The Fluidity of Ethnic Identities in Peru

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to advance some ideas about the politics of culture in Peru in order to problematise the general idea that ethnicity has not been a mobilising force for public action. In order to do so the paper discusses the concept of ethnicity and presents a brief review of ethnic relations in Peru as well as of the ways in which ethnicity has been imagined, lived and strategically brought into the field of politics.

The underlying argument to this discussion is that ethnic identities constitute a site of strategic contestation, and that in Peru ethnic exclusion has mainly been contested through a cultural politics of everyday life, in which public forms of expressive culture are important means of giving expression to, as well as to accomplishing, this aim. Drawing on some case studies, it sets out how the cultural politics of everyday life has worked throughout the 20th century, and the forms it now takes.

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1. Introduction

Despite the existence of important events of social and political uprising throughout Peruvian history (Kapsoli 1982; Rénique 1991), some of them of enormous violence and cruelty, grounded in an ethnically and racially fragmented national society, as the events of the last 20 years have shown (CVR 2004), no ethnically minded political movements or organisations have developed. This is a widely accepted statement in academic and public debates, and has been evoked as a feature that distinguishes Peruvian cultural and political history from that of neighboring countries, such as Ecuador and Bolivia. In other words, it is affirmed that in Peru, collective action has not been translated into political movements of ethnic content. It would be more accurate to say that political action has been organised around the struggle for land rights, class ideologies, and lately around issues of human rights. How, then, have Peruvians responded to ethnic and racial exclusion?

Throughout, this paper aims to advance some ideas about the politics of culture in Peru in order to problematise the general idea that ethnicity has not been a mobilising force for public action. Some of the arguments advanced are the following: (i) to assert that in Peru social movements have not had an ethnic content involves ignoring a history of political organisation and claims of ethnic content in the Amazon region; (ii) in the Andes, ethnic exclusion has been contested in the field of culture and not of politics, specifically through a cultural politics of everyday life; and (iii) in the present context this cultural politics of everyday life is being strategically brought into the field of politics proper, giving rise to emerging local and national political organisations. The second section of the paper presents a theoretical discussion of ethnicity; the third section discusses the general statement about the lack of ethnic movements in Peru; and the final section, drawing on some case studies, explains how cultural politics of everyday life have worked throughout the 20th century and the form they now take.

2. A theoretical discussion

2.1 Ethnic groups and ethnic boundaries

For a theoretical discussion of ethnicity as a form of social distinction based on criteria of cultural difference, it is necessary to problematise the concept of culture and more precisely of cultural difference. The tendency has been to assume that 'difference' precedes the cultural encounter, while on the contrary 'difference' is generated precisely in the context of cultural encounters such as Colonialism, and more recently in the context of globalisation, characterised by an intense circulation and exchange of people, goods and information. For that reason, cultural difference is not a neutral value, or marginal to politics. Rather it is one central field where hegemony is pursued.

Within a Weberian tradition, structured around concepts such as the ideal type and the idea of a collective ethos as principles of social and historical action, an ethnic group is defined as a community that: (i) identifies itself as such, and is recognised by others; (ii) is made up of members that share cultural values, which are contained in cultural forms; and (iii) forms a common ground for social interaction and material and symbolic exchange. In general terms, the ascription of such features to ethnic groups reflects an understanding of ethnicity as a state of mind, a consciousness of self-definition and sense of belonging that works as a principle of action, that explains cultural difference and the self-reproduction of ethnic groups. In other words, ethnicity as a primordial ethos has come to be the explicative principle for the existence of ethnic groups. Additionally, such understanding implies that ethnicity is defined in terms of a given condition, observable through particular cultural features or items. Within this line of argument, the history of such a given condition is further conceived of in terms of a foundational origin.

Drawing on Frederic Barth it is possible to identify for discussion at least three methodological consequences entailed in such a conceptual frame that require discussion: (i) "it implies a preconceived view of what are the significant factors in the genesis, structure and function of such groups"; (ii) "it allows us to assume that boundary maintenance is unproblematical and follows from the isolation which the itemised characteristics imply (…) limiting the range of factors, that we use to explain cultural diversity"; (iii) it produces a "world of separate people, each with their culture and each organised in a society which can be legitimately isolated for description as an island to itself" (Barth 1969: 11). For all these reasons studies on ethnicity have tended to take cultural difference for granted, focusing on the identification of discrete, measurable cultural items (race, language, religion, art, etc.) and having as their objective to establish typologies of ethnic groups.

Although self-ascription and discrete cultural features are crucial to the definition and distinction of ethnic groups, the primordialist approach referred to above does not explain, for example, the fact that ethnic groups persist despite social and cultural interaction between different groups. More precisely "ethnic distinctions do not depend on an absence of social interaction and acceptance, but are on the contrary often the very foundations on which embracing social systems are built" (ibid.: 10) In this regard, Barth's perspective implies a generative approach that explores the processes implicated in the doing and un-doing of ethnic groups. In other words, what he is proposing is to "shift the focus of investigation from internal constitution and history of separate groups to ethnic boundaries and boundary maintenance" (ibid.: 10).

This line of argument has two other consequences. The first is that only those cultural features that are regarded as significant and socially valued as essential by a specific ethnic group can be taken as criteria for the cultural definition of a group. As a result, cultural difference is anchored in subjective, defined features. The socially significant cultural features of an ethnic group can be redefined and resignified over time in the context of inter-ethnic interaction. They can also emerge as a result of internal disputes and argument between different groups within a specific ethnic community, in regard to the legitimacy and representativity of what they hold as their characterising features. It is for these kinds of reasons that Barth affirms, "when one traces the history of an ethnic

group through time, one is *not* simultaneously, in the same sense, tracing the history of 'a culture'" (ibid.: 38). An approach that seeks objective, measurable and comparative markers misses the historical and contextual nature of ethnicity, as well as the politics and poetics involved in cultural production. By the latter I mean the struggle over the terms and the means as well as over the meanings of cultural production.

A second consequence lies in the fact that as long as ethnic boundaries are constituted and maintained because of social and cultural interaction, it is necessary to consider that cultural distinction is not only established through persistent and identifiable features, but also through a "systematic set of rules governing inter-ethnic social encounters" (ibid.: 16). In other words, a person can change their economic situation, even incorporate cultural elements of another ethnic group, but ethnic difference will still persist, precisely because in situations of inter-ethnic relation the pre-established codes of interaction have the function of revealing and highlighting those cultural features that are socially relevant to mark cultural differences, reproducing or redefining ethnic boundaries.

Two points are central here: (i) ethnic difference supposes shared cultural codes of interaction; (ii) ethnic difference is constituted again and again in a relational and situational frame, and has therefore to be understood as context and agent specific. This implies that ethnic exclusion does not consist in putting individuals or groups out of the system, but rather in a position and relation within a system. As De la Cadena (1995) explains for the case of a southern Andean community, in specific situations of ethnic interaction gender can be stressed as the significant feature of cultural difference, so that indigenous men can be in the position of strategically positioning themselves as *mestizos*. Further, in Peru ethnic distinctions between a traditional capitalist sector and an emergent elite of entrepreneurs of Andean origin still prevail, despite the fact that the latter have repositioned themselves in terms of class. Economic wealth, important achievements in the industrial sector and in the national and international market have been shown not to be the condition to erase ethnic boundaries, or to eliminate ethnic exclusion[1].

Within the perspective discussed above, studies on ethnicity have privileged a situational approach, centering the analysis on the social actor, taking into consideration its position within a larger system of intra and inter-ethnic relations, as well as the relativity of this position in regard to a particular interlocutor in a specific situation. In general it advances an idea widely incorporated in ethnographic research on ethnic identity that defines ethnicity as a subjective and mobile condition that can even be strategically instrumentalised for the interests of particular groups. Such an approach opens up a set of questions that require us to ask to what extent and in what conditions ethnic identity

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[1] CADE (Conferencia Anual de Empresarios), the annual meeting of Peruvian entrepreneurs, does not achieve a significant representation of entrepreneurs of provincial origin. It is worth mentioning that the very fact that in academic and public debates these groups are labeled with the term *empresarios emergentes* refers to the fact that they are discursively located in a transitional position, they are always 'emergent', but never reaching the full condition of a 'real' entrepreneur. Their absence from CADE constitutes the practical consequence of this classificatory strategy.

can be strategically defined and used; who is in a position to benefit from it; and what is the nature of the changes it brings about?

Additionally, a situational approach requires us to ask how each group argues for and legitimises what is taken as a shared origin and how its significant cultural features are naturalised as essential to its character. As can be noted, these questions about the origin and authenticity of cultural features do not seek to reveal an essential truth or character, or a foundational origin. They rather point to a discussion of the ways through which cultural production works to gain and consolidate symbolic power (Bourdieu 1994) and hegemony (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992), both within and between ethnic groups.

2.2 Ethnicity as a form of social classification

In order to problematise the line of thought that understands ethnicity as a function of the existence of primordial ties that can be taken as an independent explanatory principle of human organisation, Jean and John Comaroff argue that what is essential to social life is "classification, the meaningful construction of the world". In that regard, they affirm that it is "the *marking* of relations – of identities in opposition to one another" that is "primordial", not the substance of those identities" (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992: 51). Such marking can take the form of different classificatory systems, but each system will emerge and persist in specific historical contexts, "for the signs and practices involved in each have their source in the very construction of economy and society" (ibid.: 54).

What I want to underline here in order to advance in our discussion on ethnicity is that what is necessary is to consider both, (i) the cultural and representational aspects of ethnicity – which speaks to the issue of ethnic self-definition and consciousness – and (ii) its relation to a larger social structure of power relations. The specificity of ethnic classification in regard to other forms of classification, like totemism for example, lies in the fact that "while totemism emerges with the establishment of symmetrical relations between structurally similar social groupings (…) ethnicity has its origin in the asymmetric incorporation of structurally dissimilar groupings into a single political economy" (ibid.: 54). Furthermore, ethnicity "appears to have two generally recognised and closely related properties. One refers to the subjective classification, by the members of a society, of the world into social entities according to cultural differences. The other involves the stereotypic assignment of these groupings – often hierarchically – to niches within the social division of labor. Neither property, of course, is unique to ethnic consciousness, the first applies equally to totemism, the second to class. But it is in their fusion that the particular character of ethnicity resides" (ibid.: 52).

This is especially relevant to understanding inequality and domination in colonial and post-colonial societies, where the development of capitalism and the social structuring in terms of class is not incompatible with the persistence and even flourishing of ethnic groups. On the contrary, ethnicity is a feature of capitalism, since its substance "is likely to reflect the tensions embodied in relations of inequality" (ibid.: 53); and it does so by inscribing class differences and hierarchies into a cultural frame that can be synthesised

in dichotomist distinctions such as civilised and savage; modern and traditional; rational and cultural, that might further be coded in a language of gender and race or charged with moral values. According to this, the assertion of the collective self and the negation of the collective other that any identity entails may in the case of ethnicity "call into question shared humanity" (ibid.: 53), and in such a way legitimise relations of domination. It is the function of ethnicity to frame asymmetric structural positions and relations as cultural distinctions. It is precisely this function that helps to explain why, as noted in the previous section, social mobility due to a repositioning within the structure of labour does not necessarily eliminate structures of subordination and exclusion. It is important to highlight that ethnic relations should not be seen as the mere survival of traditionalist societies and ideologies that could be overcome by the advance of capitalism and the establishment of class distinction. They are rather functional to capitalism as an asymmetrical structural order characterised by a highly stratified division of labour, since "there can, after all, be no social division of labor without its representation in culture" (ibid.: 56).

Emerging within a structure of class distinction, ethnic differences are not just based on arbitrarily chosen signs and practices drawn from an infinite and accessible source, but from unequally distributed material, political and social power. The possibilities of moving and undoing ethnic boundaries, as discussed in the previous section is highly problematic and depends precisely on the structural position from which one does the "cultural structuring of the social universe" (ibid.: 57). In consequence, those cultural features that become recognised and legitimate markers of ethnic identity as part of the process of the shaping of ethnic boundaries are intrinsically linked to the structural position of an individual or group and therefore emerge *from*, and are constrained or given potential *by,* its concrete material conditions and its access to the means of cultural production. In other words, ethnicity implies an identity consciousness that emerges *from*, and might arise as a reflexive consciousness *about*, the position one occupies in an unequal structure of power relations. For that same reason, "the identity imputed to a social group from the outside may be quite different from that same identity as subjectively experienced" (ibid.: 56). For an adequate understanding of any process of differentiation, that is the configuration of self/other relations, it is important to pose the question of who is enunciating whose identity.

Ethnic consciousness "emerges as groupings come to signify and symbolise their experience of a world of asymmetrical 'we-them' relations" (ibid.: 56). It is under such conditions that ethnicity becomes a generative principle of experience and action. Consequently, ethnicity might originally emerge as a product of material and structural conditions, but "where it becomes the basis of social classification and status relations, ethnicity, rather than the factors that generate it, takes on the ineffable appearance of determining the predicaments of individuals and groups", and it "assumes the autonomous character of a prime mover in the unequal destinies of persons and populations" (ibid.: 59).

2.3 The mechanisms of ethnic classification and the shaping of the ethnic subject

In this section I will explain how cultural representations work in order to discuss their power actually to constitute ethnic identities as lived conditions, as well as their relevance in the struggle for hegemony. According to Bourdieu "practical classifications are always subordinated to practical functions and oriented towards the production of *social effects*" (Bourdieu 1994: 220). For that reason, social representations are performative acts in the sense that they seek to constitute the very reality they name, that is to "make people see and believe, to get them to know and recognise, to impose the legitimate definition of the division of the social world, and thereby, to *make and unmake groups*"; in other words, "imposing a vision of the social world through principles of di-vision" (ibid.: 221). The 'objective' criteria that define distinct social groups are the "object of *mental representations,* that is of acts of perception and appreciation, of cognition and recognition, in which agents invest their interests and their presuppositions, and of *objectified representations* in things (emblems, flags, badges, etc.) or acts, self-interested strategies of symbolic manipulation which aim at determining the (mental) representations that other people may form of these properties and their bearers" (ibid.: 220-221).

