*. Indeed, in my view, the novel's ending invites its readers to refuse the false choice between condemning or celebrating *turupukllay*, since to choose one of these options over the other is to obscure the event's contradictory complexity as *both* a perverse and violent spectacle of death tied to *misti* domination *and* a courageous practice of collective self-affirmation tied to indigenous agency and belief structures.<sup>63</sup>

Just as the contradictory character of *turupukllay* remains unresolved in the novel, the *desencuentro* between Mariátegui's followers and the indigenous communities that they claim to represent and defend persists up to the very end of the narrative. Escobar and his comrades are ultimately unable to construct a zone of confluence from which they could form an alliance with the *ayllus* of Puquio. The novel points to a number of factors that contribute to this missed encounter, from the group's epistemological elitism, top-down vanguardism and modernist developmentalism to its vulgar economism and its rigid understanding of man's relationship with nature and with myth. By bringing these factors into relief, the novel offers a critique, from within Marxism-Mariáteguism, of one of the doctrine's possible tendencies and supplements its blind spots. The conclusion of *Yawar Fiesta* is thus a kind of beginning, a starting point for experimentation with alternative forms of relation beyond the missed encounter of *turupukllay*.

### Declarations and conflict of interests

The author declares no conflicts of interest with this work.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> See, on this point, José Aricó, 'Introducción', in *Mariátegui y los orígenes del marxismo latinoamericano*, ed. José Aricó (Mexico City: Cuadernos de Pasado y Presente, 1978), xi–lvi; José Aricó, 'Mariátegui y la formación del partido socialista del Perú', *Socialismo y Participación* 11 (1980): 139–67; Néstor Kohan, *De Ingenieros al Che: Ensayos sobre el marxismo argentino y latinoamericano* (Havana: Instituto Cubano

de Investigación Cultural Juan Marinello, 2008), 116–28; Gavin Arnall, Susana Draper and Ana Sabau, ‘José Aricó como lector de Gramsci’, in *Gramsci en las orillas*, ed. Oscar Ariel Cabezas (Buenos Aires: La Cebra, 2015), 141–70.

<sup>2</sup> Marco Martos as cited in Nicolas Matayoshi, ‘El marxismo mágico de Arguedas’, in *Arguedas vive*, ed. Nicolas Matayoshi (Huancayo: Instituto Nacional de Cultura, 2002), 54–5 [my translation].

<sup>3</sup> Martos in Matayoshi, ‘El marxismo mágico’, 54–5 [my translation].

<sup>4</sup> According to Antonio Cornejo Polar, Arguedas never joined an official political party during his youth or at any other time in his life. Cornejo Polar cites as evidence a letter that Arguedas wrote in 1947 to correct a newspaper article published in *La Tribuna*, which described him as a ‘known communist militant’. An excerpt from the letter reads: ‘I do not agitate in the ranks of any political party, nor have I put my name down in the register of any political association; my conduct has always followed my own consciousness, with the most absolute freedom.’ See José María Arguedas, ‘Rectificación a una publicación de *La Tribuna*’, in *Obras completas Tomo VII* (Lima: Editorial Horizonte, 2012), 39 [my translation]. See also Antonio Cornejo Polar, *Los universos narrativos de José María Arguedas* (Lima: Editorial Horizonte, 1997), 55–6. My use of the technical term *desencuentro* throughout this article draws from Álvaro García Linera’s account of the persistent missed encounter between Indianism and Marxism in Bolivia. See his ‘Indianismo y marxismo: El desencuentro de dos razones revolucionarias’, in *La potencia plebeya: Acción colectiva e identidades indígenas, obreras y populares en Bolivia*, ed. Pablo Stefanoni (Buenos Aires: Prometeo Libros, 2008), 373–92. Although each with a different emphasis, the following works also theorise the term *desencuentro* in ways that resonate with my own approach: Julio Ramos, *Desencuentros de la modernidad en América Latina: Literatura y política en el siglo XIX* (San Juan: Ediciones Callejón, 2003); Bruno Bosteels, *Marx and Freud in Latin America: Politics, Psychoanalysis, and Religion in Times of Terror* (London: Verso, 2012), 1–27; Jeffrey L. Gould, ‘Ignacio Ellacuría and the Salvadorean Revolution’, *Journal of Latin American Studies* 47, no. 2 (May 2015): 285–315; Patrick Dove, ‘The *Desencuentros* of History: Class and Ethnicity in Bolivia’, *Culture, Theory and Critique* 56, no. 3 (2015): 313–32.

<sup>5</sup> The most famous exponent of this ethic within the Latin American Marxist tradition was perhaps Ernesto Che Guevara. See ‘El socialismo y el hombre en Cuba’, in *Obras completas Tomo II* (Buenos Aires: Legasa, 1995), 7–33. See also his ‘No hay revolución sin sacrificios’, in *Obras completas Tomo II*, 183–211.

