

Fluid identities: Exploring ethnicity in Peru

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Abstract

This paper analyses information about salient ethnic identities collected through a survey applied in three areas of Peru in August 2005, and through follow-up interviews in June 2006. It explores the fluidity of ethnic identity in Peru and the role of persistent prejudice against the indigenous population in the country. The cases examined also provide insights into different perceptions of the effects and consequences of the salient ethnic identities. Finally, it attempts to contribute some insights to explain the relative lack of engagement in political action in the country, whether ethnically driven or not.

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Table of Contents

1. Introduction	2
2. Salient identities revealed by the survey	4
2.1 Language	7
2.2 Geography.....	8
2.3 Skin Colour.....	8
3. Prejudice against cholos and indigenous.....	10
3.1 Evidence of prejudice from the survey	11
3.2 Being the subject of prejudice.....	13
3.3 Prejudice against indians	15
3.4 Prejudice against serranos	16
4. Perceptions about the consequences of ethnic identity.....	19
4.1 Perceptions about the effects of ethnicity on employment and education.....	20
4.2 Perceptions about the effects of ethnicity on political power	22
5. Political mobilisation and lack of political engagement	27
6. Conclusions.....	30
7. References.....	32

List of Figures

Figure 1a: Salient identities by cases (%)	5
Figure 1b: Perception of being minority or majority by cases (%)	5
Figure 2: Do you believe racial and cultural characteristics affect one's chances of getting access to public or private jobs?	20
Figure 3: Which ethnic groups do you believe have power in the following institutions? (%)	23
Figure 4: Self-perception of power across ethnic groups and institutions (%)	24
Figure 5: Perception of discrimination across localities and ethnic groups	26
Figure 6: Engagement in 'uncontroversial' and 'controversial' forms of political action (%)	28
Figure 7: Percentage of people who consider it useful to have a link with the following entities	28

List of Tables

Table 1: Characteristics of the Salient Ethnic Groups in each case study (%)	6
Table 2: Language and self-identification of the household head (%)	7
Table 3: Self-perception of skin colour across ethnic groups and localities	9
Table 4: Characteristics of those with and without prejudice against <i>indigenous</i> and <i>cholos</i> (%)	13
Table 5: Which ethnic groups do you believe have power in the following institutions? (%)	25

Fluid identities: Explaining ethnicity in Peru

By Maritza Paredes¹

1. Introduction

This paper analyses information about salient ethnic identities collected through a survey carried out in Peru in August of 2005, with follow-up interviews in June of 2006². It explores the persistence of prejudice against the indigenous population in the country and the various consequences of ethnicity. Finally, it attempts to contribute some insights to explain the relative lack of engagement in political action in the country, whether ethnically driven or not.

Ethnicity is complicated to analyse because it never comes “clean”. Both the survey and the interviews oblige us to confront its subjective and context-specific nature. The various approaches in the literature on ethnicity do not, on their own, give us the framework we need. The exclusive emphasis of some writers on the immutability of inherited ethnic and racial identities -- in which conflict is presented as unavoidable -- does not seem suitable for understanding emergent categories such as *cholo*³ or *mestizo* (person of mixed European and non-European parentage). Nor does an understanding of ethnicity in terms of individual strategies based on common interests, where conflict appears as the result of differences, which leaders capitalise on, seem able to explain by itself the absence of ethnic mobilisation in Peru, given the existence of deep and enduring horizontal inequalities in the country⁴. Finally, an exclusive emphasis on the role of historical and institutional processes does very little to explain the relative absence of mobilisation in Peru, compared to Bolivia and Ecuador, or the absence of ethnic consciousness, compared to Guatemala, given that Peru underwent similar historical processes to these countries.⁵

A separate literature focusing on the processes and context of ethnic identity formation provides us with a more comprehensive framework for understanding

¹ We would like to acknowledge significant comments and suggestions from the CRISE team, particularly Corinne Caumartin, Frances Stewart and Rosemary Throp and the valuable collaboration of Jazmin Angeles and Maria Teresa Gonzales from the Universidad Católica del Perú for the interviews.

² The survey was designed by the Centre for Research on Inequality, Human Security and Ethnicity at the University of Oxford and the Facultad de Ciencias Sociales of the Universidad Católica del Perú with the aim of exploring the role of ethnicity in prevailing horizontal inequalities and its association with political conflict, in violent or non-violent form. It was applied to 615 people in three localities: Bambamarca in Cajamarca in the North Highlands; Huanta in Ayacucho in the Central Highlands; and San Juan de Lurigancho in the capital city.

³ A broad and ‘fluid’ word use of somebody of ‘indigenous origin’ living in the city. Depending on the context, it can have positive and negative meanings, but it is frequently used in a pejorative sense.

⁴ Stewart (2001) introduced the term ‘horizontal inequalities’ (HIs) to refer to inequalities between groups, mostly defined in cultural terms such as ethnic, religious, caste-based, and in some contexts racial groups. The concept of horizontal inequality differs from the ‘standard’ definition of inequality (which we term ‘vertical inequality’) because the latter lines individuals or households up vertically and measures inequality over the range of individuals rather than groups. HIs are multidimensional and encompass economic, social, cultural status and political dimensions. For a recent study of these HIs in Peru, see Figueroa and Barrón (2005)

⁵ For primordialist theories, see Eller & Coughlab 1993, Grosby 1994 and Van den Berghe 1995. For instrumentalist approaches, see Bates 1983, Hardin 1992, 1995 and Waters 1990 and for theories emphasising the power of external (generally historic) processes, such as modernisation, decolonisation, the construction of nationhood and others, see Vail 1989, Comaroff & Comaroff 1992, Ignatieff 1994 and Wilmer 1997.

these problems.⁶ Ethnic identity in Peru has been transformed through significant processes, such as *mestizaje* and migration, and as a consequence of these transformations, we are permanently struggling with an understanding of ‘continuities’ and ‘changes’ in ethnic identity in Peru. These processes have not only altered the way different groups see themselves and others, but the context in which groups develop, change, and relate to each other. If we want to understand ethnic identity in Peru today, it is not useful to force relationships between peoples’ perception of their current ethnic identity and supposedly ‘ancient markers’, whether they be language or culture. We need to explore the different levels or expressed forms of identification with (or non-identification with/negative feelings towards) a specific ethnic category today, the possible values attached to an individual’s own group or to others’ groups, and the perception of how an individual’s group is seen by others.

It must be acknowledged that it is not possible for us to address all these aspects without additional research, but our material allows us to contribute some important insights to the study of ethnicity in Peru. The survey and the interviews bring important insights on how ethnic prejudice is important for a better understanding of the elements behind flexible forms of ‘ethnic categorisation’ in the country today. They also permit us to explore in this context how people perceive the various consequences of ethnicity on their life.

Before embarking on the analysis, we present the methodology. We analysed the database of a survey designed by CRISE and carried out by the Facultad de Ciencias Sociales of the Universidad Católica del Perú. The survey interviewed 615 people in three localities: Bambamarca in Cajamarca in the North Highlands; Huanta in Ayacucho in the Central Highlands; and San Juan de Lurigancho in the capital city (see map in Appendix 1). In addition, we carried out 30 in-depth interviews (10 in each of these localities) one year after the survey with a randomly selected sub-sample of the survey’s original population. Pseudonyms are provided to protect the real identity of our sources and numbers are provided for the purposes of identification.⁷

The three cases were chosen to contribute to the broader research agenda of CRISE, which aims to explore the role of ethnicity in prevailing horizontal inequalities and its association with political conflict, in violent or non-violent form. Huanta in Ayacucho – which includes the districts of Huanta (40,000 inhabitants) and Luricocha (5,700 inhabitants) and which experienced a high level of penetration by Sendero Luminoso (Communist Party of Peru Shining Path⁸) – provided a case in

⁶ There is a vast literature on ethnicity that seeks to understand the cultural context in which group differences are perceived; an important part of this literature has been based on a cognitive approach to the process of categorising, interpreting and framing ethnic categories. What this approach adds to the discussion of categorisation of race, ethnic groups and nations is further interrogations such as how, when and why people interpret social experience in racial, ethnic or national terms. The most important contributions made by this literature have been: 1) the attention to self-classification and the classification of (and by) others; and 2) the levels (individual, interactional and institutional) and the context in which categorisation occurs (See: Barth 1969, Tajfel & Turner 1986, Jenkins 1997, Brubaker et al 2004 and others).

⁷ All interviews were conducted in Spanish and recorded in note form. Only a few interviewees allowed us to record their testimonies. In order to report the interviews in this paper, we use double quotation marks when we translate and reproduce testimonies; single quotation marks are used for paraphrasing and emphasising ideas.

⁸ Shining Path was the Maoist-inspired party that initiated the internal conflict in Peru in the early 80s. Their actions have largely been controlled since the capture of the movement’s leader, Abimael Guzman, in September 1992.

which conflict took place, while Bambamarca in Cajamarca (74,000 inhabitants) represented a case in which almost no conflict was registered, with hardly any sign of Sendero presence. In both cases, urban and rural areas were considered in order to capture variation in the degree of heterogeneity. In addition, a third case was selected in the capital city in order to sample something of the greater heterogeneity of the country in ethnic and class terms. The case comprises two migrant communities, predominantly from Huanta in Ayacucho, in San Juan de Lurigancho with almost 1 million inhabitants: Huanta Uno (2,450 inhabitants) and Huanta Dos (1,750 inhabitants).

In addition, the cases of Huanta and Bambamarca vary in the degree of *mestizaje* found. In Bambamarca, a more intense and earlier process of intermarriage with European migrants in the region had an impact on ethnic characteristics, such as language and forms of organisation. As a consequence, the Quechua language has to a large extent disappeared there, and people with lighter skin predominate⁹. In Huanta, the process of *mestizaje* has been less extreme, particularly for highlanders, and some indigenous characteristics have remained, such as the Quechua language, traditions, clothes and forms of social organisation. Our case in Lima is more heterogeneous in terms of ethnic background as a result of the process of migration.¹⁰ The experience of violence during the internal conflict of the 1980s made the circumstances of migration very different in the two settlements in San Juan de Lurigancho in Lima. Huanta Uno, which comprises the relatively better off from the valley, those who – owning houses and land – were able to sell up and fund a better establishment in Lima. The poorer migrants of Huanta Dos – mainly smallholders and villagers – fleeing from even more traumatic experiences, left their homes with family members dead or missing, livestock destroyed and land abandoned (Munoz, Paredes and Thorp 2005). However, the survey did not, by any means, sample the full heterogeneity of Peru in terms of ethnicity and class. It did not cover people living in ‘core Lima’, where most of the white and rich live, or rural areas at high altitudes where migration and *mestizaje* has been less intense.

This paper is organised in four sections. Section 2 analyses the salient ethnic identities revealed by the survey; Section 3 shows the persistence of prejudice against the indigenous population in the country; Section 4 explores the various consequences of ethnic identity; and Section 5 concludes, with an attempt to contribute some insights on the issue of the relative lack of political engagement in the country.