At the representational level, ethnic classification implies a politics of identity through which cultural features are ascribed to specific groups, either as an imposition from the outside or as self-definition. Identity politics implies the use of such techniques of power as statistics and the archive (Foucault 1980), but also of cultural representation as literature, the museum, the visual arts and folklore (Said 1979; Tenorio-Trillo 1996; Poole 1997; De la Cadena 2000), as well as through mass media and the culture industry (Dávila 2001). Within this line of thought, the struggle over the representation of identity is one particular case of what Bourdieu calls a struggle over classification. Such a struggle compromises two central aspects: (i) a *politic* that concerns the control over the means of cultural production and over the conditions for the strategic use of difference; as well as the authority to define the terms of cultural representation itself, and (ii) a *poetic* (Fernandez 1986) that concerns the configuration and struggle over the meanings and moral condition ascribed to particular ethnic identities.

In other words, the struggle over representation involves mechanisms of inter- as well as intra-ethnic argumentation, disputes and legitimation, through which groups seek to achieve cultural hegemony. Such hegemony may imply the adscription of specific cultural features to distinct groups that are in a subordinate position, as well as the constitution of the hierarchically superior as the one that has the authority and the means to do the representation. It also may imply the imposition of those cultural features proposed and embodied by those with power as representative for the whole group. In other words, there is a political economy of culture that has to be taken into account in order to understand the doing and undoing of ethnic boundaries.

Following on that line of thought, the study of ethnic identity and relations requires paying attention to those zones of debate where the struggle over classification happens. In other words, rather then looking at the 'objective' criteria constituted by the acts of representation, what is revealing is to look at the mechanism through which such

'objective' criteria are performatively brought forward, that is represented and legitimised. In that regard, questions such as (i) who is involved in the struggle over representation, (ii) who defines the terms of representation; (iii) from which structural position representations are brought forward; (iv) what are the possibilities to challenge the "previous state of the relations of power in the field of struggle over legitimate delimitation" (Bourdieu 1994: 222), are central. For the case of ethnic identity, where notions such as a common origin and a primordial ethos work as mechanisms to legitimate and naturalise arbitrarily imposed cultural differences, the issue of authenticity constitutes one of these zones of cultural debate and struggle over classification (Cánepa 2002).

In societies like Peru, as well as more generally in colonial and post-colonial contexts, identity politics implies the work of groups of power that, while remaining unclassified, make other groups the target of ethnic classification and moral judgment (Frankenberg 1993). The possibility to do so is central to gaining hegemony within multiethnic societies, in the sense that those groups that maintain an ethnically unmarked condition not only have control over representation and become the authoritative voice, but also constitute themselves as representative of a universal human condition, that transcends the particularism of 'other' groups, reducing them to mere variations if not deviations of a humanist and universal project.

The configuration of the 'objective' features of identity through cultural representation additionally allows them to mediate social experience and constitute subjectivities (Turner 1987; Fernandez 1986). In other words, cultural representations mediate between objective structures and the subjective relation to those structures. Ethnic identity and relations should not be reduced to anonymous positions within a field of power relations, since they become embodied features that shape experience and action. In that regard, ethnic identity, although historically constructed, contextually and relationally specific, takes the form of an embodied condition, naturalising the structural position occupied in a larger system of power relations, intrinsic to the people who hold it. In other words ethnic consciousness is the consciousness of a structural position and relation that has been inscribed into the body.

Here I want to go back to the contrast that Comaroff and Comaroff (1992) make between totemism and ethnicity as two distinctive forms of social classification; the former corresponding to a structure of equal relations, and the latter to a hierarchical society. But I would like to add a second element which refers to the difference between them that I consider relevant for the present discussion. They explain that, while in totemism differences are objectified in figures taken from the world of nature, in ethnicity differences are expressed through cultural practices, that is, performatively, the body being the means and the goal of classification. The body, that is to say its features, styles and aesthetic, is used to codify ethnic distinctions. Additionally, the classification is imposed upon the body in order to make it docile and competent to perform in accordance with the codes of distinction that mark and give meaning to a classificatory position. By being inscribed into the body, not only ethnic classification but also ethnic exclusion come to be perceived and experienced as natural.

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That fact is crucial in many senses. First, the performative nature of ethnicity works as a mechanism through which historical and interest-driven distinctions are naturalised as given and intrinsic conditions, and also subjectively perceived as such. Secondly, it is in that sense that, as I will later illustrate for the Peruvian case, codes of ethnic distinction are frequently and easily translated into codes of race and gender. Finally, this fact explains why a great part of the struggle for civil and cultural rights has been brought forward through a politics of identity that is highly performative. According to performance theory (Turner 1987; Carlson 2001), performance as an expressive genre has precisely the advantage of having the body as the means of expression, making it an object of reflection.

The definition and legitimation of socially relevant cultural features that shape ethnic boundaries and distinctions are framed within a political economy of cultural production that works upon the body. In that regard, and drawing on the works of Comaroff (1985) and Mendoza (2000), it is possible to understand the political relevance of cultural practices as a sphere of individual and collective action to contest and subvert performatively – that is putting the body in action – ethnic classification and exclusion. Within this logic, and as the Peruvian experience shows us, education, migration and the acquisition of urban styles are all practices that are ethnically driven. In Peru, ethnic collective action has been played out less in the sphere of politics proper, and more in the sphere of culture, where individuals and collectivities have been involved in a cultural politics of everyday life (De la Cadena 2000).

2.4 Identity politics and ethnicity in the contemporary global conjuncture

In this section I want to discuss the emergence of indigenous and culturalist movements in the midst of the expansion of globalisation and the rise of neoliberalism as a hegemonic ideology, as well as the emergence of 'culture' as a main sphere for political action.

After World War II, capitalist, nationalist and class formations suffered important changes that gave rise to new developments in the relations of indigenous people with the nation-state and the capitalist world system. There are several processes at the economic, political and ideological level that Turner (s/f) considers to be crucial in the shaping of a particular 'culturalist conjuncture', which frames what he calls an 'indigenous renaissance'. Very important has been the "decline of national economies as the primary units of the global economic system in favor of a heterogeneous assortments of trans-national corporations, financial markets, multilateral banks and regulatory agencies" (ibid.: 3). As a consequence (i) state nationalisms decline; (ii) "states no longer depend upon deriving their power and legitimacy – in short their sovereignty – from their own citizens as a nation or people" (ibid.: 4); (iii) new globally oriented elites, that lack the 18th-century commitment to and identification with the nation, emerge; and (iv) "common citizenship in the state becomes perceived by relatively disprivileged, disempowered, insecure or impoverished groups of the population as an inefficacious basis for making political and economic claims" (ibid.: 5). On the other hand, "the business and political establishments of the major capitalist

states have more or less deliberately followed a policy of shifting the main emphasis of production from heavy capital goods to consumer commodities" (ibid.: 6), which encouraged the enlargement of the middle class, while consumption expanded the possibilities of individuals to produce their own life-styles and social existence, in other words, to produce themselves as social persons. The main consequence of this process implied a shift in terms of political and ideological consciousness that favoured "the individualistic struggle of consumers for a better standard of living" (ibid.: 6) over class struggle for political control of the state.

It is precisely in the midst of globalisation and the crisis of the nation-state, and the development of a middle class that characterises, distinguishes and reproduces itself through ever more sophisticated consumerist life styles, that culture, and more specifically "cultural difference", emerges as a field for self-production and political action. Continuing with Turner, "'Cultural' identities like ethnicity, religion, gender, or indigenousness have thus become the preferred medium for asserting social power, demanding rights and laying claim to status honor for many sub-national groups. 'Culture' has thus tended to replace nationalism as a political resource in struggles for status and empowerment within a nation-state" (ibid.: 5).

According to Turner 'culture' has come to be identified with 'identity', and consequently with 'difference'. He explains: "'culture', in the new culturalisms, serves essentially as a basis for the mobilisation of groups for the assertion of rights and interests in national societies felt by their citizens to be composed of a plurality of competing and unequal identities, upon which the state no longer has the power or the ideological commitment to impose a uniform national identity" (ibid.: 2). In such a context culture can be defined as a discursive and practical field of argument, where social worlds and 'difference', both ideologically and materially, are being made and remade, accepted and contested. This can help to explain why the homogenising forces of globalisation are constantly challenged by the revival of ethnic movements and ideologies.

This 'culturalist conjuncture' further implies that the struggle for self-representation has become highly political. At the same time, in the current context of globalisation and neoliberal capitalism, the struggle over self-representation requires dealing with the marketing of cultural goods and with new forms of technological reproduction and communication of cultural expressions; and it also requires being in a position to negotiate with the state, the media and the market, each of which has its own agenda for promoting, publicising and marketing particular forms of cultural representation. In other words, cultural representation and the struggle over self-representation happens today in a very complicated and sometimes contradictory "zone of cultural debate", which Appadurai and Breckenridge (1995) call public culture.

For that reason ethnic movements give rise to a wide range of agendas and forms of intervention, that include movements such as the Zapatistas in México, that have instrumentalised the media for political activism (Yúdice 2002), or the Ashaninka in Peru, where eco-tourism works as a frame to claim rights to land and environmental protection (Espinoza 2005). The "indigenous renaissance" and the possibilities for native people to succeed in claiming their territorial and human rights involve facing and challenging the

dilemmas posed by the fact that such agendas are brought forward in a field where self-representation, entertainment, and consumerism work in intricate ways.

While the individual self-production of identity and multiculturalism have been promoted by neoliberalism as "the supreme value of civil and political society"(Turner s/f.: 8), economic and political power has become highly centralised. This contradiction has posed the question of whether ethnic movements are in a position to define the terms of their own representation, as well as to unravel the class basis of the structural contradictions entailed in the system, or whether the struggle in the field of culture will prevent them from contesting unequal relations in the field of politics. Several authors (see, for example, Zizek, 2001) are sceptical and argue that cultural movements are finally instrumental to neoliberalism, since the discourse and the policy of multicultural development and inclusion are a strategy of the institutions of power to dictate the terms of the struggle of recognition and inclusion. In this regard, there is always the risk of ethnic identity being reduced to a mere lifestyle or an exotic commodity.

Others think that ethnic cultural politics offer a chance to contest dominant political cultures, for as Yúdice argues, "the imbrications of the transnational and the grassroots (most evident in the action of NGOs) produced situations in which culture could no longer be seen predominantly as the reproduction of the 'way of life' of the nation as a discrete entity separate from global tends" (2003: 89). But in order to understand such processes it is crucial to transcend approaches that conceive culture and politics as separate spheres. Culture is not just an epiphenomenon of economic and social structures. It is rather the field where social actors are constituted as such, and the terms of political debates are discursively negotiated and established. Drawing on the discussion of Martín-Barbero (1987) on mass media, Yúdice (2003) proposes rethinking the latter precisely as a decisive space in which the public and the construction of democracy is redefined, instead of reducing it to a mere issue of consumption and marketing. Cultural politics can entail access to spaces of action such as the streets, art galleries, the culture industry, that will further require control over the very means of cultural production, and therefore compromise concrete power relations.

Following on this line of thought, Alvarez, Dagnino and Escobar (1998) argue that any social movement, including those that are not explicitly 'cultural', implies some kind of cultural politics, since the struggle for political rights, citizenship and democracy might go beyond the demand of inclusion, and "rather seek to reconfigure the dominant political cultures" (ibid.: 8), in other words, "the mode in which power is to be exercised" (ibid.: 9), as well as the very definition of 'the political', as it is defined by modern political theories and put in practice by the institutional frames of modern democracy.

3. Culture and politics in Peru: a brief introduction

3.1 The lack of ethnic movements in Peru

The assertion that in Peru "nobody wants to be an Indian" has come to be part of a shared understanding about the nature of Peruvian society, and a key argument to

explain the lack of ethnic movements in Peru. This implies the assumption that indigenous groups have not only been classified in a subordinate social and moral position, but that they have assumed such a position without contesting it. What De la Cadena (2000) argues is that such a line of thought reduces contestation to the sphere of politics proper, leaving out the important cultural politics of everyday life, through which – as she has demonstrated for the case of Cuzco – hybrid indigenous-*mestizo* identities are constituted. The configuration of such identities is highly performative and implies a double move: a strategy of resistance, where cultural features (language, dress, religiosity, music and dance) were kept in the domestic sphere and lived as intimate experiences; and a strategy of accommodation, where particular cultural features were publicly expressed in a way that challenges hegemonic ethnic classification and hierarchies, and disputes the meanings attributed to indigenous and *mestizo* cultural features such as backwardness, illiteracy, rural life, etc. In this sense, the tactics of everyday life (education, migration, music, the celebration of fiestas, etc…) imply not simply a process of acculturation and "whitening", but rather the understanding of ethnicity in fluid terms, where contestation is not oppositional. Although Degregori (1993) and De la Cadena (2000) admit the lack of ethnic movements in Peru, they call attention to the fact that in Peru ethnic groups perform a different identity politics from the one that has characterised indigenous movements in other Latin American contexts.

