

Ghosts of the Present: Emphases and Erasures
in Latin American Fashion Histories



Workshop

Ghosts of the Present: Emphases and Erasures in Latin American Fashion Histories

Thursday 19th June 2025

Central Saint Martins, London

Workshop, 09.30 – 17.30, K302

Organised by Dr Elizabeth Kutesko (Central
Saint Martins, University of the Arts London)
and Professor Maria Claudia Bonadio
(Universidade Federal de Juiz de Fora/
Postdoctoral Fellow at Universidade
Federal Fluminense).

Cover image: Silvana Trevale and
Patricia Pietri for Costaiia

This one-day workshop foregrounds alternative, anachronistic, non-linear, plural, decentred and decolonial Fashion Histories in Latin America, or Abya Yala. To understand the nuances and complexities of Latin American fashion in global perspective over the past five centuries we must reject any simplistic notion of Latin American dependence on an authoritative Anglo-European-dominated fashion industry and culture. The aim is to stitch together a plurality of perspectives that use fashion to illuminate erasures and cast doubt on emphases in established historical accounts. In doing so, we draw together new research into Latin American Fashion Histories that speaks to the present, looks to the future, and interrogates the past.

What are the historical power dynamics that continue to haunt Latin American fashion and its representation in visual and material cultures? How might we construct a global and relational account of fashion and modernity from the perspective of this vast and diverse continent? How can we expel the ghosts of colonialism that cast their shadows on contemporary Latin American fashion design? What is the significance of Latin American archives and museums in revealing colonial injustices but also offering the potential to trouble authorised accounts? Where does resistance to authoritarian social structures intersect with the complexities of fashion as a lived experience in Latin America? How can we interrogate History as a critical practice in the fashioning of Latin America, whilst also acknowledging that alternative fashion histories might employ different concepts of time to those defined by Western historians?

To reflect on these questions, we draw on the writing of historian and anthropologist Lilia Moritz Schwarcz in *Brazilian Authoritarianism* (2022), originally published in Brazil as *Sobre o Autoritarismo Brasileiro* (2019). She writes:

Brazilian history [cannot] escape the fundamental ambiguities that, at the same time that it is formed of a chain of events that build upon one another and conjure substantial changes, it is also replete with selective memories and lacunas, emphases and erasures, reliable accounts and glaring omissions (2022, p. 199).

Written in 2018, in the wake of the election victory of self-styled ‘Trump of the Tropics’ Jair Bolsonaro, but translated into English in 2022 to coincide with leftist Lula Inácio Lula da Silva’s return to presidential power, Schwarcz’s argument in *Brazilian Authoritarianism* is persuasive: Brazil’s present is haunted by the ghosts of its past. The spectres of authoritarianism, intimately tied to 500 years of colonial violence, racism and inequality, continue to haunt its contemporary society and politics, shaping the everyday lives of Brazilians. Brazil was the last country in the Americas to abolish slavery in 1888. Although Schwarcz focuses on the history of oppression and inequality in Brazil, her ideas are applicable to the wider context of Latin America, whose chequered histories reveal the shadows of colonial legacies that endure, repeat and persist over time.

09.15 – 09.40

Registration

09.50 – 10.00

Introduction: Exhuming the Ghosts

Elizabeth Kutesko &

Maria Claudia Bonadio

10.00 – 11.15

Moderated by Maria Claudia Bonadio

**Redressing the Stereotype: Decolonising
the History of Fashion in Abya Yala**

Laura Beltrán-Rubio

**Fashion as Soft Power: European Periodicals and
Brazilian Femininity (1879–1904)**

Ana Cláudia Suriani da Silva

**Muddying Modernity: Laundering and
Dirty Laundry in the Brazilian Amazon**

Elizabeth Kutesko

Discussion

11.15 – 11.45

Coffee Break

11.45 – 13.15

Moderated by Ana Cláudia Suriani da Silva

**Cultural Identity as Resistance:
The Fashion Scene of Belém, Pará**

Fernando Hage

**Past and Present of the Randa: an Ancient
and distinctive Lace-Making Practice
in the Rural Community of “El Cercado”,
Northern Argentina**