2. Salient identities revealed by the survey

We asked rather carefully in the survey about identity in terms of ethnic origin, using racial or cultural origin as a proxy for ethnicity¹¹. The result of such self-identification

⁹ Cajamarca is probably the best-known place in Peru where it is possible to find light-skinned people across all income levels. In the rest of the country, lighter skin tends to overlap with better levels of income.

¹⁰ A dramatic process of migration occurred in Peru between the 1950s and the 1990s. Migrants looking for employment, better living conditions and, latterly, refuge went mainly from the provinces of the Sierra to Lima. As a result, Lima today has 30% of all Peruvian residents (7,829,436 out of 26,152,265) and the change in distribution from rural to urban has been profound (the urban population rose from 47% in 1961 to an estimated 70% in 1990) (INEI 2001).

¹¹ As in Peruvian society the concepts of ethnicity and race have been and continue to be very much suppressed, a card offering options was used. The question was phrased as follows: A lot of people think that the racial or cultural groups living in Peru are the following: (1) indigenous/Andean, (2) Amazonian, (3) black or *Zambos*, (4) whites, (5) *cholos*, (6)

was: 18% *indigenous/Andean* (N=108); 9% *white* (N=54); 18% *cholo* (N=108) ;and 54% *mestizo* (N=330).¹² We do not include in this analysis the tiny proportion of people who self-identified as *black*, *Chinese/Japanese* and *amazonico* (N=15). These proportions are only applicable to our own sample and cannot be extrapolated to the country as a whole, because the survey was not designed to represent the entire population of Peru, but to explore ethnic identity in the three cases selected.

An analysis of self-classification across our cases (localities) shows the differences we would expect. Huanta in Ayacucho and SJL in Lima show larger ethnic differentiation than Bambamarca in Cajamarca. Figure 1a shows the distribution of each salient ethnic group in the three cases and Figure 1b presents the proportion of people who consider their ethnic group to be among the two most important groups in their community (in a majority). Table 3 shows the most important characteristics of the salient categories regrouped into two majors groups: whites-*mestizos* and *cholos*-indigenous¹³. Significant differences are found among ethnic groups in Lima for all variables with the exception of education.

Figure 1a: Salient identities by cases (%)

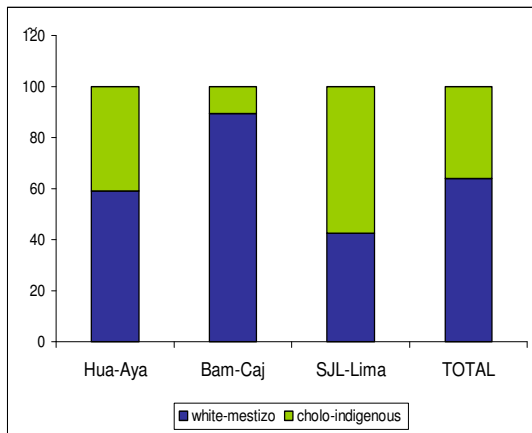
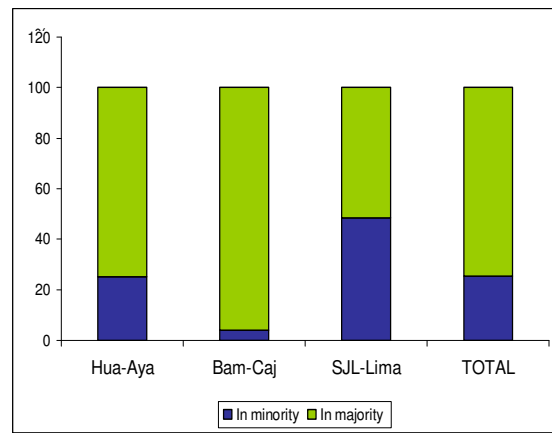


Figure 1b: Perception of being minority or majority by cases (%)



Note: Total = 600; Bambamarca =200; Huanta=210; SJL-Lima=190. Source: CRISE Survey-Peru. Universidad Catolica del Peru

mestizos, (7) Chinese or Japanese and (8) others. Using this list, if you had to define which of these groups you belong to, which would it be?

¹² In the course of the analysis we will call these four groups *white*, *mestizo*, *cholo* and *indigenous/Andean* in italics for simplicity.

¹³ Similar characteristics have been found within each pair, *white-mestizo* and *cholo*-indigenous.

Table 1: Characteristics of the Salient Ethnic Groups in each case study (%)

Region of Birth (at provincial level)	Huanta (Aya)			Bambamarca (Caj)			SJL (Lim)		
	Whi-Mes	Cho-Ind	Tot	Whi-Mes	Cho-Ind	Tot	Whi-Mes	Cho-Ind	Tot
							<i>(significant at 95%)</i>		
Sierra	96.8	98.8	97.6	97.8	100.0	98.00	44.4	68.8	58.4
Lima	2.4	1.2	1.9	0.0	0.00	0.00	45.7	19.2	30.5
Costa	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.2	0.00	2.00	4.9	11.0	8.4
Selva	0.8	0.0	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.9	0.9	2.6
Tot (100%)	124	86	210	179	21	200	81	109	190
Place of Birth*							<i>(significant at 95%)</i>		
Lima	2.6	0.0	1.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	51.6	20.9	35.9
Core	5.2	1.2	3.5	2.3	9.5	3.0	9.4	14.9	12.2
Periphery	92.2	98.8	95.0	97.8	90.5	97	39.5	64.2	51.9
Tot (100%)	116	84	200	178	21	199	64	67	131
Migration							<i>(significant at 95%)</i>		
To Lima	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	54.3	80.7	0.7
Internal	34.7	27.9	31.9	9.0	9.5	9.0			
Didn't migrate	65.3	72.1	68.1	91.0	90.5	91.0	45.7	19.3	0.3
Tot (100%)	124	86	210	179	21	200	81	109	190
Quechua							<i>(significant at 95%)</i>		
Speaks	95.7	97.7	96.2	0.6	0.0	0.5	27.2	50.5	40.5
Doesn't speak	4.8	2.3	3.8	99.4	100.0	99.5	72.8	49.5	59.5
Tot (100%)	124	86	210	179	21	200	81	109	190
Education							<i>(significant at 95%)</i>		
None	0.0	4.6	1.9	16.8	4.8	15.5	1.2	0.0	0.5
Completed primary	22.6	32.6	26.7	44.7	19.1	42.0	11.1	13.8	12.6
Completed secondary	46.0	36.1	41.9	19.5	33.2	21.0	58.0	56.9	57.4
Some post-secondary	31.4	26.7	29.5	19.0	42.9	21.5	29.7	29.4	29.5
Tot (100%)	124	86	210	179	21	200	81	109	190

Notes: (*) Core is a capital province and periphery, a non-capital province. Source: CRISE Survey-Peru. PUCP.

2.1 Language

An analysis of language, one of the most frequent ethnic proxies used in Peru, shows that about half of our sample speaks Quechua, with 30% learning it as a maternal language and 17% as an additional language within the family. On average, *whites* have the lowest percentage of Quechua speakers (28%); followed by *mestizos* (38%), *cholos* (53%) and *indigenous* (76%). What is revealing is the presence of Quechua speakers across all self-defined ethnic categories in Ayacucho and Lima. Quechua is not spoken in Bambamarca. A large majority in Huanta (96%) said they spoke Quechua, including those who self-defined as *white* or *mestizo* (100% and 95% respectively). In the case of SJL in Lima, our more heterogeneous case, 41% speak Quechua, and although the percentage of *whites* and *mestizos* speaking the language (25% and 28% respectively) is significantly smaller than the percentage of *cholos* and *indigenous* (41% and 62% respectively), Quechua speakers are found across all categories. This leads us to understand that speaking Quechua in Huanta in Ayacucho, and to some extent in SJL in Lima, does not determine ethnic identity. In order to examine this result further we analysed the National Household Survey of 2001 (ENAH0) which asks for ethnic identity and we found that in regions where indigenous language predominates, both those who self-define as indigenous and those who do not speak Quechua (Table 2).

Table 2: Language and self-identification of the household head (%)

Household heads with indigenous language	Region	Self-identification		Total
		Non-Indigenous	Indigenous	
More than 70%	Apurimac	0.92	1.00	0.99
	Puno	0.80	0.98	0.97
	Ayacucho	0.77	0.99	0.96
	Huancavelica	0.84	0.99	0.95
	Cusco	0.81	0.98	0.94
More than 30% and less than 70%	Huanuco	0.42	0.92	0.72
	Ancash	0.18	0.98	0.62
	Arequipa	0.18	0.89	0.55
	Madre de Dios	0.17	0.94	0.54
	Junin	0.27	0.79	0.52
	Pasco	0.37	0.70	0.52
Less than 30%^a	Moquegua	0.10	0.80	0.38
	Average	0.06	0.47	0.12

Source: Enaho 2001. Notes: ^a Ica, Lima, Loreto, Callao, Ucayali, San Martin, Tacna, Amazonas, Lambayeque, Tumbes, Piura, La Libertad and Cajamarca

Language does not therefore seem useful for distinguishing power relations and subsequent socio-economic inequalities among different ethnic groups, for instance *mestizos* and indigenous. It is important to remember that as recently as 35 years ago, and for several centuries before that, the use of both languages (Spanish and Quechua/Aymara) was an important source of power for *gamonales*¹⁴ (*mestizos* or whites), as few indigenous people spoke Spanish. The use of both languages

¹⁴ Exploitative landlord, generally from the Sierra

enabled Sierra landlords to become the main intermediaries between marginalised indigenous groups and the central authorities.¹⁵

This information helps us to understand why the relationship between language and self-identification in our sample is flexible across localities. It is more likely that a person who speaks Quechua in SJL in Lima will report him or herself as *cholo* or *indigenous* than a Quechua speaker in Huanta in Ayacucho (71% vs. 41%). This difference is quite considerable and it increases slightly if we narrow the analysis to those who reported Quechua as their first language (80% vs 46%). A knowledge of Quechua may be an ethnic trait in Lima, but it is not one in Ayacucho

2.2 Geography

Geography is another proxy used to make ethnic categorisations. Recently, Figueroa and Barrón (2005) used the variable “core-periphery”, based on place of birth, to differentiate between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples in Peru and to study the socio-economic dimensions of horizontal inequality¹⁶. As our survey was carried out in two non-capital provinces of the sierra and two settlements of migrant population in Lima, it is not surprising that 85% of those surveyed were born in non-capital provinces, 5% in capital provinces and 10% in Lima. And as non-capital provinces have been predominantly agricultural in Peru, in our survey, being born in the periphery is strongly correlated with having a peasant father (95%). According to Barrón’s and Figueroa’s criteria, we have a sample with a predominantly indigenous population, whether they went through an early process of *mestizaje*, which led to the loss of their indigenous language or to mixed skin colour as in Cajamarca, or they transformed their identity through migration, as in our case in Lima, with 70% migrants from the sierra.

While this proxy gives a closer approximation than native language to ethnic identity in Peru, our cases show that people ‘born in the periphery’ tend to self-define themselves differently across localities. Among people born in the periphery, those now living in Lima are more likely to perceive themselves as *cholo* or *indigenous* (63%) than those living today in Ayacucho (43%). Ultimately, almost none of those in Cajamarca perceive themselves in this way (only 9%).