In Section 4, I will come back to these issues to discuss how this cultural politics works. For the moment I will briefly present the main arguments that have been put forward to explain the lack of ethnic movements, understood in a strictly political sense. In doing so I will also discuss the fact that the very statement that 'there are no ethnic movements in Peru', leaves ethnic classification and discrimination unproblematised, reproducing it through the discourse of the social sciences.

The conquest of the Inca Empire by the Spanish is considered to be the foundational event of ethnic discrimination and inequality in Peru, since the Spanish government was built on the distinction between the *República de Españoles* and the *República de Indios*. Nevertheless this statement needs to be problematised since such a separation was based less on a racial and cultural distinction than on juridical and moral conditions[2]. For that very reason the system was permeable, leaving room for social mobility. The República de Indios was certainly not a homogenous social body, and sectors of the indigenous nobility were able to assure social and political privileges, even sharing many of "their [the Spaniards'] cultural traits: food, dress, religion, language, access to a privileged education" (Mendez 1996: 220). This permeability of the colonial order was instrumentalised by regional indigenous elites that mediated between both Repúblicas and that survived after the final decline of the Inca nobility around 1570.

According to Rowe (1955) in the 18th century these emerging elites gave rise to the *movimiento nacional indio,* which consisted in the rescue and revival of symbols and

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[2] For a detailed discussion of morality as a criterion of distinction between Europeans and indigenous Americans that worked during the 16th and 17th centuries, and of how social classification based on ethnicity and race has been instituted since the 19th century, see Poole (1997).

cultural practices of the Inca past that helped in the configuration of a cultural repertoire that made it possible to imagine, express and practise a common indigenous identity. "This movement involved the resurgence and re-elaboration of various Inca traditions, and took shape in the theatre, painting, dress and other artistic representations" (Méndez 1996: 121). Flores Galindo (1987) and Burga (1988) have studied the importance that myths like Inkarri[3] had in the shaping of this movement and in the configuration of the *utopía andina* (Andean utopia) as the ideological referent that made it possible to imagine a community that transcended the local and the regional. This movement found its end with the victory over Tupac Catari and Túpac Amaru in 1780, an event that changed attitudes towards the indigenous population. "In other words, the disdain towards and the unfavorable image of the Indian grew together with the fears of an 'outburst' and the resulting need for the subordination of these populations. While these fears and concerns were, to be sure, those of the colonial state after Túpac Amaru, they would stamp even more clearly the ideology of the Creole who had themselves participated in the emancipation process. For it was the Creoles who had to contend with the Indians not only for legitimacy of the leadership in the anti-colonial struggle, but also, and above all, for the status which each was to attain in a new, potential nation" (Méndez 1996: 221).

What is important to note here is that the death of Tupac Amaru constitutes another foundational event in Peruvian cultural and political history. It is in the context of the social and political events of the end of the colonial order and the institution of the new *República* that ethnic boundaries were established, shaping ethnic distinctions between *indios*, *mestizos* and *criollos*[4] as we know them today. After the death of Tupac Amaru, the indigenous groups lost many of their privileges, such as the right to learn to read and write (Montoya 1998). In other words, illiteracy as a feature of indigenous identity and culture was the result of state politics that actually shaped the illiterate Indian subject, as an inferior "other". Also, the use of Quechua was prohibited, as well as the performance of any other practice or the use of any symbol that made explicit any identification with the Inca past. These cultural policies were crucial to the elimination of an indigenous elite, while the creole constituted themselves into the only legitimate agents to represent the Inca past. In this way the indigenous cultural representations lost their political potential and the Indian was colonised for a second time, as he lost the means and the authority for self-representation.

This cultural politics became especially relevant in a context where the ideas of the Enlightenment began to shape Peruvian society. Modern thought, defined by Heidegger (1958) as the "conquest of the world as image", institutes a particular form of power that is fundamentally based in a subject/object relation. In other words, social difference was enunciated by a subject and predicated on an objectified 'other'. Instrumental to such

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[3] According to this myth, after the Spaniards decapitated the Inca or Inka Rey, the head was buried. Now the body is growing again and when it is complete, indigenous people will govern again.

[4] Very broadly, *indios* refer to indigenous, Quechua-speaking peasants; *mestizos* refer to those who are racially and culturally mixed; and *criollos* refer to Spaniards born in America, usually white and residents of the coastal cities.

order were the techniques of classification, serialisation and comparison that characterised the scientific thought and practices of the Enlightenment. From then on the *indio* would come to be the object of different representational genres such as theatre, music, painting, photography, and folklore, etc, as well as of ethnographic inquiry (Poole 1997; De la Cadena 2000; López 2004). Such cultural politics instituted by the *criollos* regarding the Inca cultural patrimony and indigenous cultural repertoires constituted cultural representation as a central mechanism for ethnic classification, which was instrumental to the urge of the creole elite to put everybody 'into their place'. This same cultural politics founded the terms of cultural representation and identity politics that shaped the Creole Nationalism of "*Incas si, indios no*" (Incas yes, Indians no) (Méndez 1996) and *indigenismo* ideologies,[5] helping to constitute the sphere of culture into a space for political contestation. The very gesture of seeking for cultural self-representation is a challenging move within this order of things.

It is the disappearance of an elite that championed an indigenous utopia, which has not yet been replaced, that Degregori identifies as a first argument in explaining the lack of an ethnic movement in Peru: "considering the important role that elites play in regard to the creation of ethnic and/or national identities, the (re)invention of traditions and the imagination of projects" (Degregori 1993: 119). According to Montoya the absence of an indigenous elite defined the terms in which the Peruvian nation was imagined and made real, since, 40 years after the Tupac Amaru rebellion, when the Republic was organised by the creoles, there was no Indian leadership able to demand a place at the negotiation table (Montoya 1998: 158). Despite the liberal laws of Bolivar, any cultural or political indigenous agenda or participation was systematically excluded, as is illustrated by the economic and ideological resistance of *limeño criollos*[6] to Marshall Santa Cruz's project for the Peruvian-Bolivian Confederation (Méndez 1996), as well as by the social and political history of 17th-century peasant guerrillas who, while having been a crucial actor in the resistance to the Chilean army in the Pacific War, were "'othered' as illiterate, lazy, backward Indians", once they sought to be included as full citizens into the nation state (Mallon 1995: 219). At the same time, the indigenous taxes that subsisted until 1854 and the expropriations of large amounts of land that gave rise to the *hacienda* (estate) and the consolidation of *gamonalismo*[7] at the end of the 19th and beginnings of the 20th century, established the structural conditions for the exclusion of the indigenous and rural population (Degregori 1993: 119).

During the 19th century and the beginnings of the 20th century the *indio* come to be identified with the "poor peasant", the *siervo* (serf), the uncivilised, and the archaic (Mallon 1995; Mendez 1996; Degregori 1993; Montoya 1998), configuring it into a disadvantaged structural position, and making it undesirable as an identity condition. From the mid 20th century onwards, migration and the expansion of the market would take on bigger dimensions, open up channels and offer mechanisms for social mobility, intensifying the fluidity of ethnic identities. Although ethnic borders were not erased,

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[5] Nationalist ideologies that see indigenous people and the inca history and cultural heritage as the genuine and legitimate root/basis of national identity
[6] *Criollos* resident in Lima.
[7] A system of local control impose by large estate owners.

through education and migration rural and provincial sectors were able to reposition themselves within the ethnic and class structure. At the same time the dominant associations of the indigenous and the provincial with cultural backwardness, ruralness and moral inferiority were being contested. During this process indigeneity came to be framed in the language of class, which was central to the way in which social movements and their political agendas would be arranged, namely as the struggle for the land that was lost during the expansion of the hacienda, and the right to education. It is argued that for this reason and despite the highly politicised and socially effervescent atmosphere, no social movements with ethnic demands developed.

Two main reasons that explain this process can be mentioned. The state itself "facilitated and promoted that these *siervos* in rebellion stopped considering themselves as *indios*". Very early, in 1920, it granted legal recognition to the *comunidades indígenas*[8]. Although the latter was an ethnic label and its recognition was part of the development of a "tutelary legislation (…) the channels that were open through the legal recognition were not used to bring forward ethnic and cultural agendas, but peasants' demands" (Degregori 1993: 121). This shift found its climax during the government of General Velasco, when he instituted the Agrarian Reform and developed a state rhetoric that replaced the term *indígena* (indigene) with *campesino* (peasant).

At the same time, the influence of a Marxist ideology and the strong links between the leftist parties, the *movimientos campesinos* (peasant movements), and the emergence of educated sectors of Quechua and Aymara origin were also crucial in defining the political agenda of the 1970s, as well as in imagining a community in terms of class. After the government of Velasco in 1975, while they struggled for political democratisation, these alliances, headed by the *Confederación Campesina del Perú* (CCP–Peasant Confederation of Peru); the *Confederación Nacional Agraria* (CNA–National Agrarian Confederation); and the *Sindicato Unitario de Trabajadores en la Educación del Peru* (SUTEP–Union of Education Workers of Peru), grew very strong, gaining regional and national influence.

In recent years, another argument has been brought forward to explain the lack of ethnic movements in Peru. According to this, what has hindered a process of indigenous self-recognition, organisation and political representation has been the internal war that Peru experienced for two decades (1980-2000), since the rural, peasant and Quechua-speaking population (75% of the victims) were the main targets of political violence from both the Shining Path and the military forces (CVR 2004). Nevertheless during these same years of political violence, Amazonian indigenous leaders carried out fertile work of political organisation, "a fact systematically overlooked by several prominent social movement observers" (Green 2006: 330). In the next section I want to turn to this bias

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[8] The *comunidades indígenas* are social and territorial units that developed from the *reducciones*. The latter were instituted by Francisco de Toledo in the 1570s as part of efforts by the colonial government to relocate indigenous populations in order to ensure better tax collection, as well as more efficient political, religious and cultural administration of the native population.

and to the re-indigenisation of several Andean "peasant" community leaders that can be observed in recent years.

3.2 National geographies of identity and the invisibility of Amazonian indigenous organisations

According to Green (2006), the generally accepted statement that there is no indigenous movement in Peru needs to be revised, since it overlooks an almost 35 year old process of eco-ethnic politics around which Amazonian indigenous groups have gained self-recognition, fortified their organisation, and struggled for political representation. Drawing on an argument brought forward by the Peruvian anthropologist Stefano Varese (1972; in Green 2006), on the invisible status of Amazonian groups in the national imaginary and academic thought, Green explains that this status is due to the uncritical assumption, widely present in the intellectual and political debates on the *problema nacional*, that Peru is essentially an Andean nation, where the coast and Andes stand for the national territory and society. Within such a geography of identity, indigeneity has mainly been understood as an Andean phenomenon so much so that "In Peru, Andean indigeneity represents ethnic politics even when such politics are declared officially silent; Amazonian indigeneity is represented as silent even when Amazonians are officially speaking of ethnic politics" (Green 2006: 338). In other words, the 'Andean-centric' character of Peruvian social thought "systematically reproduce[s] the very geo-politically circumscribed national imaginary [it] should seek to unveil" (ibid.: 336-7).

Furthermore, in those cases in which scholars do refer to the existence of Amazonian indigenous movements, they evaluate their relevance only within the national frame, and therefore render them as local or marginal, although "Amazonian movement leaders operating out of Lima since the 1980s routinely refer to themselves as 'national' indigenous representatives" (ibid.: 333). What is being overlooked is the fact that Amazonian indigenous movements developed largely in connection with a global sphere of indigenous politics, and working in conjunction with international environmentalist agents. Taking this into account, the whole argument that Peru constitutes an anomaly in regard to the development of ethnically based agendas and actions in Latin America could be challenged by asking "whether or not Peru's ethno-political 'insignificance' should only be measured in national terms, to the exclusion of other possible scales and scopes of significance" (ibid.: 329).

Transcending the exclusively national frame of the analysis can help us to overcome the shortcomings of an Andean-centric perspective, as well as to understand the terms in which indigenous politics are ideologically framed and practised in the nation at large. It is precisely the linkage to a global sphere that can explain the development of what Green calls an eco-ethnic politics, namely the development of an indigenous movement that emerges in a context where "neoliberal and multicultural agendas promote cultural/ethnic recognition", and in which "'nature' is no longer to be simply conserved but rather 'sustainably developed' and 'ecologically marketed'" (ibid.: 330). "Increasingly, indigenous activists claim rights to 'culture' and 'ethnic identities' as part of an integrated package with rights to 'nature', as witnessed in the global struggle over traditional

biodiversity knowledge, ownership and management of natural resourses, and territorial claims" (ibid: 330).

Green argues further that Amazonian indigenous movements not only predate the recent re-indigenisation of peasant and provincial leaders and political agendas, but also the latest emergence of public debates and policies about indigenous rights in the Peruvian contexts that have given rise to CONAPA (Comision Nacional de Pueblos Andinos Amazónicos y Afro-peruanos) and later to INDEPA (Instituto Nacional de Desarrollo de los Pueblos Andinos Amazónicos y Afro-peruanos), but "shape the terms of debate between the state, the international community, and indigenous movement actors" (ibid: 329), including the "nascent alliances between Andean and Amazonian".

