

Weak Indigenous Politics in Peru

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Abstract

This paper aims to show how, until 1980, an enormous proportion of people in Peru was disenfranchised, particularly in the periphery of the Highlands and the Rain Forest, where most indigenous people lived. Migration, the end of the estate system and the introduction of universal suffrage have progressively closed the gap in electoral participation in the country and “new” people, rarely found in the political arena before, are present today, mainly at the local government level. However, these changes have been very limited. Indigenous people feel alienated from political power and persistent and deep inequalities between indigenous and non-indigenous have no outlet. The appearance of Ayaipomas, Arpasis and Carhuaricras in key parts of the state administration does not appear to have been sufficient to modify the pronounced horizontal inequalities observable throughout the Peruvian data or to put this issue on the public policy agenda. This paper attempts to shed light on the mechanisms which may have prevented indigenous people from finding channels of political representation, beyond voting rights.

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Table of Contents

1. Introduction 3
 2. Historical background..... 4
 3. The opportunities of the new political system 7
 4. Weak indigenous politics in Peru..... 13
 4.1 ‘Weakening’ political processes in Peru..... 14
 4.2 Discrimination and ‘strategic’ identity decisions 19
 5. Conclusions 25
 6. References 27

List of Tables and Figures

Table 1: Voting rights in 19th-century Constitutions, 1839-1860..... 5
 Table 2: People with voting rights by ethnic region (%) 10
 Table 3: Provincial mayors with indigenous last names by geographical area (%) 13
 Table 4: Judges and prosecutors with indigenous last names by period of selection and position in the hierarchy (%)..... 13
 Table 5: Electoral results in provincial municipalities (1980–1993) 17
 Table 6: Perceptions of ethnic discrimination 20

 Figure 1: People with voting rights (%)..... 9
 Figure 2: People with voting rights by area according to the incidence of..... 9
 Figure 3: Congress members with indigenous last names 12
 Figure 4: Provincial mayors with indigenous last names 12
 Figure 5: Number of local officials assassinated by Sendero by district of occurrence, 1980-2000..... 16
 Figure 6: Percentage of provincial municipalities run by local political organisations..... 18

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By Maritza Paredes¹

1. Introduction

The newly elected National Congress in Peru opened its first session in July 2006 with controversy when two congresswomen, María Sumire and Hilaria Supe, insisted on using their original language – Quechua – to take their oaths of office. When Sumire pronounced the vows in Quechua, the president of the ceremony interrupted her twice and asked her to repeat the vows three times. Some congress members expressed dissatisfaction: “If I were in Machu Picchu and did not understand Quechua, I would have to conform; but in the Congress, the official language is Spanish”². According to article No. 48 of the Constitution of Peru, indigenous languages are official in territories where these languages predominate. Although in the Congress the majority of members speak Spanish, Sumire and Supe argued that they represented Peru’s large numbers of indigenous and Quechua speakers. Some newspapers covered the news for a couple of days, but for the most part the controversy remained at the level of anecdote.

Sumire and Supe elected in 2006 – together with Paulina Arpasi, elected in 2001 – are atypical characters in the Peruvian Congress. Their demand to speak in their indigenous languages, their indigenous dress and their proposals are largely seen by their colleagues in the Congress and the national media as a colourful irrelevance. Their solitude is emblematic of the weakness of indigenous politics in Peru.

Since the early 1980s, the Latin American region has experienced a cultural and political resurgence of indigenous movements that cast doubt over the legitimacy of the newly democratic nations³ and raised demands for indigenous rights as individuals and as peoples (Sieder, 2002). However, in Peru indigenous movements have not emerged, or have emerged in a weak form and focussed on one minority group. This is the case for indigenous organisations in the Amazon region of Peru. The contrast with Bolivia is particularly striking. Bolivia is without doubt the most outstanding case of indigenous people’s emergence into national politics in the region. Bolivia’s electoral rules and the configuration of its party system in the last three decades have provided indigenous organisations with the political space to develop powerful regional and national coalitions and networks, which have found their expression through the electoral system, both at the national and at the municipal level (Whitehead, 2001; Yashar, 2005). This process has created a new situation in Bolivia, in which political inequalities among different ethnic groups have been significantly reduced, although without much change so far in socioeconomic horizontal inequalities (HIs)⁴ (Gray Molina, 2007).

Indigenous organisations and their participation in politics in Latin America have followed a different path in each country of the region, but their weakness in Peru is puzzling, not only because of the severe real inequalities among ethnic groups (Figueroa and Barron, 2005),

¹ I would like to acknowledge significant comments and suggestions from Frances Stewart and Rosemary Throp of CRISE and Carlos Contreras from the Universidad Católica del Perú.

² Marta Hildebrandt, a member of the National Congress, vice-president of the Commission of Ethics in the National Congress and perpetual secretary of the Peruvian Academy of Language.

³ Since the early 1980s, many countries in the region have renewed their constitutions, redefined the role of the state and sought the consolidation of new democratic institutions. This is part of a broader process that has focussed attention on the democratic transitions of more than 60 countries since.

⁴ Horizontal inequalities (HIs) are inequalities in economic, social or political dimensions between culturally defined groups. The Center for Research of Inequality, Human Security and ethnicity (CRISE) is studying the role of HIs in causing conflict.

but also because of the strong perception among indigenous peoples about these inequalities (Paredes, 2007). The absence of a salient indigenous political identity has not, however, prevented violent conflict. *Sendero Luminoso* initiated a war in the early 1980s in the Central Andes that, within 15 years, had left around 70,000 victims. The doctrine of *Sendero* was not ethnic but class-based; however an 'ethnic-regional' identity seems to have played a role in the cohesion of the middle and lower ranks of the group (Degregori, 1990).⁵ While the latter can be contested and should be further investigated, the impact of the war in ethnic terms is clear-cut: 75% of those killed in the conflict were of indigenous origin (CVR, 2004). While there is a general concern that the emergence of strong indigenous political identities may only bring more conflict and violent clashes, CRISE research has found that violent conflict is in fact especially likely when groups are excluded both in economic and political terms. For instance, Bolivia – where, as noted above, indigenous political participation is more salient than in Peru – has been able so far to avoid a major political violent conflict on the scale of that which affected Peru. In this context, we consider it important to analyse indigenous political disempowerment in Peru.

In the last three decades of the 20th century, important political progress has been made for indigenous people in Peru. Indigenous people have been freed from the large landed estates known as *haciendas*, which coexisted with tiny plots cultivated by indigenous peasants. The *hacienda* system not only controlled indigenous labourers, but deprived them of their basic rights. In addition, under the new rules of Peruvian electoral democracy, those barriers that banned illiterate (mostly indigenous) people and leftwing parties from electoral competition have been eliminated. These processes have significantly incorporated indigenous people into the electoral system through voting rights, but the reality is that the party system and the management of the state, particularly at the national level, has remained Lima-centred and predominantly white and *mestizo* led.

This paper aims to show how indigenous people have benefited from the return of democracy and from the new voting rules, while noting that the benefits have been very limited. It also seeks to shed light on the mechanisms that have prevented indigenous people from finding channels of political representation in the country beyond voting rights. The paper is divided into three parts. It first analyses the elements that kept indigenous people largely excluded from political participation until the 1980s. Second, it assesses the effect of competitive elections and universal suffrage introduced in 1980 in closing the gap between indigenous and non-indigenous people in terms of political participation. Finally, the paper attempts to contribute some insights into the nature of the obstacles that indigenous people have faced to reaching greater political participation. This last section reflects on both the political processes that have undermined indigenous political opportunities, and on discriminatory mechanisms that have led indigenous people to make 'strategic' decisions regarding the renunciation and denial of ethnic identity in order to achieve political goals.

2. Historical background

The republic of Peru was constructed according to the ideals of the Enlightenment and the new ideas of liberalism in Europe and North America. The first Constitution of 1823 expressed this spirit: it assumed a culturally homogenous nation under Creole leadership in which Spanish was the sole official language and Catholicism the religion (Stavenhagen, 1992). Inspired by these ideals, liberators proclaimed the indigenous "citizens" and attempted to provide both "Spaniards" and "Indians" with the same rights. In spite of these

⁵ According to Degregori's study of the rise of *Sendero Luminoso* (1990: 205-207), ideological identity was crucial to maintaining cohesion among the high ranks of leaders and intellectuals of the party, but among the middle and low ranks of the party hierarchy, the importance of ideology diminished (although it never disappeared) and an 'ethnic-regional' element played a more important role.

declarations in the 19th century, indigenous political participation was extremely limited. Although for the greater part of the century (1821 to 1896) legislation was remarkably open and vague in regard to voting rights, significant participation did not occur. This is suggested as the reason that no reaction occurred when these rights were removed by the Electoral Law of 1896. The law modified the constitution of 1860 and restricted voting rights to male literates, thereby excluding the majority of indigenous people, who were illiterate: “Those who may exercise voting rights: all Peruvian males older than 21, or those married that have not reached that age; that know how to read and write and are enrolled in the civic registry of their jurisdiction”. This article was reproduced in the constitutions of 1920 (Art. 66) and of 1933 (Art. 86) and only modified in the constitution of 1979. In the census of 1876, more than half of Peruvians (58%) were of indigenous origin. This percentage had decreased by the census of 1940 (the last time ethnicity was measured officially) to 46%. Since then, up until 1980, estimations suggest that the indigenous population represented between 38% and 40% of the population.⁶

Table 1: Voting rights in 19th-century Constitutions, 1839-1860

Year	Article
1839	“All who know how to read and write, with the exception of indigenous and <i>mestizos</i> , until 1844, in the places where no school for primary instruction exist”
1856	“All citizens that know how to read and write, or are heads of a <i>taller</i> , or have a fixed property or have been retired, according to law, after having served in the army”.
1860	“All citizens who know how to read and write, or are head of a <i>taller</i> , or have an fixed,property or pay to the Public Treasury any contribution. The exercise of this will be regulated by a law.”