<sup>6</sup> On Andean scissor dancers and their importance in Arguedas’s works, see Martin Lienhard, *Cultura popular andina y forma novelesca (Zorros y danzantes en la última novela de Arguedas)* (Lima: Tarea/Latinoamericana, 1981). On ‘ludic’ politics, see Bolívar Echeverría, *Modernity and ‘Whiteness’*, trans. Rodrigo Ferreira (Medford, MA: Polity Press, 2019).

<sup>7</sup> On the limits of the Peruvian Left at this time, and its impact on Arguedas, see César Lévano, *Arguedas. Un sentimiento trágico de la vida* (Lima: Labor, 1969), 54–5.

<sup>8</sup> On the ‘Problem of the Indian’, see José Carlos Mariátegui, *7 ensayos de interpretación de la realidad peruana* (Lima: Biblioteca Amauta, 2006). On the ‘heroic creation’ of Indo-American socialism, see José Carlos Mariátegui, ‘Anniversary and Balance Sheet’, in *José Carlos Mariátegui: An Anthology*, eds. Harry E. Vanden and Marc Becker (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2011), 130.

<sup>9</sup> I develop the distinction between imitating and critically translating Marxism here: Gavin Arnall, *Subterranean Fanon: An Underground Theory of Radical Change* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2020). See also Gavin Arnall, ‘Hacia una teoría de la práctica teórica: Mariátegui, marxismo y traducción’, *Escrituras Americanas* 2, no. 2 (December 2017): 43–80.

<sup>10</sup> To take a recent example, Irina Feldman’s engaging book on Arguedas’s political philosophy dedicates only a few pages to a discussion of his relationship with Marxism. See *Rethinking Community: The Political Philosophy of José María Arguedas* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2014), 110–14. There are, of course, exceptions to this general tendency. See, for instance, Ericka Beckman, ‘José María Arguedas’ Epics of Expropriation’, *emisférica* 14, no. 1 (2018), <https://hemisphericinstitute.org/en/emisferica-14-1-expulsion/14-1-essays/jose-maria-arguedas-epics-of-expropriation.html>, accessed 3 March 2020.

<sup>11</sup> An instructive example of this line of criticism can be found in Neil Larsen's essay 'Indigenism, Cultural Nationalism, and Universality', in which Larsen argues that a 'major weakness' of Arguedas's work is 'the persistent tendency to trade the epic and political perspectives that partially foreground [his] narratives for generally static cultural and ethnographic tableaux'. See *Reading North by South: On Latin American Literature, Culture, and Politics* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 137–8. Angel Rama's more sympathetic reading of Arguedas as participating in a 'culturalist' form of *indigenismo* should also be consulted here. See *Writing Across Cultures: Narrative Transculturation in Latin America*, trans. David Frye (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2012), 125. See, relatedly, Martín Oyata, 'Una poética de la sensibilidad. José María Arguedas y la invención de la cultura andina', *A Contracorriente: Revista de historia social y literatura en América Latina* 11, no. 2 (Winter 2014): 76–113.

<sup>12</sup> José María Arguedas, 'I Am Not an Acculturated Man...', in *The Fox from Up Above and the Fox from Down Below*, trans. Frances Horning Barraclough (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2000), 269.

<sup>13</sup> Arguedas, 'I Am Not an Acculturated Man...', 269–70.

<sup>14</sup> Arguedas, 'I Am Not an Acculturated Man...', 269. On Arguedas's approach to tradition as mobile and fluid rather than static and unchanging, see Carlos Huamán, *Pachachaka: Puente sobre el mundo. Narrativa, memoria y símbolo en la obra de José María Arguedas* (Mexico City: El Colegio de Mexico, 2004), 58, 126.

<sup>15</sup> Arguedas, 'I Am Not an Acculturated Man...', 270.

<sup>16</sup> Arguedas, 'I Am Not an Acculturated Man...', 270.

<sup>17</sup> Arguedas, 'I Am Not an Acculturated Man...', 269; José María Arguedas, 'The Novel and the Problem of Literary Expression in Peru', in José María Arguedas, *Yawar Fiesta*, trans. Frances Horning Barraclough (Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, 2002), xxi.

<sup>18</sup> Arguedas, 'I Am Not an Acculturated Man...', 269 [translation modified]. For the original, see José María Arguedas, 'No soy un aculturado', in *El zorro de arriba y el zorro de abajo* (Lima: Editorial Horizonte, 2011), 12.

<sup>19</sup> Horacio Legrás similarly considers what literature allows Arguedas to do that he cannot accomplish through ethnographic work here: '*Yawar fiesta*: el retorno de la tragedia', in *José María Arguedas: hacia una poética migrante*, ed. Sergio R. Franco (Pittsburgh, PA: Instituto Internacional de Literatura Iberoamericana, 2006), 61–79.