2.3 Skin Colour

A question about self-perception of skin colour was included in the survey, using a scale from 1 to 7, where 1 is *indigenous* colour and 7 is *white*.¹⁷ On average, *whites* see themselves as *lighter* compared with *mestizos* (5.4 vs. 3.7). *Cholos* feel almost identical to *mestizos* with respect to their skin colour (3.65); but they feel lighter skinned than *indigenous* (2.64). Again, perceptions about skin colour vary among ethnic groups according to where they currently live. *Whites* living in SJL in Lima are likely to feel darker than *whites* living in Bambamarca and Huanta. In contrast, *indigenous* and *cholos* are likely to feel darker if they currently live in Huanta than *indigenous* and *cholos* in Lima. The exceptions are the *cholos* and *indigenous* in Bambamarca. *Mestizos* do not reveal differences: they believe themselves to be in the middle of the skin-colour scale in the three places. See table No. 2.

¹⁵ De la Cadena 2000, Borricoud 1970, and Cotlear 1970.

¹⁶ This includes people born in Lima-Periphery, where most migrants live; outside the provincial core (capital province) in the northern Andes, where Spanish predominates; and the central Andes, where Quechua and Aymara predominate.

¹⁷ This question was based on the methodology used in Ñopo et al. (2004).

Table 3: Self-perception of skin colour across ethnic groups and localities
mean of the scale Indigenous (1) to white (7)

<i>Ethnic identity</i>	<i>Hua-Aya</i>	SJL-Lim
Indigenous (**)	2.1	3
Cholo (**)	2.8	4.1
Mestizo (**)	3.4	3.9
White	5.3	4.9
TOTAL	210	190

(**) differences are significant at 95% level

In assessing these three variables, our first conclusion is that moving to or living in Lima raises self-awareness of ethnic traits. This is confirmed in our interviews: people living in Lima or ‘cosmopolitan’ Peruvians,¹⁸ described how new and recreated markers and traits emerge there. For instance, Simon, a 35-year-old man from Bambamarca, who sees himself as *cholo*, is a good example. He told us that he never felt himself to be a *cholo* when he was young. When he first arrived in Lima, to San Juan de Lurigancho, at the age of 15, he heard people calling him *cholo* or *Serrano*. He also learned from observing in public buses how people rejected a woman in typical dress, calling her “*serrana*” and “*chola*” and “complaining about her llama odour” [8].

Another interesting example shows us that Lima may represent a higher degree of “whiteness” even for *white* or *mestizo* people living in the migrant community of SJL in Lima. Florencia, a women who considered herself white, lives in a neighbourhood that is mostly *cholo* in Lima but works in the well-off residential district of San Isidro. She observed differences between her “whiteness” and that of her colleagues’ in San Isidro: when talking about her place of work, she called herself “*clara*” (light-skinned) instead of “white” and her colleagues “white”; she described her boss’ characteristics as “tall, white and with fair hair” [28]. It is not difficult to think that in a largely differentiated society, where most of the *whites* (the rich and more educated) live, the deeper the contrast, the stronger the awareness of people of their ethnic traits and of the way they are seen by others.¹⁹

The interviews also help deepen our understanding of how “geography” and “skin colour” play a major role in defining ethnicity, more so than other elements, such as language. The ‘sierra’ becomes the common ‘place of origin’ in which both *indigenous* and *cholos* find the foundation of their ethnic identity: ‘we came from the sierra’. Some see the two categories, *indigenous* and *cholo*, as the same, precisely because they share this ‘geographical origin’. However some indigenous people prefer to stress some differences, suggesting a degree of superiority of the *serrano*

¹⁸ The word cosmopolitan generally describes an environment where many cultures from around the world coexist, or a person whose cultural and identity baggage comes from many different cultures. Its sense overlaps to some extent with citizen of the world, implying identification with a world community rather than with a particular nation or people. In Peru, the term cosmopolitan refers to an individual who identifies with different spaces and cultures in Peru. She or he will have travelled to other regions for work, including Lima; will have interacted with people from other regions, and moved from his or her little province to the largest cities, or has returned to his or her town of birth.

¹⁹ We studied mainly *serrano* people from small towns but few ‘rural highlanders’. Therefore, we cannot say if moving to these small towns raises the same self-awareness for these latter groups as moving to Lima does for the former.

over the *cholos*²⁰. The *cholos*, in addition to their emphasis on the geographical element, seem to be more aware of their ethnic traits and of being the subject of disdain because of them. However, they express a special pride in having overcome these humiliations. With very few exceptions [13], *mestizos* and *whites* did not mention their *serrano* origin in the interviews and most explained their self-defined categories by referring to the nature of their skin (mixed or “*morenito(a)*”). Yet, among *mestizos* and *whites*, poor peasant women, mainly in Bambamarca, had great trouble understanding the concept of ethnic identity.

The survey and interviews oblige us to confront the subjective and context-specific nature of ethnicity in Peru. Long-term processes, such as *mestizaje* and migration, have had a profound impact on ethnic identity, and as a result, it has become very flexible and difficult to capture. In this situation, it does not seem useful to try to force connections between people’s current ethnic identities and their ‘ancient origins’. Nor does it seem correct to believe that the only result of *mestizaje* has been ethnic homogenisation and the dilution of ethnic traits in a ‘melting pot’ where only class differences matter. It seems even more erroneous to believe that people do not perceive ethnic differences any more and do not create new ethnic divisions. Motivated by these difficulties and by the rich testimonies that we gathered in our three cases, we attempt in the next section to explore how ethnic identity is expressed in our cases and what role prejudice plays in the way people make ethnic differentiations or feel they are classified (characterised) by others.

3. Prejudice against *cholos* and indigenous

The theory of self-categorisation underlines the importance of the perception of others in the construction of the *in-group* identity and, most importantly, how the relation that an individual can establish to the outside world is determined, in part, by the individual’s assessment of how “others” see him or her according to some salient ethnic traits. Many of the case studies looking at the phenomenon of ethnic identity in Latin America and Peru have arrived at the same conclusion²¹. For those reasons, we believe it is particularly important to study ethnic prejudice in Peru.

Prejudice is defined as a hostile attitude toward groups predicated on false, simplistic, over-generalised, or unconscious beliefs. It may be felt or expressed, may be directed toward a group as a whole or toward an individual because he or she is a member of that group (Allport 1954). According to this definition, prejudice has two essential ingredients. First, there must be an attitude (of favour or disfavour) in respect to the characteristics of a group. Second, prejudice must be related to an over-generalised belief about the group itself. A good illustration of these two concepts is shown in some of the survey’s results. The 45% of people who would neither accept their daughter or sister marrying a *cholo* or indigenous, or vote for a

²⁰ Gloria Varillas from Lima self-identifies as indigenous and described the *cholo* more as a person from the city. While she does not express any negative feeling about *cholos*, she said that her parents would [24]. Hildebrando Vargas says that being *cholo* is more common because all Peruvians are *cholo*, but being *serrano* is more specific. He adds that being *cholo* is ‘worse than’ *serrano*, *cholo* is more ‘*criollo*’ [30]. ‘*Criollo*’ is a term frequently used to refer to people who know how to avoid the rules.

²¹ The imposition or pressure from outside in the self-definition or self-categorisation of social identity has been largely studied in social psychology, as has been noted previously. See: extensive work by M. Hogg, particularly with McGarty (1990) and with D. Abrams (1988). These studies have rarely interacted with macro political explanations of ethnicity. Efforts in this direction have been made by Green & Seher (2003) and Brubaker, Loveman & Stamatov (2004). In Peru, Portocarrero (1993), De la Cadena (2000) and Mendez M (1996) have done interesting work in this direction.

cholo or indigenous running for Congress, illustrate the attitudinal factor of a prejudice. The 48% that placed *cholo* and indigenous groups in the lowest levels of a violent (1)-peaceful (7) scale are expressing the belief factor.

Commonly we tend to make overgeneralisations or misconceptions in our everyday life, but not all these simplifications turn into prejudices. For instance, we avoid insects that are unfamiliar to us, but after proper explanation, we are capable of distinguishing which are still dangerous. Prejudices, however, are conceived when we are not capable of rectifying our judgment under the light of new information and our beliefs acquire a strong resistance to all evidence that would overthrow them (Allport 1954) and have the power to organise our affects and sentiments (Balibar 1988)²². Florencia told us that her mother is against her relationship with a man she considers *cholo*: her mother tells her that “*cholos* are bad men, they abuse women, and they are drunk”. The young woman, who has painfully maintained her relationship for about four years, has introduced her boyfriend to her mother so “she can see that he is not a *cholo*, he is a good person and wants the best for me”, she says, “but my mother does not change her opinion about him, she just does not like him”[28].

In the subsequent parts of this section, we will analyse prejudice against *cholos* and *indigenous* drawing on both the survey and the interviews. First, we will present the results of the survey and second, we will turn to the interviews to explain how people become aware of being the subject of prejudice, particularly in Lima; how strong the prejudice against highlanders and indigenous peasants appears to be in Huanta and Bambamarca; and how prejudice against the Serrano people has been reproduced over time in the country.

3.1 Evidence of prejudice from the survey

The results of the survey are interesting in terms of attitudes toward *cholo* and *indigenous* people. We consider three different questions in the survey to analyse prejudice: (1) would you agree with your daughter or sister marrying a *cholo* or *indigenous*²³, (2) would you vote for a *cholo* or *indigenous* running for Congress and (3) how would you rank *cholos* and *indigenous* on a violent(1)-peaceful(7) scale.

The first question comprises a very strong statement and we expected people would overwhelmingly answer in a “politically correct” way, but still we found that 1 in 6 individuals in our sample would disagree with a marriage between their daughter or sister and a *cholo* or *indigenous* (16%). The percentage of those who disagreed is larger among *whites* and *mestizos* (19%), but still close to 10% among *indigenous* and *cholos*. Education does not make a difference, but age and gender do. The percentage of women who disagree is twice that of men (20% vs. 10%) and disagreement increases with age: 10% in the 18 to 25 age group, 15% in the 26 to 40 age group; and 20% in the 40 to 70 age group.

²² Prejudices are understood as cognitive structures that contain knowledge, beliefs, and expectations about social groups that are deeply rooted in an ordinary cognitive process of the individuals and the groups. Therefore their content is highly variable across cultural settings, over time, and across groups. For an overview of social psychological literature on stereotypes, see Hamilton & Sherman (1994).

²³ We need to be careful with our interpretations. We are not capable of distinguishing between those who would not agree with their daughter or sister marrying a *cholo* or *mestizo* because of prejudice or because they believe they will get on better if they marry “up”.

Greater prejudice is manifested in the second question. Around 1 in 3 individuals in the sample would not vote for a *cholo* or *indigenous* running for Congress (38%). The percentage of *whites* and *mestizos* who would not vote is the largest (43%), but the percentage of *cholos* and *indigenous* who feel the same is also significant (29%). Opposition decreases slightly with education: 50% of those with less than secondary education would not vote in such a way and 31% of those with more than this level would not. Opposition decreases as well among those living in SJL-Lima (47% in Huanta and 45% in Bambamarca vs. 19% in SJL-Lima). There are no differences of opinion between women and men, but willingness to vote for *indigenous* and *cholos* decreases among older respondents.