Teresita Garabana

**The Historicity of Afro-Brazilian Clothing
in the Nineteenth Century**

Ana Rafaella Oliveira

**Rebellious Threads: Weaving Fashion and
Decoloniality Otherwise**

Tamara Poblete

Discussion

13.15 – 14.15

Lunch

14.15 – 15.30

Moderated by Elizabeth Kutesko

**From the National Symbol of Brazilian Fashion
to the Banishment: The Trajectory of Dener
Pampoplona de Abreu told by his Photographs**
Maria Claudia Bonadio

**Caetano Veloso: When Clothing Challenges
Authoritarianism in Brazil**
Maria do Carmo Rainho

**That Woman Who Dares to Wear Dior Dresses:
Symbolic Disputes of Power and the Demonization
of Evita Perón Through her Clothes**
Marcelo Marino

Discussion

15.30 – 16.00

Comfort Break

16.00 – 17.15

Moderated by Isabella Coraça

**Futures in the Past: The Politics and
Poetics of Latin American Fashion Archives**

Edward Salazar Celis

Fashion from an Invisible Place:

***Jopara* as a Decolonial Lens from Paraguay**

Jasmin Ruiz Diaz

Indigenous Futurity in Andean Bolivia

Daniela Monasterios-Tan

Discussion

17.15–17.30

Closing Remarks

Maria Claudia Bonadio & Elizabeth Kutesko

Redressing the Stereotype: Decolonising the History of Fashion in Abya Yala

Laura Beltrán-Rubio

As Latin American fashion has grown in popularity and market share, so too has the reputation of a ‘Latin flair’, a whitewashed vision of tropical exuberance featuring vibrant colours, voluminous flares, and exotic fruit. Such a Europeanized vision reflects longstanding biases about Latin America as an unexplored, ‘new’ land, implying the inexistence of fashion in Abya Yala for millennia and contributing to the erasure of a long history of fashion in the region. At the same time, the wealth of textile traditions in Abya Yala are only valued when the sensual richness of the land is to be exploited through extractivist practices that profit from the self-exoticisation of all things Latin American. Such exploitation is exemplified in the rising interest in working with ‘artisans’, many of whom are Indigenous or otherwise racialized. This paper traces the roots of the two sides of Latin American fashion to European colonisation and colonialist discourses. By revisiting the diverse and enduring history of fashion in Abya Yala, I aim to undress the stereotypes of Latin American fashion and pave the way to a decolonial future that redresses both the writing of our rich fashion history and contemporary fashion practices.

Dr Laura Beltrán-Rubio specializes in fashion and the textile arts of the Americas. Her research explores the construction and performance of identities through

artistic expression, with a particular interest in Indigenous fashion and textile practices. She is Senior Researcher at The Fashion and Race Database and Senior Lecturer in Design Cultures at De Montfort University.

Fashion as Soft Power: European Periodicals and Brazilian Femininity (1879–1904)

Ana Cláudia Suriani da Silva

This paper examines the transnational circulation of fashion periodicals, focusing on the adaptation of *Die Modenwelt* (1865–1942) into *A Estação* (1879–1904) and the references to *A Estação* in Júlia Lopes de Almeida's column 'A Moda' (1892–1901), published in *O País* (1884–1934). As a vehicle of soft power, *A Estação* mediated between European sartorial dominance and local practices, creating a complex dynamic of cultural exchange. While it introduced new possibilities for self-expression through expanded sartorial vocabularies, dress codes and social conduct, it simultaneously constrained Brazilian femininity and gender identity within Eurocentric frameworks.

Through its serial format, material composition, and multimodal content (Ernst and Scheiding), which combined textual materials, fashion plates, sewing patterns, and advertisements, it did more than transmit trends: it fundamentally shaped bodily practices and social performances. Employing Barthes' concepts of the *written garment* and *image-clothing*, this study examines how fashion discourse materialised abstract ideals into tangible visual and material content, not always suited to Brazilian readers. Almeida's column exemplified this tension, attempting to reconcile Parisian trends with Brazilian realities.

