Joseph C. Miller Memorial Lecture Series

10

eds. Abdelkader Al Ghouz, Jeannine Bischoff, Sarah Dusend

Paola Revilla Orías

Historicizing the Yanacona: Methodological Decisions, Implications and Challenges

EBVERLAG

Historicizing the Yanacona: Methodological Decisions, Implications and Challenges

Joseph C. Miller Memorial Lecture Series

eds. Abdelkader Al Ghouz, Jeannine Bischoff, Sarah Dusend

Volume 10

Paola Revilla Orías

Historicizing the Yanacona: Methodological Decisions, Implications and Challenges

ebv BERLIN

EBVERLAG

Bibliographic information published by
the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek
The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data are available in the Internet at http://dnb.d-nb.de

Gefördert durch die Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG) im Rahmen der Exzellenzstrategie des Bundes und der Länder – Exzellenzcluster Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies (BCDSS) EXC 2036/1-2020, Projektnummer: 390683433

Funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG, German Research Foundation) under Germany's Excellence Strategy – Cluster of Excellence Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies (BCDSS) EXC 2036/1-2020, Project No.: 390683433

This book is available for free download in the Open Access section of the publishers' website. (https://doi.org/10.53179/9783868934038).

A print version is available for a fee from the publisher.
The page numbers in the print and in the online version are identical.

© EB-Verlag Dr. Brandt
Berlin, 2021

Coverdesign: © Rainer Kuhl, Berlin

ISBN 978-3-86893-385-7 (Print)
ISBN 978-3-86893-403-8 (Open Access)
DOI 10.53179/9783868934038

Historicizing the Yanacona: Methodological Decisions, Implications and Challenges

1. Introduction

Colonial *Yanaconazgo* was not only, formally speaking, an institution, but furthermore, a daily experience for thousands of people affiliated or indirectly linked to this fiscal category. With a few notable exceptions, historiography has, as yet, paid relatively little attention to this matter. The following pages may serve as an invitation to reflect on this labor system and on the experience of the workers, moving beyond certain discursive and methodological limitations that prevent its intrinsic complexity and heterogeneity from being understood. For this purpose, the historiographic commentary is combined with the analysis of data, mostly unpublished, from a precise and paradigmatic context, that of the jurisdiction of La Plata, seat of the *Real Audiencia de Charcas* in the colonial period, from the 16th to the 18th centuries.[1] These data is offered to the reader to be compared and discussed trough the light of future findings in other contexts, thus enriching the approach to the range of labor situations generated by this institution while in force.

Five aspects have been chosen to frame the present research. The first part questions the attempts to establish a single meaning in the historiographical interpretation of Yanaconazgo as a protracted institution (15th to 19th centuries). It consists of an invitation to recognize

[1] The *Real Audiencia de Charcas* was a high court of appeal, established in America in 1559, on the basis of the former *Gobernación de Nueva Toledo*. It was a strategic platform that ensured the political-administrative control of the area. Subordinate to the *Real Audiencia de Lima* within the Viceroyalty of Perú and directly to the king. Its jurisdiction was initially one hundred leagues surrounding its headquarters, the city of La Plata; later extending to the *Collasuyu*, Cuzco, Tucumán, Juries and Diaguitas, Chunchos-Moxos and the territories colonized by Andrés Manso and Ñuflo de Chávez. Circa 1573, the southeastern section of Cuzco was dismembered. Charcas became the colonial ancestor of present-day Bolivia, from its capital Sucre, formerly La Plata. Josep M. Barnadas, *Charcas 1535–1565. Orígenes de Una Sociedad Colonial* (La Paz: CIPCA, 1973), 513.

the relevance of an analytical perspective that conceives continuities and transformations in the diachrony of labor relations, as well as their undeniable synchronic diversity. The second section of the study warns against the trap of dichotomous and legalistic questions surrounding the *Yanacona*: Was the person free or unfree? introducing the reader to the study of the case of La Plata during the early colonial period. It proposes that labor relations should be analyzed from more complex prisms, taking into account the subtleties of the wide range of situations of servitude generated in each space and circumstance. The third and fourth parts analyze the direct and indirect participation of women and children in this labor system, commonly read rather from a masculine and adult perspective as determined by the norm. It also questions the lack of methodological receptiveness that gave shape to a certain ethnifying essentialism that led to reading the institution as an exclusively indigenous experience. The last segment introduces the actions and uses that people shaped in their (self-) adscription to Yanaconazgo, when it was necessary and possible, and subject to the particular objectives pursued.

2. The nonsensicality of seeking a single meaning

The etymology of the term *yana* (plural *yanakuna*) is uncertain and disputed. In his *Vocabulario* of the Quechua language of 1607, Diego González Holguín points out that it referred to a "attendant or servant boy."[2] This reflection, however, does not seek to begin with a restrictive definition of the Yanaconazgo system in which these workers were immersed. The objective is rather to invite the reader to assume the challenge of the inherent complexity of the term, both at the level of the labor system to which it referred during it was in force, as well as the uses that people made of it.

[2] Diego Gonzáles Holguín, *Vocabulario de la Lengva General de Todo el Perv Llamada Lengva Qquichua o del Inca* (Lima: Printing of Francisco del Canto, [1608] 2007), 236. On the origin of the term, see: Rodolfo M. Cerrón Palomino, "Yanacona," *Boletín de la Academia Peruana de la Lengua* 43 (2007): 149.

The institution's existence was documented no later than the 14th century, during the Inca period. It lasts through the colonial period (16th to 18th centuries) and continues, in Bolivia, at least until the sixth decade of the 19th century. Authors who mention this subject, or who have approached its study in certain contexts, are aware of its long standing. However, few have stopped to analyze the nuances that the term acquired and its possible modifications of meaning from one political regime to another, within different transition scenarios.

It would be simplistic to state that the Spaniards took over the Inca labor system in the colonial context. Rather than transposing it, Viceroy Francisco Álvarez de Toledo sought to readapt it to the economic and fiscal needs of the new regime in power, at the end of the 16th century. Today, researchers such as Francisco Cuena Boy note a clear similarity between the legal status of the colonial Yanaconas and that of the serfs of the glebe in medieval Europe.[3] In fact, their legal justification resorted to Roman law, linking them to the Latin *adscripticii* of the 6th century *Codex Iustinianus;* these were registered according to dispositions of Emperor Diocletian and assigned to a rural property. At the beginning of the 17th century, the jurist Juan de Solórzano y Pereira associated them to the manor vassals.[4] It would be more precise, therefore, to consider different institutions, although linked and designated under the same referent. Historian Laura Escobari has emphasized this, in her analysis of the Yanaconazgo in Potosí in the 17th century, noting that little remained of the Inca connotations of this labor system, except that of the link to imposed servitude.[5]

Much less attention has been given to the study of this colonial institution in the scenario of the transition to the republican context of the

---

3 Francisco Cuena Boy, "Yanaconazgo y Derecho Romano: ¿Una Conjunción Extravagante?," *Revista de Estudios Jurídicos* 8 (2006): 401–424.

4 Juan de Solórzano y Pereira, *De Indiarum Iure*, vol. 2 (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, [1648] 2001), Ch. 4.

5 Laura Escobari de Querejazu, "Mano de Obra Especializada en los Mercados Coloniales de Charcas. Bolivia, Siglos XVI–XVII," *Nuevo Mundo Mundos Nuevos*, 31.01.2011 http://nuevomundo.revues.org/60530. Also see: Laura Escobari de Querejazu, *Caciques, Yanaconas y Extravagantes. La Sociedad Colonial en Charcas en S. XVI–XVIII* (La Paz: IFEA, 2005).

19th century. One exception is the significant contribution of the historian María Luisa Soux and her reflection on the change of the legal status of the Yanacona since 1825, date of the signing of the act of the country's political independence, through the Agrarian Reform of 1953.[6] The author clarifies that it went hand in hand with a change in the lexicon that gave way to the generalization of terms such as settler and landlord. However, the system and the labor relation would have changed very little, in contradiction with the liberal regulations of the time.