Source: Congress of Peru <http://www.congreso.gob.pe/ntley/ConstitucionP.htm>.

During most of the 19th century, elections were indirect and involved two stages. Provinces selected delegates who voted for the president and members of the Congress (Aljovín de Losada, 2005). Recent research suggests that indigenous participation at the first stage had some importance in those provinces with a large indigenous population and a significant indigenous elite. (Chiaramonti, 2005) provides some interesting examples of this. In the province of Quispicanchis in Cusco, out of 154 delegates elected in 1834 for the Electoral College, 30 were indigenous, judging by their Quechua names. In the province of Trujillo between 1863 and 1877, Chiaramonti found that the province of Moche always selected as delegates members from three indigenous families: Nique, Anguaman and Azabache.

If the legislation during these years offered indigenous people a ‘window of opportunity’ to build awareness about their citizen rights in general, and their voting rights in particular, the limited enforcement power of the central state, the lack of true competitiveness of the political system, and the absence of guarantees of peoples’ rights during this period undermined these opportunities. Local elites had enormous leverage and autonomy in organising elections and developing electoral registers (Aljovín de Losada, 2005). How significant indigenous participation was in elections during this period, and whether they voted with a relative degree of freedom or not, largely depended on local dynamics of power. In areas with a strong presence of *haciendas*, it is doubtful that indigenous people were aware of their rights or allowed to exercise them freely. In those regions, such as the Mantaro Valley or the northern coast, where indigenous people were more integrated into markets (Manrique, 1981; Mallon, 1987), we can expect more participation to have occurred. More specific historical study about indigenous exercise of political rights during this period is required.

⁶ See Yashar (2005: 21).

As noted above, in 1896, after the Pacific War, voting rights were restricted to the literate, thereby excluding indigenous people. The legislation seems to have been explicitly written to exclude indigenous people, and expresses the enormous disappointment of the Peruvian elite, particularly from Lima, with the pluri-ethnic nature of the country after the dramatic defeat by Chile. The elite blamed the indigenous for the loss of the war because they believed they lacked patriotic sentiments or civic virtues to fight for the nation. A good illustration of this sentiment is illustrated by a letter sent by Ricardo Palma to Pierola, quoted in (Larson, 2004):

“The main cause of the big disaster of 1883 is that the majority of the population of Peru is formed by an abject and degradable race that you wanted to dignify. The Indians do not have a sense of *patria*; they are enemies of all white and the men from the coast; for them is the same to be Chilean or Turkish. Educate the Indians, inspire in them patriotism will not be the task of the institution, but the time”.

The discussion that took place before approval of the bill reinforces this view of a general disappointment on the part of the elite. Belaúnde (1963), describing the debate, shows how the members of the Congress were convinced that the indigenous had demonstrated a lack of capacity to exercise constitutional rights and that only after assimilation into national life could they be considered “equals”. Moreover, members of the Congress accused estate landlords from the highland regions of taking advantage of their ignorance and capturing their votes to increase their power in the National Congress.

The literacy requirements that disenfranchised indigenous people in significant numbers were not removed until 1979 and indigenous participation in elections only increased because indigenous people were becoming literate as a consequence of their migration to the cities and their contact with urban markets, mainly in the coast. It is not surprising that no formal change occurred before 1956, when elections were at best semi-competitive anyway (Lopez, 2005).⁷ However by 1956 the system became more open. Not only did APRA (Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana, or American Popular Revolutionary Alliance) – the main anti-oligarchic party – return to legality and participate in the government of Manuel Prado Ugarteche⁸ (representative of the National fraction of the oligarchy), but other new groups emerged expressing the interests of the expanding middle-class and *mestizo* groups.⁹ In this new context, why did the agenda of universal suffrage and the exclusion of indigenous people not attract more attention? According to Cotler (Cotler, 1970), political parties, including leftist parties, did not consider universal suffrage in their political agendas. In spite of APRA’s strong appeals to the ‘Indian’ problem and the impressive rhetoric used to address the topic, they adopted a conservative position (Davies, 1974). Cotler reports interviews with leaders from APRA and *Accion Popular* (AP), in which people claimed that that their parties had made little effort to organise indigenous masses because they were not important in electoral terms and the issue was contentious and controversial; therefore various leaders would oppose such efforts, particularly out of fear of the army’s reaction.

⁷ Lopez (2005) argues that until 1956 oligarchic elites competed among themselves but did not accept the incorporation of the “anti-oligarchic” middle and popular classes. Specifically the Constitution of 1933, in Article 53, excluded APRA and the Communist Party from electoral participation.)

⁸ Prado arrived at power with the support of APRA. This led to a political alliance known as “*convivencia*” (coexistence).

⁹ These groups were Accion Popular (Popular Accion), la Democracia Cristiana (Christian Democracy) and el Movimiento Social Progresista (The Progressive Social Movement). All these organisations were formed by professionals, middle-class workers and *mestizos* who demanded changes to the oligarchic system.

3. The opportunities of the new political system

The return to democracy in Peru in 1980 raised many people's hopes. For the first time, the political system was open to universal suffrage and competitive elections. However by 1983, it was clear that the Peruvian process of democracy would not be an easy one. The country was already immersed in a horrific internal war, and by 1987, was facing an escalating economic crisis, with hyperinflation reaching 2,000% per year. Nonetheless, competitive elections were held in 1990. The result of these elections brought another serious challenge for the consolidation of democracy in Peru, 'Fujimorismo'.

Alberto Fujimori --the son of Japanese migrants and an 'outsider' from the party system -- brought the traditional party structure to an end. He closed the Congress in 1992 with massive popular support and became an emblematic case of a new political phenomenon in Latin America, the 'democradura': a democratic dictatorship as set out by Levitsky (1999). By the end of 1993, Congress had been restored with a composition in which Fujimori had a large majority, a new Constitution had been approved, and several new competing groups calling themselves "independent" and "apolitical" replaced the "traditional" parties with a pragmatic rather than ideological strategy. The new Congress and Constitution gave Fujimori great freedom of authority to end the internal war at any cost and to reorganise the economy radically (Thorp and Cevallos, 2002).¹⁰ In 1995, Fujimori was re-elected with almost two-thirds of the vote in an election accepted by both the national and international community. His second period was less well received and the dangers for the democratic system rapidly became obvious: the armed forces acted through shady agreements with Fujimori's prime adviser, Vladimiro Montecinos; free journalists and opposition leaders were subject to fierce harassment; and there were systematic human right abuses. Fujimori attempted to win a third term of office, but he no longer enjoyed popular support, and the fairness of the elections was cast into doubt. Clear charges of corruption and mobilisation on the streets brought Fujimori's third period to an end. In November 2000, he resigned, by fax from Japan. After the collapse of Fujimori's regime, Peru's fragile but persistent democracy has ensured a succession of genuinely competitive elections, each producing a peaceful transfer of power, all in the context of an economic bonanza led by high mineral prices.¹¹

Elections are a basic if insufficient way of looking at the political participation of indigenous people. We argue that the introduction of universal suffrage in 1978 radically changed the status of indigenous citizenship in the country, although the situation is still a long way from complete citizenship in terms of indigenous people having guaranteed rights as individuals and as people. In addition to universal suffrage other changes facilitated this status. By 1978, the estate structure that used to control indigenous people's labour in large landed estates, or *haciendas*, and to hold back indigenous people from free political participation, was ended; and the state, while still very fragile, had significantly more power throughout the territory to enforce a minimum standard of fairness. For instance, Peru had seven presidential elections between 1978 and 2007, and only one election, that of 2000, was considered fraudulent.

¹⁰ For more information about the economic reforms see Thorp and Cevallos (2002); on political reform, an extensive report has been developed by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Peru (www.cverdad.org.pe).

¹¹ After a short period of transition under the leadership of Valentin Paniagua, who took office in November 2000, Alejandro Toledo was elected in 2001 and Alan Garcia in 2006.

In order to calculate roughly the impact of universal suffrage on indigenous people, we used both language and geographical proxies.¹² Not only did the total number of citizens with voting rights double between 1963 and 1980 (from around 45% to 80%), in addition the gap was narrowed by a strong increase in voting rights for *mestizos* (outside Lima), *cholos*¹³ and indigenous¹⁴ (see Figure 1). The impact was higher in those indigenous areas where the gap had previously been much larger, such as the highlands and the Amazon region. In Table 2, we show how the impact seems to have been larger for the indigenous in the highlands regions, and much larger for those living in the southern highlands. In the latter region, electoral participation increased by around 42 percentage points, from 19% in 1963 to 61% in 1980, reaching 80% in 1998. The impact was also large for indigenous people in the Amazon, but as late as 1998 the gap was still larger than in other regions. It is also important to note that the percentage of people with voting rights in the main provincial cities outside Lima (regional or local core), where more *mestizos* and *cholos* live, was lower in 1963 than the percentage of people with voting rights in the coastal peripheral areas, where most indigenous from these regions live. However in subsequent years, the “Regional Core” and “Coast Periphery” improved more quickly than the other groups. By 2001, there was almost no gap between “Lima Core”, “Regional Core” and “Coast Periphery”, while among the remaining groups the average gap was still 15%. Recent studies in Peru have pointed out that the great majority of those who are still excluded are indigenous women, both from the highlands and the Amazonas. They not only lack birth certificates and identification cards, but are also alienated from most state services. The exercise shows similar results if we use just language as a proxy for ethnicity. The impact of universal suffrage was far larger for those speaking an indigenous language. Using census information, we calculated the percentage of people speaking an indigenous language in each province and we categorised these provinces into three categories according to these percentages. Figure 2 shows how the gaps closed progressively between places that are predominantly populated by indigenous and non-indigenous language speakers.