It is precisely this eco-ethno alliance that has played a central influence in the way in which Andean political leaders have begun to frame the political struggle and debate between Andean rural communities, the state and the mining companies. One example is CONACAMI (Coordinadora Nacional de Comunidades Afectadas por la Minería) which was founded in the late 1990s to respond to neoliberal natural resource policies. "Although it was without any explicit ethnic content initially, in the last few years, as it has taken leadership of COPPIP (Coordinadora Permanente de Pueblos Indígenas del Perú) in the context of [then-first lady Eliane] Karp's multicultural commission, CONACAMI increasingly deploys its own eco-ethnic-political indigenous stance" (ibid.: 348). These experiences not only reveal the emergence of ethnically based political agendas and the revival of an indigenous leadership, but also the alliances between Andean and Amazonian organisations, as is the case of COPPIP. Constituted by "acting representatives of its affiliating Amazonian and Andean organisations, which include a mix of professionally run NGOs and other organisations with more direct representational ties to provincial Andean and Amazonian communities" (ibid.: 348), COPPIP asserts, as is written in the declaration from its Second National Congress in 2001, that it is their interest to "summon up this identity [the indigenous] as an inalienable right in order to use an international juridical status, that today is recognised" (quoted in ibid.: 348). This statement is revealing about the fact that citizenship is currently being constituted through discursive and performative practices that occur in a field for individual and collective action where law, culture, nature and politics converge (May 1999).

"The recent emergence of a debate on indigenous issues shows that the Amazonians' longer engagement in the global sphere of indigenous and environmental politics now places them in the position of exemplifying indigeneity for the Andeans and Peruvians at large " (Green 2006: 327). "The model of eco-ethnic politics exemplified in Amazonian struggles now serves both as a template for some recently re-indigenising Andeans and as leverage against Toledo's romantic 21st century Inca empire" (ibid.: 331). Nevertheless, it has been further noted that this coincidence between the politics of culture promoted by Latin American states and the global institutions of neoliberal development certainly poses difficult challenges to eco-ethnic politics in many ways. Neoliberal multiculturalism has been instrumental in institutionalizing the very terms and codes of political struggle and cultural affirmation from above, in order to regulate indigenous struggles and demands, establishing the criteria to distinguish those

movement that are acceptable from those that are not, and condemning precisely those that seek to question the very structures of asymmetry associated with neoliberalism, or whose cultural politics challenge a particular dominant political culture (Alvarez, Dagnino and Escobar 1998; Yúdice 2003).

Given that, this eco-ethnic politics is played out in very complex and contradictory ways, where ethnicity and the environment are instrumentalised as an economic resource packaged as 'eco-tourism', as well as a strategy to performatively state their claims for citizenship for the public, through the media. But at the same time, the process of re-indigenisation does configure a zone of cultural discourse and practices that shape meanings and mediate experiences, constituting a sense of belonging and self-recognition through which representative figures emerge and get legitimised and collective action is generated. An example of the complicated ways in which eco-ethnic politics can move within a range that goes from self-exoticisation for a tourist and media public, to the struggle for recourses and political inclusion, is the case of the comunidad Ashaninka of Mariankari Bajo[9].

On the other hand, the celebratory account that Green (2006) presents of Andean-Amazonian indigenous movements in Peru, has to be contrasted with that of other authors who have pointed to the fact that these organisations have not yet overcome problems of representativity, as well as regionalist sentiments and loyalties that,for example, ended with the fragmentation of COPPIP into two *juntas directivas* (boards of directors), because of confrontations that could not be solved during the elections of 2004 (Durand 2005).

In order to get somewhat closer to the process through which the revival of indigenous discourses and ethnically minded agendas are gaining spaces of political representation in the Peruvian Andes, I will draw on the case study of Durand (2005) on two main political organisations that emerged during the 1990s in Lircay (the capital of Angaraes, Huancavelica): *Movimiento Independencia, Trabajo e Integracion* (*INTI*) and *Movimiento Independiente de Campesinos y Profesionales* (*MINCAP*). Eduardo Candiotti, one of the founders of MINCAP, and later a leading figure of Movimiento Rickcharisum, is the intellectual voice of cultural movements such as '*renacer ank'ara*'[10]. He is also a member of one of the *juntas directivas* of COPPIP and a director of INDEPA.

3.3 The revival of Andean indigenous identities in contemporary political organisations

In the 1990s, after the capture of the main leaders of Shining Path and during the implementation of neoliberal politics by the government of Fujimori, several elements contributed to the emergence of independent organisations that seek political representation, mainly at the municipal level. Some of these organisations promote to

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[9] See Correa (2005), Espinoza (2005) and the web page of the community
http://www.rcp.net.pe/ashaninka/
[10] *Ank'ara* is the ancient culture of the province of Angaraes, in the department of Huancavelica.

different degrees the revival of indigenous discourses and ethnically minded political agendas. The elements that characterised this decade are a crisis of representation of traditional political parties and labor unions, as well as of the legitimacy of leftist ideology, both of which can be explained as part of larger political and social processes, as well as the result of the internal war and political violence (Montoya 1998; Caro 2004; Durand 2005). Fujimori instrumentalised this anti-political feeling, through a discourse that highlighted professional and technical efficiency over political interest, and through specific public policies that fortified municipal power through *democracia directa* (direct democracy), and the redistribution of municipal budgets/rents. In this way, Fujimori was able to eliminate the intermediatry role of political parties, while reaching the local level through clientelist networks.

In this context former local leaders in Lircay who distance themselves from traditional political parties, and leaders of the *comunidades campesinas,* who seek a political presence by relying on the support of intellectuals and professionals instead of political parties come together and begin to form independent political organisations – although not without internal conflicts and contradictions,. Framing their organisations as ideologically independent, and drawing on notions of professional and technical efficiency, these local elites reinvent themselves, imagining and developing local projects. In some cases local intellectuals engaged in the revival of ethnic identities are members of these organisations. By doing so they champion the principles of Andean reciprocity and collectivism as a moral and political alternative to corruption and exclusion.

These independent organisations are a space for the formation of local and regional elites that have a say in the way that the terms of democratic participation are being defined. Durand (2005) identifies two main tendencies within such organisations. On the one hand there are those organisations made up mainly of professionals and former local leaders who were once linked to political parties. Their principal interest is to get elected. They further understand their political task as the realisation of public works. Although they include peasant representatives in their list, they hinder real peasant participation since education is a requirement for access to executive positions. In other words, peasant political participation is reduced to the right to vote, and does not allow for interaction with their own political mechanisms of participation and representativity. What can be observed here is the reinvention of an old local elite who, having lost their lands, now base their power and socio/cultural distinction on education.

On the other hand, these professionals limit the revival of ethnic identity to a pragmatic and economic agenda, since they consider that Andean symbols are appealing to a public of peasant electors. The promotion of local cultural expressions is geared towards encouragjng tourism in the region, and supports only those cultural repertoires that belong to the capital of the province, while dismissing those that are rooted in an indigenous peasant tradition. Although the use of culture is purely instrumental, it does imply a cultural politics that empowers those cultural repertoires rooted in the tradition of the local elites, making them representative for the province as a whole, and turning the professionals into the depositaries and guardians of an authentic *ank'ara* cultural

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repertory and patrimony. As can be noted, literacy and cultural representation are used to establish distinctions within the group, reproducing old forms of ethnic exclusion.

Some intellectuals such as Eduardo Candiotti, who has a significant knowledge of indigenous movements in other Latin American countries and is director of the NGO Yapuq PRODER which works under an indigenous banner, do establish relations with indigenous authorities through which shared projects can be developed and sustained. One of those projects, for example, is the formation of indigenous leaders. In this case the aim was to pursue a more active participation in negotiation with the state and the mining companies regarding economic activities that compromise land and natural resources. The work of Yapuq PODER with peasant leaders results later in the creation of organisations such as CUNA (Consejo Unitario de la Nación Ank'ara).

The agenda of these intellectuals and professionals is to ground political demands in an ideological and cultural frame. The validation of an ethnic identity goes beyond the instrumentalisation of culture as an economic resource, since it is thought of as the common ground from where economic and political claims should be made. Although indigenously minded intellectuals and organisations are not predominant, the *indigenista* discourse seems to gain space. It speaks to a peasant population that feels "called" by it and valued by it, and its is a way to intervene in regional and national politics, since it is through organisations like CUNA and CORECAMI (a local office of CONACAMI) that their demands can be brought into the national sphere and that they gain representation in state-sponsored institutions like INDEPA.

It is important to mention that the actions taken by the Toledo administration to stress its profile as a multicultural government, as well as the financial policies of international development agencies like the World Bank that have programs aimed at supporting cultural minorities or marginal communities and initiatives that stress cultural identities, have been central to the configuration of cultural politics and the formation and development of indigenous and afro-Peruvian organisations in the last decade in Peru.

In an article in which Albó (1991) discusses ethnic movements in Andean countries, he concludes that in Peru "*no se avanzó más allá*" (they did not go further). According to what I have presented, this statement can be problematised. Although the political organisations with an ethnic banner that I have referred to developed during the 1990s, after Albó's article was written, it can be said that since the 1970s NGOs and intellectuals had already been working in a framework of belief in the importance of ethnicity. Montoya lists several of these cases and explains that they were inspired by CISA (Consejo Indio Sudamericano) formed in the 1980s. These NGOs, such as PRATEC and ABA in Ayacucho, Tinkuy in Huancavelica and Huancayo, CADEP and Chirapaq in Ayacucho, and Integración Ayllu in Villa el Salvador (Lima), work mainly to strengthen Andean knowledge and organisation (Montoya 1998: 138), to support the ayllu[11] as a form of organisation (ibid: 154), and to revalue the word *indio* (Montoya

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[11] A parental and territorial unit that was central to the organisation of Andean prehispanic society.

1998: 159), while they work as a space for the emergence of an intellectual elite that defines itself as indigenous. It is precisely here that one can trace back the trajectory of those intellectuals and professionals like Candiotti that lead the new political organisations, such as INTI and MINCAP. Montoya argues that the fact that these intellectuals and NGOs only worked in the cultural and religious sphere is due to a profound distrust of politics proper. He considers this to be a second moment in the cultural and political history of Peru, in which "culture is used against politics" (Montoya 1998: 167), and speaks of the need of a third moment of convergence between politics and culture (Montoya 1998: 169).

Following what I have presented above, it could be said that in the contemporary conjuncture, the politics of culture in Peru is beginning to configure political movements that dispute the prevailing forms of the dominant political culture that has excluded ethnic groups and their alternative ways of conducting politics. The importance of these forms and spaces for cultural politics and the fact that they have been neglected by most of the social scientist is also highlighted by Degregori, when he comments on Albó's verdict, "it might not be an issue of being behindhand or ahead, but of different forms through which the ethnic issue is played out in different countries" (Degregori 1993: 128). In order to argue for this he focuses on Andean migrants in Lima who validate in multiple and renewed ways, provincial and *cholo*[12] identities. Degregori feels positive about the future of cultural politics in Peru, considering that "such interaction of different identities – according to region, class, ethnicity, citizenship – constitutes a major platform to acquire democratic rights avoiding the dead-ends to which the unilateral prominence of ethnic identities seems to be heading in other regions" (ibid.: 128).
n certain context it is

Given the political organisations that are emerging currently, I consider nevertheless that the question that should remain open is whether the politics of *revaloración étnica* will entail the possibility of a more inclusive society, or if its reliance on professionals will reproduce old forms of ethnic distinction and exclusion based on literacy, ultimately serving only the interests of a class within the ethnic group.

4. Ethnicity, migration and cultural politics in Peru: Shaping the moral subject of the Peruvian nation

In this section I will focus on the cultural politics of Andean migrants and their descendants in Lima. In discussing the process of migration and the consequent transformations of Lima, most of the academic and public debate has emphasised the formation of new social and economic sectors denominated *sectores emergentes* (emergent sectors), being identified either as a *nueva clase media* (new middle classes) or *empresarios emergentes* (emergent entrepreneurs). There are certainly many examples of the actual existence of these new middle classes, and their economic

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[12] The term *cholo* refers to racial and cutural mixture. It is widely used to name Andean migrants from the provinces to the coastal city of Lima, and has negative connotations.

achievements, as the commercial success of Mega Plaza (a Mall in Los Olivos-Comas) has proved. At the same time, public figures such as engineer Máximo San Román, who began with small-scale production and now owns an enterprise that has proved a national and international success, tell us about the existence of groups of small entrepreneurs who are creating a new economic elite. Nevertheless I want to argue that these groups have not only been engaged in the accumulation of economic wealth, gaining access to economic power; they are also committed to cultural politics that range from forms of everyday life, to forms of cultural expression proper.

This cultural politics has been crucial to (i) constituting and promoting cultural leaders and public figures; (ii) gaining presence and visibility in the public sphere; and (iii) contesting meanings that are predominantly associated with indigenous, rural, and provincial identities as well as with Andean culture in general. This agenda has been fulfilled via the field of culture and religion, specifically through the realisation of Andean religious festivities and the culture industry. I argue that what is at stake in this culture politics are mainly two issues. First, the encouragement of an *identidad provinciana andina* (a provincial and Andean identity) that values the links to a rural and indigenous origin while redefining the meaning attributed to them through the shaping of such figures as the *mestizo*, the migrant and the professional. Secondly, the need to challenge the condition of *limeños emergentes*[13] ascribed to them. While the label acknowledges their economic success, it reduces them to mere economic agents while leaving out their recognition as political and moral actors in the construction of the Peruvian nation. Furthermore, *emergente* is a new name to refer to migrants of Andean origin, introduced by the social sciences in the 1980s in order to validate them by replacing previous labels such as *indigena*, *cholo* and *provinciano* (provincial), that were associated with archaism, illiteracy, rural life and underdevelopment. Nevertheless it is worth mentioning that the word *emergente* has an ambiguous character since it discursively locates these new sectors in a transitional position, where they are always 'emergent', never fully reaching the condition of a 'real' entrepreneur or middle class. In other words, the label *emergente* not only replaces former pejorative ascriptions, but rather reproduces them within a new terminology which is that of *chicha* identity or *chicha* culture (see below).