The linguistic impact was equally paradoxical: while the adoption of French and English terms to describe fashion patterns enriched the vocabulary of its readers and the Portuguese language, it also imposed foreign value systems. *A Estação* and Almeida's column thus operated as double-edged instruments of modernity, simultaneously expanding Brazilian women's expressive repertoire while circumscribing their self-presentation and vocabulary within Eurocentric gender performativities (Butler) that relied on imported materials for their materialisation and through which the prescribed femininity was enacted.

Ana Cláudia Suriani da Silva is an Associate Professor in Brazilian Studies at University College London (UCL). Her research explores the relationship between textual creation, genre, and publishing, as well as the exchange of ideas between Europe and Brazil through the press. She has authored books, articles, and chapters on Brazilian literature, translation, fashion, and media studies, including 'From Germany to Brazil: The History of the Magazine *A Estação*, an International Enterprise' (2008), 'The Genesis of the Brazilian Fashion Magazine and Fashion Editorial (1827-1851)' (2013), 'The Role of the Press in the Incorporation of Brazil into the Paris Fashion System' (2014), 'Fashion, Cultural Transfers and History of the Book' (2017), and 'A moda enquanto espaço da escrita para Júlia Lopes de Almeida' (2024).

Muddying Modernity: Laundering and Dirty Laundry in the Brazilian Amazon

Elizabeth Kutesko

In 1910, on the cusp of the rubber fever that gripped South America, New York photographer Dana Bertran Merrill was hired to document the transnational

construction of the Madeira-Mamoré railroad, built deep in the Brazilian Amazon. Merrill was assigned under the premise that he must capture the speed and progress of this imperial project of US capitalist expansion and exploitation of South America. Reading fashion into Merrill's photographs yields insights into the erasures that have shaped fashion's histories in Latin America at their intersection with commodity frontiers. In his portraits of the North American administrative class, streamlined white suits generated a visible hierarchy of race and rank that positioned their wearers above labour and beyond disease, ensuring that they remained 'literally but also figuratively enlightened' (Dyer 1997, p. 101). The absence of dirt and disorder in dress amounted to a considerable presence: of cleanliness and whiteness, order and rationality on the railroad.

Merrill's photographs smoothed over the lived and material realities of white tropical dress, which was easily soiled, difficult to maintain, and required frequent laundering by the Caribbean women who laboured in the Steam Laundry on site. In foregrounding their hidden labour of washing, ironing and starching, this paper responds to anthropologist Ann Laura Stoler's call to pay attention to 'the archive's granular rather than seamless texture' (2009, p. 53), but also considers the metaphorical sense of laundering with reference to Merrill's camera and the written accounts that North American wearers left behind. Merrill's camera laundered the muddy truth behind extractive capitalism: the monumental loss of human life, environmental devastation, and expropriation of Indigenous land and livelihoods.

Elizabeth Kutesko is a fashion historian and alumna of the Courtauld Institute of Art (PhD, 2016). She leads the MA and BA in Fashion Histories and Theories at Central Saint Martins. She is the author of *Fashioning Brazil: Globalization and the Representation of Brazilian Dress in National Geographic* (Bloomsbury, 2018) and is currently working on a new book titled *Fashion and the Devil's Railroad: Dress, Temporality and Modernities in the Brazilian Amazon* (forthcoming, 2026).

..... Resistance

Cultural Identity as Resistance:

The Fashion Scene of Belém, Pará

Fernando Hage

This presentation examines how Belém, a city in the Brazilian Amazon, has cultivated its own distinctive fashion scene as an act of resistance against the hegemonic narrative that confines Brazilian fashion to central hubs like São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. It presents examples of prominent local brands and stylists, emerging talents from fashion bachelor's programs and designers and artisans enrolled in activities held by the Amazon Gems and Jewellery Institute (IGAMA), whose work collectively challenges dominant fashion paradigms and has created a signature in the Brazilian fashion system that is represented within and beyond the city. By examining the visual, cultural and material elements of Belém's cultural identity — rooted in Amazonian heritage, local craftsmanship and urban creativity — the discussion emphasizes how the city's designers and brands leverage their uniqueness and demonstrates how Belém's fashion ecosystem operates as

a space of innovation, self-representation and economic resilience, asserting its place within Brazil's diverse fashion landscape. In the case of this northern Brazilian city, cultural identity is not just a stylistic reference, but a strategic tool for redefining structures of power in fashion.