Participation in elections is mandatory in Peru¹⁵, nevertheless, it is impressive that participation remained high during the worst period of the *Sendero* conflict. We found that voting remained high even among indigenous people, but voting totals shrank significantly in the central highland region, particularly in Ayacucho, where violence claimed many more victims – around 45% of the total victims (CVR 2004).¹⁶ In Ayacucho, turnout fell from 82% in

¹² Using a similar geographical classification to the one used by Figueroa and Barron (2005), we distinguished three categories of areas: 1) areas where most of indigenous live, 2) areas where most of cholos (urban indigenous) live mixed with mestizos and 3) areas where most of white live mixed with mestizos as well. However the variable used was not place of birth, but the place where an individual is registered to vote. Non-indigenous are those who are registered to vote in “Lima Core” (which includes the residential districts of Lima, where most of the white population live) and the “Regional Core”, composed of the provinces in which regional capital cities are located. Indigenous are those who are registered in “Lima Periphery” (migrant districts); “Periphery in the Southern Andes”, where indigenous languages predominate; “Periphery in the Central and Northern Highlands”, where Spanish predominates; “Periphery in the Coast” and “Periphery in the Amazon Rain Forests”. While this is still a controversial division, we think it is a better classification than others, such as language, which excludes indigenous people who have lost their language, for instance in the Northern Highlands and on the coast. However we also present results by language.

¹³ *Cholo* denotes someone of indigenous origin with experience in urban areas, some degree of education and adaptation to western culture

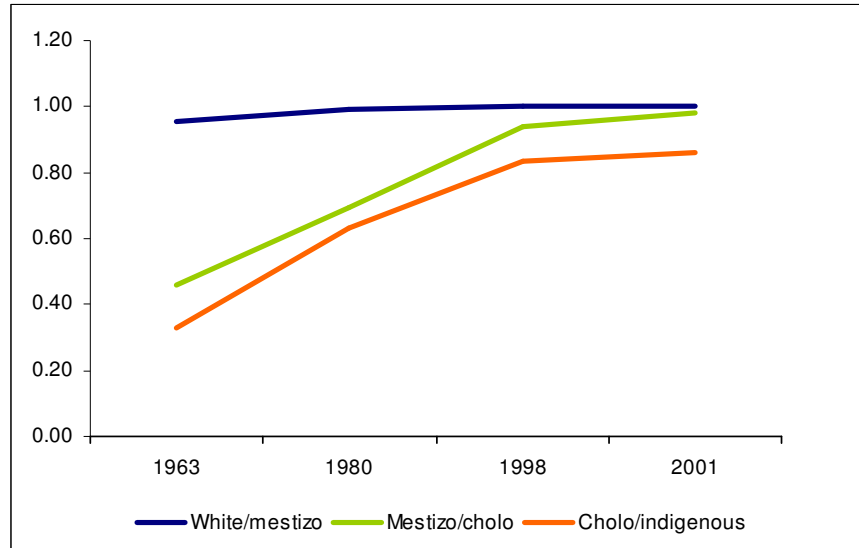
¹⁴ Historical information on ‘people registered to vote’ is our own construction based on electoral data systematized by Tuesta Soldevilla (2001) and census data (people of voting age in each province).

¹⁵ Peruvians are subject to a punitive fee. Without the payment, a citizen cannot marry, divorce, register the birth of a child, or sign a will; cannot participate in a judicial process, issue contracts, sell or buy or transfer legal power; cannot be hired as a public official, cannot obtain or renew a passport or driving license; and cannot register in the social security system.

¹⁶ Together with Ayacucho, the regions of Junín, Huánuco, Huancavelica, Apurímac and San Martín accounted for around 85% of the total number of victims in the conflict. During this year of violence,

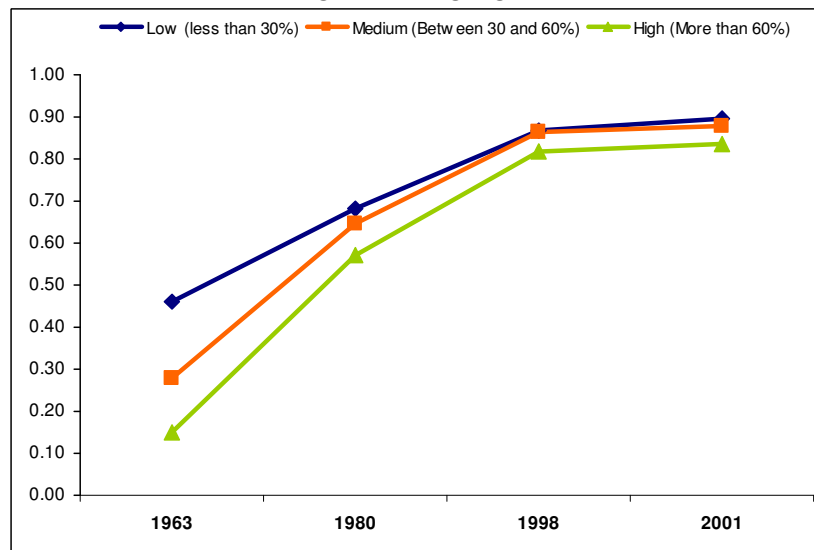
1985 to 47% in 1990. In 1995, voting was still low (45%) and only started recovering in 2001 and 2002, when it reached 70%.

Figure 1: People with voting rights (%)



Sources: Tuesta Soldevilla (1994); ONPE (electoral list 1998, 2001) and Population Census- INEI 1961, 1993.

Figure 2: People with voting rights by area according to the incidence of indigenous language (%)



Sources: Tuesta Soldevilla (1994); ONPE (electoral list 1998, 2001) and Population Census- INEI 1961, 1993.

Sendero threatened to cut off the index fingers of those who went to vote, and in general, people from these areas fled to other cities to escape the violence, often without appropriate documentation, which prevented them from any political participation.

Table 2: People with voting rights by ethnic region (%)

Regions	1963	1980	1998	2001
Lima Core	0.95	0.99	1.00	1.00
Lima Periphery	0.69	0.77	0.86	0.88
Local Core	0.45	0.70	0.94	0.98
Cost Periphery	0.54	0.76	0.97	1.00
Amazon Periphery	0.39	0.53	0.75	0.84
Central and Northern Andes Periphery	0.36	0.64	0.84	0.85
Southern Andes Periphery	0.19	0.61	0.82	0.83

Sources: Tuesta Soldevilla (1994); ONPE (electoral list 1998, 2001) and Population Census- INEI 1961, 1993.

At least in theory, larger electoral participation should generate a higher presence of indigenous people in government advocating indigenous interests. However, it is very difficult to assess how these improvements in voting rights have actually impacted on indigenous participation in government positions, whether they are being elected as members of the Congress and heads of municipalities or appointed to positions in the cabinet and in the judiciary. We face a serious problem of lack of information and can only use surnames as a proxy. Using surnames is extremely problematic in Latin America because of the significant process of *mestizaje* in some regions. Nevertheless, we decided to carry out the analysis and look cautiously for any trends across time. Given the problems of the data, we only can see if the *tendency* has been positive or negative as we don't know the proportion of people with indigenous surnames in the country. Thus, the proportions by themselves do not tell us anything, but the positive or negative direction of the trend does say something.¹⁷

Having recognised these problems, we can see that the *tendency* of participation in Congress by indigenous people has been positive, but only moderately so. Figure 3 shows the results for Congress and we can see a clear increase in participation since 1995.¹⁸ For the period 2001-2006 in which the proportion of indigenous candidates was highest, it is interesting to consider the distribution of indigenous candidates between parties. A total of 24% of *Renacimiento Andino* (Andean Renaissance) candidates had indigenous names and 21% of Toledo's party, *Peru Posible* (Possible Peru). The latter had greater electoral support in 2001 and placed 38% of its candidates with indigenous names in the Congress (10 of the 26). These 10 elected members represented 70 percent of those in Congress with

¹⁷ In addition, some indigenous people may have lost their indigenous surnames. This is the case of Maximo San Roman, who was vice president during the first government of Alberto Fujimori (1990-1992), for instance. His mother was Natividad Cáceres Chuchullo and his father, Julio San Román de Pomacanchis. Because of this, the participation of indigenous people may be underestimated and we need to assume that this underestimation occurs in the same proportion over time, so the trend is not affected.

¹⁸ However, the regulations for the composition of Congress have changed over the years. Under the Constitution of 1979, the country had a bicameral Congress composed of a Senate with 60 members and a Chamber of Deputies with 180 members, both elected for five-year terms and at the same time as the president. Under this Constitution, party-list proportional representation was used for both chambers: on a national basis for the Senate and with departmental representation for the lower house. After Fujimori's Auto-Coup of 1992, the Democratic Constitutional Congress of 1993 established a single chamber with 120 members, all elected in a single national circumscription. In 2001 the composition of Congress returned to the proportional mechanism with departmental representation but with a single chamber. Twenty electoral districts were created, each representing one department.

indigenous names; no other group had a significant number of candidates with indigenous names. The right-wing parties showed the lowest percentage: *Accion Popular* (AP) and *Unidad Nacional* (a front lead by PPC) had 9% and 8% respectively of candidates with indigenous names. Only one candidate with an indigenous name from *Unidad Nacional* was elected as a result. In 2006, the distribution was different – the greatest proportion of candidates with indigenous names was in small new parties, which obtained less than 1% of the votes. The distribution of candidates with indigenous names in the national parties is as follows: 6% in APRA, 17% in *el Frente de Centro*, led by Valentin Paniagua and 13% in the party of Ollanta Humala.

The tendency for indigenous participation in provincial municipalities as mayors is similar to that for Congress: positive but moderately so (Figure 4).¹⁹ Elections for municipalities have officially taken place in Peru since 1963, but these were interrupted by the military coup in 1968 and did not resume until 1980. As the database of names was organised by province, we were able to see how the trend differed geographically. Table 3 gives the results. It is important to note that these percentages cannot be compared across regions because each region probably has a different proportion of people with indigenous names. However, we can see the trend over time for each region. In particular, it is clear that the trend is positive for most places, and the tendency for an increase in indigenous mayors is most marked in the southern highlands. It moved there from almost no provincial mayors with indigenous last names in 1963 to close to 40% in 2003.