Through the emblematic case of Máximo San Román I will argue that in the current situation urban communities that ascribe themselves an provincial and of Andean origin find themselves at a critical moment, in which they have to decide whether they will continue responding to ethnic exclusion by working in the sphere of culture and religion or whether they should make a move towards political action proper. But in order to reach this point of the discussion it is necessary first to present a brief history of cultural politics through the 20th century in Cuzco as framed by *indigenista* discourses.

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[13] Migrants of Andean origin that have settled in the city of Lima and have succeeded as small entrepreneurs or have come to join a growing middle class.

4.1 Ethnicity and cultural politics in Cuzco

4.1.1 On the notion of *mestizaje*

In Cuzco the *indigenismo* movement has been a central space for the discursive configuration of ethnic distinctions, while religion and culture have been the fields where such identities have been constituted into distinctive cultural repertoires. In a different trend to *indigenismo,* which was promoted by E. Valcárcel (1927) and had racial purity as the main principle of authenticity in order to claim indigeneity as the legitimate cultural and political foundation of the Peruvian nation, *neo-indigenismo*, argued for by García (1973), had the *mestizo* as the main agent of a national project.

As several authors have argued, although *mestizaje* is discursively defined as a racial and cultural synthesis that gives rise to a new subject, cultural politics in Cuzco show that *mestizo* identity, rather then being a fixed and objective condition, is always strategically performed in order to position a person in a specific situation (Poole 1994; De la Cadena 2000), and through which subaltern groups contest or redefine classifications and social hierarchies, questioning authenticity and rejecting "the need to belong as defined by those in power" (Mallon 1996: 1).

In Peru, ethnic identity is a highly context-defined condition because it is arranged and negotiated in terms of dialogically determinate notions of race, class, gender, and geographical location (De la Cadena 2000). Identity is always context specific and relational. *Mestizaje* emerges, then, as the arena where such negotiations occur and where particular agents can escape ascriptions to fixed categories, thereby challenging authenticity. It is a space of struggle. But for just this reason, the counter-hegemonic and liberating character it can have in certain contexts and for specific actors can turn into a discourse of power when enunciated by elites. Lomnitz, for example, has reminded us that *mestizaje* as an official doctrine denies political agency to real indigenous populations, as has also been the case for *cuzqueño indigenismo*. He writes: "This ideology, which became the official doctrine of the Mexican Revolutionary Party, is part of an argument about individuality of the Mexican process: the soul of Mexican culture is Indian, and its political body is destined to be ruled by *mestizos* against the Europeanising project of the lackeys of foreign imperialism" (1992: 2). In the same way, *cuzqueño neo-indigenismo* was instrumentalised by an emerging provincial elite that rejected the notion of authenticity for itself, exploring alternative identities, while imposing it on the indigenous population, evoking it through different forms of cultural representation, such as folklore, as the depositary of racial and cultural purity, binding it to a fixed social place.

The paradox implied in the category of *mestizaje* is that the very authenticity it questions can under other circumstances be invoked to consolidate legitimacy. Therefore, as many authors have suggested, the relationship of *mestizaje* to authenticity in Latin America always requires us to take into account the position from which the former is claimed, since it has different strategic entailments depending on "who is asking the question, and who is doing the imagining" (Mallon 1996: 4). Mallon recommends distinguishing

between "strategic authenticity" and "strategic marginality" in his discussion of De la Cadena's work on *mestizaje* in Cuzco: "As De la Cadena shows for Cuzco, the *neo-Indianista* project of militant hybridity and multiplicity was intricately layered in terms of authenticity and marginality. In relation to power groups in Lima or the old elites in Cuzco, the *neo-Indianistas* positioned their project of cultural fusion as strategically marginal. In relation to Indians and male *cholos*, however, the Bohemian male *Indianistas* positioned themselves as the authentic and truly virile examples of what the new fusion – interestingly enough, to be accomplished directly upon the bodies of seductive *cholas* – would entail" (Mallon: 1996:3).

4.1.2 The politics of representation in Cuzco

In the 1920s the *indigenista* discourse found the basis for an authentic identity in the figure of the racially pure *indio* and interpreted *mestizaje* as the cause of the degeneration and decadence of the contemporary indigenous race. This *indigenismo*, which had in Luis Eduardo Valcárcel one of its most important voices, with his work *Tempestad en los Andes* (1927), worshiped the racially pure *indio*, locating the source of every political project in the Inca past and not in the action of the contemporary indigenous peasant. At the same time, he envisioned the leading and modern class that would execute the modern national project, also as racially pure, but white. Within this logic, the *mestizo* appeared as being responsible for all the political, social and cultural vices that went against the indigenous race and the possibility of the consolidation of a modern nation-state. In the context of Leguia's populist government (1919-1930) which wanted to expand the central government at the expense of the provincial aristocracies, while needing to control the peasant uprisings (Deustua and Rénique 1984), and in the middle of the intellectual debate around the *problema del indio*, the figure of the landlord itself, together with those of the priest and the lawyer, come to represent the anti-modern and anti-democratic power. Considered to be the cause of the impossibility of modernisation of the state and growth of an integrated nation, the *hacendado* (estate owner) comes to incarnate illegitimate power.

The racial purity argument made it possible to establish a link between *mestizaje* and *gamonalismo*, the latter being a feudal, barbaric, cruel and irrational way of domination of the indigenous peasant population. This discursive strategy allowed a *cuzqueño* landlord sector to build itself as the legitimate holder of power, establishing a moral distinction between *hacendados* and *gamonales*. The *hacendado*, in opposition to the *gamonal*, had a legitimate property and power over land and over the *indios* that worked on it. That legitimacy was founded in a long familiar history and in a modern and cosmopolitan education that "taught him the right way of using his authority and social position" (De la Cadena 2000: 83). But the real distinction between *hacendados* and *gamonales* lies in the fact that the *indigenistas* of the 1920s reinterpret racial purity in terms of moral and cultural attributes, and not as a biological fact.

The discourses by which the *hacendados* built themselves as racially white in opposition to a *mestizo* "other" can be traced back to the race arguments developed by biological and social sciences of that time. However, the *cuzqueño* elite had to solve the problem of their own physical characteristics that contradicted the racially white condition they

had attributed to themselves. In this sense, the *indigenista* discourse consisted in reinterpreting and re-signifying the biological argument in terms of a moral argument, in a way that an ethnic/racial structure, where class, gender and ethnicity are the classificatory and hierarchical terms, is legitimised. Racial purity is then signified in terms of a group of cultural and moral attributes that synthesise the notion of *decencia* (decency) (De la Cadena 2000). *Decencia* at the same time is translated in several social and bodily practices, from the refinement of manners (diet, wardrobe, hygiene practices, artistic expressions and enjoyment) to sexual behavior and the kind of matrimonial alliances that were established. It is through that engineering of the body that the *cuzqueño* elite equates itself morally with the *limeño* and European elites, and takes a hierarchically superior position over the *mestizos* and over the *indios* abused by the *gamonales*. One of the most important parts of this process of self-construction was to hold to a sexual morality that would guarantee social reproduction within the established ethnic/racial boundaries. Therefore *recato* (reserve and control) was a highly valued behavior that any *decente* women ought to exhibit.

On the other hand, the fact that *decencia* was translated in body practices and styles, that is, that social differences were located in the body itself, points to the rationalisation of the moral and cultural classificatory referents introduced by the *indigenista* discourse. This means that at the same time that the racial condition is reinterpreted as a complex of cultural dispositions that can be acquired and therefore establishes the possibility of ascending within the social structure, those dispositions are re-essentialised by attributing them to the configuration of the body – shaped by race, economical activity and geographical habitat – of the diverse ethnic/racial groups, naturalising in this way the difference that had been historically constituted at the social level.

Such discursive constructions were very complex and were strategically used. Although the reinterpretation of race theories implied an anti-hegemonic gesture in terms of a social order constructed from Lima and Europe which situated the provincial elites at an inferior level, that gesture can only be evaluated contextually, because, on the other hand, the *decencia* concept worked in everyday practice as an efficient mechanism for social differentiation, hierarchisation and exclusion in the region.

Like any other discourse the *indigenista* discourse was involved in a struggle over the power of representation, and had its own dilemmas and contradictions; on the one hand, essentialising ideas about culture and identity, and on on the other, proposals that opened up the possibility of thinking of identities and bodies as being reformed and reshaped by men. The latter left space for different social groups to negotiate and transform their place inside the social hierarchies, although this far from questioned the system of domination itself. The spaces for negotiation and transformation of identities have since then been education, migration, consumption, and the management of cultural forms that range from everyday symbolic actions to the performance of devotional dances. The ethnic/racial condition of an individual is dependant on the knowledge and technologies that he or she can appropriate and gain competence in. These cultural appropriation and resignification dynamics explain how *mestizaje* could be forged later as an expression of the authentic *cuzqueño* regional identity, being at the same time appropriated by different social sectors.

Within the neo-*indigenista* postures, represented by Uriel García (1973), who in his book "*El nuevo indio*" speaks of the *indio* as having been shaped by colonial and republican history as well as by his interaction with geography, *mestizaje* is rather resignified as the outcome of a creative and heroic cultural enterprise. Within the logic of these arguments the *mestizo* condition is resignified by *cuzqueño* intellectuals and artists, who were descendants of provincial elites associated with *gamonalismo*. If in the beginning their *mestizo* condition was associated with ideas of rebellion, savagery and unruliness (Poole 1994), at the end of the first half of the 20th century that rebellion is reinterpreted as the essence and source of an autonomous *cuzqueño* regional ethos and identity, which resisted the authoritarianism of a centralist *limeño* government. On the other hand, De la Cadena (2000) illustrates how, in the second half of the 20th century, women at the market in Cuzco, migrants with indigenous origins, self-construct themselves as *mestizo*, resignifying their "rude" and socially censurable behaviour, inappropriate for a woman, in such a way that *bravura* (unruliness) is redefined as bravery to defend the well-being of their families. Both ex-*gamonales*, and later the emergent middle classes and low urban sectors, found the *mestizo* discourse a space for accommodation in the social and cultural universe of the region, either to reinvent their hegemonic condition or to move up within the social structure.

In this sense, *mestizaje*, more than an objective ethnic condition, was constituted into a field for cultural argument in the sense that groups and individuals used indigenous and *mestizo* referents in a contextualised and situated way to construct an image that empowered them. As the case of the choreographic repertoire of the festival of Virgin Carmen in Paucartambo shows (Cánepa 2003), *paucartambinos* on the one hand de-indigenise their dances, stylising their choreographies and wardrobe, introducing urban and modern elements – replacing sandals with high-heeled shoes –, and on the other possibly choose to represent indigenous or rural characters – such as the *qollas* or the *machu* of the *contradanza*[14] – in order to argue for a greater authenticity. Within this logic it is possible to understand that the contradictions observed from a classificatory point of view – *indios/mestizos* – are no longer present when they are approached as contextualised practices in the everyday life or as performatively staged.

The town's middle classes, as well as the middle and upper classes of the *paucartambinos* resident in Cuzco choose to represent themselves as *mestizos*. For localised groups in or coming from the countryside this option implied the resignification of a *mestizo* condition associated with the agrarian rural world and with *gamonal* power. This will be achieved by capitalising on the hegemony that *mestizaje* gained in the urban context of the region as a source of a *cuzqueño* regional identity. On the other hand, the self-representation as *mestizo* implies the existence of a cultural and racial counterpart, the *indio*. In this way the existence of an ethnic/racial group that was culturally and geographically located 'outside', had to be guaranteed, displacing every feature of rurality, tradition and localism of the *paucartambino mestizo* condition. It is because of

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[14] The *golla* is the main character of the *golla* dance, which represents the people of the Golla region, south of Cuzco. The *machu*, or old man, is the leading figure of the *contradanza* dance, which is a parody of colonial court dances.

this that the reinvention of the place of origin, that constitutes a primordial referent of identity within the *indigenista* discourse, becomes such an important part of the agenda.

The racialisation of the ethnic distinctions, that is, their naturalisation as corporeal attributes, goes together with their naturalisation as the expression of particular and distinctive geographies. In this way the indigenous population has also been marginalised and subordinated in spatial terms, in other words, in terms of a geopolitics of identity. The indigenous and the "authentic" have always been located "somewhere else", "a bit further", beyond the frontiers established for "one's own" (Orlove 1993; Radcliff and Westwood 1996). Inspired in deterministic theories and in European romanticism that influenced the *indigenista* discourse, the cultural and physical differences are attributed to the practice of different economic activities that at the same time are placed in particular geographical spaces. It is in this line of thought that education has always been for peasants a critical factor for their relocation in the social structure (Ansión 1990), since education implies access to nonindigenous economic activities and cultural practices. But migration has also been central to the accomplishment of these moves (Degregori 1994). Migration is, apart from the fact that it implies physical displacement, the staging of the displacement within social and cultural space. In other words, migration, the displacement from one geopolitical location to another, from the *puna* (highland) to the valley, from rural to urban, from the sierra to the coast, from the province to the capital city, constitutes an act of de-indigenisation. In this sense, the trope of displacement becomes a dominant figure in the construction of *mestizaje* (Cánepa 2003).

I have mentioned that in a first phase of *indigenismo*, *mestizaje* had negative connotations which were predicated through notions like rebellion and savagery, assumed as attributes of the inhabitants of rural regions and Andean punas, as well as a characteristic of socially and morally marginal and censurable behaviors. Inspired in the *neo-indigenista* discourse, this account falls back on the idea that the rebellious and savage character of the *mestizo* emerged historically from the domination he exercised over geography. In this way the *mestizo* could claim a primordial bond with geography – this power came from his interaction with it – and at the same time distinguish himself from the indigenous population living in this same habitat but subordinated to it. While the bond of the *indio* with geography was founded on the fact that the harsh conditions of Andean geography had a degenerating effect on his human condition, the bond of the *mestizo* with geography was founded on a history of conquest and domination (Poole 1994). In this way the *mestizo*, an agent in history and geography, and not the *indio*, was constituted into the agent of a regional agenda.