Another important aspect when approaching the study of this labor system are the synchronous differences that were fostered. John V. Murra examined these in the 1980s, pointing out the impossibility to speak of Yanaconazgo as a unitary and defined institution in the pre-Hispanic period. The author considered it more appropriate to refer variety of situations of servitude in which the *yana* were immersed, on the basis of their origin and function in the Inca empire, while also warning that they had suffered the uprooting from their community of origin and experienced the direct dependence of the political and religious power of the *Tawantinsuyu* (the Inca empire).[7] Within his own research, Josep M. Barnadas coincided with this appreciation about the colonial period.[8] Currently, Lía G. Oliveto, Raquel Gil Montero and Fernando Longhi mention and emphasize the relevance of studying this diversity.[9] Much remains to be done regarding the various local realities that emanate from colonial Yanaconazgo from a comparative point of view that con-

6 María Luisa Soux, "Yanaconas, Colonos y Arrenderos: Contradicciones entr la Ley y la Práctica en el Trabajo Rural Durante los Siglos XIX y XX en Bolivia," in *Trabajos y Trabajadores en América Latina (Siglos XVI–XXI)*, ed. Rossana Barragán and Amaru Villanueva (La Paz: CIS, 2019): 313–330. References to: Daniel J. Santamaría, "La Propiedad de la Tierra y la Condición Social del Indio en el Alto Perú, 1780–1810," *Desarrollo Económico* 66/17 (1977): 253–271.

7 "Nueva Información Sobre las Poblaciones Yana," in John V. Murra, *Formaciones Económicas del Mundo Andino. Población, Medio Ambiente y Economía* (Lima: IEP, 2002): 328–341.

8 Josep M. Barnadas, *Charcas 1535–1565. Orígenes de Una Sociedad Colonial* (La Paz: CIPCA, 1973), 285.

9 Raquel Gil Montero, Lía G. Oliveto, and Fernando Longhi, "Mano de Obra y Fiscalidad a Fin del Siglo XVII: Dispersión y Variabilidad de la Categoría Yanacona en el sur Andino," *Boletín del Instituto de Historia Argentina y Americana "Doctor Emilio Ravignani"* 3/43 (2015): 59–93. This study analyzes the data of the General Visit ordered by the Duke of La Plata to Atacama, Lípez, Chichas and Tarija.

siders, for example, its mechanism in parallel with other labor systems, without losing focus of diachronic relationships, as earlier mentioned.

The need to reflect on the spatio-temporal complexity is intimately connected to an evidence that cannot be overlooked, the fact that Yanaconazgo was not only a formally established institution, but a labor system shaped by the daily interaction of people. The perception and meaning that the contemporaries gave to the term and its derivatives, as well as the testimony of workers' experiences are fundamental for approaching from a historical perspective. This leads to think about the sources in use and the way this system has been carried out. Historians who have approached to Yanaconazgo have favored the study of official documentation, of a normative nature, at different levels (royal provisions, viceregal and local authorities' dispositions, population counts, among others). These shows the intent to regulate the system and control the workforce. Sometimes, of course, they may also echo the dynamics of the workers themselves. However, the information provided should be cross-referenced with information supplied by other types of documentation, such as that obtained from court files and notarial records, which reflect more day-to-day experiences. In this sense, it should be added that it is not wise to settle with the quantitative perspective in regard to the reality of nearly anonymous groups belonging to one or another regulated category. It is essential to validate the figures by comparing them with the qualitative analysis of specific trends that may result from the diversity of work experiences in a region, different to other regions or cross-cutting to a more ample dominion.[10]

Another no less important detail is that the analysis should be carried out using samples found to be sufficiently extensive to gauge the Yanacona's particular local reality without falling into generalizations, while also taking the specific context of workers' individual histories into account. The case study should not be seen as merely functional to numerical data or as an anecdotal illustration. It has the power to stress ideas that we take for granted, from the sole examination of other

[10] This is what Christian G. De Vito would call "connected singularities." Christian G. De Vito, "History Without Scale: The Micro-Spatial Perspective," *Past and Present* 42, Supplement 14 (2019): 356.

sources. The microhistorical approach can be a useful ally in this task, starting with new interpretive components, such as those proposed by labor history. Christian G. De Vito and Anne Gerritsen, for example, have highlighted the richness of the micro-spatial approach with a compared perspective in the long-term.[11] It is precisely within the diversity of human experiences that senses of identification are being (re)created. Those that are not always reflected by the political power's desire to impose an order, that result on it's overflowing and often force it to adapt its lexicon and normativity.

3. The lack of relevance of the dichotomous interpretation

Another methodologically important gesture, when approaching the study of Yanaconazgo, is not to get entangled while seeking to solve the slavery/freedom dichotomy. Some researchers in the second half of the 20th century argued that this labor system in the Inca empire could be assimilated to that of slavery. John V. Murra was quite reluctant to this position. Rather, he advised against trying to fit this labor system to certain models of socio-economic history, and to reflect on the concrete and logical data of the scenario under consideration.[12]

At the time of the late *Tawantinsuyu*, the *Yanakuna,* separated from their community of origin and distributed throughout the Inca empire among different landowners, worked as "perpetual servants," inheriting their status to their offspring. However, it is, at the very least, premature to consider them to be slaves, in the legal sense of the colonial term. As they were uprooted, the Y*anakuna* were not obliged to provide rotatory personal service.[13] In fact, their degree of specialization in a series of

[11] Christian G. De Vito and Anne Gerritsen, eds., *Micro-Spatial Histories of Global Labour* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), preface.

[12] John V. Murra, "Nueva Información Sobre las Poblaciones Yana," in *Formaciones Económicas del Mundo Andino. Población, Medio Ambiente y Economía*, ed. (Lima: IEP, 2002): 329.

[13] Some authors suggest nuancing the idea of a categorical uprooting. In this regard see: Josep M. Barnadas *Charcas 1535–1565. Orígenes de Una Sociedad Colonial* (La Paz: CIPCA, 1973). Catherine Julien, "La Visita Toledana de Yanaconas de la Ciudad de La

agricultural and craftmaking tasks allowed them to dwell in a privileged situation, with differentiated treatment and public recognition.[14]

In the colonial scenario, the number of Yanaconas increased considerably.[15] Several historians, including a pioneer as James Lockhardt, have shown the autonomy they had to manage their economic resources, as a result of the degree of specialization they had acquired in certain tasks.[16] In Potosí, at the end of the 16th century, Peter Bakewell found them to be among the main master *huayradores* (metal smelters).[17] By not having to participate in the colonial *mita* and being allowed to trade, they conducted themselves with more freedoms and autonomy than other indigenous workers.[18] The minister of the *Audiencia* (*oidor*), the *Licenciado* Juan de Matienzo, described them as "*aficionados"* y *"de gran provecho para la república* [of Spaniards]," given their proximity to the Spaniards and because they appeared to embody an accelerated process of assimilation to the colonial project.[19] Despite this initial situation,

Plata," *Memoria Americana* 6 (1997): 57. Thierry Saignes, "Ayllus, Mercado y Coacción Colonial: El Reto de las Migraciones Internas en Charcas (Siglo XVII)," in *La Participación Indígena en los Mercados Surandinos. Estrategias y Reproducción Social, Siglos XVI a XX*, ed. Olivia Harris, Brooke Larson, and Enrique Tandeter (La Paz: CERES, 1987): 111–158.

14 It is necessary to distinguish them from the *mitmakuna*, who were displaced for political, military and economic reasons for an indefinite period of time, and who did not lose kindred ties with their community. However, nothing proscribed a person to have more than one work status.

15 For example, see: Nathan Wachtel, *Los Vencidos. Los Indios del Perú Frente a la Conquista Española (1530–1570)* (Madrid: Alianza, 1976), 201.

16 James Lockhardt, *El Mundo Hispanoamericano 1532–1560* (México City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1996).

17 Peter Bakewell, *Miners of the Red Mountain. Indian Labor in Potosí, 1545–1650* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1984).

18 The *mita* was, as is known, a system of compulsory and rotatory work of Inca times (from Quechua *mit'a*). Regulated by Viceroy Francisco Alvarez de Toledo in the 16th century, it acquired in colonial times unprecedented conditions of systematic and oppressive exploitation. See: Peter Bakewell, *Miners of the Red Mountain. Indian Labor in Potosí, 1545–1650* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1984); Enrique Tandeter, *Coacción y Mercado. La Minería de la Plata en el Potosí Colonial (1692–1826)* (Cuzco: Centro de Estudios Regionales Andinos"Bartolomé de las Casas", 1992), 37; and more recently: Paula C. Zagalsky, "La Mita de Potosí: Una Imposición Colonial Invariable en un Contexto de Múltiples Transformaciones (Siglos XVI–XVII, Charcas, Virreinato del Perú)," *Chungará* 6/3 (2014): 3–32.