Fernando Hage Soares (FAAP/São Paulo) is a fashion researcher and educator specialized in the history of dress and creative economy. With a PhD in Arts, MA in Fashion, Arts and Culture and Bachelor in Design, his work bridges academic research and practical fashion curation. As a former Bachelor in Fashion's course leader at FAAP and UNAMA (Belém), he has developed programmes to support emerging designers, while producing award-winning projects such as "Caixa de Criadores" (2006-2012). His publications analyse the visual and cultural dimensions of fashion, especially in Amazonian contexts. He is the author of the book "Entre palavras, desenhos e modas – Um percurso com João Affonso" (Appris/2020).

**Past and Present of the Randa:
an Ancient and distinctive Lace-Making
Practice in the Rural Community
of "El Cercado", Northern Argentina**

Teresita Garabana

Randa is a type of lace handcrafted using thread and a sewing needle. Introduced to northern Argentina by women from Castilla (Spain) in the 17th century, it now faces the threat of extinction, as is the case with many traditional practices. Nevertheless, in the rural community of El Cercado (Tucumán, northern Argentina), a group of approximately thirty women of diverse ages continue to engage in this practice, which constitutes more than

a mere leisure activity — it is a fundamental aspect of their social and cultural identity. Unlike other lace-making techniques, Randa does not follow a predefined pattern; each Randerera creates her own design, making every piece the product of an imaginative process that blurs the boundaries between craft and art. Randa lace is used both in home décor and in the embellishment of garments. For centuries, the Randeras of El Cercado have combined lace-making with domestic and caregiving labor, in a context where life and work are not distinctly separated by time or space. Transmitted across generations, the Randa technique can be read today as a form of resistance to the global fashion industry, as well as a challenge to the hierarchical distinction between “craft” and “art,” which traditionally privileges the latter. This paper explores the historical development of the Randa in El Cercado, highlights key milestones in its trajectory, and seeks to amplify the voices of the Randeras who continue to create in the present.

Teresita Garabana holds a PhD in History from the IDAES School (UNSAM, Buenos Aires, Argentina), a Master’s degree in Historical Research from the University of San Andrés and a Bachelor’s degree in History from the National University of Tucumán. She has been a doctoral fellow at CONICET and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), which enabled her to spend two years conducting research at the Lateinamerika-Institut of the Free University of Berlin. In her doctoral thesis, she analysed the formation and development of the fashion press in Buenos Aires and Rio de Janeiro between the 1850s and 1890s, integrating perspectives from transnational studies, visual studies and the cultural history of fashion and its consumption. She has published articles and book chapters in publications in Argentina, Spain and Brazil.

The Historicity of Afro-Brazilian Clothing in the Nineteenth Century

Ana Rafaela Oliveira

The slavery process underwent several changes over more than three centuries in Brazil, with new mechanisms of exploitation and profit being established. In this context, activities in urban centres intensified. During the 19th century, some enslaved gained a little more autonomy to live in these spaces, thus being able to keep part of their earnings for themselves or invest in items such as clothing and jewellery. This access allowed a portion of them to achieve significant economic advancement, capable of financing the purchase of their freedom and using clothing as a means of distancing themselves from the precarious conditions of the past. In that manner, when we look at this time frame, we can see how clothing was an essential marker in the social dynamics of black populations, both in urban and rural spaces, allowing them to use the practice of dressing as a means of recovering their dignity. This is a topic that has not been widely addressed in Brazilian fashion historiography, which for a long time emphasized the ways of dressing of the country's elites, but that based on recent debates on decoloniality, has sought to expand its approaches in the present.

Ana Rafaela Oliveira is a master's student in Cultural History at the Universidade Federal Fluminense (UFF) in Brazil, a specialist in the History of Africa and the Atlantic Diaspora, with bachelor's degree in Fashion Design from SENAI-CETIQT, and a researcher of decolonial fashion. She was a Research and Development fellow at the Council for International African Fashion Education

(CIAFE), and currently writes for fashion media, presenting perspectives on Afro-Brazilian and diasporic fashion.