<sup>20</sup> For Arguedas's intervention on lived experience, see José María Arguedas, 'Primer encuentro de narradores peruanos', in *Obras completas Tomo XII* (Lima: Editorial Horizonte, 2012), 112–15. See, relatedly, John Landreau, 'Translation, Autobiography, and Quechua Knowledge', in *José María Arguedas: Reconsiderations for Latin American Cultural Studies*, eds. Ciro A. Sandoval and Sandra M. Boschetto-Sandoval (Athens, OH: Ohio University Center for International Studies, 1998), 88–112.

<sup>21</sup> Arguedas, 'Primer encuentro', 179 [my translation].

<sup>22</sup> On the dual logic of supplementarity, see Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997).

<sup>23</sup> Arguedas, 'Primer encuentro', 179 [my translation].

<sup>24</sup> On this understanding of contradiction within dialectical thinking, see Fredric Jameson, 'The Three Names of the Dialectic', in his *Valences of the Dialectic* (London: Verso, 2010), 3–70.

<sup>25</sup> For a compelling reading of how Arguedas, like Frantz Fanon, links the distribution of space to the distribution of power, see Irina Feldman, 'Las metáforas de colonialidad y descolonización en José María Arguedas y Frantz Fanon', *Revista de Crítica Literaria Latinoamericana* 38, no. 75 (2012): 77–94.

<sup>26</sup> See Mariátegui, *7 ensayos*, 35–8, n1.

<sup>27</sup> According to Rodrigo Montoya, this is a fictitious detail added by Arguedas rather than an accurate portrayal of *turupukllay* as it was practised at the time. See '*Yawar fiesta*: Una lectura antropológica', *Revista de Crítica Literaria Latinoamericana* 6, no. 12 (1980): 55–68.

<sup>28</sup> José María Arguedas, *Yawar Fiesta*, trans. Frances Horning Barraclough (Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, 2002), 31.

<sup>29</sup> Arguedas, *Yawar Fiesta*, 32.

<sup>30</sup> For an in-depth discussion of this point, see Juan Carlos Galdo, 'Rituales sangrientos: poéticas y políticas del sacrificio en José María Arguedas y Mario Vargas Llosa', *Revista de Crítica Literaria Latinoamericana*, 33, no. 65 (2007): 265–76.

<sup>31</sup> Arguedas, *Yawar Fiesta*, 36.

<sup>32</sup> Arguedas, *Yawar Fiesta*, 36.

<sup>33</sup> Arguedas, *Yawar Fiesta*, 43, 45.

<sup>34</sup> Arguedas, *Yawar Fiesta*, 66. On this point, see Sara Castro Klarén, *El mundo mágico de José María Arguedas* (Paris: INDIGO, 2004), 69.

<sup>35</sup> José María Arguedas, 'Puquio: A Culture in the Process of Change', in *Yawar Fiesta*, trans. Frances Horning Barraclough (Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, 2002), 153.

<sup>36</sup> As a result of this movement, the characters of the Lucanas Union Center are referred to – and refer to themselves as – 'chalos', a Quechanised pronunciation of *cholo*, the once-pejorative Spanish term for mixed ancestry. For a discussion of the historical process of *cholificación* in Peru, see Aníbal Quijano, *Dominación y cultura. Lo cholo y el conflicto cultural en el Perú* (Lima: Mosca Azul Editores, 1980). For a related discussion of *cholaje* in a different historical context, see Javier Sanjinés C., *Mestizaje Upside Down: Aesthetic Politics in Modern Bolivia* (Pittsburgh, PA: Pittsburgh University Press, 2004). On borders as phenomena that connect what they separate, see Sandro Mezzadra and Brett Neilson, *Border as Method, or, the Multiplication of Labor* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013).

<sup>37</sup> In Mariátegui's words: 'For the progressive ideological education of the Indigenous masses, the workers' vanguard has at its disposal those militant elements of the Indian race who, in mines or particularly in urban centers, come into contact with trade union and political movements. They assimilate its principles and receive training to play a role in the emancipation of their race. Workers from an Indigenous milieu often return temporarily or permanently to their communities. Their language skills allow them to carry out an effective mission as instructors of their racial and class brothers. Indian farmers will only understand individuals who speak their own language. They will always distrust whites and *mestizos*, and, in turn, it is very difficult for whites and *mestizos* to carry out the hard work of coming to the Indigenous milieu to bring class propaganda.' José Carlos Mariátegui, 'The Problem of Race in Latin America', in *José Carlos Mariátegui: An Anthology*, eds. Harry E. Vanden and Marc Becker (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2011), 323–4.