19 "Amateurs" and "of great benefit to the republic [of Spaniards]." Juan de Matienzo,

the rapid changes in the labor system at the end of the 16th century, resulting from the fall of the production in Potosí mining, that became more susceptible in the early decades of the 17th century, would have diminish their privileges.[20]

Few kilometers from Potosí, in the jurisdiction of La Plata, a paradigmatic context can be found during those decades, as it displays diametrically differentiated realities of Yanaconazgo taking place at the same time. Around 1575, 103 resident Yanaconas were counted in the city.[21] Their ages ranged from 17 to 50, most of them being in their thirties. Nearly 30% held a trade, among them were tailors, stockingers, masons, weavers, saddle-men and silversmiths, all held officially. They were at the service of well-known neighbors and enjoyed abundant autonomy in their work. As decreed, they were authorized to have free time for their *tratos y granjerías* and could take part in annual employment contracts.[22] Some inherited property from their lords and rose economically becoming owners of various assets, plots, farms and slaves. For example, in 1575 the Yanacona Francisco Quispe Rimache bought a house in the city of La Plata from the neighbor Juan Peñalosa for 145 pesos of the eight-silver-*reales* coin or "piece of eight."[23] In the words of the chronicler Fray Antonio de la Calancha: "visitándose en ellas como Yanaconas, son ya propietarios habiendo sido advenedizos."[24] This, because in their majority they had arrived from other regions, particularly from Cuzco, as they declared when censused.

Gobierno del Perú con Todas las Cosas Pertenecientes a él y a su Historia (Paris: IFEA, [1566] 1967), 13.

20 See: Laura Escobari de Querejazu, "Mano de Obra Especializada en los Mercados Coloniales de Charcas. Bolivia, Siglos XVI–XVII," *Nuevo Mundo Mundos Nuevos*, 31.01.2011 http://nuevomundo.revues.org/60530.

21 According to data from the *Tasa de los Yanaconas de la Ciudad de La Plata*, dated 1575, drawn up at the request of judge Juan de Matienzo. *Archivo Histórico de Potosí*, *Cajas Reales, legajo* 18.

22 Catherine Julien, "La Visita Toledana de Yanaconas de la Ciudad de La Plata," *Memoria Americana* 6 (1997): 86.

23 *Archivo y Biblioteca Nacionales de Bolivia* (ABNB): *Escrituras Públicas* (EP), García de Esquivel, *legajo* 19, 10.12.1575, files 355–356.

24 "Registering themselves in it as Yanaconas, they are already owners having been outsiders." Fray Antonio de la Calancha, *Crónica Moralizada del Orden de San Agustín en el Perú, con Sucesos Ejemplares en esta Monarquía* (Barcelona: Pedro Lacavallería, 1638), 300.

There were also those Yanaconas who, having been put *en cabeza real*, "the king's Yanaconas," performed different tasks for the benefit of the Crown institutions.[25] Those assigned to the Church worked in public construction as well as in craftmaking and service activities within convents and hospitals, such as Santa Bárbara, where they cared for patients.[26] They were to be guaranteed housing and an annual wage of 50 standard pesos.[27] It is worth recalling that, on the basis of the dispositions of Viceroy Toledo, the Yanaconas had to pay a *tasa en moneda* (fee in currency), for the control of which a Royal Treasury branch was created. Those who did not have a manual trade were to pay five pesos annually, while those who did were to pay eight.[28] The collections were made by the *cacique de Yanaconas* of the San Sebastián Parish and the one of the San Lázaro Parish. There was also a general *cacique de Yanaconas;* appointed by Toledo, Francisco Quispe Rimache, from Cuzco, held the post until at least 1601.[29]

While some Yanaconas enjoyed undeniable autonomy and economic prosperity in the city, the situations experienced by others in the nearby farms did not differ from the servitude of medieval Europe and, in some cases, from legal slavery.[30] At the end of the 16th century there were approximately one thousand farms or *chacras* (also called *chácaras*) surrounding La Plata. The number had been increased given the mining

---

25 Regarding the "king's *yanaconas,*" see the work of Raquel Gil Montero, Lía G. Oliveto, and Fernando Longhi, "Mano de Obra y Fiscalidad a Fines del Siglo XVII: Dispersión y Variabilidad de la Categoría Yanacona en el sur Andino," *Boletín del Instituto de Historia Argentina y Americana "Doctor Emilio Ravignani"* 3/43 (2015): 66.

26 Antonio Vázquez de Espinosa, *Compendio y Descripción de las Indias Occidentales*, trans. Charles Upson Clark (Washington: The Smithsonian Institution, [1628–1629] 1948), 607.

27 "Cartas y Expedientes del Cabildo Eclesiástico de Charcas," 1612. *Archivo General de Indias* (AGI): *Gobierno, Charcas, legajo* 140, file 4.

28 Francisco de Toledo, "De los Indios Yanaconas de la Provincia de los Charcas, Como Han de Ser Doctrinados y Tributo Que Han de Pagar,"in *Disposiciones Gubernativas Para el Virreinato del Perú (1575–1580)*, vol. 2, ed. Guillermo Lohmann Villena and Justina Sarabia Viejo (Sevilla: Escuela de Estudios Hispans, 1986): 217–235.

29 ABNB: EP, Juan de Losa, 01.01.1601. Francisco Cusi Páucar held the post until 1648 in Potosí and preceding this, both his father and grandfather had held the post. *Archivo General de Indias*: Charcas 416, *legajo* 4, files 94–95, 23.02.1648.

30 See: Ann Zulawski, *They Eat from Their Labor. Work and Social Change in Colonial Bolivia* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1995).

boom in Potosí.[31] The demand of those who, not receiving the mercy of parcels or allowances sought to obtain labor for their crops and domestic services, led to the extensive hiring of Yanaconas.[32] Reality reveals that these workers suffered all manner of abuses that, to little avail, the Toledo *Ordenanzas* of June 14, 1589, specific to the Yanaconas of the farms of La Plata, sought to alleviate. Any intention to regulate this labor system had to take the farmers' reactions into consideration, cautious to avoid affecting them adversely.[33]

According to the Viceroy's *Ordenanzas*, the Yanaconas were to work for their lord and perceive the usufruct of a plot of land that they did not own. Their lords were to annually give them an *abasca* (llama wool) dress, treat them for diseases and protect them. Pedro Ramírez del Águila indicates that in La Plata, men were given a blanket and an shirt, and women were given an *acsu* (traditional wrap dress) and a *lliqlla* (traditional blanket to cover the shoulders). Additionally, they were supplied with salt, chile and meat, cattle and tools for plowing and sowing.[34] This was not, however, a systematic practice. Testimonies gathered during the *visita* to *chácaras* or farms, in 1613, reveal a series of daily abuses and brutality towards the workers. In Huañoma, a farm owned by the Cabrera family, the Yanaconas claimed: "*que les dan a cada un año una pieza de ropa a cada indio e que este dicho año no les pagan estas piezas y se les deben.*"[35] Complaints include that the Yanaconas did not have free-

---

31 François Chevallier, "Servidumbre de la Tierra y Rasgos Señoriales en el Alto Perú Hispánico: Apuntes Comparativos Sobre los Yanaconas," *Histórica* 13/2 (1989): 153–162.

32 The Viceroy of Perú, Marquis of Cañete, Andrés Hurtado de Mendoza, had been seeking since 1556 to found settlements where the "vagabond" soldiers could become laborers. At the time of the departure of Pedro de La Gasca in 1567, servitude was already rooted in the lands of these new patrons despite King Philip III's provisions against personal service of Indians. See François Chevallier, "Servidumbre de la Tierra y Rasgos Señoriales en el Alto Perú Hispánico: Apuntes Comparativos Sobre los Yanaconas," *Histórica* 13/2 (1989).

33 Carlos J. Díaz R., "Nuevas Aportaciones Sobre el Yanaconazgo Charqueño," *Revista de Estudios Histórico-Jurídicos* 12 (1987): 173.

34 Pedro Ramírez del Águila, *Noticias Políticas de Indias y Relación Descriptiva de la Ciudad de La Plata, Metrópoli de la Provincia de los Charcas*, original manuscript (Bloomington: Indiana University 1639), 83.