If we consider both questions together to analyse prejudice, our result shows that 46% of the individuals in our sample have some type of prejudice against *cholos* and *indigenous*. *White* (54%) and *mestizos* (52%) tend to be more prejudiced than *indigenous* (39%) and *cholos* (30%). But among *cholos* and *indigenous*, the latter tend to be more prejudiced about the first than vice versa (30% vs. 22%). *Indigenous* and *cholos* express prejudice against their own group in identical proportions (17%). The proportion of people with an overall prejudice against *mestizos* and *whites* is much lower (25%).

Prejudice is also clearly manifested in the third question related to associations between being *cholo* and *indigenous* and violence. The proportion of people who think that *indigenous* and *cholos* are violent is 48%. *White* (62%) and *mestizos* (53%) tend to be more prejudiced than *cholos* (38%) and *indigenous* (37%) on this subject. Education and gender do not make a difference, but age does: prejudice is greater among older people.

Table 4 shows the profile of those who expressed prejudice against *cholos* and *indigenous* in at least one of the three questions: marriage, vote and violence. In these general terms, *white* and *mestizos* tend to be more prejudiced (when analysed by skin-colour or self-definition, but not by language). The percentage of prejudiced people is larger in Bambamarca and Huanta than in Lima and prejudice is also more predominant among older people than among the young, and among women rather than men. Surprisingly, education does not make a significant difference.

Table 4: Characteristics of those with and without prejudice against *indigenous* and *cholos* (%)

Characteristics	With Prejudice	Without Prejudice	Total No
Ethnic Self-definition			
<i>White-Mestizo</i>	77%	23%	384
<i>Indigenous-Cholo</i>	55%	45%	216
Skin-colour			
Mean of scale: 1(<i>ind</i>)-7(<i>whi</i>),	4.02	3.00	
Locality			
<i>Huanta</i>	72%	28%	210
<i>Bambamarca</i>	77%	23%	200
<i>SJL-Lima</i>	58%	42%	190
Age			
18-25	62%	38%	195
26-40	70%	30%	207
40-70	75%	25%	198
Gender			
<i>Female</i>	72%	28%	317
<i>Male</i>	66%	44%	283
TOTAL	414	186	600

Source: CRISE Survey-Peru. Universidad Catolica del Peru.

3.2 Being the subject of prejudice

We carefully asked in the interviews about why people would not agree to their daughter or sister marrying a *cholo* or *indigenous*, and why they would not vote for somebody belonging to either of these groups. People did not seem comfortable addressing these types of questions. Only Elvira Macedo, a 27-year-old *mestiza* women, who told us that her grandfather had advised her never to allow anybody to put her down because she is a *mestiza* and that she should eat 'red meat' to make her cheeks rosier, was willing to explain. She is married to a *cholo* who is 'a good man'; but she would like somebody 'better' for her daughter, a "*limeñito*", she said. We asked for the difference between a *limeño* and a *cholo*, and she explained to us that a *limeño* is a mix between skin colour and place of origin [23].

While we cannot address these questions directly from our interviews, we can see that our respondents seem to be very aware of negative beliefs associated with the categories *cholo* and *serrano*. It is clear from their narration that this awareness comes from negative experiences, whether they have directly experienced (they have been snubbed as *cholo* or *Serrano* with an offensive intention) or witnessed.²⁴ On other occasions, they have realised that they have been excluded from certain circles. Marco from Bambamarca, who travelled to Lima to study, told us: "the children *de bien* never joined the groups of provincials, *serranos* or *cholos*... there was a hidden behaviour going on ... people from the sierra look more aggressive, but

²⁴ See Interviews with Marco Balbín, Bambamarca [1], Pablo Cavero, Bambamarca [5], Simon Barreto, Bambamarca [8], Jorge Pajuelo, Bambamarca [10], Beatriz Calderon, Huanta [13], Eliana Cabrera, Huanta [16], Soledad Tello, Huanta [18], Jacinta Cáceres, Huanta [19], Julio Aguilar, SJL [21], Agustin Carrasco, SJL [29] and Hildebrando Vargas, SJL [30].

it is because they are defensive, they do not remain silent. I think it is because they feel rejected. They do not say it, but a *serrano* feels it" [1]. Harold, from Huanta and studying in Lima, said: "there is in the Conservatory a group of friends that are always together, they are from Lima and the majority are *white* and fair-haired, they have studied together in school... they do not join the rest and are given preferential treatment in the Conservatory... my friends are mostly from the provinces" [17]. Finally, we can identify an awareness of 'being visible'. Julio, 48, a *cholo* living in Lima, told us that when he walks in the street in residential places such as Miraflores or San Isidro he feels that people look at him. When asked how, he replied 'as a *cholo*' [21]. Soledad, a 38-year-old teacher from Huanta, told us that she went to work in Lima for one year as a maid when she was 17 years old. She received good treatment from the family, but she felt that people looked at her as *serrana* with contempt or disdain [18]. Elvira told us of her experiences in residential areas in Lima where she worked as a maid. When she arrived in La Molina she "felt fear, embarrassed, different, observed, and intimidated". She could never talk in a relaxed way with her employer, even when it was necessary to explain her non-attendance at work to keep her job. Her silence prompted anger on the part of her female boss, who pulled her hair and fired her without pay. On another occasion, she tried to sell some goods in the streets of Miraflores and felt the same: "embarrassed, observed, without words". Now, she prefers to take her daughter for entertainment to other places, such as the Park of Huachipa and the *Parque de las Leyendas* (zoo) [23], places packed with migrants during the weekends. Whether the rejection is intended in ethnic terms or not, the way in which people receive it has a strong ethnic component.

Not all those interviewed felt the same. Some were completely unaware of any type of second thoughts about them. This group has two characteristics. First, they are mainly cajamarquino women (and to a lesser extent from Huanta) with little experience of travelling to the coastal cities or Lima. When they did travel, they visited their families and were not looking for jobs. Second, they are the type of cajamarquino with lighter skin, which probably minimises the visible traits that tend to serve as the "condensing rod" for prejudice.²⁵ Lilian, a 35-year-old woman from Bambamarca, described herself as "fairly *white*, fair and with brown eyes". Two years ago she had visited her cousin in Lima for the second time. In her memory, he used to live in a small house with straw-mat walls, but now both the house and neighbourhood were prettier. She had been treated with affection in Lima, but she had not left the house very often, only with her cousin to the centre of Lima or to Huachipa (his brother had advised her to avoid going out alone because she might lose her way). She had felt comfortable in Lima and, if Lima offered jobs, she would like to move there with her family [2]. Another example is Judith, a *mestizo* women who said that her father was a little bit darker but her mother was *white* with red hair. She said she had visited not only Lima, but also cities such as Cajamarca and Trujillo (always visiting relatives). In all the places, she had felt very well and had not felt any discrimination. She said she would not like to move to Lima because there are too many cars and life is different, although her children study there and she misses them [6]. A third example of this group is Gladys, a *white* women from Bambamarca, who told us that she was "in love with Lima". She travels with her husband and

²⁵ Allport (1954) underlines that a genuine physical difference comes to be regarded as a total (categorical) difference in *kind*. Whether real, such as skin colour, or imaginary, as generally other "sensory" qualities such as odour are, they become a central symbol, a "condensing rod", which enables us to think about another group as a solid unit and attach specific qualities to them. In different cultures or historical times, women were not only thought of as different in appearance, but also in biological nature, less intelligent, less rational and – in some cultures – without a soul.

daughter every year for a vacation and stays for months in the house of her sister in Chorrillos. She goes out with people there, loves "the green places and the parks". Gladys thinks that people in Lima are calm; however, she stressed that she only walks in the central areas (Surco and San Borja); she did not like the suburbs [9].

3.3 Prejudice against indians²⁶

While it is mild in Bambamarca and very strong in Huanta, prejudice against *Indians* (or *chutos* as they are called in Huanta) was reported by people from all three cases. Unfortunately, the survey missed this population; the sample included surrounding rural towns, but upper communities were not reached²⁷. Harold, an *indigenous* 23-year-old student, explained to us what a *chuto* is: "the word '*chuto*' is used to identify a peasant or an *indian* offensively". For him, *cholo* is different; it is the same as *indigenous*. "In Lima everybody is a *cholo*", he emphasises [17]. Jacinta, a 23-year-old *indigenous* woman in Huanta, who considers herself *blanca* (as a way of saying she is fairly *white*), expressed it with more clarity: "there is not much difference between *indigenous* and *cholos*, we both speak quechua; but *chutos* or *indians* are different. They are those who live in the highlands, in the mountains" [19]. For Margarita, a 55-year-old woman in Huanta, being *chola* means being *serrana*, "all Peruvians, we are *cholos*" The *chutos* are different, she affirms. "They are from the 'sleet highlands', don't talk Spanish, don't know how to read and write, and have a special character: they are stubborn" [20].

Bertha, a young primary school teacher, told us that children who come from the highlands are called *chutos* or "the stinking ones", because they do not know how to speak Spanish very well, have an accent, or because of their different appearance or odour. She has listened to her colleagues, especially 'those coming from the city', calling them 'those of the highlands', 'the *chutos*'. She adds that "it is easy to identify them because they wear their *hojotas* (traditional sandals)" [13]. Marco tells us that in Bambamarca people from the city treat peasants in a similar way: "often they insult them, call them ignorant ones, dirty ones". He mainly witnesses these situations on the buses to Cajamarca, since there are no special, or luxury, buses: "people avoid sitting with them, touching them, and peasants realise" [1].

What Harold and Jacinta made clear for us is that being *indigenous* or *cholo* is not the same as being *Indian*. *Indians*, *chutos* or peasants (in the case of Bambamarca) can be seen for the *serrano* people as a specific category different from them, in which the ethnic elements are not lacking. Eliana, a young *white* teacher from Huanta, told us that *chutito* (little *chuto*) is someone who comes from the highlands, with *cobrizo* (copper) or darker skin, trousers of *bayeta* (a cloth material), socks of sheep wool and *hojotas* (typical sandals). She added that these children speak only Quechua and do not understand Spanish very well. The other children, who do not want to learn Quechua, laugh at them and complain to her: "teacher, they do not understand", "they are donkeys" [19]. Beatriz, a *mestizo* teacher in Huanta, described the situation of a 6-year-old girl insulting an *indian* boy, calling him *chuto* and foolish (*bruto*), and making him cry. She said such situations are always happening.

We heard clearly how *indian* children were discriminated against in schools because of their particular ethnic traits. The process of "becoming educated" has not been an easy one, and still is not today. Soledad, a 38-year-old *cholo* teacher in Huanta,

²⁶ Although the word *indio* is not commonly use any more in public and academic literature, it is still used, and with a very well-defined meaning, among the people we interviewed.