<sup>38</sup> Arguedas, *Yawar Fiesta*, 70.

<sup>39</sup> See, on this point, Michael Löwy, 'Introduction: Points of Reference for a History of Marxism in Latin America', in *Marxism in Latin America from 1909 to the Present*, ed. Michael Löwy (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1992), xxviii–xxxix.

<sup>40</sup> On the hierarchical 'fraternalism' of the Stalinist Third International, see Aimé Césaire, 'Letter to Maurice Thorez', trans. Chike Jeffers, *Social Text* 28, no. 2 (Summer 2010): 145–52.

<sup>41</sup> Arguedas, *Yawar Fiesta*, 72.

<sup>42</sup> Arguedas, *Yawar Fiesta*, 72.

<sup>43</sup> Horacio Legrás, *Literature and Subjection: The Economy of Writing and Marginality in Latin America* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2008), 209.

<sup>44</sup> Arguedas, *Yawar Fiesta*, 73.

<sup>45</sup> For a discussion of this 'developmentalist reading' of Mariátegui, see John Kraniauskas, 'A Short Andean History of Photography: *Yawar fiesta*', *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies* 21, no. 3 (October 2012): 360, 371.

<sup>46</sup> For a related reading of this scene, see Antonio Melis, 'Presencia de Mariátegui en la obra de José María Arguedas', in *Mariátegui en el siglo XXI: Textos críticos*, ed. Sara Beatriz Guardia (Lima: Editorial 'MINERVA', 2012), 197.

<sup>47</sup> Arguedas, *Yawar Fiesta*, 99.

<sup>48</sup> Arguedas, *Yawar Fiesta*, 113.

<sup>49</sup> Arguedas, *Yawar Fiesta*, 120.

- <sup>50</sup> To fully appreciate this imagery of uprooting, see José María Arguedas, *Yawar fiesta* (Santiago de Chile: Editorial Universitaria, 1968), 114.
- <sup>51</sup> See John Kraniauskas, 'Difference against Development: Spiritual Accumulation and the Politics of Freedom', *boundary 2* 32, no. 2 (Summer 2005): 53–80. See, relatedly, Legrás, 'Yawar fiesta', 67, 73.
- <sup>52</sup> Arguedas, *Yawar Fiesta*, 120–1 [translation modified]. For the original, see Arguedas, *Yawar fiesta* (1968), 114.
- <sup>53</sup> Arguedas, *Yawar Fiesta*, 121.
- <sup>54</sup> Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), 89. See, relatedly, Marisol de la Cadena, 'Indigenous Cosmopolitics in the Andes: Conceptual Reflections beyond "Politics"', *Cultural Anthropology* 25, no. 2 (April 2010): 334–70.
- <sup>55</sup> I discuss in greater detail the political implications of this conception of historical time here: Gavin Arnall, 'Remembering the Sixties: On Julio Cortázar's *Hopscotch* and Time', *MLN* 134 (2019): 360–81.
- <sup>56</sup> Arguedas, *Yawar Fiesta*, 124.
- <sup>57</sup> Arguedas, *Yawar Fiesta*, 124–5. For the original, see Arguedas, *Yawar fiesta* (1968), 117.
- <sup>58</sup> Here I have in mind Judith Butler's discussion of the need for social movements to 'negotiate' or 'translate' between their competing articulations of universality. See 'Competing Universalities', in *Contingency, Hegemony, Universality: Contemporary Dialogues on the Left* (London: Verso, 2000), 136–81.
- <sup>59</sup> Arguedas, *Yawar Fiesta*, 147.
- <sup>60</sup> Cornejo Polar, Los universos narrativos de José María Arguedas, 70 [my translation].
- <sup>61</sup> Kraniauskas, 'A Short Andean History of Photography', 370.
- <sup>62</sup> Kraniauskas, 'A Short Andean History of Photography', 371.
- <sup>63</sup> Some readers of *Yawar Fiesta* gesture toward this point when they describe the ending of the novel as 'ambiguous'. See Anne Lambright, *Creating the Hybrid Intellectual: Subject, Space, and the Feminine in the Narrative of José María Arguedas* (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 2007), 103; Roland Forgues, *José María Arguedas: Del pensamiento dialéctico al pensamiento trágico* (Lima: Editorial Horizonte, 1989), 413. Cornejo Polar also alludes to this idea in a separate text dealing with Arguedas, in which he describes *Yawar Fiesta* as exploring 'the possibility of understanding the Andean world as a totality, albeit an internally conflicted one, and of opposing it, with all its contradictions, to the Westernized socio-cultural system of the Peruvian coast'. See Antonio Cornejo Polar, 'Historia de la literatura del Perú republicano', in *Historia del Perú Tomo VIII* (Lima: Editorial Juan Mejía Baca, 1980), 128 [my translation].

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