Essentialising arguments on culture, geography and identity that are generative of an ethnic/racial structure were reinterpreted, but not questioned. Contrary to the *indigenista* line of argument of the 1920s, *mestizaje* no longer implied contempt for the pure *indio*, but on the contrary, his "virilisation". If the notion of *decencia* in the *indigenista* discourse established a moral censorship over exogamic sexual relationships, the neo-*indigenista* discourse reformulates the "former masculine sexual and sensual paradigms, that the old elites constructed around racial/cultural purity, disputing in this way previous laws of racial and class endogamy" (De la Cadena 2000: 149). The development of such a

discourse reflects an eminently masculine agenda where sexual behaviors that transgress the principles of *decencia* established previously are reinterpreted as virility, later incarnated in the figures of the artist and the bohemian, which came to life through *cuzqueño* musicians and artists of the time and in folkloric characters such as the *qorilazo* (Poole 1994; 1997).

4.1.3 Folklore and cultural politics

Throughout Cuzco, dance plays a major role in the constitution of ethnic distinctions between Indians and *mestizos* (Cánepa 1998; De la Cadena 2000). In the Peruvian southern Andes the dichotomous and hierarchical social structure between *indios* and *mestizos* emerges at the beginning of the 20th century as a racial distinction that differentiates between pure blood *indios* and racially mixed *mestizos*. Such a distinction is later on redefined, shifting from categories of race to those of ethnicity, class and gender (Poole 1994; De la Cadena 2000). The displacements along different social categories have been the way in which social classification and location have been re-defined and negotiated. Within such a logic, for example, formal education, urban manners, economic status and gender could strategically be brought into play to argue for a *mestizo* condition. To perform *indio* or *mestizo* is for that reason always context bounded and relational.

But these social distinctions, which in everyday practice are in constant flux and negotiation, are on the other hand objectified and naturalised in specific forms of cultural performance, folklore being a central one. The creation of distinctive choreographic repertoires has been crucial for the representation, distinction and negotiation of *indio* and *mestizo* identities. Furthermore, the fact that dance as a performative practice entails particular bodily dispositions has contributed to signifying class and ethnic differences as embodied forms (Poole 1994). In other words, *cuzqueño* regional folklore is the semantic field where social differences are constituted and embodied, but also transformed. It is through the struggle over representation between different social groups that folklore has emerged as an efficacious practice for intervening in social life.

In the first half of the 20th-century *indigenista* artists and intellectuals began to imagine and represent regional identity by collecting, classifying, studying, disseminating and performing popular dance and music. The creation of distinct choreographic repertoires, and the establishment of proper performative contexts and groups to legitimately interpret them were the means through which *cuzqueño* regional folklore was invented and shaped. Its dissemination through academic publications, local and regional contests and the school system was instrumentalised as the true and faithful representation of social life, empowering a regional elite as the authorised voices to dictate social frontiers and location. Consequently, subordinate groups contested social classification imposed on them by re-appropriating folklore for their self-representation. Introducing aesthetic and stylistic changes in the performance of choreographical repertoires *indio* and *mestizo* identities could be re-defined and the position within social structure re-located.

As discussed above, in Cuzco, and in Peru more generally, ethnic classification and exclusion have mainly been contested through the cultural politics of everyday life, as well as of the forms of cultural performance. In Cuzco, the cultural politics implied in the performance of cultural repertoires like music and dance have as their main institutional frameworks the *Asociaciones Culturales* (Cultural Associations) or the *comparsas de danzantes* (dance troupes). These cultural institutions organise the dance troupes and music ensembles, regulate the participation and incorporation of their members, have a say about the 'authentic' or proper way to perform a particular choreography or musical piece, are responsible for the promotion and safeguarding of *cuzqueño* cultural repertoires, and are publicly recognised as cultural agents. As cultural institutions they constitute forms of organised civil society that certainly work in the sphere of culture, but are for that reason no less involved in the constitution of social subjects and spaces of public participation. Although these actions do not happen in the field of 'politics' proper, they are nonetheless political in a broader sense of the word, which understands politics as the power to do and undo the social world.

4.2 Migration, Andean fiestas and cultural citizenship

During the 1990s, downtown Lima, and especially the Plaza Mayor, where political protests used to take place, became a silent space[15]. This political calm reflected the Fujimori civil-dictatorship's control over the civil war, but also that a process, which Jean and John Comaroff have called a depoliticisation of politics (2001), was occurring. The slogan of Fujimori's political campaign in 1990 had been *Honradez, Tecnologia, y Trabajo* (Honesty, Technology, and Work). In 1992 his government closed the Congress with the argument that the old political class had revealed itself to be inefficient and that it had to be replaced by what was considered a new generation of technocrats. In the following years the government implemented neoliberal economic policies, carried out privatisations, and increased participation in international trade.

The architectural restoration of the *Centro Histórico* was another instance of this depolitisation of public space. The project, labeled *Recuperación del Centro Historico* (Recuperation of the Historic Centre), was led by the Municipality of Lima within the framework of the declaration of Lima as a Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO in 1994. It appealed to the nostalgic sentiments of *limeño* traditional elites who were watching the transformation of "their" city by an Andean migrant population that had already been arriving for half a century. The project was articulated in the language of public hygiene and security, as well as of cultural authenticity, aimed at restoring the '*limeño*' and '*criollo*' character of Lima. It consisted of two plans. First, the eradication of informal pedestrian commerce, one of the main economic activities by which a large part of the migrant population made its living in the city. Second, the restoration of colonial

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[15] In 2000 the Plaza Mayor was reclaimed by civil society as part of the struggle against the dictatorship of Fujimori. One emblematic action of that process was a public intervention organized by artists and intellectuals called *"Lavar la Bandera",* where the Peruvian flag was washed.

architecture as well as the restoration of Creole cultural and festive traditions, in order to establish the *Centro Histórico* as a tourist attraction.

The project was related to broader economic policies, supported by the government of Fujimori, which had tourism as a main strategy to overcome underdevelopment. Within that logic, the transformation of downtown Lima into a tourist attraction was further conceived as the solution to the problems of pollution, delinquency, deterioration and crowding that affected it. The reconfiguration of downtown Lima as a historical and cultural patrimony, as well as an object of tourist consumption, implied the need for a modern administration that could administer, patronise and safeguard it. Such an objectification of the *Centro Histórico* implied a claim for autochthony (Comaroff and Comaroff 2001). The traditional *limeño* elite was naturalising the city as its place of origin by claiming an historical past that enabled its self-representation as the natural population of the city. By doing so, a large Andean migrant population that also wanted to make the city its place of legitimate residency was being excluded and marginalised. In other words, the problems that affected the *Centro Histórico* were defined as technical problems that required a technical solution, concealing their political content; namely, the struggle of groups of different origin over the legitimate occupation, administration and custody of public space.

But during the same decade that downtown Lima was being released from political protests and peddling, migrant communities formed cults around the patron saints of their various places of origin and took over the streets and the Plaza Mayor with their processional troupes and *comparsas* of devotional dances. Furthermore, as the municipality's project of restoring churches, balconies, and old residences began to decline because of lack of financial support, communities of devotees increasingly worked to restore altars in the downtown Lima churches that housed their cult images. Thus public space had not been completely emptied. Drawing on traditional cultural expressions, migrant communities continue to negotiate their participation in the invention of the *Centro Histórico* and try to keep public space as an arena of intervention and self-representation. This has been an effort to act politically through public culture.

The *hermandades religiosas,* which are communities of devotees that are in charge of the cult of the patron saints of the place of origin, are one of the most important institutions around which communities of migrants gather and are institutionalised. Following a rich religious calendar, many Andean religious festivities are celebrated all over the city. But those that are staged in the *Centro Histórico* are of special interest because the images that are honoured are kept in different churches located there. In order to do so, the communities of devotees have to negotiate permission with the religious authorities of the temples. Several influential groups of *cuzqueño* origin have been able to do so, for example devotees of the Virgin Carmen of Paucartambo, or the Sr. de Qoyllur R'ity.

When a community of devotees is allowed to have its image in a temple, an *urna* (wooden case), is assigned so that the image can be kept there. The *hermandad* takes responsibility for having the image cleaned, as well as for restoring and adorning the *urna.* Throughout the year the church becomes the place where the community of

devotees gathers, since monthly masses as well as the main fiesta are celebrated there. The latter also requires negotiating with the municipality that regulates the use of public space, where processions and the performance of devotional dances are performed.

Those *hermandades* of Andean origin that have their images in church in the *Centro Histórico* are in a special situation, since the activities aimed to honour their images require access to and use of the places of the cult such as temples and altars, as well as public spaces like streets and squares, that are emblematic of a Creole *limeño* tradition. In the context of the declaration of Lima as a historical and cultural heritage and the project of "*recuperación del Centro Histórico*", such access and use acquires a contesting nature. At the time of the declaration of Lima as a historical and cultural heritage, a municipal decree, number 0621994, dictated that only traditional *limeño* festivities such as the fiesta of the Virgin Carmen of Barrios Altos, the fiesta of the Sr. de los Milagros, Corpus Christi and the anniversary of Lima, were allowed. At the same time, the implementation of the project of architectural restoration, supervised by the INC (National Institute of Culture) in order to follow architectural, historic and aesthetic criteria that guarantee the maintenance of the colonial and republican character of those buildings and plazas that were restored, was challenged by the works of decoration made by the communities of devotees according to their own aesthetic criteria.

The fiesta, as well as the organisation and the activities related to it, has a political dimension in the sense that they constitute a form of strategic action that implies negotiations with the church and the municipality, as well as concrete interventions in and over streets, plazas and temples. Communities of devotees including migrants of Andean origin and their descendants, found in the traditional forms of cultural expression a heritage that could be instrumentalised in order to negotiate their participation in the restoration of the *Centro Histórico*, using public space as an arena of intervention and self-representation, while arguing for their recognition as legitimate and authentic inhabitants of the city.

In 1987 the members of the Hermandad del Sr.de Qoyllur R'ity got in touch with the cleric Cerpa, who performs masses in Quechua and supports Andean communities of devotees that otherwise have difficulty accompanying their masses with dance, since influential sectors of the church do not admit such expressions as part of the Catholic liturgy. Cerpa invited them to bring the image of the Sr. de Qoyllur R'ity to the temple of San Sebastián and asked them to collaborate in the restoration of the temple, which at that time was almost abandoned and semi-destroyed. Later on, cleric Cerpa addressed other *hermandades* that needed a place to house their images, suggesting they bring them to San Sebastián.

Currently there are several images, mainly of *cuzqueño* origin, in San Sebastián, and each of them has an *urna*, which has been restored or carefully crafted anew and adorned. Over the last 25 years the temple has been almost completely renewed thanks to the collaboration and sponsorship of members of the communities of devotees. This project involves the work of craftsmen *talladores* (woodworkers), as well as design of the *urnas*, that is carefully supervised by the members of each *hermandad*. Such works have to be coordinated with the INC, which has to ensure that the original structures of

the temples are not modified. The existence of these official dispositions and the desire of the devotees to build the *urnas* and altars according to criteria of authenticity that ensure coherence with the aesthetics of the temples in their places of origin result in extensive negotiations between the chief priest, the *hermandades* and the INC.

All the *hermandades* that have their images in San Sebastián are collected in the Central Católica de Hermandades Quechuahablantes (CCHQH), which brings together all Quechua-speaking *hermandades.* The CCHQH, has as one of its aims the promotion and legitimisation of the celebration of masses in Quechua, and obtaining permission to have their main masses observed in the Cathedral of Lima. In other words, they share the same religious affiliation as well as the Quechua language as a main cultural feature. The linguistic code is used to claim a pan-Andean affiliation and at the same time a root in colonial history as well as in *limeño* tradition. One has to remember that Quechua became the shared language of the indigenous population when the colonial authorities instituted it as such. On the other hand, the members of the *hermandades* claim that the first mass celebrated in Quechua was observed by Santo Toribio de Mogrovejo 500 years ago, in Lima.

The CCHQH has additionally as one of its aims to support initiatives and social projects that will improve living conditions in the places of origin of the different *hermandades*. It is also the body that mediates between the *hermandades,* the municipality and the church. The initiatives to restore San Sebastián, as well as to get permission to celebrate fiesta masses in Quechua and in the Cathedral, to conduct their processions and perform their dances in the streets and main plaza as part of an intense yearly calendar, creates several tensions and conflicts with the church and the municipality. The declaration of Lima as an historical and cultural Patrimony implied the restriction of those cultural expressions that are not considered to be of Creole and *limeño* origin. Such criteria of cultural authenticity as well as the municipalities' preoccupation with resolving the problems of public hygiene and security, are the main arguments brought forward and that restrict the presence of Andean fiestas. For that reason, each year the *hermandades* have to go through the difficulties and paperwork of getting permission and paying taxes.