²⁷ In order to reach these communities, special transportation is needed. Infrastructure is extremely limited and inadequate.

experienced this discrimination herself. The first year she attended school, she could not speak Spanish very well, and on one occasion, could not do the homework because she had not understood the teacher's instructions. She did not have the strength to explain the reason for her failure and the teacher beat her against the blackboard. The rest of the class laughed and she did not come back to school until the following year. She remembers that her first years at school were not pleasant. The students insulted her because of her language and her parents' occupation (peasants). Only at the end of the second year does she remember feeling more comfortable with Spanish, and better overall. Today, she has forgotten some of her Quechua and speaks a mixture of Quechua and Spanish. However, she is teaching it to her daughter because new job opportunities exist in Huanta for people with a knowledge of Quechua, in the government and in NGOs, she explained [18].

We do not know how these so-called *indians* would self-define. Probably they would not use the word *indian*, and would consider themselves *cholos*, *mestizos*, or even, *whites*. However, for the *serrano* people living in the towns, or closer to them, this group does exist, as an imagined solid category with specific visible traits. They can be easily identified and a series of negative, oversimplified characteristics are associated with them. This serves to justify practices (insults, rejection, intolerance, humiliation and shame) and discourses (ignorant, dirty, bad smelling). These practices and discourses around the stereotype of *indianess* not only organise the feelings and emotions of those who have the prejudice, but also of those who are its victims (Balibar 1991, Kaufman 2001). Beatriz emphasises that "people come to hate Quechua and make their children feel ashamed of their language when they love it" [13]. Marco from Bambamarca agrees with her. He said that "when people discriminate against peasants and laugh about their traditions, the result is loss of self-esteem, of their own culture. The young feel shame and start looking for other accepted forms, alienated ones" [1].

While we cannot say exactly how people feel about or process these situations, or to what degree they happen, we find significant evidence here of the existence of prejudice, discriminatory mechanisms and degrees of acceptability in Peruvian society. In order to avoid being laughed at at school, it is necessary not to speak Quechua any more. Poor peasant parents, who know the suffering produced by the stigma, will not jeopardise their children's learning of Spanish. Consequently, they oppose bilingual education.²⁸ Traditional clothing and traditions are visible traits of the stigma. It does not matter that the clothing is clean, or that students are not allowed to wear it in the school; what matters, is that the other children laugh at them. A level of rupture with one's own community²⁹ and a desire to leave behind the despised ethnic traits (as far as possible) becomes unavoidable.

3.4 Prejudice against serranos

In Lima, prejudice is directed at *cholos* and *serranos*. Eliana complained "in Lima they call the *serrano* people *cholos* because they are from the sierra and in Lima they

²⁸ Eliana [19] and Beatriz [13], both teachers in Huanta, explained to us that bilingual education is not working well in their jurisdiction. On the one hand, parents oppose bilingual education because they want their children to learn Spanish and on the other hand, teachers do not have adequate training. Eliana says that *indian* children speak a different Quechua, 'a hard one' and the teacher's Quechua, is less pure, more mixed with Spanish. They have difficulty understanding and speaking with *indian* children. They also told us that bilingual education is given only in rural areas, but not in the principal schools, where parents want to send their children.

²⁹ The teachers in Huanta told us about peasant parents paying for rooms for their small children to attend primary and secondary school.

see the sierra as backward, but it is not like that. *Cholo* is a negative expression and the *serrano* says, yes, I am *cholo*, just to shut their mouths [16].

According to our interviews, whether a migrant is a “so-called *indian*” or not, he or she will try to speak Spanish and dress in an urban way; if not, without a doubt, someone would quickly appear – very likely another *serrano* – to call them “*cholo*” or “*serrano*”. This is in order to remind them that they are exposing those markers nobody wants to be identified with (Nugent 1992). While some of these traits can be removed, others cannot. Unfortunately, we did not ask about how a *serrano* can be recognised in Lima (what are the visible traits?). Within a community, however, it is enough to know the neighbours’ place of origin. Julio, a 48-year-old *cholo*, living in SJL, told us that he does not like to be called *serrano* or *cholo* because in the neighborhood most people come from the sierra: “why do people only call some of them *cholos*?” He told us that during parties there are fights and people, when drunk, insult each other as “*cholo de mierda*” and “*serrano*”³⁰. He was specific that the *norteños* (from the north coast) are not insulted as *cholos*. The young do not like to be called *cholo*. On the contrary, they want to be seen as *limeños* [21].

Outside the migrant community, in the traditional or residential areas of Lima, the contrast between *serranos* and others can become more pronounced, and other traits become significant. We do not have information from our data to describe those traits; interviews with people living in more residential areas would be needed. Our hypothesis, however, is that traits such as accent, colour of skin and features become more important. However, these can be downplayed through opportunities to change one’s appearance, obtain education or possess some level of wealth. These characteristics all together enable others to distinguish between a new, poor migrant from the sierra and a successful, assimilated *mestizo*³¹. Why is such differentiation important? Eliana gave us a clue: “they think the sierra is backwardness”.

The idea that ‘the sierra is backwardness’ is old rooted in the history of Peru and has persisted through the discourse of a *mestizo* society. However, it is precisely within this discourse of *mestizaje* – based on the greatness of Peruvians’ mixed blood and their Inca and Spanish heritage – that the prejudice has survived. In a much divided society³² a stereotypical picture of both the *indio* and the landlord (the *gamonal*, or *misti*, from the Sierra) was recreated and lasted in Lima and the most important cities of the coast until the first half of the 20th century. Not only the *indians*, about whom we have already learned a lot from our interviews, but also the masters (among them, *whites* and *mestizos*) were associated with the traditional, the archaic, the past, the resistance to modernity³³. There were multiple projects to bring these

³⁰ This is a recurrent theme in the testimony. For example, see interviews in Lima: Julio [21], Elvira [23] and Carlos [27].

³¹ Another hypothesis to explore in a future study is how “rapid changes” are seen. Becoming an accepted, assimilated *mestizo* takes time. Migrants coming back from Miami and Paterson, New Jersey, holding the appearance “card”, such as modern clothing and some relative wealth, constitute another, different group, which is not necessarily well accepted.

³² There is an important literature explaining the dualism of Peruvian society. On the one hand, there is modern sector concentrated in the coast generated 67 percent of the gross domestic product but employed only 35% of the population; and on the other hand, there is a traditional sector concentrated in the Sierra, with small-scale units of low productivity. This resulted in a highly unequal distribution of income and assets. In contrast with the Coast, the Sierra presented severe problems of transport and of poorly yielding land; about half of the population lived in the Sierra in a subsistence economy nurtured by this dualism (Thorp & Bertram 1978, Webb 1977 and others).

³³ De la Cadena (2000, 2001), Mendez (1996) and Nugent (1992). The latter calls this view “countermodernity”. He maintains that this view attributes an archaic identity to social actors

subjects out of the past³⁴. New policies based on an assessment of the “deterioration of the *indian* race” were promoted first by the Civilist Party at the beginning of the 20th century, and later by the *indigenista* movement. The focus was on education and hygiene. After the failure of these policies, the *gamonales* were accused of being responsible for boycotting *indian* integration (Contreras 1996). Later, agrarian reform put the emphasis on the unjust structural foundation of society and the division was made clear: on the one side there were the “landlords”, the abusers; and on the other side there were the “peasants”, the victims. An ethnic dimension to these structures was not acknowledged, but rather ignored and even removed by decree. *Indians* were not to be called *Indians* anymore, but peasants (Davies 1973). While this discourse made landlords the villains, the category of *mestizo* was exalted. The *mestizo* was the new race, embracing all Peruvians; through it, *indians* would find dignity.³⁵

While we are not dealing with a discourse based on the superiority of the biological heredities of certain groups compared to others, the symbols of backwardness and archaism served to transmit beliefs about the incompatibility of life styles and traditions if there was no “transformation”, if a way of becoming “*mestizo*” was not found. The discourse suggested that there was nothing wrong with the sierra or the *serrano* or *cholo* people “in their nature”, but it was necessary for them to overcome the “backwardness” “the irrational”, “the authoritarian” aspects of their culture to become compatible with modern Peru, with the culture of progress. “Culture criteria” replace “nature criteria” (Balibar 1988) to justify the emergence of a new set of prejudices and stereotypes against *serranos* and *cholos*, and physical features remain important because they are visible traits that enable these identifications to be made.³⁶

How people react to this prejudice is a much more complex question. People’s reaction may vary according to the different contexts and circumstances in which they live. However, our interviews allow us to offer some insights that can serve as a useful foundation for further research. The emotion of shame, and the consequences it has for those who feel it, is important in our cases. For instance, as the school teachers Beatriz and Marco pointed out, the humiliation of *indian* children in school may result in a loss of self-esteem, embarrassment at their own culture, and dropping out of school [1] [13].

Prejudice is not only present in Lima; it is also highly present in Huanta and Bambamarca against the indigenous peasants. Urban-based *indigenous* call them ‘indians, *chutos*’ and consider them ‘ignorant’, ‘dirty’, ‘pigs’ ‘stubborn’. The tragedy is

and supports the continuity and reproduction of the discourse that *indians* are backward and violent.

³⁴ These attempts followed disillusion after the failure of immigration policies that aimed to bring into the country more “invigorated races from Europe” to “adjust the biological disequilibrium of our society” because of the predominance of the *indian* race. For a discussion of this period and ideas, see Davies (1973) Mendez (1996), Manrique (2006), and Larson (2004).

³⁵ See De la Cadena (2000) for an explanation of how *mestizos* also maintained a relation of power over the *indians* and for a discussion on the construction of the *mestizo* society, see Mallon (1992).

³⁶ The recent elections in the country have revived all these stereotypes and prejudices in the highlands, and the highest authorities in the country have felt free to make prejudiced comments. The first ministry told the press that it is the lack of oxygen that prevented people from the sierra from making a good and rational decision, referring to the high support enjoyed by candidate Ollanta Humala in these areas. Cited by Degregori C. ‘Inclusión vs. Racismo’ in Peru 21 (July 16, 2006).

that in Lima, the differences between ‘*chutos*’ and the rest of serrano people, which may be very visible in the province, are no longer clearly identifiable. All *serranos* may fall into the same category that is treated with contempt. In these circumstances, denial of group membership to avoid the shame may be the response. They want to suppress their identity when they arrive in Lima and discover that those characteristics that are ascribed to peasants or ‘*chutos*’ in their words, tend to be attached to all *serranos*. As Elvira [23] and Julio [21] illustrate, ‘I am *cholo*, but I don’t want to be called *cholo*’. Another important response is to make clear the differences between these ‘indians’ and themselves: here education becomes a central strategy. Agustin Carrasco, a 52-year-old mechanic in Volkswagen Lima, told us that ‘the *raza cobriza* [copper race] is the race with capacities’. He added that if you are professional, it is difficult for others to treat you badly: “they speak to you with more respect, nobody can *cholear* you [call you *cholo* offensively]”. For him, ‘*cholear*’ is the same as ‘to humiliate’ [29]. However, facing the pressure of colleagues, he felt the need to distinguish himself, an educated *cholo*, from ‘*indians*’: ‘non-educated’, ‘still dressed in their traditional clothes’. He described to us how a couple of *serranos* came to the Volkswagen store to buy a car and his colleagues mocked him, saying: “you go and help your *paisanos* [those from the same place of origin]”. He made clear to us that this couple were a different type of *cholo* from him: “they were dressed in their typical clothing with a sac in the hand”. In order to demonstrate this to his colleagues, he sold the car to the couple for a much higher price. ‘I bought a car with the commission’, he told us proudly [29].