35 "That each year they give out a piece of clothing to each Indian and that this year they have not paid these pieces and are owed." ABNB: *Expedientes Coloniales* (EC), 1613, *legajo* 13.

dom of movement and they were recurrently not provided with enough animals and tools; also, they were not always allowed to sell their products and, in fact, did not have enough time to work for their own benefit.

There is no lack of information referring Yanaconas forced to move from a farm or being temporarily rented out to obtain resources to pay their fee.[36] Moreover, they were included in the sales and transferals of land as if they were the landowner's possession, a practice prohibited by Toledo.[37] The Yanacona Joan Cayo, in 1574, says that although he wanted to serve the man he called "his master," he was urged to return to the farm with a new owner as he was informed he had been sold along with it. According to this, his situation led him to ask for protection against those who sold free people.[38] Indeed, the language that interceded between the lord and the Yanacona was, to say the least, ambiguous and similar to that of the enslaving relationship. The examination of the *tasa* of 1575 shows that all urban Yanaconas are characterized as "Indian belonging to," "who was of" a certain landowner or an "Indian without owner." These, in turn, refer to the landowner as "the master." It is not surprising to also find references to Yanaconas being assets that were even inherited in wills.

A fundamental consideration is that despite this, local authorities refused to admit that this labor reality could be compared to legal slavery. They did not even consider it could be mentioned as enslaving, and preferred to describe it as "diminished" or "conditioned freedom." Matienzo insisted that though the Yanaconas were *tasados* and transferred by their lords along with the lands, this did not indicate that they were slaves. He compared them to the manorial serfs in Spain, whose freedom was constrained by their hereditary affiliation to the land of the lord

36 There are several deeds regarding the creation of companies for blacksmiths, weavers, mills, among others, in which the parties committed their Yanaconas to participate as laborers in La Plata in the 16th and 17th centuries. For example, see: ABNB: EP, Gaspar de Rojas, 18.02.1551.

37 The Viceroy wrote to the *Audiencia* in La Plata on March 6, 1604, reminding them that the *yana* could not be sold as slaves. ABNB: Correspondence *Audiencia* de Charcas (CACH), *legajo* 466.

38 ABNB: *Acuerdos del Cabildo de La Plata* (ACLP), 11.02.1574, *legajo* 8.

they worked for.[39] In a profoundly legalistic tone, the authorities of Charcas in 1608 clarified that Yanaconas were not in fact slaves, whose condition was unique. The condition of free people, in this view: "could vary," as was referred, and they reminded the sovereign that there were: "*hombres que siendo libres tienen en algo minorado el derecho de la libertad y la tienen condicionada.*"[40] A subtle connection was therefore drawn between rural Yanaconazgo and colonial slavery in La Plata, thus calling into question the dispositions of the Crown against indigenous personal service.[41] The disturbing reports of the enslavement of Yanaconas in the farms often reached Spain, and explanations were solicited from the ministers of Charcas.

It is no minor detail that, additionally, not all the workers assigned to the category of Yanaconas had been part of the census commissioned by Toledo.[42] On March 20, 1574, the Viceroy described that the Province of Charcas had 364 inheritances and approximately 5,500 Yanaconas recorded in the census. According to Roberto Levillier, through information retrieved from Toledo himself, there were at least 3,000 workers in La Plata and the surrounding areas.[43] At the beginning of the 17th century, the judge of the *Audiencia*, the *Licenciado* Francisco de Alfaro, documented a total of 8,741 Yanaconas in 920 estates and farms that he visited in 1611. Of these, 554 Yanaconas had been registered in the Toledan *Visita*; 1,225 were their descendants and, the major figure of

---

39 Juan de Matienzo, *Gobierno del Perú con Todas las Cosas Pertenecientes a él y a su Historia* (Paris: IFEA,[1566] 1967), 78.

40 "Men who, though are free, have in some way a reduced right of freedom and have it conditioned." "Parecer de la Real Audiencia de La Plata Sobre los Yanaconas de las Chacras 28 de Febrero de 1608." AGI: Gobierno, Charcas, *legajo* 31, file 4.

41 Regarding this type of phenomenon in other regions and labor realities: Marcel van der Linden and Carolyn Brown, "Shifting Boundaries between Free and Unfree Labor: Introduction," *International Labor and Working Class History* 78 (2010): 4–11; Christian G. De Vito and Fia Sundevall, "Free and Unfree Labour. An Introduction to this Special Issue," *Arbetarhistoria* 3–4 (2017): 6–12; Tom Brass and Marcel van der Linden, *Free and Unfree Labour: The Debate Continues* (Bern: Peter Lang, 1997), 11–42.

42 Francisco de Toledo, "De los Indios Yanaconas de la Provincia de los Charcas, Como Han de Ser Doctrinados y Tributo Que Han de Pagar," in *Disposiciones Gubernativas Para el Virreinato del Perú (1575–1580)*, vol. 2, ed. Guillermo Lohmann Villena and Justina Sarabia Viejo (Sevilla: Escuela de Estudios Hispanos, 1986): 480.

43 Ricardo Levillier quoted in Catherine Julien, "La Visita Toledana de Yanaconas de la Ciudad de La Plata." *Memoria Americana* 6 (1997): 57.

1,782 were relatives who were not recorded in the initial census. There was also a number of 20-year-old indigenous people from the district of La Plata and its outskirts.[44]

It might also be noted that, given the farms number increase and the need of workforce, as mentioned earlier, many indigenous people from the surrounding areas, for all practical purposes, became Yanaconas without being registered, under the wording of "voluntary" Yanaconazgo. The argument set forth by authorities of the *Audiencia* was that it was better to force some indigenous to work to prevent them from wandering, getting drunk or stealing.[45] In 1604, authorities wrote to the Crown expressing that these workers lived "with more relaxation" than the indigenous in the communities, and that they would even flee their villages to serve in Spaniards' farms. The dynamic was explained by the desire to avoid obligations of *mita* mining and to generate more income to pay the tribute and support their family by putting themselves to work for a third party in colonial cities and farms. Few knew of the conditions of servitude in which they were getting involved.

This diversity of situations, as well as the criteria of regulation and articulation of illegalisms that were set in motion in the daily labor relations of each scenario and juncture, must predominate in the analytical perspective. It does not seem reasonable to be satisfied with an interpretation that restricts the perception of the Yanaconas regarding the characteristics with which the colonial norm described this labor category, and which do not account for the diversity of situations in which people were immersed, all under the same adscription.[46] Any assessment that

---

44 Silvio A. Zavala, *El Servicio Personal de los Indios en el Perú (Extractos del Siglo XVII)*, vol. 2 (México City: Colegio de México, –1979), 121.

45 *Tasa de los Jornales y Salarios de los Indígenas en la Ciudad de La Plata.* La Plata, December 20, 1574, in Francisco de Toledo. *Disposiciones Gubernativas Para el Virreinato del Perú (1575–1580),* vol. 2, ed. Guillermo Lohmann Villena and Justina Sarabia Viejo (Sevilla: Escuela de Estudios Hispanos 1986), 488. Also see the argument of the *Audiencia* to the Crown. In: AGI: Charcas 416, *legajo* 6, file 354, 15.08.1685.

46 On the subject of the different degrees of coercion to which they were exposed, there is an important contribution in the text by Raquel Gil Montero, "Entre el Trabajo Libre y Forzado: Los Yanaconas Rurales de Charcas (Bolivia) en el Siglo XVII," *Colonial Latin American Review* 27/3 (2018): 355–373. The initial part is a complete historiographical statement on Yanaconazgo.

does not take this inherent complexity of the labor system into consideration would be, in this sense, arbitrary.

4. On the construction of the Yanacona subject in terms of a masculine adult

Historians tend to focus on Yanaconazgo, assimilating it to a prominently masculine and adult activity, due to the fact that, legally, only men ages 18 to 50 were meant to participate in it. However, there is documented evidence of an unexplored reality that deserves to be studied in detail: that of the women and children who were directly and indirectly part of this labor system. Their presence and actions lead us to confirm the intrinsic plurality of the Yanacona subject and its labor dynamics, drawing from not only the formally ascribed individual, but also the family nucleus to which they belonged.