Rebellious Threads: Weaving Fashion and Decoloniality Otherwise

Tamara Poblete

The paper critically examines the relationship between decoloniality as an academic approach and historical anticolonial struggles, particularly in the Latin American context and dress studies. Beginning with Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui's provocative assertion: "The decolonial is a fashion, the postcolonial a desire, and the anticolonial a struggle", the text questions the transformation of indigenous resistances into academic theory and the cognitive extractivism this entails. It analyses how fundamental voices of decoloniality that are not captured in academic books are systematically silenced. As a methodological alternative, the article proposes Cornelius Castoriadis's "Radical Imagination", understood as the capacity to create new forms of being from nothingness. This perspective enables the conception of "impossible futures" that challenge the Eurocentric and capitalist vision, exemplified in movements such as Zapatismo in Chiapas. The text concludes that decoloniality must be decolonised, emphasising that decoloniality is not theorised but rather manifests as living praxis.

Tamara Poblete is a Lecturer in Global Fashion Theory at the University of Amsterdam. Her research explores the resignification of clothing as a tool for protest in feminist uprisings in Latin America from 2015 to the present,

through the concept of *activismo de género*. In this context, clothing and its embodied actions are analysed as forms of aesthetic and political representation, with an emphasis on harnessing the thought and resistance practices of anti-colonial feminisms. She is co-founder of the Chilean transfeminist and transdisciplinary collective *Malvestidas* (Poorly Dressed).

..... Authoritarianism

**From the National Symbol of Brazilian Fashion
to the Banishment: The Trajectory of Dener
Pamplona de Abreu told by his Photographs**

Maria Claudia Bonadio

During the 1960s and 1970s, Brazilian couturier Dener Pamplona de Abreu emerged as one of the most prominent cultural figures in the country. His recognition stemmed not only from his creative output but also from his unique public persona, which challenged traditional norms of masculinity. Dener's sophisticated behavior, erudition, theatrical poses, and carefully staged photographic appearances — widely disseminated by the media — contributed to his fame and status. These characteristics, perceived as effeminate by the press, played a central role in shaping his image as a luxury couturier and granted him access to elite circles, including his role as the personal couturier of First Lady Maria Thereza Goulart and other high-society women. However, with the intensification of Brazil's military dictatorship in the early 1970s, Dener's image became politically charged. Labeled as subversive, he was investigated by DOPS

(Department of Political and Social Order) and banned from television due to his “affected” mannerisms. This paper analyzes how Dener’s visual and performative identity transcended the boundaries of fashion, becoming a political issue. It further explores: how state authorities and the media alternately constructed and manipulated his public image to serve ideological purposes, portraying him as either a symbol of national modernity or as a threat to the established order and impact of the banishment of TV through his photographic images.

Cultural historian and alumna of the State University of Campinas (Unicamp), Maria Claudia Bonadio is currently an Associate Professor at the Federal University of Juiz de Fora (UFJF). With over twenty years of experience as a Fashion History professor, she specializes in Brazilian fashion. Her work has been published in Portuguese, English, Italian, and Russian. She was editor-in-chief of *Dobra(s): Journal of the Brazilian Association of Fashion Studies and Research*, for a decade. Since 2024, she has been on sabbatical for her second postdoctoral internship at the Graduate Program in History at UFF, with sponsorship from CNPq (National Council for Scientific and Technological Development).

Caetano Veloso: When Clothing Challenges Authoritarianism in Brazil

Maria do Carmo Rainho

The aim of this presentation is to examine the construction of Brazilian singer Caetano Veloso’s public image in the 1960s and 1970s as a crucial element in his imprisonment and exile in London during the military dictatorship. The artist’s experimental nature, evident in his music,

was also expressed through his clothing, long hair, slender body on display, and his choice of visual elements that transgressed dominant norms of sexuality and gender roles still hegemonic at the time.