In contrast to these types of responses are the attitudes of Soledad [18] and Marco [1] and others, who self-define as *cholos* and refuse to feel shame. For this group, the awareness of being the subject of prejudice has led them to a new appreciation of their own identity. Soledad was driven to hide her language, but now she is teaching Quechua to her daughter, taking advantage of the new opportunities that are appearing in the Huanta labour market: ‘the State and NGOs are hiring people with knowledge of quechua’ [18]. Marco, a teacher from Bambamarca, is proud of being the son of a peasant. He told us he still goes to work with his father using the *yunta*, an agricultural tool inherited from pre-Spanish cultures. He argues that his trips to Lima and new experiences have helped him to accept his identity, whereas when he was young, he used to feel shame. An important group of our cases, mainly self-defined as *cholos*, acknowledge that the word ‘*cholo*’ is used to humiliate and insult by the wider world, but their response does not involve shame, it involves pride, it is a deliberate affirmation against the insult others are offering to them: ‘I am *cholo*, and so what’. In the survey, *cholos* are a special group. They have above average education, are concentrated in Lima, and share positive views of indigenous more than of *mestizos*. We cannot say from our research what factors have been significant in their effort to overcome prejudice, but probably education, together with a wider experience of the world through migration and travel, have played an important role.

4. Perceptions about the consequences of ethnic identity

The survey aimed to collect information about whether or not people feel ethnicity affects their lives. Questions asked specifically about the effects of ethnicity on people’s chances of getting employment, education and public services, and more broadly about group domination in ethnic terms and government favouritism and discrimination. These are the types of perceptions we address in this section.

The interviews reveal a population highly attuned to the consequences of ethnicity. This is also apparent in the survey: 52% consider that the importance of racial and

cultural characteristics for accessing opportunities for success has not changed or has become even more important over time in the country. This awareness is not significantly different across ethnic groups, but it is across localities (47% in Huanta, 47% in Bambamarca and 62% in Lima). Lima, as we have seen in the previous section, confronts people with major problems relating to their ethnicity.

4.1 Perceptions about the effects of ethnicity on employment and education

At least half of all respondents perceive that ethnic background affects a person's chance of obtaining jobs, whether in the government or in the private sector (53% and 56% respectively). The impact of ethnicity on getting access to contracts with the state is slightly smaller (47%). Differences between the perceptions of *cholos*-indigenous and white-*mestizos* are statistically significant but difficult to interpret. A higher proportion of the first group perceive the effects of ethnicity than of the latter: 61% vs. 49% respectively for public jobs and 67% vs. 50% respectively for private jobs (Figure 2a).³⁷

Differences across localities are significant. More than 70% in our case of SJL in Lima believe ethnic characteristics affect one's chances of getting jobs both in the public and private sector; in Huanta, 52% believe this is true for public jobs and 66% for private jobs; and in Bambamarca, the percentage of people who believe the same is much smaller (38% for public jobs and 35% for private jobs). We have learnt from the interviews that *serrano* people migrating to Lima are likely to feel more discrimination than those who have not migrated. These results seem to capture that idea as our case in Lima is composed largely of migrants.

Figure 2: Do you believe racial and cultural characteristics affect one's chances of getting access to public or private jobs?



Total = 600; White-Mestizos=384; Cholo-indigenous/Andean=216. Source: CRISE Survey-Peru. Universidad Católica del Perú

Total = 600; Bambamarca =200; Huanta=210; SJL-Lima=190. Source: CRISE Survey-Peru. Universidad Católica del Perú

The interviews allow us to deepen our understanding of the form and manner in which this discrimination is experienced, and why discrimination is perceived more in the private sector than in the public sector. According to the interviews, 'preparation' and 'qualifications' are seen as important, but '*buena presencia*' ('good appearance')

³⁷ The question does not permit us to distinguish whether respondents were reflecting on their own ethnic traits and chances of employment, the ethnic traits and chances of employment of others, or just the way the system seems to work

seems to be the key.³⁸ Eliana from Huanta told us “yes, there is discrimination when looking for jobs. They request people with good presence. It does not mean that you have a nice dress or you know how to express yourself, but a person who is good looking, pretty; but if you are unattractive, darker, they say, *ay no!*” [19]. The *white* are particularly aware of this mechanism. Florencia, living in Lima, added that in companies in Lima the first thing they look at is if girls are thin, tall, have a good manner and a pretty face. “The colour is also a criterion”, she added. Florencia had a friend who told her that a supermarket chain was hiring. When they went there, a man separated her friend from the queue, despite her friend having the same qualifications as her. She believes it happened because her friend was darker [28].

The perception of discrimination based on “physical appearance”, whether it is purely aesthetic or ethnic, is more widely perceived in the search for jobs in the private sector than in the government. Discrimination is perceived in the government as well, but more linked to party membership and contacts. Gertudris from Bambamarca said that personal interviews are convenient because they not only evaluate your oral performance, but “your *pinta*” (physical appearance); however, for finding a job in the government, ‘qualifications are not important, but whether or not you are affiliated to the party in power’ [9]. Soledad from Huanta said that the Regional Government of Ayacucho only offers jobs to people affiliated to its party: ‘relationships with the ruling party are needed in order to access a job in the government’ [18]. While interviews downplay ethnicity compared to party affiliation, this is an insight that comes from an open question, compared with the questionnaire’s closed question. The emphasis on party affiliation doesn’t mean an ethnic element is not there.

The results of the survey on perceptions of the effects of ethnicity on education opportunities are more moderate. Twenty seven percent think that ethnicity has an impact on access to pre-university education and 28% on university education. Differences across ethnic groups are not significant and percentages are slightly higher in Lima than in the other localities. These results show a significant difference from the results on employment.

The interviews, however, enable us to elaborate on this finding. We learnt in the previous section that education plays a hugely important role in overcoming prejudice against those who are *indian*, *cholo* or *serrano*; when the moment of looking for employment arrives, ethnic characteristics may matter, but education and preparation are what people expect to use to succeed. There is no formal barrier to accessing education. But as regards true freedom to acquire capabilities, there is a huge ethnic difference in terms of access and quality. The sacrifices people are willing to make to access education are extraordinary. Judging by the interviews, the poorest indigenous highlanders make the greatest effort to access education. Poor and highlander children either walk hours to reach school, especially for secondary school or to avoid “multiyear” primary schools (which tend to be of a very low quality), or they live alone in rented rooms in the town. Eva Salazar, living in the community of Occana in Lauricocha, 15 minutes from Huanta by car, told us that she couldn’t finish secondary school: ‘I couldn’t do it anymore’, she said. She used to wake up at 3.00 in the morning to cook and at 6.00 a.m. begin her walk to school. The walk was about an hour under the sun and her face was frequently burnt [12]. Sonia, a teacher from Huanta teaching 11-year-old children, told us that indigenous people from the highlands rent rooms in Huanta so their children can attend the school there: “they are far way from their homes, are disorganised in their appearance and dirty. The other children insult them and they get depressed because their houses are far away

³⁸ Interviews with Marco, Bambamarca [1], Pablo, Bambamarca [5], Simon, Bambamarca [8], Soledad, Huanta [18], Karen, SJL [22] and Karla, SJL [26].

and their parents are poor". [18] This testimony was repeated by others teachers in Huanta and some parents.

While the poor rural people and highlanders are looking for strategies to overcome the problem of distance, urban-based indigenous people still need to deal with differences in quality of education. They are quite clear that the quality of education is not the same everywhere. The closer you are to the centre or the capital, the better the education you can receive. Pedro, a *cholo* from Bambamarca, told us that racial aspects do not prevent people from finding a job, but preparation and education do. Unfortunately, he said, 'preparation is not equal for all'. He added 'my son was the first student in Bambamarca but what did he learn? It did not do him any good in Lima'. Again, success depends on the enormous effort of parents to send their children to the closest town and/or the extraordinary sacrifice of the child. Neptali Tipto, who had almost finished secondary school, walks and takes a car to go to school in Huanta instead of just attending the school in Luricocha (which is closer to his town). He is proud of attending school in Huanta: "I am the only one in Llanza", he said [11]. Juana from Bambamarca has sent three of her four children to Lima, although she has mixed feelings about her children liking their new life there. She has visited them four times (18 hours at least by bus) and is working hard to afford her children's education.

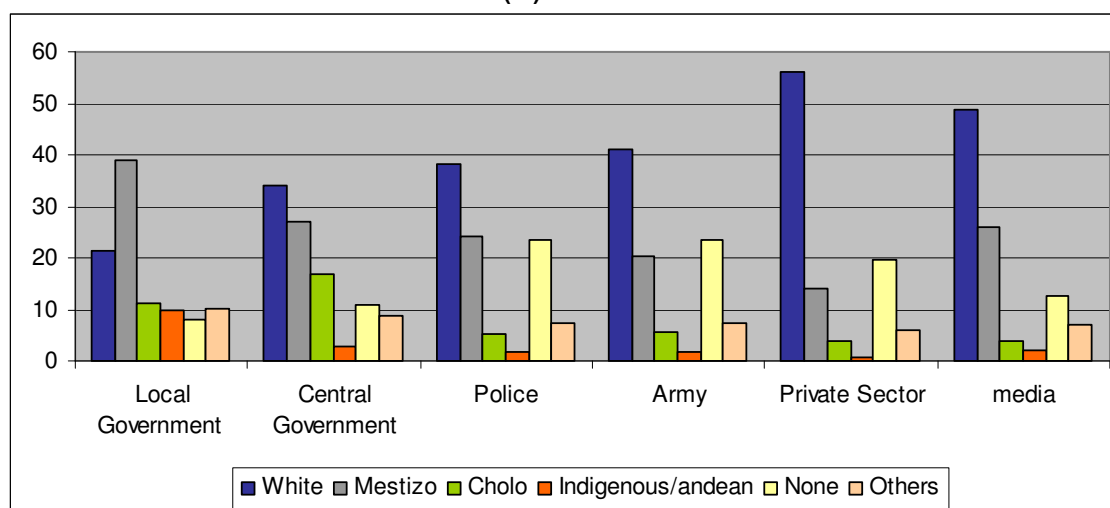
While we cannot know how widespread these experiences are, other studies suggest that class and ethnicity are fundamentally embedded in the mechanisms and the cost of those mechanisms to overcome access and quality of education (Figuroa 2006). Indigenous highlanders seem to bear the highest cost, but all those in the provinces, if they are looking for better quality of education, need to face the burden. Whatever the cost, it is clear that people are struggling to bear it. Physical separation from the community and the family when still very young has quite an impact on the formation of a child's identity, especially when the school is an institution that offers a different culture and community of language. This is a relevant topic that requires much more investigation, as education has been shown to be such an important means for overcoming discrimination and ethnic humiliation.