The women were frequently registered together with their husbands and children in censuses and varied lists of Yanaconas. Due to the prevailing patriarchal logic in the family organization, they are usually mentioned as "Yanacona's wife or woman," when no other terms are used to refer to them as workers.[47] However, it should come as no surprise that they were sometimes referred to as Yanaconas, directly ascribing them to this form of servitude. In 1683 Luisa de la Cruz was reportedly "perceived as a Yanacona" without being one.[48] Likewise, in the aide-mémoire made by a 17th century priest regarding the workers that he confessed on an estate by the name of Vilanche, he mentions several Yanacona women, differentiating them from the slaves, but also from the free workers:

47 Guamán Poma de Ayala mentions the Yanacona women of analogous service under the term *chinacona*. Felipe Guamán Poma de Ayala, *El Primer Nueva Corónica y Buen Gobierno*, ed. John V. Murra, Rolena Adorno, and Jaime Urioste (México City: Siglo XXI, [1612] 1980), 717.

48 ABNB: EC, 1683, *legajo* 19. Another court file refers: "some of the said Yanacona Indian women," in: ABNB: EC, 1770, *legajo* 159, file 3.

[…] Juan Bentura, esclavo casado con mulata libre
Salvador de Vargas, esclavo casado con Yanacona
Faustino Sandoval, esclavo soltero
[…] Bernarda de Sandoval, Yanacona casada con Salvador, Yanacona
Martín Salgado, esclavo casado con Úrsula Bermúdez, Yanacona
Francisco Choque, Yanacona casado con Úrsula Pallares, Yanacona
[…] Pascuala Siquimira, casada con Lorenzo Condori, Yanacona
Pedro Cinti, Yanacona casado con Andrea Cissa, Yanacona.[49]

Legally, women were not obliged to work the land on the farms. They could, however, "voluntarily" participate in the domestic service of the house of the landowners whose land their male relatives labored.[50] Anyway, as verified, they also participated in the sowing. A revealing case is that of the farm owned by Diego Moreno Poroma. When the wives of the Yanaconas were questioned in regard to their daily work, they said: "*que las obligan a que trabajen como los indios Yanaconas en la siembra y la cosecha y que si no lo hacen el mayordomo pasado las solía dar de palos y azotes*."[51] This case not only highlights the type of work they had to carry out, but also the punishments they were threatened with if they did not comply. In the aforementioned Huañoma farm, when asked if they were forced to work, they expressed even more explicitly: "*que les hacen trabajar como unas esclavas en amasar lavar guisar hacer chuas*."[52]

The Crown had prescribed: "Que las mujeres e hijos de indios de estancias que no estén en edad de tributar no sean obligados a ningún

[49] […] Juan Bentura, slave married to a free mulatto woman. Salvador de Vargas, slave married to a Yanacona. Faustino Sandoval, unmarried slave. Bernarda de Sandoval, Yanacona married to Salvador, Yanacona. Martín Salgado, slave married to Úrsula Bermúdez, Yanacona. Francisco Choque, Yanacona married to Úrsula Pallares, Yanacona […] Pascuala Siquimira, married to Lorenzo Condori, Yanacona. Pedro Cinti, Yanacona married to Andrea Cissa, Yanacona. *Archivo y Biblioteca Arquidiocesanos*, Sucre (ABAS): Archivo Arzobispal (AA), Esclavos (1657–1836), file 1.

[50] Juan de Matienzo, *Gobierno del Perú con Ttodas las Ccosas Ppertenecientes a él y a su Hhistoria* (Paris: IFEA, [1566] 1967), 17.

[51] "They were forced to work like the Yanacona Indians [males] in the sowing and harvesting and that if they did not do it, the butler would beat and whip them." ABNB: EC 1613, *legajo* 13, file 2.

[52] "They make them work as slaves kneading, washing, cooking, making *chuas* [baked clay dishes]." ABNB: EC, 1613, *legajo* 13.

trabajo."[53] But, with the authorization of their parents, they could be forced into certain occupations. It is possible to verify the participation of children and adolescents in different tasks to support the grandfather, father or Yanacona husband in the fields, the lord's house or in nearby locations to contribute to the family subsistence. Unfortunately, historiography has not yet taken into account the role that women and children played as a jointure between Yanaconazgo and other forms of labor connected to this system. Their capabilities considered to be an annex, eventual and overlapped in its coercive mechanisms despite its illegality, and the experience of these workers was overshadowed.

5. On ethnic and quality essentialization

Another drawback of the approach to the complexity of Yanaconazgo is to reduce the analysis to the ethnic-labor tie with the colonized indigenous population. The historical methodology loses a great deal when it seeks to fit people into the compartments in which a certain order wishes to place the population, believing their existence will make sense within the context studied. A more pertinent and renewed perspective implies the questioning of these typecasting, questioning their intended purpose of internal coherence, driving their concepts to the limit. Yanaconazgo is an open door to this type of less conditioned approaches.

On the one hand, not all *Yana* Indians, initially distributed by governor Pedro de la Gasca to the conquistadors in La Plata, that took up residence in this city, were included in the census of the Yanaconas of Toledo. Several were left out because their lords had died. This is the case of Luis de Aldana, son of an official Yanacona tailor who served the Extremaduran conquistador Hernando de Aldana until his death.[54] Once the tie with the Yanaconazgo was dissolved, these people were assimi-

[53] "That the women and children of estate Indians who were not of taxable age should not be obliged to any work." Iulian de Paredes, *Recopilación de Leyes de Indias*, vol. 6 (Madrid: Consejo de la Hispanidad, 1681): Title. 13, Law 9.

[54] This case has been studied in detail by Máximo Pacheco in his unpublished text: "Luis de Aldana, Indio en Hábito de Español (La Plata, Siglo XVI)," (Sucre: 2015).

lated to the rest of the taxable indigenous population. On the other hand, many who did not descend from families in servitude, did not belong to communities or reductions created by Toledo, voluntarily put themselves at the temporary service of Spaniards as Yanaconas by means of a written agreement. Of these, it was said: "*son venidos de diferentes partes y aunque los más son cimarrones y fugitivos de sus naturales, parece podrían estar en las chacras hasta que hubiese quien los pidiese a los que se quisiesen volver sin que su retención sea precisa*."[55] This would explain why the term Yanacona was often used by farm owners to refer to all the Indians they held in servitude. The context of labor needs, both of employers and workers, and of relatively little interference on the part of the authorities made the agreement to broaden the meaning of the term feasible.[56]

Among the indigenous who made up most of the Yanacona labor force were several captives from the Chiriguano Mountain Range, in the southeastern limit of Charcas. Throughout the colonial period, they were forced to go to colonial cities in Charcas to work in domestic service and on the farms, under the justification of "evangelization and civilization of the unredeemed." In 1608, the *Audiencia* of Charcas specified: "*en todas estas chácaras entre estos indios yanaconas hay muchos que son sacados de los indios chiriguanaes, indios de guerra fronteras de esta provincia, y muchas chácaras pobladas de solo estos*."[57] Although they were identified as free, they were traded and lived in conditions of non-free subjugation, very similar to those of legal slavery. On certain occasions, over the years, they became Yanaconas. Furthermore, in 1581, it was established that, after a *visita*, all Indians who had been on a farm for over 10 years, including Chiriguanos, would be considered Yanaconas: "under the same

---

55 "They come from different parts and although most of them are maroons and fugitives of their natives, it seems they could stay at the farms until someone requested them and those who wanted to return there without the need to retain them." AGI: Charcas *legajo* 31, 3. On July 28, 1561, before a notary, nine Indians manifested their desire to serve Antonio de Robles and his mother. ABNB: EP Lázaro del Águila, 28.07.1561.

56 This reality of change or broadening of the meaning of the term was previously noted by Nicolás Sánchez Albornoz, "Migraciones Internas en el Alto Perú. El Saldo Acumulado en 1645," *Historia Boliviana* 2/ 1 (1982): 16.