Drawing on official documents held in archives, as well as photographs and other visual sources as provocations, we aim to address one of the central questions proposed by the workshop: where does resistance to authoritarian social structures intersect with the complexities of fashion as a lived experience in Latin America?

Maria do Carmo Rainho studied History and has been a researcher at Brazil's National Archives since 1988. Between 2016 and 2019, she also worked at the National Historical Museum on projects related to fashion and dress. She holds a PhD in History and is the author of several articles and books on fashion history, fashion historiography and theory, dress, body and politics, fashion photography, and the history of photography. Her publications include *A cidade e a moda: novas pretensões, novas distinções*—Rio de Janeiro, século XIX (2002); *Moda e revolução nos anos 1960* (2014); *Marcas do Progresso* (2009); and *Retratos Modernos* (2005).

**That Woman Who Dares to Wear
Dior Dresses: Symbolic Disputes of
Power and the Demonization of
Evita Perón Through her Clothes**

Marcelo Marino

More than seven decades have passed since Eva Perón's death, and no figure in Argentine history has a more complex relationship between fashion and the political body. In the era of social media and artificial intelligence,

the ghost of the oligarchy, which was irritated by her political rise since 1945 and celebrated her death by praising cancer in 1952 on the walls of Buenos Aires, continues to be activated with intense violence facing images of Evita wearing Haute Couture dresses. This presentation revisits some of the voices and images that link class and gender authoritarianism and the use of the meanings of Fashion to construct hate speech. It also raises the issue of Eurocentric narratives of history and fashion criticism and their power to influence global fashion discourses when dealing with Latin American political figures constructed from stereotypical visions.

Specialist in the history of art and visual culture in 19th-century Latin America and Europe. His research interests include Art History and Fashion Studies. He is a full time Professor of Fashion History at the Faculty of Humanities and Arts at the University of Rosario (Argentina). Visiting professor in the Visual Culture Studies course in the Master's program in Latin American and Argentine Art History at the Interdisciplinary School of Advanced Social Studies at the General San Martín National University (Buenos Aires, Argentina). He is a research associate in the Argentine and Latin American Historiography department at the Center for Research in Art and Heritage (CIAP) at the same university. He is a member of national and transnational research projects and a member of the editorial board of *Caiana*, the academic journal of the Argentine Center for Art Researchers (CAIA). He has taught at various universities in Argentina and abroad. He has received scholarships and grants from CONICET (National Council for Scientific and Technical Research), the National Endowment for the Arts (FNA), and the German Center for Art History in Paris (DFK). He is the director of the book collection *Estudios de Moda*, published by Ampersand in Buenos Aires and

Madrid. He has contributed chapters and articles to various academic and popular publications. He edited the volume *Evita Frente al Espejo. Ensayos sobre moda, estilo y política en Eva Perón* (2022). He holds a degree in Art History from the National University of Cuyo (Mendoza). He lives in Bristol, England.

..... Futures

**Futures in the Past: The Politics
and Poetics of Latin American
Fashion Archives**

Edward Salazar Celis

This paper critically explores the politics and poetics of Latin American fashion archives, proposing a transnational and diasporic reading of how creative labor emerges from and continues to haunt these repositories across the Americas. By recognizing the fashion archive as a site of knowledge and power shaped by structural colonial legacies, the paper examines events and gestures that reveal the violences, silences, and erasures produced along class, racial, and ethnic lines, which have shaped fashion and its archival contours in Latin America. It engages primarily with archival gestures and events in Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, and the United States. As such, the paper interrogates the very notion of Latin America and the definition of fashion itself. At the same time, as a multilayered space and practice that connects past, present, and future, the archive represents a site of potential critical intervention and imagination. Therefore, this paper also considers how the archive opens space for alternative dress and fashion

histories that challenge hegemonic narratives of Latin American sartorial practices, centering neglected aesthetics and subjectivities. Through the conceptual and methodological lenses of critical fabulation and futurity, the paper invites an ongoing reimagining of fashion archives for Latin Americans and their diaspora.