4.2 Perceptions about the effects of ethnicity on political power

Another set of questions in the questionnaire aimed to explore perceptions about whether or not an ethnic group has power in four institutions of the state (local government, central government, top ranks of the police and the army) and two in the private sector (large private firms and the media). This was a closed question, and interviewees were asked to indicate in which institutions each ethnic group had power. The identification of power in the hands of *whites* was significant across the different institutions, with the exception of local government, where *mestizos* were perceived to have more power (See Figure 3). In the case of central government, the percentage of people who believe *mestizos* have power comes closer to the percentage affirming that *whites* do, but is still significantly different. An important, though still small, percentage of people think *cholos* hold the power in central government³⁹. The proportion of people affirming that *whites* have power in the private sector and the media is by far the greatest.

³⁹ This is certainly associated with the presidency of Alejandro Toledo, who has repeatedly pointed to his indigenous and/or *cholo* origin. However, it could be argued the percentage is still small.

Figure 3: Which ethnic groups do you believe have power in the following institutions? (%)



Total: local gov =572; central gov=557; police=559; army=556, private sector= 559 and media=554.
Source: CRISE Survey-Peru. Universidad Catolica del Peru.

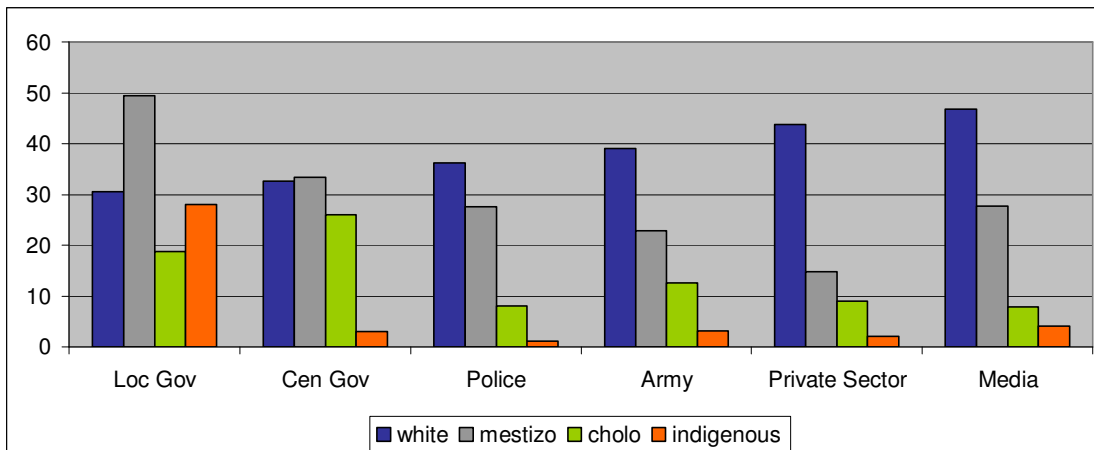
We find several significant differences across the cases (see Table 5) when we assess the perception of power across public institutions. Power in local and central government is perceived significantly differently in SJL-Lima than in Huanta and Bambamarca. For most people living in Lima, power in both local and central government is in the hands of *whites*, while for most people living in Huanta and Bambamarca, power in local government is in the hands of *mestizos* while in central government it is shared between *whites* and *mestizos*.

When asking about power in the top ranks of the police and army, a higher percentage of people both in Huanta and SJL consider *whites* to be the dominant group (for the police the percentages are 46% and 53% respectively and for the army 47% and 55% respectively). In contrast, in Bambamarca, the largest percentage believe no ethnic group dominates the police (43%) or the army (40%).

In the case of the big private firms and the media, results are definitely more clear-cut across all localities. However, differences between Huanta and SJL, and Bambamarca are significant. In SJL and Huanta, 71% and 61% percent, respectively, think that the power in big private firms is in the hands of *whites*. In Bambamarca, in contrast, the percentage is smaller and almost equal to the percentage that believe that no particular ethnic group dominates. The results for media are similar to those for big private firms.

The analysis across ethnic groups is especially revealing when we examine the percentage of people who believe that their own ethnic group has the power. With the exception of local government, indigenous people see themselves as powerless. *Whites* are the group with the highest self-perception of power in the police, the army, the private sector and the media. In all institutions, *mestizos* see themselves as more powerful than *cholos* do. In local government, *mestizos* see themselves as even more powerful than *whites* believe of themselves (50% vs. 30%, respectively). In the case of central government, self-perceptions of power are relatively similar among *whites* (33%), *mestizos* (33%) and *cholos* (26%); but the contrast with indigenous self-perception is remarkable (3%).

Figure 4: Self-perception of power across ethnic groups and institutions (%)



Total = 600; White=54, Mestizos=330; Cholo=-indigenous/Andean=216. Source: CRISE Survey-Peru. Universidad Catolica del Peru

Table 5: Which ethnic groups do you believe have power in the following institutions?
(%)

Institution	Ethnic group	Locality			TOTAL
		Bam-Caj	Hua-Aya	SJL-Lim	
LOC GOV	White	10.68	12.02	44.77	21.57
	Mestizo	45.63	43.17	26.74	39.04
	Cholo	14.08	8.74	9.88	11.05
	Indigenous	20.39	3.83	4.07	9.98
	None/others	9.22	32.24	14.53	18.36
	Total responses	206	183	172	561
CEN GOV	White	35.08	19.43	46.67	33.88
	Mestizo	37.7	26.86	16.11	27.11
	Cholo	15.18	16	19.44	16.85
	Indigenous	3.66	1.71	2.78	2.75
	None/others	8.37	36	15	19.42
	Total responses	191	175	180	546
POLICE	White	45.69	16.18	52.57	38.53
	Mestizo	27.92	23.7	21.14	24.4
	Cholo	4.57	3.47	7.43	5.14
	Indigenous	2.03	0.58	2.29	1.65
	None/others	19.79	56.06	16.57	30.28
	Total responses	197	173	175	545
ARMY	White	47.18	20.59	54.8	41.33
	Mestizo	20.51	22.35	18.64	20.48
	Cholo	5.64	1.18	9.6	5.54
	Indigenous	1.54	1.76	2.26	1.85
	None/others	25.13	54.12	14.68	30.82
	Total responses	195	170	177	542
BIG PRIVATE FIRMS	White	60.51	34.12	70.56	55.6
	Mestizo	17.44	20	6.11	14.5
	Cholo	3.08	3.53	5	3.85
	Indigenous	1.54	0	0.56	0.73
	None/others	17.44	42.35	17.78	25.32
	Total responses	195	170	180	545
MEDIA	White	53.33	28.57	63.48	48.98
	Mestizo	31.28	28.57	18.54	26.25
	Cholo	3.59	2.38	5.06	3.7
	Indigenous	2.56	1.19	1.69	1.85
	None/others	9.23	39.28	11.24	19.22
	Total responses	195	168	178	541

Source: CRISE Survey-Peru. Universidad Catolica del Peru

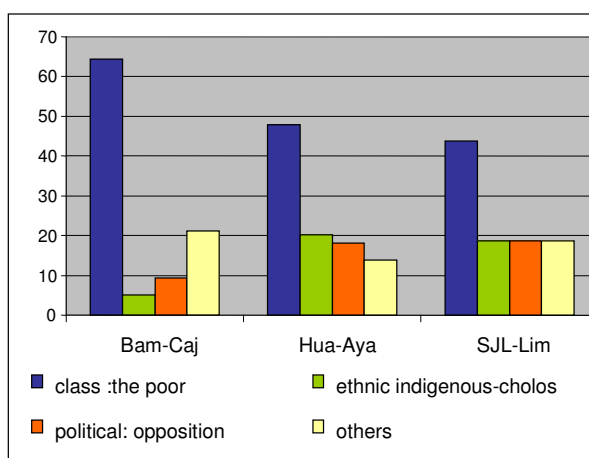
The interviews enable us to deepen our understanding of how power is perceived. In contrast with the survey, the question in the interviews was open ('who do you think has power in the country and in your community?'). The responses show that power is certainly perceived both as political and economic and only one has mentioned race or ethnic characteristics. The absence of responses addressing the question from an ethnic approach is notable when the question is put in an open form. Political power was directly associated with the president (for the country) and the mayor (for the locality). The emphasis on the president is very strong in the testimonies, especially in Bambamarca. For instance, for Liliam power is first 'in God' and then 'in the president' [2] and for Fatima "the president has the power in the country as parents do in their home" [4].

In Huanta, the president and political power were seen as very important as well, but were generally seen as subordinate to economic power. Beatriz from Huanta said that the United States had power over Peru in the economy, while within Peru, power belonged to ‘private firms’ [13]. Luis Enrique said that the rich and the government hold power, but added that the government works for “the rich” not for the “people” [15] and finally Pedro affirmed that big private firms hold power and buy the politicians and the media. He told us that some years ago, the people from Bambamarca organised a strike to protest against Yanacocha (a private gold mining company working in the area). According to him the strike lasted for a whole week and was accompanied by demonstrations and protests, but the media, bought off by the firm, did not give it any publicity [5].

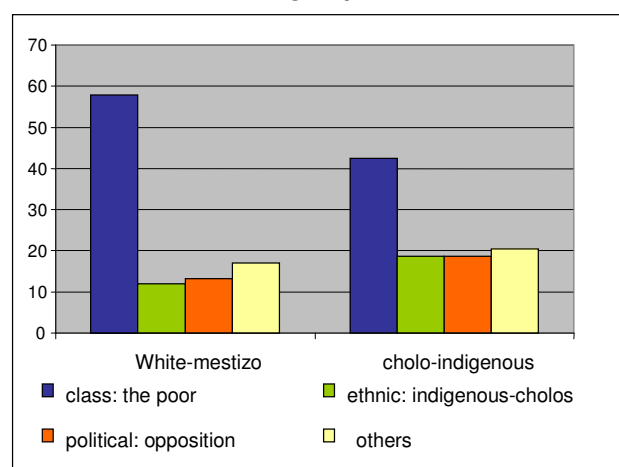
Karina from Huanta was the only one who mentioned ethnic and racial characteristics. For her, power belongs to the big businessmen and she describes them as ‘white, fair-haired and dressed in a suit’. These groups are more powerful than others, in her opinion, “white people are more involved in politics because they have more relations, relatives that help, access to education, and more opportunities” [26].

Whether in ethnic or in other ways, the survey registered that 57% of our interviewees believe the government discriminates against certain groups and 61% think it favours some groups. Discrimination was mostly expressed in terms of class (52% referred to ‘the poor’) rather than in ethnic terms; and favouritism in political (64% referred to ‘political affiliates’) rather than in class or ethnic terms. There were some significant differences between the three cases. The question was open and was answered heavily in class terms, but the emphasis on class discrimination (‘the poor’) was stronger in Bambamarca than in Huanta and Lima, where the emphasis on ethnic discrimination was notable and significantly larger (Figure 5a). In the same way, a stronger perception of ethnic discrimination was perceived by the group of *cholo*-indigenous than by the group of white-*mestizo* (Figure 5b). There are not significant differences across cases with respect to government favouritism; the emphasis in all cases is on political affiliates.