57 "On all these farms, among these Yanacona Indians are many that are taken from the *Chiriguanaes* Indians, Indians of war, frontiers of this province, and many lands are populated solely by these." AGI: Gobierno, Charcas, *legajo* 31, files 6–7.

burdens and the same freedom."[58] Occasionally, the labor situation they experienced could only be described as slavery, without ambiguity in the lexicon used by buyers and sellers. Thus, in 1585, eight Indians, five men and three women kidnapped by Captain Juan Valero, resident of La Plata, were sold as *piezas* (units) of Chiriguano Indians for 950 pesos of assayed silver to Antonio Pantoja de Chávez who, according to the deed: "he has as slaves and perpetual Yanaconas."[59]

Careful research reveals data on this phenomenon in the notarial records of La Plata, such as the personal service agreement between Alonso Rodríguez, a tile manufacturer, and the homonymous Alonso, who is listed as a "Chiriguano Yanacona" and who was to enter the service of the former during two years.[60] The service was to be voluntary, but this was not always the case.[61] Frequently, newly arrived captives were distributed among the neighbors with no prior consultation with the worker. This is what happened on September 27, 1571 to two Chané Indians were taken captive by Pedro de Zárate to La Plata and delivered as Yanaconas.[62] A very early and illustrative case is that of a 29-year-old Indian tile-maker who appears in the register of urban Yanaconas of 1575 as Juan *Chiriguano Yampara*.[63] How could Juan be at the same time Chiriguano, Yampara and also be registered as a Yanacona? Simply because these adscriptions were malleable and mostly based on their function rather than on their ethnic or ethnifying definitions. Several

---

58 Ricardo Mujía, ed., *Bolivia-Paraguay. Exposición de los Títulos que Consagran el Derecho Territorial de Bolivia, Sobre la Zona Comprendida entre los Ríos Pilcomayo y Paraguay. Anexos*, vol. 1 (La Paz: El Tiempo Press, year), 284.

59 ABNB: EP, Blas López de Solórzano, 25.11.1585, files 400–401.

60 ABNB: EP, Francisco Logroño, 14.10.1560, file 55.

61 "That Indians of Naborías, as free persons, serve and live with whomever they wish" refers to the Royal Decree made in Madrid, on November 19, 1539. Richard Konetzke, *Colección de Documentos para la Historia de la Formación Social de Hispanoamérica (1493–1810)*, vol. 1 (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1953), 194.

62 ABNB: ACLP, 27.09.1571, *legajo* 58. Lía G. Oliveto has noticed a similar phenomenon with the *moyos-moyos*. The labor of their wives and children had also been exploited. Lía Guillermina Oliveto, "De Mitmaqkuna Incaicos en Tarija a Reducidos en La Plata. Tras las Huellas de los Moyos Moyos y su Derrotero Colonial," *Anuario de Estudios Bolivianos, Archivísticos y Bibliográficos* 17 (2011): 463–490.

63 Catherine Julien, "La Visita Toledana de Yanaconas de la Ciudad de La Plata," *Memoria Americana* 6 (1997): 79.

factors may have influenced the personal and institutional (self-)identification to each of them. These can only be elucidated by attending to each particular experience. What is most important is to recognize that labor demands caused these adscriptions to reveal themselves to be highly and politically changeable. The Chiriguano, considered "infidels" and "savages" among other qualifiers, and who became "pacified infidels" in captivity, were assimilated to the Yanaconas without any major objection to the basic lexical and normative contradiction. The passage from one adscription to another was not necessarily linear, nor did all Chiriguano suffer this fate, but this exposes the intrinsic complexity of the notion of Yanaconazgo in scenarios such as the jurisdiction of La Plata.

It is also evident that, at least in the case of Charcas, Yanaconazgo did not only affect the indigenous, but also the Afro-descendant population, a phenomenon to which historiography has paid very little attention. One exception is the work of Lolita Gutiérrez, who, reviewing the 1597 census records of Mizque (Cochabamba), comes across "free blacks" and "free mulattos" registered as Yanaconas. Moreover, women and children of different ages were also involved.[64] The phenomenon extends throughout the entire colonial period in Charcas. One 1774 La Plata lawsuit makes reference to a "*sambita Yanacona*" who fled with two mulattos, also Yanaconas, from the hacienda of Nicolás Téllez.[65] Another litigation, initiated in Mizque in 1805, depicts one Ambrosio "*de tal*," relative of the person who initiated the trial and Blas Canchari who acted as a witness; both were identified as "mulatto Yanacona."[66] Undoubtedly, for different circumstances, many other Afro-descendants were assimilated into Yanaconazgo, and have been invisibilized by historiography.

Nevertheless, the transition from legal slavery to the exercise of personal freedom in the colonial context was not a simple or linear process

64 Lolita Gutiérrez Brockington, *Blacks, Indians and Spaniards in the Eastern Andes: Reclaiming the Forgotten in Colonial Mizque, 1550–1782* (Lincon: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), 117.

65 ABNB: EC, 1774, *legajo* 5 (*adiciones*), file 1.

66 ABNB: EC, 1805, *legajo* 38, file 8.

for Afro-descendant workers. In order to better insert themselves into the labor market, many freedmen temporarily or indefinitely entered into unfree labor relations. Thus, due to the need for labor, they were sometimes registered as Yanaconas and worked in the farms around La Plata together with Chiriguano and indigenous people of other origins, under one complex fiscal adscription. These workers do not seem to have cared much about ethnic vindication of an origin (of which they sometimes knew little due to their captivity) as they did about the possibility of better inserting themselves into the labor market in order to survive. Unfortunately, their experiences have been overshadowed, in part because studies on slavery have rarely analyzed the transition from this legal condition to different forms of free and unfree labor in which the freed Afro-descendant population in Charcas was involved.

6. Personal adscription and its practical uses

Some historians have highlighted a certain flexibility of colonial social and labor categories and adscriptions. However, in the case of Yanaconazgo, they have not paid enough attention to the uses the people made of them when they could, whether they wanted to be within or beyond their reach, and according to the particular objectives they pursued. Further scrutiny regarding this issue is even more important because, as was mentioned, there was no homogenous type of Yanaconazgo, and not all the workers experienced their relationship with its system equally.

The coercive mechanisms of this institution could be very violent and oppressive, particularly on the farms. This did not necessarily lead to violent resistance against the system, but neither did it suggest passive tolerance of the abuse. A series of mechanisms were put in place by the workers to try to improve their life conditions._These actions, carried out with the impulse of the possibilities available in daily life, shaped labor relations and, on occasions, adjusted alternative connotations of the institution itself.

On the one hand, there is the undeniable mobility of the workers. Due to continuous complaints of abuses that reached the Peninsula, and

in search of a more voluntary labor relationship, King Philip III ordered that the Yanaconas could leave the farms whenever and however they wished.[67] Viceroy Luis de Velasco wrote to the sovereign pointing out the impossibility of making this measure effective in Charcas given the opposition of local authorities and the pressure on behalf of farm owners' interests.[68] Years earlier, Viceroy Toledo among his *Ordenanzas* of 1589 had forbidden Yanaconas to be absent from the *chacras* for more than four years, pointing out the danger of vagrancy in what was undoubtedly a way of exercising greater control over the workforce.[69] Attempts by local authorities to establish the Yanaconas to one land and one employer were ineffective. For as long as possible, workers moved to farms with better productions or where they were seasonally required; at times they were illegally hired by their lords to pay their taxes and at times this occurred spontaneously and voluntarily. In the latter case, their masters accused them of "running away," a term common to enslaving property relations that did not legally apply to the Yanaconas. In reality, many did not escape but would return in a seasonal coming-and-going process documented by Gutiérrez Brockington.[70]

On the other hand, it is undeniable that the workers, when they deemed it necessary and when it was possible, showed great skill in defending their violated rights before the courts. Some lords and employers did not hesitate to treat the children of workers who were not legally ascribed to this system as Yanaconas. This happened frequently with Afro-descendants: if not threatened by the spectre of slavery in their past, they could be conditioned by the Yanaconazgo servitude of one of their parents. This happened to Luisa de la Cruz, a free *samba* married

67 Royal Decree of November 24, 1601.

68 Silvio Zavala, *El Servicio Personal de los Indios en el Perú. Extractos del Siglo XVII*, vol. 2 (México City: Colegio de México, 1979), 24. Also see letters of the *Audiencia* to the King on the inconveniences that the freedom of movement of *chacra* Yanaconas were said to have caused. AGI: Charcas 18, R. 3, *legajo* 10 and 11, 03.01.1606.

69 Ordinances of June 14, 1589, ordinance VII, in:Francisco de Toledo*, Disposiciones Gubernativas Para el Virreinato del Perú (1575–1580)*, vol. 2, ed. Guillermo Lohmann Villena and María Justina Saravia Viejo (Sevilla: Escuela de Estudios Hispanos, 1986).