Edward Salazar Celis is a doctoral candidate in Latin American and Latino Studies at the University of California, Santa Cruz. He is a writer, scholar, and cultural critic specializing in Latinx and Latin American arts, fashion, and visual cultures. His work has been widely published in academic and popular media. He is the author of the books *Nostalgias y Aspiraciones* (2021) and *Estudios de la moda en Colombia* (2022), the first reader on critical fashion studies in the country. His research bridges social sciences and public humanities, and has been supported by Colombia's Ministry of Culture and Ministry of Science, the University of California, and twice by the Mellon Foundation.

Fashion from an Invisible Place:

Jopara as a Decolonial Lens from Paraguay

Jasmin Ruiz Diaz

Paraguay remains significantly underrepresented in academic research, particularly within fashion studies. At the same time, cultural analysis on national discourse reveals a complex entanglement of nationalist ideals rooted in the romanticisation of *mestizaje* between Guaraní and Spanish heritage, alongside conservative gender norms.

In my PhD project, I examined the encounters between craft and design in this country, focusing on how *cultura popular* (I adopt *cultura popular* instead of the English

translation of popular culture to refer the tradition of critical cultural studies from Latin America) is instrumentalised by the state to promote nationalist narratives and conservative policies. The notion of ‘invisibility’ thus extends beyond Paraguay’s geopolitical marginalization to include the erasure of queer, Indigenous, and other subaltern voices from official histories. Fashion and dress, I argue, offer a powerful medium through which to make visible what has been systematically concealed.

As a theoretical framework, I draw on the Guaraní concept of *jopara* — a form of mixing that resists homogenisation and embraces contradiction. *Jopara* functions as a decolonial lens for rethinking the relationship between craft and fashion, tradition and modernity, gender and national identity. Building on this perspective, I ask: How can we imagine fashion from an invisible place? In pursuit of this question, I propose to explore textile art, dress, and the body as sites of situated knowledge, dissent, and radical imagination.

I am a Paraguayan researcher, scholar and journalist. I recently passed my viva on Culture, Media & Creative Industries at King’s College London with a thesis about co-creation between fashion and craft from decolonial perspectives. The intersections between fashion, culture and gender guide my work, both in research and outreach. I am also co-founder of the platform *Moda en Teoría* (@modaenteoria on Instagram and TikTok), created with the aim of disseminating Critical Fashion Studies in Spanish and from a decolonial, feminist and intersectional perspective.

Indigenous Futurity in Andean Bolivia

Daniela Monasterios-Tan

The Aymara aphorism *qhip nayr uñtasis sarnaqapxañani* —to walk forward with the past before us and the future behind— unsettles linear chronology through an indigenous cosmovision. This paper moves with this orientation, sitting alongside visual and embodied dress practices shaped by the past that gesture toward possible Andean fashion futures in Bolivia.

I will be guided by Ariella Aïsha Azoulay's invitation to walk *with* images, and Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui's decolonial articulation of the Aymara term *ch'ixi* — a concept metaphor for the mottled midtone that emerges in weaving from the distinctness of warp and weft. Rather than collapsing contradictions, *ch'ixi* honours pluralities, stains and visual indeterminacies.

I will attend to images by River Claire, who reclaims his *ch'ixi* identity through layered portraits, creating a personal future archive of indigenous identity in Bolivia. I will also engage with images showing the defiant self-styling of members from the collective *Imilla Skate*, who adopt the *pollera* to fight discrimination and reclaim ancestral indigenous lineage. I will trace how the *pollera*, historically influenced by colonial imposition, becomes not just a garment but a shared archive — worn with pride, adapted with style and as a tool of refusal. Across these practices, indigeneity is not recovered as something lost but rearticulated as a creative force for imagining futures otherwise.

Daniela Monasterios Tan is a fashion researcher and educator based in Singapore. She holds an MA in Fashion Curation from London College of Fashion and has worked with curators and archivists on exhibitions at the Asian Civilisations Museum, the Barbican, Frida Kahlo Museum, Palais Galliera, and the V&A Museum. Daniela is currently pursuing a PhD at Central Saint Martins, where her project focuses on contemporary fashion practices in Bolivia, exploring indigeneity and dress as a site of resistance and future world-making. danielamonasteriostan.com

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saint martins

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