The cabinet in Peru is composed of 16 members who are appointed by the president²⁰. In a review of a complete list of ministers from 1968, we only found six ministers with indigenous names over seven electoral periods (1%). We also looked at the position of vice-ministers, but almost no organised data was found. Putting together information from official records and interviews with retired officials, we found that almost no vice-ministers in education (since 1986), agriculture (1983) and interior (1992) had an indigenous last name.

The selection of judges and prosecutors in the country has improved lately²¹ incorporating less subjective methods (although it is still not ideal according to specialists). These new methods have given more weight to examinations as oppose to personal interviews, for instance. From a data base of 2,412 judges and prosecutors selected in the periods 1995-2004, we found that there was no clear tendency for growth in the numbers of judges and prosecutors with indigenous names. Part of the problem is our limited data, which starts only in 1995, when no first-time judges were selected. Table 6 shows the results for judges and

¹⁹ Peru's territory is divided into 25 regions (formerly, departments) and then subdivided into 180 provinces. The latter are divided in 1,747 districts. This number is currently accurate, but numbers have changed over time.

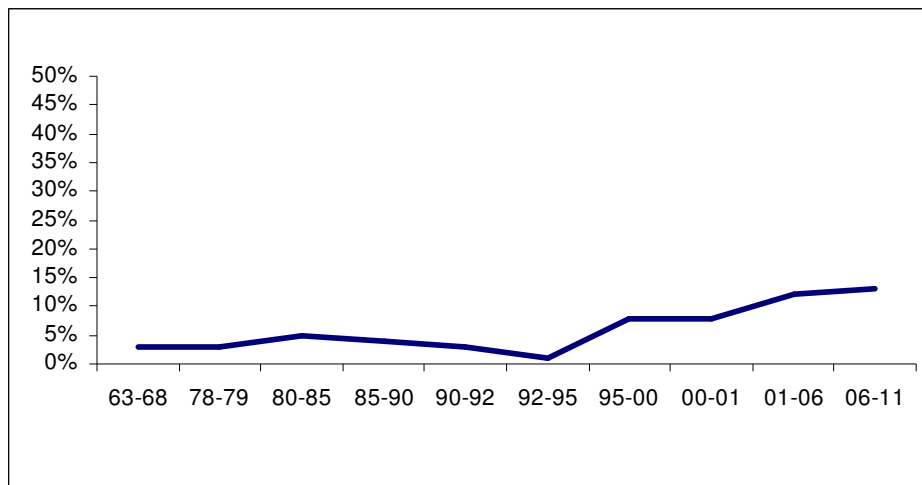
²⁰ External relations and Economy and Finances have existed since the independence. Justice, Education and Transportation & Communication were created in the 19th century. In the first half of the 20th century, the ministries of Interior, Agriculture, Health, Labor and Social Affairs, Navy, Army and Aeronautic were formed. During the Military government of Velasco Alvarado (1968-1974), several ministries related to the area of production were created: Industry, Commerce & Tourism; Energy and Mining, Fishing, and Housing and Construction. The ministry of the Presidency, created in 1985 by Alan Garcia and kept on by Alberto Fujimori, was closed in 2001. The three army corps were united in the Ministry of Defence in 1987 and the ministry of Women and Human Development, created in 1996, was renamed the Ministry of Social Promotion in 2001.

²¹ The judicial branch of government is headed by a 16-member Supreme Court in Lima. The National Council of the Judiciary appoints judges to this court. Superior courts in departmental capitals review appeals from decisions by lower courts. Courts of first instance are located in provincial capitals and are divided into civil, penal, and special chambers. In addition, the judiciary has created several temporary specialized courts in an attempt to reduce the large backlog of cases pending final court action. At the bottom level are the literate and illiterate peace judges. The prosecutors are also part of the system and they belong to each of the different levels of the judiciary system.

prosecutors with indigenous names. However, what is interesting is the distribution of judges and prosecutors in the judicial hierarchy. Judges with indigenous names are concentrated in the lower ranks of the hierarchical system: judges for rural areas called *Jueces de Paz*, and First Instance judges. Fewer cases were found in the Supreme Court.

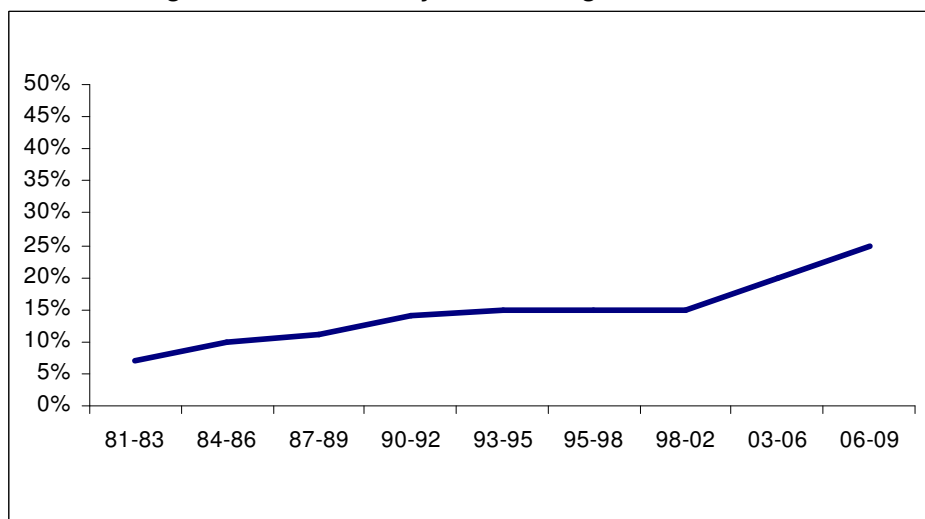
We can draw some conclusions from the analysis. The available data suggests that indigenous people were the most disenfranchised group before the reforms and that the electoral reforms, therefore, significantly helped to include indigenous people in the electoral system. However although today indigenous people can vote en masse and run for elected and appointed office, it seems that the result has not been particularly significant at the central level of government. The state remains white and *mestizo* upper-middle-class led. Moreover, the participation of indigenous people – such as the Ayaipomas, the Carhuaricras, and the Sucaris – seems to have followed a political path of weak ‘indigenous’ representation. The development of an indigenous identity or indigenous agenda through their political work is not clear, and therefore, it seems, the reduction of HIs in the country is not on the political agenda.

Figure 3: Congress members with indigenous last names



Sources: Tuesta Soldevilla (1994) and the Nacional Congress of Peru

Figure 4: Provincial mayors with indigenous last names



Sources: Tuesta Soldevilla (1994) and Electoral National Jury (JNE)

Table 3: Provincial mayors with indigenous last names by geographical area (%)

	1963	1980	1983	1986	1989	1993	1995	1998	2003
Local core	0	0	8	8	4	8	13	4	17
Rest coast	10	0	5	5	10	0	10	5	15
Rest Amazonian	0	0	11	6	17	22	17	11	22
Rest central and north	1	1	3	6	5	9	8	8	9
Rest southern Andes	2	18	16	15	27	29	27	33	38

Sources: Tuesta Soldevilla (1994) and Electoral National Jury (JNE)

Table 4: Judges and prosecutors with indigenous last names by period of selection and position in the hierarchy (%)

Year of selection	Supreme Court	Superior Court	First Instance	Peace (literate)	Total %	Total N
1995-1996	0	12			10	226
2000	0	13	15	14	15	708
2001-2003	8	10	19	13	15	650
2004	0	12	16	18	16	828
Total %	5	11	16	15		2,412
Total N	22	561	1,503	326		

Sources: Report of the National Office of the Magistratura, 2004.

4. Weak indigenous politics in Peru

Why have indigenous people in Peru not achieved greater political participation to reverse their exclusion? To elucidate why there is weak indigenous political representation in Peru, we propose to bring together two different types of hypothesis and literatures. On the one hand, there is the leading scholarship of Van Cott (2005 and 2000), Yashar (2005) and Sieder (2002), coming mainly from politics, who have tended to focus on 'political' mechanisms and processes that might explain why indigenous organisations did not emerge strongly in regional or national-level politics. In this literature, the study of political opportunity, movement framing, and social networks is emphasised and skilfully examined. On the other side, we have the thoughtful work of Mallon (1995) and De la Cadena (2000), coming mainly from history and anthropology, who have focused on those 'discriminatory' mechanisms that may explain why indigenous groups in Peru did not emerge with an 'indigenous' identity, but preferred to organise along other lines.²² These literatures often run in parallel, with little interaction, but we believe that it is essential to look across these traditions for modes of synthesis. As in many other cases, in Peru both types of mechanism have played a role. Together, they have imposed serious and continuing barriers to indigenous people associating and emerging as political actors. This dual analysis draws on Tilly and Tarrow, who argue that the construction of political identities relates intimately to the political processes and structures it confronts: on the one hand, political processes and institutions both constrain and empower the construction of political identity and the culture of movements; and on the other hand, the way political identity is activated and managed shapes the ways in which actors face political processes, both opportunities and constraints (Tilly and Tarrow, 2006).

²² Mallon (1995) and De la Cadena (2000) have focused their work in this direction. Other contributions in a similar vein come from Degregori (1998), Renique (2004) and Garcia (2005).

4.1 'Weakening' political processes in Peru

Research into the institutional mechanisms that have weakened indigenous people's political organisation has focused on the post-oligarchic period, starting with Velasco's corporatist government in 1968²³, and the history of the Peruvian countryside, particularly the Sierra. It has been argued that after the collapse of the oligarchic state, no modern state emerged to replace the old one.²⁴ Neither the military government nor the democratic regime that followed was able to redefine the institutions of political intermediation between the state and the countryside once the long-established intermediaries were gone, i.e. the traditional estates, the *haciendas* and their *gamonales* (landlords). Furthermore, the brutal violence that followed impeded indigenous people from organising and engaging in political activity on regional or national stages.