Neither the saying of mass in Quechua, nor the performance of dances, is considered proper by the authorities of the Catholic Church. Those religious festivities that are defined as properly *limeño* fiestas, such as the Señor de los Milagros and Virgen del Carmen of the Masses of Barrios Altos, do not include the performance of dances, limiting the liturgical activities to processions. What predominates in those fiestas is an understanding of religiosity as a liturgical practice, rather then a festive one. This also reflects a general understanding according to which festive religiosity is essentially Andean. Due to the process of urbanisation and modernisation of Lima, public space such as streets and plazas stopped being considered proper places in which to dance (Muñoz 2001). On the other hand, there are fiestas of Andean origin that coincide with the *limeño* festivities such as Corpus Christi and the anniversary of Lima on January 18. With regard to the anniversary of Lima, the *hermandades* that make up the CCHQH perform a procession and celebrate a mass in the Cathedral. They do so in order to express their gratitude to the city that has welcomed them. While reference is made to

the Andean origin of the devotees, the fact that the anniversary of Lima is added to the festive calendar of the different *hermandades* speaks about the fact that festive performances are used strategically. In doing so, communities of devotees of Andean origin negotiate their participation in the cultural affairs promoted, administrated and patronised by the municipality. In other words, they struggle for cultural agency, which is a way they can be recognised as the legitimate guardians and practitioners of *limeño* cultural heritage.

My main argument in regard to the performance of Andean fiestas in downtown Lima is that they are fundamental to a cultural politics led by groups of Andean origin in order to be recognised as legitimate residents of the city, which in the Peruvian social and political context means to struggle for citizenship rights. In Peru, social and ethnic classification has been inscribed onto the landscape, and identities are conceived as essentially linked to geographical locations (Poole 1988; Orlove 1993). This has given rise to highly localised and territorialised geographies of identity that have been instrumental to a political and cultural order featuring Lima as the centre of the nation-state and the rest of the country as a fragmented and marginalised landscape, a distant and internally disconnected territory that Peruvians call *'el Perú profundo'* ('deep Peru'). Thus, Radcliff and Westwood note that 'the geographical imagination of the Peruvian citizen and the state in the post-Colonial period has associated the indigenous population with the Andean mountains, and has seen "development" as a task to overcome the physical and social "obstacles" represented by this racialised geography' (1996: 27). Such geographies of identity have naturalised the relationship between identity and place and have regulated movement to the extent that migration to the cities is still considered a subversive practice. It is important that in the context of Peruvian cultural, economic and political centralism, and of a geography of identity that defines the Andes as the 'proper and authentic' place of the Andean man, imposing on him a fixed and single ethnic and geographical position, the very act of migration constitutes a challenge as well as a claim to full citizenship (Degregori 1994). Additionally, the performance of Andean fiestas in the city challenges the very notion of authenticity. While there is the prevailing notion that to be Andean or indigenous implies to be geographically located in the Andes – and therefore to be 'out of place' when in the city – the celebration of religious images that have a strong link to their Andean localities (Marzal 1983) in the very centre of Lima, implies a claim to be recognised as Andean and *limeño* at the same time.

The struggle for citizenship does not only include the invasions of lands, nor participation in grassroots organisations[16] in order to get access to property and urban services. It also includes creative and effective forms of public intervention that make strategic use of the recontextualisation and reinvention of cultural repertoires. At the same time, the efforts of important sectors of Andean origin to acquire economic power run in parallel with the preoccupation with achieving leadership in the field of culture.

The forms of cultural expression through which Andean groups intervene in public space are diverse and often comprise entrepreneurial activities, and mass circulation and

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[16] See Degregori, Blondet y Lynch (1986).

consumption. This process, which began in the 1960s with the dissemination of *huayno* music through the radio and the record industry and continued in the 1980s with the appearance of the *chicha* genre is starting to have significant economic, social and cultural relevance. Diverse forms of cultural expression (including music, visual arts and movies) have developed, in parallel with the configuration of specific publics as well as circuits of mass circulation and consumption, that in several cases sustain the growth of local and regional cultural industries.

Although in the 1990s the social sciences drew attention to the emergence of the so-called *nuevas clases medias* (new middle classes), these were mainly defined in terms of their economic activities. In this way, these emergent sectors were identified with the figure of the small entrepreneur and reduced to a *homo economicus*. These small entrepreneurs were certainly given their due as an important agent of the nation's development, but only in regard to their productive capacity, while the issues of social inclusion and citizenship were framed in terms of the transit from an informal economy to a formal one.

On the other hand, the economic potential of these social groups was formulated through essentialising racial and ethnic codes, as a natural disposition for work, strength, physical endurance and loyalty to traditions such as reciprocity, all features ascribed to the *cholo*. These discourses helped to naturalise the idea that the role of Andean and provincial groups is that of economic production, leaving the field of culture and politics to others. In other words, behind the apparently objective and neutral characterisation of the migrant as a small entrepreneur, or a part of the emergent middle class, the *cholo* continues to be an object of racial and ethnic exclusion. The relative economic success of some sectors has helped to promote the image of the *cholo*, but at the cost of a subordinated classification. As an economic agent, he has been relegated to the informal sector and delegitimised morally. It is precisely through the fiesta, that gives prominence to public cultural actions, that efforts are invested in order to challenge such classification, and to self-represent as a cultural agent and a moral subject. The fiesta additionally allows the design of identities that move between the place of origin and the place of residency, eventually evading geographic ascriptions.

Here I want to come back to the figure of the *cholo* and the attributes that neo-*indigenismo* attributed to it. Artistic and aesthetic sensibility, and a great capacity for cultural management, were the main features invoked to argue for the *cholo* as the legitimate and moral agent of a cultural project that would define and shape *cuzqueñismo* as the cultural identity that would sustain a regional economic and political project. It was precisely those qualities that were absent in the figure of the small entrepreneur of the present, and it is precisely the moral attributes they imply that the new *limeños* want to claim for themselves. In that regard, the declaration of Lima as an historic and cultural heritage and the "*Proyecto de Recuperación del Centro Histórico*", constitute an adequate frame to intervene in cultural actions that might legitimate them as guardians of the cultural and historical heritage and as legitimate residents of Lima, as well as subjects that contribute to the cultural and political history of the city.

4.3 Migration, **cultura chicha** *and cultural industry*

One other important cultural practice in which the image of the *cholo* and *provinciano* is re-shaped, gaining visibility and new spaces of intervention in the public sphere, is music, and specifically the genres of *chicha* and *huayno*. In this case we are looking at cultural phenomena that have mass dimensions and that are sustained by a whole cultural industry that is based less on the selling of records and more on the celebration of a way of life. According to Alfaro this is the particular feature that the *huayno* industry has taken in Peru, because of the ways in which cultural politics and marketing interconnect. "The abundant piracy, trans-national migrations, the consolidation of the social process initiated by migration and the very predilection of the people of the provinces for spaces for social gathering, have contributed to multiply the places to perform concerts, transforming them into the main income for producers and distributors of music [*my translation*]" (Alfaro 2005)[17]. As I will argue, cultural politics is developed here through the market and it is the nature of the market that determines where it finds its potential and its limits. The force of such cultural politics resides in the fact that cultural practices that give meaning and a sense of belonging takes on a mass dimension, multiply, circulate, and get disseminated though merchandising and the media, shaping the identities of their publics. But at the same time it is the laws of the market that define their limits since the cultural offering is subordinate to criteria such as rating and fashion, in other words to economic profit. For that reason such cultural politics throw up the dilemmas that derive from a permanent tension between cultural agendas and commercial interest, and a cultural identity and self-recognition that is lived through consumption.

What has been consolidated through this cultural industry of music[18] is a field for and circuits of cultural production and marketing, a mass audience, successful entrepreneurs and cultural narratives that are encoded in the song lyrics as well as embodied in the interpreters who have become celebrities and public reference figures, and who emphasise their provincial and Andean origin.

It is worth mentioning that in order to construct all this, Andean migrants in Lima had to struggle for access to the media and to record companies, in a city were no spaces for Andean cultural expressions existed in the hegemonic public and cultural spheres. In 1953 Luis Pizarro Cerrón, *provinciano* of Tarma, broadcast "El sol de los Andes", the first radio program of Andean popular music in the morning hours and without sponsors (Alfaro 2005). Although today programs of Andean musical genres have gained more space in radio and TV programming, this is still limited to certain channels and restricted to specific hours, usually very early in the morning. Several groups of *chicha* music in the sixties paid for segments of programming in order to disseminate their music and

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[17]These mega-concerts can bring together up to 25,000 people and sell 1,800 beer boxes in one night (Alfaro 2005).
[18] At the moment there is an emerging film industry in the provinces, which shows many similar features to those of the music industry, that has not been yet studied, but that shows the shaping of provincial and Andean narratives, cultural agents and public figures, commercial circuits, and specific publics.

announce their concerts. Radio and posters remain the main forms of publicity, while live concerts, which were the first channels of Andean musical performance in the city from the 1950s (Romero 2002), still constitute the principal form of musical consumption. In other words a whole alternative, as well as informal, apparatus of cultural production works in parallel to the hegemonic and formal one. No serious studies have been carried out, but we seem to be talking of an economic and cultural activity that is much more productive and profitable then the one promoted by the state or private enterprises.

This cultural industry of music is not simply an entrepreneurial project, since it creates a whole parallel world, where separate economic groups, publics and cultural narratives emerge, are reproduced and also transformed. It is well known that many of the celebrities of the *huayno* industry carry out public works in their places of origin, for example installing electric light, or support social work with children. These cultural industries do not only follow an economic rationale, they also respond to the demands and rationale of the ethnic networks to which the singers and musicians belong (Alfaro 2005).

Nevertheless there are also signs of permeability between a 'provincial' cultural and social sphere and the 'official' one, as can be observed in the use that Fujimori made of *tecnocumbia* groups and the production of TV series on the lives of two of the main figures of *chichi* music and folklore. While tecnocumbia as a musical genre is declining because it has completed its cycle in the market and it had an unfortunate participation in the presidential campaign of Fujimori in 2000, the involvement of figures of folklore seems to have contributed to a revaluation of *cholo* and *provinciano* identity.

Chicha is a musical genre that emerged in the late 1960s. It resulted from the fusion of the Andean *huayno* with the Colombian *cumbia* and diverse tropical rhythms, and after its introduction to the radio and record companies it was disseminated throughout the nation. *Chicha* not only combines distinct musical rhythms but has also evolved while moving between Lima and the Andean provinces. It is an 'itinerant' musical expression because, contrary to the *huayno* and other Andean genres, it is no longer a purely regional manifestation, nor is it ascribed to a particular territory. *Chicha* has evolved into an expression of migrants, especially initially, when themes such as migration, nostalgia for the "place of origin," and hopes for a new city life, were central in the lyrics of its songs.

Later on, in the mass media, and even in academic debates, the term *cultura chicha* (*chicha* culture) was popularised. This expression was introduced to describe all the cultural manifestations that cross regional borders, particularly those of Andean origin that claim to reproduce or emulate urban modern culture, resulting in the end in hybrid forms. But from the point of view of hegemonic discourses, such hybridity is signified as a bad copy, a misguided effort to be modern, a simulation – what *limeños* call *huachafo*. *Huachafo* refers to someone who is "posing," also implying a lack of ability in mastering urban distinctiveness and specifically not knowing how to act as an actual *limeño*. *Huachafo* and *chicha* have the connotation of a mediocre copy, which is a way of de-legitimising new popular urban practices by making them improper in the city. In sum, *chicha* is identified with being "out of place." *Chicha* is then further used to refer

generally to all negative features of urban life. So the heavy and chaotic traffic, street commerce and bureaucratic inefficiency are labeled as *chicha*.

The label *chicha* has become a way to reinforce the displacement of the new *limeños* of Andean origin, and therefore, of questioning the legitimacy of their status as *limeños* and actors of *limeño* culture. The notion of *chicha* culture is already established in the public debate and is shared by those who apply it to others, as well as by those who assume or reject it. In that sense, *chicha* culture constitutes a space for debate and re-signification. In other words, *chicha* should be seen as the result of the struggle over representation between the different migrant communities and the hegemonic groups in the city, and a site where discourses about culture and place and the location of the *nuevos limeños* are at stake.

According to the testimonies of some *chicha* musicians, they rejected the label, since the media imposed it on what they called *cumbia andina*. Nevertheless, others instead of rejecting it, opted to re-signify it[19]. At the same time that an Andean heritage was claimed through lyrics, melodies and performative features (Romero 2002), other topics besides that of migration and nostalgia were introduced, such as the self-ascription of a proletarian and popular identity, and a capacity for hard work (Alfaro 2005). It can be argued that this latter turn in the poetics of *chicha* music contested a negative image of Andean migrants, but at the same time it aligned it with the public discourse on Andean migrants that saw them mainly as an economic force. It is through figures like Dina Páucar, a key figure of wayno, that slight changes get introduced.

When a TV series on the life of Dina Páucar broadcast on Channel 2 at prime time (9:00 pm) in 2004 and became an enormous media hit, folklore entered the space of the official and hegemonic culture. Her success was due to the fact that she already existed as a principal figure within the world of folklore music. She was certainly not the product of the media, but of an alternative circuit and field of cultural production. In other words, the TV series succeeded because it was able to talk to a public that had already been configured by a marginal cultural industry.

The wayno genre had an initial period that was mostly characterised by regional markers that were encoded in the musical style, instruments, content of the lyrics and costume of the singers. Later music, lyrics and costumes developed into more pan-Andean styles (Alfaro 2005). In these waynos other topics predominate, such as love, and female singers become the main figures, which marks an interesting difference from the chicha genre, which is totally dominated by men. What is rather projected here, through the figure of the migrant women, is the image of the woman who, despite economic and social difficulties as well as the cultural burdens of a machista society, is able to succeed economically, as mother and as reproducer of a cultural heritage. The trajectory of Dina Páucar told in the TV series presents her as the embodiment of success, professionalism, and stylistic sophistication, which adds a class dimension to her Andean and provincial identity. The image as a whole challenges the notion of being just emergente and invests her with a moral status. Her moral status is based on the fact that

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[19] Such testimonies are included in the video *Ciudad Chicha* (Romero 2005).

she did not allow her lover to cheat on her and beat her, although she had to face the social price of being a single mother. And finally, she can prove that the representation of her music as the legitimate artistic expression and sentiment of an Andean and provincial identity is not just based on authenticity – an argument evoked by folklorists – but on three decades of endurance in the music industry; the latter being an argument that defines wayno music as a modern cultural product and a means for economic development.