70 Lolita Gutiérrez Brockington, *Blacks, Indians and Spaniards in the Eastern Andes: Reclaiming the Forgotten in Colonial Mizque, 1550–1782* (Lincon: University of Nebraska Press, 1996).

to an enslaved mulatto. Her mother, also a free *samba*, had been considered a farm Yanacona, and had to carry forward a dispute in court for the recognition of her freedom from servitude.[71] The risk was greater when dealing with orphans without much memory of their parents' past. According to the *sambo* Pedro de la Cruz, the widow Margarita de Oviedo had forbidden him to leave her *chacra*, and tried to register him as a Yanacona: "*maliciosísimamente me hicieron visitar en la dicha su chacra por ser costumbre en los hacendados, con la injusta acción de visitarlos por Yanaconas, no siéndolo como yo no lo soy, y por ser libre de nación pardo*."[72] Pedro requested to be registered in Paccha, Yamparáez, where he sought to pay his royal taxes. He presented several witnesses who, in Quechua, declared that his parents were a free *sambo* and an Indian woman from Quillacas.

Unlike slavery, inherited by the mother's womb, Yanaconazo obeyed a patrilineal logic. However, given the subtle practical difference between legal slavery and Yanaconazgo in rural Charcas servitude, the assimilation of both led to flagrant abuses that would not have been recognized if the workers themselves did not carry out their strategies of labor impugnment. Around 1770, Manuel Gaitán had several Indian workers, *mestizos* and *sambos*, working on his *chacra* in the Choclosa valley (Chichas, Tarija). Possibly he was unaware that he was mistaken when he alleged:

> […] han inventado dichas mestizas o sambas el no ser yanaconas alegando ser hijas de español, ya de mestizo o ya de sambo, de que a veces se da sentencia contraria declarando por libre; aunque la madre conste en revista y padrones por solo ser hijo de los ya dichos; de los cual se les seguía notable perjuicio.[73]

---

71 ABNB: EC, 1683, file 19. Another similar case is that of the mulatto Ignacio, a minor and litigant for his freedom in face of the threat of rural Yanaconazgo. ABNB: EC, 1661, file 25.

72 "They maliciously made me register on her said farm, as is the custom of the landowners, with the unjust action of registering them as Yanaconas, not being so, as I am not, for being free of the *pardo* nation."ABNB: EC, 1686, *legajo* 34, file 3.

73 "[…] said mestizas or sambas have invented that they are not Yanaconas, claiming to be the daughters of Spaniards, be it *mestizos* or *sambos*, and sometimes a contrary

This statement is quite revealing. On the one hand, it confirms that women were seen and deemed to be Yanaconas even though this was not legal. On the other hand, the workers were more familiar, than Gaitán himself, with the fact that the Yanaconazgo condition was not a labor obligation inherited from the mother. The *Audiencia* stated that: "*los hijos de indias yanaconas que proceden bajo de legítimo matrimonio de españoles, negros mestizos y mulatos, siguen la condición del padre, y por consiguiente no deben ser yanaconas*."[74] However, in a clear gesture of support to the farm owner, it stipulated that children of unknown father and Yanacona mother should follow the mother's condition, which had no legal basis except the evident desire to exploit their labor force.

However, it would be a mistake to believe that farms belonged only to the Spaniards. Hidalgo Indigenous people (with lineage) owned farms and some Yanaconas even inherited them, replicating the logic of domination and dependence with their workers. Máximo Pacheco points out in Yanacona Luis Aldana *probanza de méritos* (proof of mertis) of 1593, that he refers he had farms and cattle in the valley of Poco-Poco and Escana: "*las cuales beneficia con indios yanaconas de diferentes repartimientos*."[75] This is a very particular case, although it is not unique. This Indian dressed like a Spaniard and, in addition to the rural Yanaconas he was in charge of, he had many others in the city as apprentices in his tailor workshop. He also owned some enslaved with whom he traded. Luis de Aldana managed to handle his initial adscription to the Yanaconazgo in a pragmatic way until, as his economic situation improved, it was finally diluted and he passed to be identified simply by his name and surname. There is no doubt that the complex process of negotiated employments of the adscriptions may only be perceived by studying the lexicons and

verdict is given, declaring them to be free, although the mother is recorded in the *revisita* and *padrones*, only for being child of the aforementioned; from which a notable prejudice was done to them." ABNB: EC, 1770, *legajo* 159, file 1.

74 "The children of Yanacona Indians who come from legitimate marriages of Spaniards, black *mestizos* and mulattos, follow the condition of the father, and therefore should not be Yanaconas." ABNB: EC, 1770, *legajo* 159, file 1.

75 "Which he benefits with Yanacona Indians from different partitions." *Probanza de méritos* of Francisco de Aldana, 1593, quoted in Máximo Pacheco, "Luis de Aldana, Indio en Hábito de Español (La Plata, Siglo XVI)," (Sucre: 2015): 86.

semantics of dependency at different levels of administration, and by the uses people made of them.

7. Conclusions

The Yanaconazgo came to be a long-standing labor system of changing and complex dynamics. Within the colonial period, it should be studied by looking at its continuities and transformations in the diachrony of social relations, and from the synchronic diversity of situations in which the workers were immersed, whether it be voluntarily or by force. The imperial, viceregal and local normative apparatus that sought to regulate it generated documentation that must be contrasted in order to engage with the experience and voice of the workers and not only with that of the institution that absorbed them as work force. This leads to the understanding of the system subtleties shaped by the people themselves, which otherwise would not be perceptible. It is also essential to broaden the perception of coercive labor in Charcas and the multiple forms of servitude in which the population was immersed, instead of being enthralled with narrow dichotomies (free/slave) that constrain reality.

Legally free and privileged in the urban space but enslaved under different mechanisms in the surrounding farms, the experience of the workers in the jurisdiction of La Plata is a paradigmatic example of the multiple situations that resulted from one labor institution. Yanacona is, without a doubt, a category of fiscal adscription within which, beyond regulations, men, women and children of different ages and ethnic origins were directly and indirectly involved. The intention of local authorities, business and farm owners was clear: to provide mechanisms that would allow them to exploit all the available productive labor, not only that of the legally enslaved, but also of those whose situation lent itself to multiple possibilities of dependence, and whose labor was far from being free and voluntary.

A relatively understudied labor system in Charcas, Yanaconazgo is a medley of highly functional processes of ethnification and re-ethni-

fication at different levels, revealing the complexity underlying free/unfree labor relations in the region. Some of its particularities exceed the transition into the Bolivian Republic, and its imprint may at times be perceived in the treatment of domestic and rural workers in our countries to the present day.

Bibliography

Bakewell, Peter. *Miners of the Red Mountain. Indian Labor in Potosí, 1545–1650*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1984.

Barnadas, Josep M. *Charcas 1535–1565. Orígenes de Una Sociedad Colonial*. La Paz: CIPCA, 1973.

Brass, Tom, and Marcel van der Linden. *Free and Unfree Labour. The Debate Continues*. International and Comparative Social History 5. Bern: Peter Lang, 1997.

Cerrón Palomino, Rodolfo M. "Yanacona." *Boletín de la Academia Peruana de la Lengua* 43 (2007): 149–169.

Chevallier, François. "Servidumbre de la Tierra y Rasgos Señoriales en el Alto Perú Hispánico: Apuntes Comparativos Sobre los Yanaconas." *Histórica* 13/2 (1989): 153–162.

Cuena Boy, Francisco. "Yanaconazgo y Derecho Romano: ¿Una Conjunción Extravagante?" *Revista de Estudios Jurídicos* 8 (2006): 401–424.

De la Calancha, Fray Antonio. *Crónica Moralizada del Orden de San Agustín en el Perú, con Sucesos Ejemplares en Esta Monarquía*. Barcelona: Pedro Lacavallería, 1638.

De Matienzo, Juan. *Gobierno del Perú con Todas las Cosas Pertenecientes a él y a su Historia*. Travaux de l'Institut Français d'Études Andines 11. Paris: IFEA, [1566] 1967.

De Paredes, Iulián (ed.). *Recopilación de Leyes de Indias*. Vol. 6. Madrid: Consejo de la Hispanidad, 1681.

De Solórzano y Pereira, Juan. *De Indiarum Iure*. Vol. 2. Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, [1648] 2001.

De Toledo, Francisco. *Disposiciones Gubernativas para el Virreinato del Perú (1575–1580)*. Vol. 2, ed.Guillermo Lohmann Villena and María Justina Sarabia Viejo. Sevilla: Escuela de Estudios Hispanos, 1986.