There is a vast and very well-known literature on how Velasco's policies (1968-1975) weakened indigenous peasants' organisations, which were built up between the mid-1950s and 1970s.²⁵ The military government not only strengthened class rather than ethnic identity, imposing a class-based organisation in the countryside, but also intensified intra- and extra-communal divisions. 'Cooperatives' with different design and policies were to be implemented for peasants in the modern plantations of the coast and peasants in the traditional and poor estates of the Sierra divided indigenous peasants' interests and motives across these regions.²⁶ Furthermore, the extremely uneven redistribution of land between these two regions increased the already dualistic configuration of the country even more. Bourque and Scott Palmer (1975: 203) quote a study from Palmer in which the author compares the prosperous coast department of Lambayaque with the marginal Sierra department of Ayacucho. The study reveals that only 8% of the peasant families in Ayacucho were scheduled to benefit from the land reform, compared with 50% in Lambayaque.

In addition to the cooption of peasant leaders and the imposition of a state-controlled organisation to centralise peasant's demands,²⁷ the military government imposed new rules with regard to rights and decisions over land, water, pastures and community organisation. These policies resulted in the exacerbation of conflicts and disputes at the local level. The literature is rich in explaining how these rules enabled powerful members of the community, often in alliance with corrupt bureaucrats, to capture and take advantage of the community's resources. Indigenous peasants fought back against these abuses, and conflicts proliferated within and between communities, fragmenting Peruvian rural society (Montoya, 1978 and

²³ General Velasco carried out a military coup on October 3, 1968, deposing the democratically elected administration of Fernando Belaúnde Terry. The military government named their administration 'the Revolutionary Government of the Armed Forces'; it proposed anti-oligarchic and nationalistic policies for the country, such as a very radical agrarian reform and the nationalization of strategic industries in a wide range of activities from fisheries to mining to telecommunications to power production.

²⁴ Extensive work has been carried in this direction by Degregori (1990), Manrique (2002) and the CVR (2004).

²⁵ Bourque and Palmer (1975), Manrique (2002), Manrique and Flores Galindo (1986), Montoya (1978, 1989 and c1998), Degregori (1990 and 1998) and Renique (2004).

²⁶ Peasants in the plantations in the coast had a more mixed origin, but the majority were indigenous who had migrated from the Northern and Central Highlands.

²⁷ The military government created the National Agrarian Confederation (CNA) as the official link between the local units: CAPs and SAIS, and the unitary national agriculture organisation. The goal of this organisation was to promote the involvement of various parts of the agriculture sector in the design of and implementation of policies. In addition, the National System of Support for Social Mobilisation (SINAMOS) was created to coordinate, stimulate and channel all initiatives related to citizen participation and serve as an intra-governmental "transmission belt" for citizen concerns as an alternative to ministerial bureaucracies (Bourque and Scott, 1975).

1998; Degregori, 1990; Degregori, 1998; Manrique, 2002; Flores Galindo and Manrique, 1986; Reñique, 2002).

The cooperatives proved to be economically unviable. Only a few coastal plantations survived; the government failed to provide the promised training and technical services; and the majority did not reach the necessary levels of efficiency (Caballero, 1980). In the case of the cooperatives (SAIS) of the Sierra, once the traditional (pre-capitalist) mode of production was dismantled, they never found a way of being profitable. Therefore, peasants did not secure benefits from these new structures and they felt that their demands for land were never addressed (Flores Galindo and Manrique, 1986). After Velasco's government collapsed in 1975, a more 'orthodox' military government took over the administration and cooperatives in the coast were gradually dismantled and land divided among agricultural workers. In the Sierra, indigenous peasants demanded the distribution of SAIS lands, but they faced opposition from state bureaucrats who boycotted or delayed the implementation of many of the government directives, making the process of redistribution in the Sierra much slower and more conflictual than in the Coast (Montoya, 1978).

In conclusion, during these seven years of experiment, the military government failed in its attempt to transform and modernise society in the countryside, but it effectively instilled distrust and tensions among indigenous peasants, their communities, and their organisations rather than fostering the cooperation necessary to build larger associations and networks at regional and national levels. This contrasts strongly with what happened in Bolivia and Ecuador.²⁸

The return to democracy in 1980 occurred without this reality in the countryside being confronted. *Sendero* took advantage of these conflicts and disputed authority in the communities to gain support from indigenous peasants in the Central highlands in the first years of the conflict. *Sendero* exacerbated ongoing conflicts over lands, quarrels over the control of resources in the existing SAIS, and all types of resentments against 'better-off' indigenous peasants who had benefited from the uneven redistribution of assets during the previous governments. In the first three years of the conflict, *Sendero* had plentiful opportunity to develop its plans in the conflict-ridden countryside (CVR/Peru, 2004).

As Yashar (2005) correctly argues, *Sendero* initiated a war (1980-1995) that had devastating effects on the possibilities for indigenous people to organise beyond their communities.²⁹ The internal war destroyed indigenous opportunities to build organisations outside their local boundaries. The war hit the incipient transcommunal organisations and unions that had been established³⁰ and closed off political associational spaces at all levels in the country. What is more, during the war, a large number of local officials – social leaders, mayors, prefects,

²⁸ For more analyses on the contrasting cases of Peru and Bolivia, see Yashar (2005) and Degregori (1998).

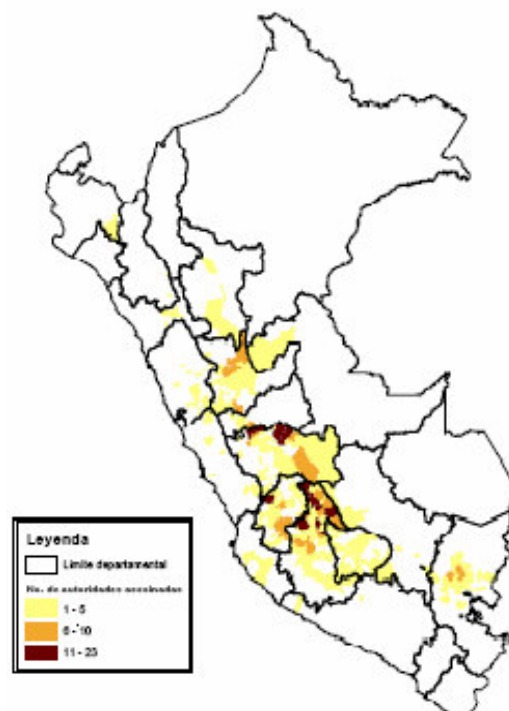
²⁹ The effects of the war on the internal organisation of the communities was also profound. The fierce competition of *Sendero* and the armed forces for control of community spaces forced people to leave their communities and towns. The degree of displacement in these years was significant. For instance, Ayacucho – the region most affected by the conflict – lost one third of its population between 1980 and 1993 (CVR 2004). However, those who stayed rapidly felt the need to organise to defend their communities. *Rondas campesinas* (community organisations) were formed and organised during the Fujimori government with the aid of the armed forces to fight *Sendero*.

³⁰ Between the 1960s and 1970s, several organisations and unions were created in the countryside at regional and national level. Peasant federations in the Sierra and in the Coast joined the Confederation Campesina del Peru (Peasant Confederation of Peru – CCP) and other unions such as mining unions with indigenous membership also acquired great importance. With the support of all this organisations, the combined left won almost a third of the national vote in the Constitutional Assembly in 1978, with Hugo Blanco, the most important leader during peasant mobilisations in the 1960s and 1970s, winning the most votes (Tanaka 1998).

governors, lieutenants, local judges of peace and other leaders – were killed. The CVR (2004) estimates that 2,267 officials were assassinated during the conflict and 1,680 were direct victims of *Sendero*. The elimination of such a number of local leaders – the majority of them members of the political parties that sustained the democracy inaugurated in 1980 – constituted a severe breakdown in the mechanisms of intermediation in the system. The CVR (2004) mapped the geographical frequency of these types of victims, showing that the central and southern highlands were the areas most affected (see Figure 5).

The elimination of leadership, the state of siege and the restriction of free association in the country generated a situation in which the newly democratic institutions found it extremely difficult to channel forces from below into the political and electoral arena. Communities and organisations were headed off and no legitimate intermediaries were left to channel demands from popular sectors. This situation affected all citizens in the country, but particularly indigenous citizens, whose communities and neighbours were at the centre of the war for longer. By the second half of the 1980s, political parties were meeting serious difficulties in continuing to work through social organisations or through ideological support. This was particularly a problem for those parties that depended strongly on the organised support of the mass of the population, such as the Izquierda Unida (IU – United Left) and APRA. Increasing disconnection with the countryside was clear from very early in the war, but as the war moved to the cities, at the end of the 1980s, the unfolding reality was a large political distance between parties and the social organisations to which they used to be linked. This was true also for NGOs and other organisations, such as the church. In addition, the radicalism of *Sendero* undermined the fragile ties of leftwing parties, which had a history of ideological factionalism and divisions. *Sendero's* extreme violence fuelled mutual accusations among leftwing parties and distrust regarding their attitudes towards this radicalism (Tanaka, 1998). By the end of the 1980s, the collapse of the party system was clear, and the project of a leftwing party channelling the demands of the population, including indigenous peasants, had failed badly (Tanaka, 1998).

Figure 5: Number of local officials assassinated by Sendero by district of occurrence, 1980-2000



What followed, with the election of Alberto Fujimori in the 1990s, was a new model of electoral organisation in which new ‘independent’ parties were little more than ‘labels’ or ‘candidate-centred’ vehicles for politicians of all ideological colours who left their established parties to join ‘de-ideologised’ and ‘pragmatic’ political projects (Levitsky and Cameron, 2003). The result was the complete collapse of the party system and the severe fractionalisation of politics at all levels. At national level, what became essential for presidential and congressional elections was a relationship with the media establishment and the development of a national public image (Tanaka, 1998; Conaghan, 2002). At the municipal level, the new electoral model together with the deeply fractionalised political division of the country (195 provincial and 1,833 district municipalities) made politics in Peru extremely fragmented, particularly in those areas where indigenous people live.