Although Dina Páucar is a popular figure and has thousands of followers, I consider that she in fact represents a specific class within the larger group, which identifies as provincial, namely the entrepreneurs – she herself being one[20]. It is additionally worth asking why Dina Páucar as a public figure in the field of culture has been able to gain some space and recognition, when dressing in her traditional but stylised costumes, while Paulina Arpazi, a congresswoman for Puno, seems to have gained neither recognition nor public authority, and claims to be doubly discriminated, as a woman and as Aymara. Does their different public approval by hegemonic groups tell us that the assertion of ethnicity is only accepted as long as it remains in the cultural field? Is it that, as Montoya (1998) explains, there is an explicit choice not to "do" politics proper and remain in the field of culture? Or is it that, while Dina Páucar can be seen as "dressing up" in stylised Andean costume and thereby objectifying Andean identity as something that can be 'represented', in the same way that presidential figures dress up in regional costumes or Eliane Karp imposes an ethnic fashion, Paulina Arpazi is self-representing, bringing her everyday outfit into spaces where they are not seen as proper? Both figures, Dina Páucar and Paulina Arpazi, stand at the crossroads of cultural and political history in Peru, since their different performances of Andean and provincial identities refer to the potentialities and limits of cultural politics, as well as to the need to enter a stage where politics and culture converge. As I have been discussing, there are reasons to think that such a convergence is beginning to consolidate. The question, then, is who is going to take this enterprise forward? What are the different positions from which indigenous and Andean identity is being claimed? And which of these agendas will simply reproduce old forms of exclusion, and which really shape a more inclusive society?

4.4 In the midst of culture and politics: the case of Máximo San Roman

In order to problematise the intricate ways in which culture politics work, I will draw on the case of Máximo San Román, former vice-president of Peru. He achieved public notoriety when in 1990 he participated in the presidential elections as the vice-presidential candidate of Alberto Fujimori. An engineer and a migrant himself, Fujimori's campaign slogan was '*honradez, tecnologia y trabajo*' (honesty, technology and work), and these concepts were based on San Roman's image. In the media, San Roman's biography and his success as an emergent entrepreneur were a popular topic, and he attracted the votes of a large population of migrants in the cities. He was born in the district of Cusipata, in the province of Quispicanchis in Cuzco, on April 14 1946. He

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[20] Dina Páucar is not only a singer; she also runs her own music business with her husband.

spent his childhood in the countryside and was sent to Cuzco, where he finished high school. Later he migrated to Lima and studied with great effort at the university. When he graduated as an engineer he began to work, but only when he decided to start his own business did he begin to find economic and professional success. According to media accounts, his success grew from an ability to restore and design new machinery by recycling used pieces. His main achievement was the construction of low-cost industrial machinery for making bread, and launching it on the local and international market. During the 1990 campaign he became a symbol of the successful Andean migrant, and the embodiment of the main principles of Fujimori's government plan: *honradez, tecnologia y trabajo*. He emerged at a moment when the academic and political debates had begun to identify an emergent business class of migrant origin (Tapia 1998, De Soto 1987) that had as its foundation the attributes of a *cholo* culture and race.

In 1992, Fujimori installed a dictatorial regime and dislodged San Roman from his post. Although San Roman made efforts to bring down Fujimori's government, he failed as Fujimori had military support and had captured the media. For the same reason, San Roman maintained an image of moral and political integrity. He was later elected congressman and was a candidate for president in the 2000 elections, but he had minimal electoral support. According to his testimony, which I obtained during fieldwork in 2002, he was retiring from his political activities because the time and money he invested in that put his business in danger. He decided to return full time to his business because "esa imagen de cholo que a pesar de las circunstancias esta luchando no quiero que se caiga nunca" (This image of the cholo who keeps struggling, I do not want it ever to fall). Now that his business was secure again, he was transferring its management to his son and would dedicate himself to "accepting the various invitations he is receiving to give testimonies of his life." He considered his biography illustrative of the fact that "el éxito ya no sea exclusividad de la gente de apellido, de la gente dominante" (success is not only for the people with a name, of the dominant class), and for that reason worth disseminating. Despite these declarations he ran for president in the presidential elections held in 2006. He leads one of the small political organisations that began to proliferate in the last decade, emerging as alternatives to the traditional political parties. His organisation is called Avanza País and the public declarations he has given indicate that he draws on his entrepreneurial and *cholo* identity, framing his political plan in a cultural profile. Following on this line San Román had further distinguished himself from president Toledo, who also promotes his *cholo* identity. He has publicly argued that the bad performance of Toledo is due not to his *cholo* identity, but to the fact that he is not an 'authentic' *cholo*. San Román bases this argument on the fact that, although he has become a successful man and has risen economically, he remains a member of the Andean and provincial community located in Lima. He does so, actively participating in the circles and organisations of *micro-empresarios* (small businessmen), as well as in the community of devotees of the Virgin Carmen of Paucartambo in Lima. As I will explain in the next section, in San Roman's agenda economy and culture converge, giving his political project an ethnic content. By doing so he engages in the task of contesting the meanings ascribed to *cholo* identity and of investing it with a moral condition.

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To explain Peruvian contemporary social processes and envision the future of a new Peruvian common man, San Roman bases his own biography on such a person, making displacement the main trope in the narrative he constructs. He narrates his life as the transit from an indigenous, poor, agrarian and marginal condition, to a life of success, self-sufficiency and self-esteem that he has achieved through migration, education and self-recognition. Migration and travel are in this account the basis for both education and self-recognition. The events that mark his biography are trips to the city of Cuzco to study at high school, to Lima where he went to the university, to Arequipa where as an employee he proved his skills as an inventor, and to Japan where he learned about new technologies that he later improved in Peru, thus inaugurating his own business. In Peruvian society, education is highly valued and has been the main avenue to ascend in the social structure. What I want to emphasise, however, is that the different stages in education are not laid out as a temporal sequence that marks different moments in life, but as a sequence of spatial displacements that mark geographical locations. It is interesting to note that San Roman incorporated into his government plan what he considered to be the four main organisational principles of the Inca Empire. One of these refers to the *mitimaes*. These were communities that were relocated along the Inca territory in order to transfer knowledge and technologies.

According to San Roman, migration also makes self-recognition possible. He considers Peru's problem to be one of a lack of self-esteem and agency, which is the result of Peruvian history being wrongly taught. The achievements of Inca civilization are not recognised, and have been neglected as the heritage of contemporary Peruvian culture and society. San Roman tells us he only learned to value Inca civilization, and its technological, scientific and political achievements, when he migrated to Cuzco. He believes that the engineer and the entrepreneur of migrant origin are agents of the reinstitution of Inca principles and values in contemporary Peruvian society; figures that will eventually give way to an authentic Peruvian citizen, a citizen fully integrated into the formal sector of society and actively intervening in the Peruvian nation. For San Roman, citizenship is strongly linked to the necessity of valuing and recognising the cultural heritage of the Inca past, and is therefore envisioned as a cultural – not merely legal and political – agenda.

In addition, San Roman narrates the success of the *cholo* entrepreneur as a historical and moral quest that consists in incorporating Inca technology, knowledge and values into contemporary social practice. This, however, requires more than the physical endurance and inventiveness attributed to the *cholo* in, for example, the *contradanza*. San Roman claims these same attributes as his own, but in his case they have been formalised through university studies and through travel, elevating his "inventiveness" to the status of technological knowledge and planning. He believes that these attributes must also be sustained by the Inca civilization's ethics, which he lists as self-confidence and pride, respect for others, responsibility, efficiency and solidarity. He argues that only this way "vamos a tener un país, mas viable, más confiable, con posibilidades de desarrollo" ("only thus will we have a country that is viable, reliable and with possibilities of development").

San Roman speaks to the fact that, while physical endurance and inventiveness are positively framed by mainstream discourse, these same attributes have also augmented the informal economy and the problems linked to it, including: the fragility of Peruvian democracy, the unreliability of social and political institutions, and corruption. To contest the ambiguities of the discourse on *cultura chola* ("cholo culture"), San Roman positively moralises the biological and cultural attributes of the *cholo*.

He also does so through his active participation in the fiesta of Virgin Carmen of Paucartambo, a religious celebration of migrants of the *cuzqueño* town of Paucartambo to Lima. The fiesta in Cuzco has achieved a regional scope and it is for that reason that the fiesta in Lima convokes a wider community of devotees made up of paucartambinos and *cuzqueños*, as well as by their descendants and friends. Although Máximo San Román is not from Paucartambo, he is a fervent devotee and active participant in the fiesta. The image of Virgin Carmen of Paucartambo is precisely one of those images celebrated in the Centro de Lima referred to above. Máximo San Román sponsors the fiesta participating in the system of *mayordomía*[21]and has been specially committed to finance the works of restoration in the temple that houses the image of the Virgin Carmen. In that way he constitutes himself as the depositary and custodian of *cuzqueño* cultural tradition, but also as the guardian of the city and its patrimony.

The community of devotees of Virgin Carmen of Paucartambo is certainly not a socially homogenous community, and it is possible to affirm that distinctions of geographical origin and class are framed in terms of the opposition between dancers and *mayordomos*. While dancers perform through choreographic language a *cholo* identity that celebrates its local and rural roots and its links with popular and working-class groups, the *mayordomos* emphasise *cuzqueño* regionalism, urbanity and literacy as their main attributes (Cánepa 2003). The participation of San Román in this fiesta, not as a dancer but as a *mayordomo*, has been instrumental to his constitution as representative of a cultural elite. He has attracted a group of engineers and *profesionales* of *cuzqueño* origin, introducing them into the system of *mayordomía*. It is important to underline that the legitimacy of these *mayordomos* is questioned because they have not been born in the town. The arguments to contest this challenge that are expressed in public speeches and in private conversations are two. First, that Virgin Carmen of Paucartambo has become representative of all *cuzqueños*, and secondly, that San Román and the circle of people that he has invited to participate in the fiesta are reliable. This credibility is based on their status as professionals, specifically as engineers. As the cases of the political organisations in Huancavelica discussed in the previous section show, here also class distinctions are posed in terms of literacy, where education as well as technology is highly valued, and instrumentalised in order to achieve moral and political authority.

What can be observed in the case of San Román are the efforts of an emerging entrepreneurial class to constitute itself as a cultural and political elite. The dilemma that seems to be faced in that process is a tension between culture and politics, since the incursion into politics proper can endanger what has been achieved through cultural

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[21]A system based on relations of reciprocal exchange, that allows for sponsorhip of the fiesta.

politics, namely the shaping of the *cholo* as a moral subject. For that reason San Román argued in 2002 that he preferred to keep out of politics, working, as Montoya (1998) would put it, under the logic of culture against politics. Nevertheless, San Román is going back to politics – if he ever really retired. What will be interesting to identify and observe is the politics of culture – the shaping of the *cholo* as a moral subject – implied in his political agenda. Will the move to the field of politics entail the abandonment of a cultural project? Will it imply a purely instrumental use of a cultural argument, reproducing prevailing ethnic and class distinctions, as Durand (2005) has observed in Huancavelica? Or will it rather challenge a dominant political tradition that has systematically excluded specific cultural groups from the field of politics proper, opening new possibilities for a more inclusive society?

5. Final Remarks

In Peru, ethnic classification has been contested in the field of culture, which entails a cultural politics that has worked at two levels. On the one hand, there is an effort to reform oneself as a person through education, the adoption of habits that are proper to urban life and migration, which entails a cultural politics of everyday life in order to move out of the cultural, social and geographical place one has been ascribed to. On the other hand, in the field of cultural performances (religious festivities, music and choreographic repertoires) cultural politics have worked at the representational level, not only establishing ethnic distinctions and redefining the meanings ascribed to each group, but also aiming to gain control over the production of cultural representations as well as to get into the position of being the one who does the representation.

As has been discussed, *mestizo* identity, as well as *cholo*, and *chicha* – defined as a strategic positioning – has been the discursive and practical field from where such cultural contestations have been carried out. In Peru, *mestizo* identity has remained a highly contested field, since no group of power has been in a position to gain total hegemony over it, while it is repeatedly appropriated by different groups. The institutional frame of such cultural politics has been the extended family (education and migration) as well as cultural associations of different kinds, such as dance troupes; *hermandades*; *clubes de migrantes*; and cultural enterprise (cultural representations and repertoires)

Finally, cultural politics have also been performed by certain NGOs that have worked in a different line. While *mestizo* cultural politics is rooted in neo-*indigenismo* ideology, those NGOs that have been working in the fields of traditional technology and medicine argue for a cultural purity rooted in an ancestral heritage, aligning with an *indigenista* ideology.

In all these cases, cultural politics seem to entail what Montoya (1998) considers to be the work of culture against politics. Nevertheless, in the current context the cultural politics has come to be a fertile field of practice to act upon dominant political culture – in other words on politics proper (Alvarez, Dagnino, Escobar 1998; Yúdice 2003). Additionally, this context seems to be challenging the strategy of culture against politics, eventually demanding that cultural agents participate in politics proper. Political

organisations such as INTI and MINCAP in Huancavelica, COPPIP, CONACAMI and INDEPA, which bring Amazonian and Andean organisations together, as well as the case of presidential candidate Máximo San Román, are certainly illustrative of these processes, as well as of the possibilities and limits they entail.

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