De Vito, Christian G. "History Without Scale: The Micro-Spatial Perspective." *Past and Present* 42, Supplement 14 (2019): 348–372.

De Vito, Christian G., and Anne Gerritsen, eds. *Micro-Spatial Histories of Global Labour*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018.

De Vito Christian G., and Fia Sundevall. "Free and Unfree Labour. An Introduction to this Special Issue." *Arbetarhistoria* 3–4 (2017): 6–12.

Díaz R., Carlos J. "Nuevas Aportaciones Sobre el Yanaconazgo Charqueño." *Revista de Estudios Histórico-Jurídicos* 12 (1987): 161–235.

Escobari de Querejazu, Laura. *Caciques, Yanaconas y Extravagantes. La Sociedad Colonial en Charcas en S. XVI–XVIII*. Travaux de l'Institut Français d'Études Andines 208. La Paz: IFEA, 2005.

Escobari de Querejazu, Laura. "Mano de Obra Especializada en los Mercados Coloniales de Charcas. Bolivia, Siglos XVI–XVII," *Nuevo Mundo Mundos Nuevos*, 31.01.2011), http://nuevomundo.revues.org/60530 [retrieved 02.09.2021].

Gil Montero, Raquel. "Entre el Trabajo Libre y Forzado: Los Yanaconas Rurales de Charcas (Bolivia) en el Siglo XVII." *Colonial Latin American Review* 27/3 (2018): 355–373.

Gil Montero, Raquel, Lía G. Oliveto, and Fernando Longhi,. "Mano de Obra y Fiscalidad a Fin del Siglo XVII: Dispersión y Variabilidad de la Categoría Yanacona en el sur Andino." *Boletín del Instituto de Historia Argentina y Americana "Doctor Emilio Ravignani"* 3/43 (2015): 59–93.

Gutiérrez Brockington, Lolita. *Blacks, Indians and Spaniards in the Eastern Andes. Reclaiming the Forgotten in Colonial Mizque, 1550–1782*. Lincon: University of Nebraska Press, 1996.

González Holguín, Dieo. *Vocabulario de la Lengva General de Todo el Perv Llamada Lengva Qquichua o del Inca*. Lima: Printing of Francisco del Canto, [1608] 2007.

Julien, Catherine. "La Visita Toledana de Yanaconas de la Ciudad de La Plata." *Memoria Americana* 6 (1997): 49–89.

Konetzke, Richard. *Colección de Documentos para la Historia de la Formación Social de Hispanoamérica, 1493–1810*. Vol. 1. Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1953.

Lockhardt, James. *El Mundo Hispanoamericano 1532–1560*. México City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1996.

Medinaceli, Ximena. "Comunarios y Yanaconas. Resistencia Pacífica de los Indios de Omasuyus. Siglo XIX." Bachelor thesis in History. La Paz: Universidad Mayor de San Andrés, 1986.

Mujía, Ricardo, ed. *Bolivia-Paraguay. Exposición de los Títulos que Consagran el Derecho Territorial de Bolivia, Sobre la Zona Comprendida entre*

los Ríos Pilcomayo y Paraguay. Anexos. Vol. 1. La Paz: El Tiempo Press, 1914.

Murra, John V. *Formaciones Económicas del Mundo Andino. Población, Medio Ambiente y Economía*, 328–341. Lima: IEP, 2002.

Oliveto, Lía Guillermina. "De Mitmaqkuna Incaicos en Tarija a Reducidos en La Plata. Tras las Huellas de los Moyos Moyos y su Derrotero Colonial." *Anuario de Estudios Bolivianos, Archivísticos y Bibliográficos* 17 (2011): 463–490.

Pacheco, Máximo. "Luis de Aldana, Indio en Hábito de Español (La Plata, Siglo XVI)." Sucre, 2015 [unpublished manuscript].

Poma de Ayala, Felipe Guamán. *El Primer Nueva Corónica y Buen Gobierno,* ed. John V. Murra, Rolena Adorno, and Jaime Urioste. Coleccion America Nuestra 31. México City: Siglo XXI, [1612] 1980.

Ramírez del Águila, Pedro. *Noticias Políticas de Indias y Relación Descriptiva de la Ciudad de La Plata, Metrópoli de la Provincia de los Charcas*. Original Manuscript. Bloomington: Indiana University, 1639.

Saignes, Thierry. "Ayllus, Mercado y Coacción Colonial: El Reto de las Migraciones Internas en Charcas (Siglo XVII)." In *La Participación Indígena en los Mercados Surandinos. Estrategias y Reproducción Social, Siglos XVI a* XX, edited by Olivia Harris, Brooke Larson, and Enrique Tandeter, 111–158. La Paz: CERES, 1987.

Sánchez Albornoz, Nicolás. "Migraciones Internas en el Alto Perú. El Saldo Acumulado en 1645." *Historia Boliviana* 2/1 (1982): 11–19.

Santamaría, Daniel J. "La Propiedad de la Tierra y la Condición Social del Indio en el Alto Perú, 1780–1810." *Desarrollo Económico* 66/17 (1977): 253–271.

Soux, María Luisa. "Yanaconas, Colonos y Arrenderos: Contradicciones entre la Ley y la Práctica en el Trabajo Rural Durante los Siglos XIX y XX en Bolivia." In *Trabajos y Trabajadores en América Latina (Siglos XVI–XXI)*, edited by Rossana Barragán and Amaru Villanueva, 313–330. La Paz: CIS, 2019.

Tandeter, Enrique. *Coacción y Mercado. La Minería de la Plata en el Potosí Colonial, 1692–1826*. Archivos de Historia Andina 15. Cuzco: Centro de Estudios Regionales Andinos "Bartolomé de las Casas", 1992.

Van der Linden, Marcel, and Carolyn Brown. “Shifting Boundaries between Free and Unfree Labor: Introduction.” *International Labor and Working Class History* 78 (2010): 4–11.

Vázquez de Espinosa, Antonio. *Compendio y Descripción de las Indias Occidentales*, trans. Charles Upson Clark. Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections 108. Washington: The Smithsonian Institution, [1628-1629] 1948.

Wachtel, Nathan. *Los Vencidos. Los Indios del Perú Frente a la Conquista Española (1530–1570)*. Alianza universidad 157. Madrid: Alianza, 1976.

Zagalsky, Paula C. “La Mita de Potosí: Una Imposición Colonial Invariable en un Contexto de Múltiples Transformaciones (Siglos XVI–XVII; Charcas, Virreinato del Perú).” *Chungará* 6/3 (2014): 3–32.

Zavala, Silvio. *El Servicio Personal de los Indios en el Perú. Extractos del Siglo XVII*. Vol. 2. México City: Colegio de México, 1979.

Zulawski, Ann. *They Eat from Their Labor. Work and Social Change in Colonial Bolivia.* Pitt Latin American Series. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1995.

For further titles see: www.ebverlag.de

EBVERLAG DR. BRANDT
WWW·EBVERLAG·DE

Rainer Kuhl
Jägerstraße 47
13595 Berlin

Tel.: 00 49 30 68 97 72 33
Fax: 00 49 30 91 60 77 74
E-Mail: post@ebverlag.de

Based on the critical analysis of historiographic assertions focused on the study of *Yanaconazgo* as a long-standing labor institution, this text proposes various key factors to broaden the historical perspective. It is supported by concrete data from the context of the jurisdiction of La Plata in Charcas (Bolivia) between the sixteen and eighteenth centuries, which provides a glimpse into the complexity of this labor system, as well as the diversity of situations of both free and unfree servitude in which workers of different origins, genders and ages were immersed. The study encourages a breaking away from methodological attachments or other constraints that may lead to uncritical repetition of certain terms of a proscribing nature. At the same time, it gives an approach to the daily functions that gradually molded this labor institution and that remind us that history is engineered by people's actions.

THE AUTHOR

Paola Revilla Orías holds a Ph.D. in History from the University of Chile and the EHESS in Paris. She is a member of the Bolivian History Society (SBH) and the Latin American Work and Workers Network (RedLatt). She is interested in social, juridical and labor history studies. Her research focuses on analyzing the experience of captive populations in colonial cities, more specifically of African and Chiriguano Indians from the lowlands of Charcas (Bolivia). She was a postdoctoral researcher at the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies (BCDSS) in 2021 and is currently a lecturer at the Bolivian Catholic University of San Pablo in La Paz, Bolivia.