Traditional parties, including the left, had a strong presence at municipal level until 1986, but after this year their influence in local municipalities almost disappeared. Table 4 shows how the presence of ‘independent local parties’,³¹ disassociated from regional or national parties, led democratic competition at municipality level from 1989.

Table 5: Electoral results in provincial municipalities (1980–1993)

	1980	1983	1986	1989	1993
Izquierda Unida (IU)	23	29	31	18	4
Accion Popular (AP)	36	17		*	13
APRA	22	33	47	20	12
Partido Popular Cristiano (PPC)	11	14	14	*	5
Others	8	7	4	30	66
Fredemo (right-wing coalition)*				32	
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: (Tuesta Soldevilla, 2001)

*Accion Popular and Partido Popular Cristiano contested the 1989 election as part of the Fredemo right-wing coalition

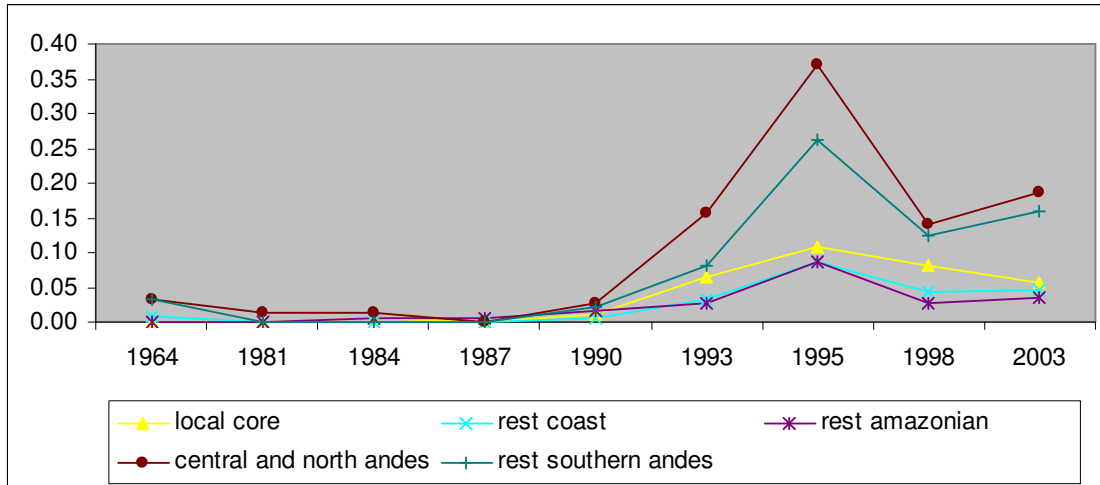
The predominance of these fragmented local parties is larger in those regions with a stronger indigenous character. Figure 6 shows the increase of these organisations among indigenous in the peripheral central and southern highlands, the areas most affected by the internal war. The peak in the 1995 elections reflected a better climate after the end of the war, and also the increasing demands for local autonomy as a reaction to Fujimori’s attempt to gain control over the countryside and the poor urban neighbourhoods after the close results obtained in the referendum in 1993.³² Local mayors contested the centralised way in

³¹ There are two types of emergent ‘independent’ parties that need to be differentiated. First, there are the so-called “independent” national parties, well exemplified by Fujimori’s cambio90 party. They are national organizations that rely on a charismatic leader, predominantly intermediation and a “pragmatic” discourse, in opposition to the ideological approaches that supposedly characterised “traditional parties”. Second, there are the local parties. These are small, localised organisations that compete only at provincial and district level. Some of these were sometimes – although few until the last elections – able to negotiate with a larger party to participate at the national level..

³² Municipalities were significantly revitalised during the last two thirds of the 1990s in light of Fujimori’s interest in controlling them. They appeared to be the state institutions in which citizens had

which the Ministry of the Presidency was implementing an ambitious plan of social expenditure. In order to weaken this wave of opposition at municipal level, Fujimori created a municipal political organisation in 1996 that participated in the elections of 1998, *Vamos Vecino* (Let's Go Neighbour). In 1998 elections, *Vamos Vecino* succeeded with strong support from the government, but in 2000 its popularity almost disappeared and local parties again proliferated.³³

Figure 6: Percentage of provincial municipalities run by local political organisations



The municipal elections of 2002 show the largest levels of political fragmentation ever: 83% of groups competing for provincial municipalities were local organisations, 13% regional organisations and only 4% were connected to national political parties. This fractionalisation was most severe in those provinces where most indigenous people live, particularly in the Central and South Highlands (JNE, 2007). In 2006, this fractionalisation lessened, leading to improved possibilities at a regional level. In 2006, 43% of groups competing for provincial municipalities were associated with a regional movement, 41% remained dispersed as local organisations and 16% were associated with a national party, whether by membership or electoral alliance.³⁴

In conclusion, the institutional context was highly discouraging. Indigenous organisations were not only beheaded during the internal war without the capacity of constructing networks and larger organisations in narrow associational spaces, but after the 1990s, the new

the most trust. The Asociación de Municipalidades del Perú (Association of Municipalities of Peru – AMPE), during these years and until 1998 was clearly the most important opposition to the Fujimori government.

³³ Another new element is that among these local political groups, we have found since 1995 political parties with names in an indigenous language or that make specific reference to peasant identity. This is a new political phenomenon at the provincial level, since the “Quechua” or “peasant” identity has largely been associated with intra-communal affairs – at an even lower level than the district one. There were three such groups in 1995, seven in 1998 and 15 in 2001. All of them have won in provinces of the highland periphery. Of these 25 groups, 20 are in the Southern Highlands; the other five include three in Cajamarca, one in Piura (Huancabamba) and one in Ancahs. In 2003, the Frente Popular Llapanchik had three mayors in Apurimac and the MINCAP and INTI in Huancavelica won two municipalities. With the exception of the Movimiento Campesino Atusparia which won the Municipality of Sihuas three times in a row, none of these groups had been reelected under the same name until 2003.

³⁴ One thousand four hundred organisations that competed in regional elections in 2002 did not participate in the elections of 2006. Five hundred and twenty two new organizations participated in 2006 and only 38 organizations that continue participating since 2002.

electoral model that emerged made their participation even more difficult. Indigenous people, and indeed all Peruvians, faced a political system that was more difficult to manage beyond their own local spaces. Attaining power at national and regional levels required large economic resources, connections with the political and media establishment and engagement in clientelistic relations with those who had already attained political popularity. The result has been disappointment with and scepticism about democracy, and a party model that, despite its transformations, has remained white-*mestizo*-led.

4.2 Discrimination and 'strategic' identity decisions

As noted, while some scholars have focussed on political and institutional processes to explain the weakness of indigenous politics in Peru, others have examined the reasons why indigenous people from the Andes did not reconstruct an 'indigenous' political identity and mobilise around ethnic cleavages when they did organise. While in Ecuador and Bolivia, the activation of indigenous politics as political identity proved to be more useful than class-based forms to integrate and represent the multiple interests and diverse emerging organisations associated with them (Yashar, 2005)³⁵, the same phenomenon did not occur in Peru. Indigenous people from the Andes in Peru have organised instead according to class-based identities (peasants, miners, popular sectors etc). The rest of this paper discusses why.

The fact that that the vast majority of Peruvians do not tend to identify as indigenous but prefer to see themselves as *mestizos*, and therefore prefer to emphasise other identities, such as class, region or occupation for political goals, can be easily misleading. It is true that racial and cultural mixing has occurred on a significant scale in Peru since colonial times, and a majority of the population in certain regions, mainly in the coast, is of mixed race and culture; however this *mestizaje* has not eliminated the perception of distinctive and hierarchically organised cultural and racial traits by Peruvians; nor has it prevented racist discriminatory practices against self-identified *mestizos*. Scholars have contrasted Peru with Mexico, for instance. While in Mexico, the paradigm of national integration and assimilation through *mestizaje* was consolidated in most parts of the territory to the extent that indigenous movements were motivated to organise their claims as ethnic minorities (Degregori 1998, Mallon 1992), in Peru the process of *mestizaje*, associated with the same integrationist project, failed not only because of the weakness of state efforts, but because of the diverse forms of indigenous resistance. Moreover, The CRISE Perceptions Survey in Peru suggests that grievances based on the perception of cultural and racial discrimination are recognised and strongly expressed³⁶. The perception of marginalisation from government, of mistreatment at public offices, and lack of power is strongly expressed by indigenous and *cholos*³⁷ as is shown in Table 6.

³⁵ This was the case behind the formation of Ecuariunari

³⁶ For more information see Paredes (2007).

³⁷ As noted above, *cholo* denotes someone of indigenous origin who has moved to an urban area, and has some degree of education and adaptation to western culture.

Table 6: Perceptions of ethnic discrimination

Percentage of indigenous or <i>cholos</i> who expressed^a:		
Ethnic or racial characteristics are equally important as, or more important than, in the past		57%
Ethnic or racial characteristics affect access to jobs		
<i>In the government</i>		61%
<i>In the private sector</i>		67%
Whites and <i>mestizos</i> dominate the state:		
<i>Local government</i>		52%
<i>Central government</i>		62%
<i>Police</i>		70%
<i>Army</i>		71%
Whites and <i>mestizos</i> dominate the private sector:		
<i>Big firms</i>		74%
<i>Media</i>		78%
Percentage that said they had been badly treated by^b:	The police	The Court
<i>White (European origin)</i>	20%	16%
<i>Afro origin</i>	52%	77%
<i>Asian origin</i>	7%	0%
<i>Indigenous Quechua or Aymara</i>	50%	52%
<i>Indigenous from the Amazon</i>	42%	19%
<i>Mestizo, espanol/indigenous</i>	36%	25%
<i>Other</i>	22%	25%

Sources: a. CRISE Survey (2005); b. Undp-Survey on Democracy in Peru.

The idea that migration, access to education, and the learning of Spanish have created a homogenous *mestizo* culture where only regional and class differences remain is usually associated with another idea: Peruvian indigenous people only exist in small and dispersed numbers in the hinterlands of the Sierra or in the Amazon, frozen in time. This vision is false. Following Van Cott (1994), we argue that no indigenous, we argue that no indigenous people in Peru live exactly as their ancestors did 500 years ago. Indigenous communities in the highlands and in the cities have changed, just as people from all cultures have. Indigenous people in Peru have transformed themselves according to the opportunities and constraints they have met, incorporating costumes, technologies and ideas from a white-*mestizo* dominated society. We argue that the idea that when indigenous people enter into contact with 'civilization' they are no longer indigenous is at the heart of the type of discrimination that has created the cultural and psychological barriers preventing indigenous people from organising politically along ethnic lines. This prejudice is a mechanism that has been historically constructed, reproduced and consolidated in Peru over the years by the institutions built around it.

Peru, like most Latin American countries, entered the 20th century with an oligarchic state structure that was unable to incorporate emerging groups. Neither indigenous people, nor *mestizo* agrarian movements, were incorporated into a broad national project. However, at some point during the 20th century, anti-oligarchic groups emerged in Peru as in the rest of Latin America, and they tried to build oppositional ideologies based on the articulation of a part of the popular heritage of the previous two centuries against an emerging *mestizo*, national-popular project (Mallon, 1992). In the case of Peru, the 'Indian' and his/her integration into Peruvian society was at the centre of these emerging ideologies and fundamental to the nation-state debate.³⁸ The discussion about the conceptualisation of the

³⁸ Davies (1974) argues that the option of leaving indigenous people completely alone or even segregating them in reservations, as was done in the United States and Chile, was not considered,

'Indian' problem and Indian integration into Peruvian society was significant among groups of intellectuals, politicians and members of the state in the first half of the 20th century. The effect of this debate can be seen in the large amount of legislation that was created, particularly from the 1920s to the 1950s (Davies, 1974).

Although, this legislation was timid, and never truly implemented and enforced, a debate developed about the 'cultural representation' of what an 'Indian' was, and what she or he should become in order to be fully integrated into society. While this debate encompassed of a wide range of positions, the hegemonic view was a paternalist, and even, a racist one. From a vast number of varied indigenous groups or communities in the country, the category 'Indian' – originally invented by the Spanish to name all aboriginals – was re-invented during the first half of the century. This reinvention occurred in the context of defeat in the Pacific War with Chile, circumstances that 'revealed' to *Limeños* the brutal conditions in which indigenous people were living at the hands of cruel white or *mestizos* landlords and indifferent or corrupted bureaucrats. The vision of the Indian was of a backward, impoverished and degraded race.³⁹

From these debates emerged a prejudiced and narrowed vision of what indigenous people were. De la Cadena argues that modern discriminatory practices of racism are today legitimised by appealing to the 'racialisation' of the culture of indigenous people (De la Cadena, 2000). The creation of 'indianness' is the creation of the intellectual and political history through which indigenous cultures have been 'racialised' and subjected to visible markers in Peru. Although during the first half of the 20th century the debate acquired different and conflicting tones, the idea that indigenous peoples' culture, customs, language, and forms of organisations were the cause of their exploitation and backwardness become a predominant one. Indigenous were 'indians', a race that because of impoverishment and exploitation was becoming a degraded race; backward, irrational and deteriorating.⁴⁰

A different view was presented by Jose Carlos Mariategui, who wrote at the beginning of the century about "the Indian problem". According to him the problem of the Indian was not their culture, but the land tenure system that deprived indigenous people of any freedom. He considered that all efforts based on education were useless because the semi-feudal system of power in the estates undermined the potential benefits of modern schooling. He rejected the view of a degeneration of indigenous people's culture or race and accused those that defended these ideas as racists and advocates of the semi-feudal system's interests. Another view was provided by Jose Maria Arguedas. He saw in bilingual education the opportunity for indigenous people to be autonomous actors in constructing a plural nation and was less concerned about the assimilation and acculturation of indigenous people. Different view points were offered by the Comité Pro-Derecho Indígena Tahuantisuyo: they also contested these racist views about indigenous people and advocated an alternative national program in which indigenous people were seen as literate and modern, and as owners of their own lives.

except by a few *indigenistas*, in the 20th century because of the Peruvian agrarian structure. It depended on the existence of a steady Indian labour supply.

³⁹ Gonzales Prada was the leading intellectual of this literature. Others were Mercedes Cabello, Irrorales and Clorinda Matos de Turner. Gonzales Prada's influence was felt beyond the literature. Later, Jose Carlos Mariategui and Haya de la Torre were both also influenced by Prada.

⁴⁰ A quote in Davies (1974) from the minister of justice, religion and instruction during the second government of Leguia expresses this discourse clearly; several other testimonies of the same calibre are presented in the literature. "Whether it is because of the state of vassalage, in which he has lived since the time of the Incas...despite laws which affirm his freedom today, or because of the atrophy of his facilities as the result of alcohol, or finally because of his lack of basic necessities, the fact remains that the Indian has completely lost all character...He passes his life as he did the generations in the centuries and the epochs before him. His lifestyle inherited from his ancestors has not altered at all; he vegetates as always in his miserable existence."

Despite these contrasting points of view, the depiction of 'the Indian' as irrational, threatening, potentially violent and – perhaps most importantly – prototypical, were ideas that spread in the first half of the 20th century and were reinforced by their use as the foundations of both ideologies and policies. Said when studying 'Orientalism' (Said, 1978)⁴¹ argues that these types of prejudiced constructions become resilient in the minds of people by the institutions built around them. In the case of Peru, first the unsuccessful educational attempts that intended to incorporate indigenous people via 'acculturation' and 'education', mainly developed during the government of Manuel Padro in the early 1940s; and second, the class-based reforms imposed by the military government of Velasco Alvarado, reinforced the vision that successful integration of indigenous people into society was only possible through the cultural transformation and evolution of the 'Indian' from their inferior, backward and unsuitable culture to a literate, 'modern' and agriculturally 'skilled' *mestizo* culture. While the military government attempted to break up the socioeconomic ties of indigenous people with traditional forces, the regime continued a tradition of paternalism, preventing indigenous people from free political participation. The government's vision was one of control, and again, of bringing the 'backward' into 'modernity', but this time by transforming them into the modern peasant classes of the newly inaugurated regime.

At the other extreme of 'indianness', the conception of 'mestizeness' was gradually constructed together with the emergence of new neo-oligarchic movements. By the end of the 1960s, the idea of *mestizo* no longer referred to a racial category – a person with European-white and aboriginal ancestors – but instead referred to a cultural and class-based process of acculturation. Basadre, the most influential historian of the republican period, expressed this idea very clearly: "Even today, if you see someone of pure Indian blood in the fields, using a plough, pasturing his sheep and dressed in short trousers, you are seeing a process of cultural *mestizaje*." (Basadre and Yepes, 2003). *Mestizaje* becomes thereby a process of scaling up from the 'Indian' situation of exclusion and exploitation to a life of citizenship and progress throughout the learning of Spanish, education, and migration to urban centres. This class-based construction for cultural differences has made it very problematic for Peruvians to disentangle class from ethnicity.

The 'racial' content that the *mestizo* category used to have was transformed into a 'cultural' content that expressed a hierarchical combination of both western and aboriginal cultures. *Mestizos* were supposed to embrace the customs, technologies and ways of life of the white-*mestizo* dominant society, but at the same time pay tribute to their origins by the glorification of the indigenous past. Indigenous culture was transformed into cultural products to be found in museums, commemorations, folklore, products for tourism and the history of the Incas, but not living languages, forms of organisations and the recreation of traditions and knowledge as they entered into contact with other cultures. Vargas Llosa (1990: 52) illustrates the power of this conception and its continued significant influence on intellectuals and politicians today very well: "Indian peasants live in such a primitive way that communication is practically impossible. It is only when they move to the cities that they have the opportunity to mingle with the other Peru. The price they must pay for integration is high – renunciation of their culture, their language, their belief, their traditions and customs and the adoption of the culture of their ancient masters. After one generation they become *mestizos*, and they are not longer indians".⁴²

⁴¹ Orientalism refers in Said (1978) to old-fashioned and prejudiced outsider interpretations of Eastern cultures and peoples.

⁴² Mallon (1992) correctly summarises the 20th-century construction of the nation state in Peru as a process in which the "indian" past was glorified, but contemporary 'indians' found they had to 'incorporate' themselves into society through education, agrarian reform, and state-sponsored development programmes, while their 'autochthonous' cultures were reconstructed as folklore and tourism".

But the real life of indigenous people was far different, diverse and dynamic than the picture of the 'indian' represented. Indigenous people in Peru did not have the same culture, nor did they all live under the state system. Furthermore, since the 1940s, a significant part of them fought against their marginalisation and discrimination by moving out of the Sierra and 'indianess' to urban areas. In the urban centres, indigenous people learned Spanish, had some education and changed their identities in multiple forms.⁴³ Those who stayed in the countryside build peasant organisations and led a series of uprisings against the traditional *hacienda* system from the 1950s to the mid 1970s.

Although the countryside revolts in the 1950s and 1960s were organised in alliance with leftist parties and along peasant lines, De la Cadena (2000) argues that the literature has failed to look at the indigenous aspects of the struggle. From her interviews, she learned that indigenous utilisation of class rhetoric was a political option that did not represent the loss of indigenous *cuzqueño* culture, but was rather a 'strategy' of 'de-indianisation' to avoid discrimination and disempowerment. It meant becoming literate, being able to live beyond the *hacienda* territory and in general obtaining civil rights. Mariano Tupa, a leader of these revolts, told her "we need to stop being Indians to defend ourselves"⁴⁴ Few scholars have studied the struggles of the 1950s and the 1960s by looking more profoundly at the ethnic angle, as most of the literature has assumed that the expressed class discourse is the genuine identity of mobilisation. Important suggestions in this direction are presented by Remy (1994) and Montoya (1992).

García's very important work on bilingual education reveals how the rejection of 'indianness' has been strongly internalised by Peruvian Quechuas in the countryside and has become an important reality for what they are today (García, 2003). For them citizenship is associated with economic progress through acculturation and the learning of Spanish. She shows how indigenous people today are worried that bilingual instruction in Quechua and Spanish, rather than helping their children, would simply lead them to the same 'dead end' of being 'indian' in a racist society. Her quotes from indigenous parents are very telling: "What I want most for my son is that he is not a *campesino* (peasant) like me, and being an Indian is even worse! So you shouldn't tell them [our children] to be Indian [referring to learning in Quechua]". García argues that it is not that that parents do not understand the benefits of bilingual education or do not acknowledge the discrimination their children suffer in Spanish-speaking schools, as NGOs activists tend to suggest as the causes of parental opposition. Rather the conclusion of her study shows that indigenous parents believe in Spanish education and some level of acculturation as the most 'effective strategy' to mitigate prejudices. She quotes another father: "If Quechua were privileged, the situation might be different, and we might even want our children to read and write in our language. But until

⁴³ The leading work on how *mestizo* identity has been redefined and contested is De la Cadena (2000). Drawing on extensive historical documentation and ethnographic research in contemporary Cuzco, she explores the meaning of *mestizaje* and argues that contemporary *cuzqueño* workers have recreated and redefined its meaning. Other authors have look at these transformations in different contexts. Renique (2004) explains in detail the history of Puno and how through the history of the struggle a new type of indigenous identity, the *Cholo* of Juliaca, was constructed. Quijano (1980) and Nugent (1995) discuss the emergence of a new *cholo* or *chicha* identity in Peru in order to explain the same process of redefining the dominant *mestizo* identity.

⁴⁴ The peasant leader was a *chaman*, a traditional priest. He spoke Quechua and was literate in Spanish. In one of the letters he sent to his friends in the community he urged them to learn how to read and write, as being illiterate made them more 'Indian', easier preys of the *hacendados* and their lawyers. According to De la Cadena (2000), the rejection of 'Indianess' was reinforced when, in the midst of the land struggle, and while state cultural activists were busy promoting indigenous folklore, other state representatives – the police – used the label 'Indian' to deny peasant leaders their right to public speech while torturing and abusing people like Mariano Turpa.

that happens, our strategy for the improvement of our children's education is still determined by our reality".

In the urban centres, indigenous migrants have re-constructed and re-created multiple forms of identities. Among these, a contesting ethnic category has developed: the *cholo*, "*cholo*" culture (Nugent, 1993), the "cholification" of society (Quijano, 1980). Degregori has suggested that 'cholos' are the sons and daughters of Quechuas and Aymaras who have some access to the school system and who have had an urban experience. On this basis they are culturally '*mestizo*' but maintain 'Indian' cultural characteristics that modify and combine with *mestizo*-white (*criollo*) or transnational traits (Degregori, 1998). We are going to suggest something slightly different. *Cholo* has become a larger ethnic representation for people from origins other than Quechua and Aymara. These people have had some schooling and urban contact but, intentionally or not, have kept some of the localised and non-westernised traits of their original culture. As '*cholo*' has a pejorative meaning because of its associations with rejected 'Indian' traits, *cholo* has become a disputed territory in the ethnic representation of Peruvians. It can express self-definition and pride and/or it can express a way of discriminating against and differentiating between people in urban contexts.

Quijano (1980) has argued that urban areas in Peru saw a massive process of 'cholification' in the last third of the 20th century as a significant number of indigenous peasants abandoned the countryside and rejected their association with 'indianness', as a vision of the rural, peasant, illiterate and monolingual. They adapted to dominant western culture as a means of improving their socioeconomic situation, but at the same time they have contested total acculturation and identification with the 'acculturated' *mestizos* who had forgotten their origins, their communities and were ashamed of their traditions. *Cholos* 'cling' to their customs, which define them as Andeans, and take pride in their Andean identity. In some form, the new *cholo* identity has contested the class-based construction in which ethnicity was framed: on one side are Indians, who are peasants, rural, illiterate, and therefore, poor; and on the other side, are the *mestizos*, who are workers/employees, urban, literate, and therefore less poor. They have created a culture of entrepreneurship and socioeconomic success, although it has proved very limited.

The terrain of 'choledad', however, is highly disputed. *Cholos* are not the product of the process of *mestizaje*, but of its failure. Indigenous migrants irrupted into 'modern' Peru and constructed a new and contesting 'cholo' identity in a society that had not yet overcome its 'oligarchic' prejudices. As with the indigenous *mestizos* of Cuzco of De la Cadena (2000), in a previous paper (Paredes, 2007) we learned that *cholos* in Lima and in other urban provincial centres, such as Huanta and Bambamarca, in an effort to avoid discrimination, have reproduced racism and discriminatory practices against those 'less literate', and 'less urban' than themselves. And as these are very fluid and subjective 'boundaries' and *cholos* themselves live on the 'borders' of urbanity/rurality, educated/non-educated, modern/non-modern, they rapidly find themselves victims of the discrimination they practise against others. This happened particularly as they moved from smaller to larger and more urbanised centres.⁴⁵

Being *cholo* in these circumstances, although it is a self-constructed identity, is also a very conflicting and ambiguous category for relating with others or constructing a political 'we'. It is an identity that seems to distil the interests of the new indigenous man and women in Peru, but at the same time is full of distrust and conflict. It is both an insult and source of shame, and an expression of resistance, and therefore of pride.

⁴⁵ For a more detailed account of this process of discrimination and reproduction of discrimination, see Paredes (2007: 10-19).

Escaping the exclusion they suffered in the countryside, indigenous migrants have conquered the urban centres in Peru through powerfully built grassroots' organisations that have converted coastal deserts into urban areas with access to basic services. But, the destruction of their organisations during the internal conflict in the 1980s and early 1990s, the elimination of their leaders, the 'cooption' that came after with the Fujimori government, and the overall feeling of alienation from the system that followed, together with the low levels of self-esteem and high levels of distrust that resulted from a deep perception of discrimination have nurtured a 'pragmatic' and 'individual' approach among indigenous migrants. Indigenous people, both in rural and urban areas, are disillusioned with politics and tend to believe that in a context of corrupt and contaminated politicians, politics brings nothing but disappointment. Only personal efforts are left as a means of improving social status. The cases of Alejandro Toledo and Ollanta Humala have had the effect of reinforcing this exaltation of individual solutions through "old strategies" (education and the army respectively) that have already proved to be ineffective, except for the few (Figueroa, 2007).

In short, neither in the countryside nor in the urban centres to which they have migrated, have indigenous people found it useful to build political claims around ethnic identity or to shift from class-based identity organisations to indigenous ones, as has happened in other countries in Latin America. Rather, they have rather organised along different lines, where ethnic identity plays only a 'covert' and 'hidden' role.

5. Conclusions

Migration, the collapse of the estate system and the introduction of universal suffrage have progressively closed the gaps in electoral participation in the country and 'new' people, 'new' names, rarely encountered there before, are present today in the state bureaucracy. However, the arrival of this more diverse bureaucracy and of new groups in the political arena has not yet brought to public attention, the urgent need to combat severe historical inequalities between indigenous and non-indigenous people in the country. Weak indigenous political participation largely explains this situation.

The paper looks at different mechanisms to explain the weak political participation of indigenous people in Peru. On the one hand, it considers the political processes that have imposed tremendous barriers on all Peruvians, but particularly on indigenous people, making it extremely difficult for them to organise beyond their local communities; and on the other hand it analyses the arbitrary construction of 'subjective' and 'discriminatory' ethnic boundaries (*indio/mestizo*) that have led indigenous people to strategic 'denials' in order to avoid discrimination.

Since the 1960s, the state's authoritarian attempts to modernise the countryside and the internal war that followed have weakened and challenged the opportunities for indigenous people to organise autonomously. The war "beheaded" indigenous leadership, destroyed transcommunal associations and closed off associational opportunities. In parallel, indigenous people rejected a prejudiced and racist conception of 'indianness' in which indigenous cultures were encapsulated as 'backwards', and Indians, therefore, as rural and poor. Indigenous people in Peru, both in the countryside and in urban areas, have taken 'strategic' decisions to avoid discrimination. They have become urban and literate, but they have also, to a large extent, resisted total acculturation and the loss of their original and diverse cultures. The *cholo* category and the "cholofication" of culture is a result of this re-creation. However, in a very prejudiced society, the terrain in which this culture develops is a very ambiguous and conflictual one. Boundaries across categories – Indian, *cholo*, *mestizo* – are fluid and largely in the hands of 'the other'.

The embedded discrimination that affects indigenous people as a group in both urban and rural areas and their strong awareness of this discrimination, as well as their rejection of

indigenous identity (even if it is strategic), weaken indigenous politics and undermine the links of solidarity and social capital that any type of collective action requires to some extent in order to succeed, whether it is organised along ethnic lines or not. When that happens, distrust, conflict and revenge become easy instruments for radical discourses, which exacerbate the contradictions and use conflict to feed their violent projects, as *Sendero* did. Moreover, when community solidarity and trust is repeatedly weakened by the humiliation of peoples' cultural identity, organisations are less likely to emerge and to build channels to express their demands. This situation may reinforce the power of authoritarian and *personalistic* leadership, which openly or symbolically appeals to people's ethnic grievances, as Humala did in the 2007 elections.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ Humala's vote in the Southern Highland regions, where most urban and rural indigenous people live, ranged from 70% in Puno to 83% in Ayacucho.

6. References

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