Figure 5: Perception of discrimination across localities and ethnic groups
 a) across cases
 b) across ethnic groups



Note: Total=358; Bambamarca=125; Huanta=92; SJL-Lima=141.
 Source: CRISE Survey-



Note : Total =324; White-Mestizos=211; Cholo-indigenous=113.
 Source: CRISE

5. Political mobilisation and lack of political engagement

Our previous findings make the question of political mobilisation much more intriguing. Why has conflict with a strong ethnic base, violent or non-violent, not arisen? The internal conflict in the 1980s, which had approximately 69,000 victims in the country the vast majority of them indigenous, was mainly expressed in class terms⁴⁰. It is clear that the answer to this question is beyond the scope of our analysis, but we believe that information from our survey and interviews allows us to shed some light on the path to possible future answers. The survey collected information about political engagement and mobilisation, as well as about perceptions of the significance of organisation (whether political or not) and the use of violence.

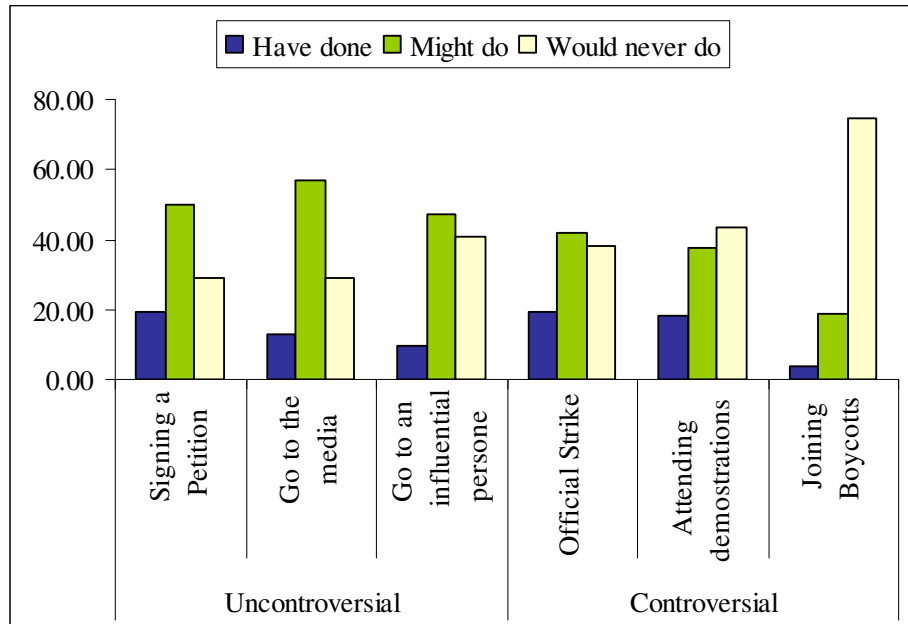
Overall, 56% do not participate in any type of organisation. Thirty five percent participate in communal organisations (such as religious groups, neighbourhood and community associations, women's groups and recreational organisations), 7% in more corporative associations (such as unions, farmers organisations, and human rights groups) and only a tiny fraction, 1%, participate in political organisations. However there are significant differences across the cases and ethnic groups. The percentage of people who belong to an organisation is significantly larger in Bambamarca (61%) than in Huanta (35%) and in Lima (35%). In the case of ethnic groups, the results differ between localities. In Huanta a larger percentage of the group of whites-*mestizos* belongs to an organisation (67%), while in Lima, the percentage is greater among the *cholo*-indigenous group (61%).

The political scepticism of the interviewees was clear. More than 50% do not feel close to any political party (57%), 17% feel close to Fujimori's party and 10% to the APRA party. There are no significant differences across cases. Most people report that they use radio and television as their main source of political information: 46 and 47% respectively. However, radio is used more in Huanta (63%) and Bambamarca (59%) than in SJL Lima (15%). In Lima, the main source is television (71%).

Figure 6 shows the percentage of people who have taken part in different forms of political action. A total of 42% have engaged in at least one political action, 29% have been involved in 'uncontroversial' actions and 27% in 'controversial' ones. Experience of engagement in political action increases with age (26% in the group of 18 to 25 year olds, 48% in the group of 26 to 40 year olds 50% in the group of 40 to 70 year olds) and is higher among those with primary education and those with post-secondary education (45% and 52% respectively). It is lower among those without formal education or with secondary education (22% and 35%). Experience of engagement is also higher in Bambamarca (53%) than in the other localities (38% in Huanta and 34% in SJL). Non significant differences are found across gender or ethnic groups. Most people said they might do some of the forms of political action cited, with the exception of joining boycotts and, to a lesser extent, attending demonstrations. The latter two forms of action received the larger percentage of rejections, together with going to an influential person.

⁴⁰ Truth Commission of Peru (2005).

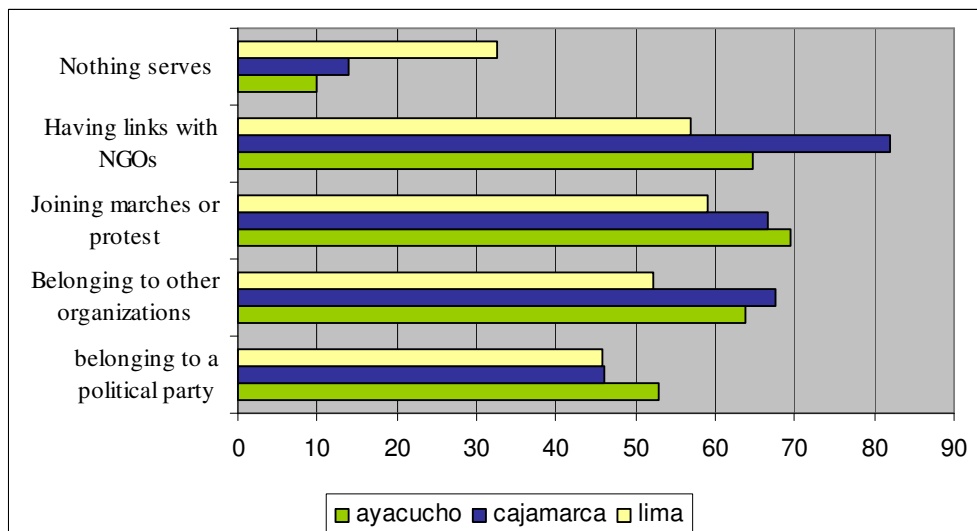
Figure 6: Engagement in 'uncontroversial' and 'controversial' forms of political action (%)



Notes: Total =600. Source: CRISE Survey-Peru. Universidad Catolica del Peru.

While involvement with an organisation or engagement in political action is moderate, most people still strongly perceive organisations to be useful. Having links with NGOs is considered the most useful (68%), followed closely by joining marches or protests (66%) and belonging to a social organisation (63%). Fifty percent think that belonging to a political party is useful. Finally, 19% believe that nothing works and it is practically impossible to improve quality of life. It was notable that half of the 111 people that agreed with this statement lived in Lima and three quarters of them belonged to the most educated group. Differences across localities were significant.

Figure 7: Percentage of people who consider it useful to have a link with the following entities



Finally, an overwhelming 83% agree that violence only provokes more violence, but 44% agree that violence is sometimes necessary and a similar percentage agree that sometimes it is the only way to be heard.

These results are very consistent with the way people from each case see social and political life in their communities as found through the interviews. In Bambamarca, people see their world and their community as 'very organised'. Organisation plays an important role in ensuring the provision of community needs, such as water and electric light. Lilian said that it was possible to obtain '*obras*' (infrastructure and public services) for the community. For example, they are now receiving water they had been demanding for six months: "in the end we got it", she said. She added that electric light took more time (two years) but in the end, this was also achieved. In Bambamarca, organisation can happen spontaneously because people see their neighbours as close and collaborative. Monica's neighbours discovered that some young men had rented a room in the community and were stealing vegetables and guinea pigs. The neighbours got together and chased the bandits out, she told us very proudly. For Monica, strikes are useful for achieving things that cannot be achieved on an individual basis: "it is in being united we are strong", she said. However Maria immediately made clear to us that she does not like violent forms of action, she prefers peaceful action "with order". But one young man noted that violence was not necessary in Bambamarca: "the organisation, the *ronda* [community organisation] has always been heard" [10].

Bambamarquinos see the role of the *rondas* as very important: 30% of them are involved. However they are not certain about the future of the *rondas*. The *rondas*' involvement in political elections and their attempts to get power in the municipality have undermined them. Pablo said that *rondas* today are weak because 'all have been politicised' 'there are too many fights among political parties and too many divisions' [5]. Marco thinks that the *ronda* has been very important for the community and regrets that the *ronderos* could not achieve high positions in the municipality: 'the parties use and divide them' [1]. Finally, Jorge, son of a *rondero*, believes that winning the municipal elections is crucial but he thinks that urban people believe that the *ronderos* will fill their pockets with money from the municipality 'because they are peasants' [10].

The perception in Huanta is very different. People see organisation as useless. In the rural areas, people told us their communities are in permanent conflict; even when they accomplish some things, they do so with too many problems. In addition, it is too costly because people do not collaborate, Eva told us: 'they are pessimists' [12]. Farmers have sometimes participated in marches and demonstrations but without any specific result. Alberto has participated with the Federación Agraria of Huanta but he thinks it is worthless [14]. Leadership is lost in a corrupt system. When people from the community reach power, they forget the community: 'it is pure opportunism', added Eva [12]. In urban neighbourhoods, things are even more difficult. People see their neighbours as distant and strange. Beatriz said that in her neighbourhood they do not organise because they do not know each other. They have come from different places and at different points in time; some are just renting [13]. Teachers and farmers have participated in demonstrations and strikes but nothing was achieved [11] [14]. For Eliana demonstrations achieve little, "but at least they make authorities pause to think". She complains that actions are very badly organised: "people cannot strike all the time, they live on their work" [19]. Lucio thinks that organisations do not work as they did in the past. He does not know what has gone wrong, but now he does not trust people, his grandfather taught him this and the time of terrorism has reinforced it. Several of them made clear to us that they are against

any type of violence and have only participated in peaceful demonstrations. Only one, Soledad, said that some times violence is needed, “if not they ignore you”. [18]

In San Juan, the Lurigancho people ‘get on with own lives’, said Julio from Huanta Dos [21]. With the exception of the richer area, where most people have come from urban Huanta in Ayacucho and families know each other from before, the rest of the areas of these two settlements are not organised. They do not support or trust each other. Most of them come from different regions and feel prejudice towards each other. Karen said that no major changes are achieved in her neighbourhood because people are not united, ‘they are bad people’ and her family do not relate to them: “Their houses are in a bad condition, their children are badly dressed”. In addition, “they are violent with their children, stubborn and they drink and fight a lot” [22]. The area is on a hill and they do not have street lighting yet. At night they have to walk up the hill in darkness, but division prevents them from organisation: ‘we do not manage to do anything together’, said Elvira. Even when leadership emerges, the system becomes too complicated, there are ‘too many doors to knock on’ without success. The dream of Hildebrando in Huanta Dos has been to help his community, but he finds institutions impossible to access when there are no ‘contacts’⁴¹. Politicians do not help, they come for the electoral campaigns but then “they forget”. He has enjoyed being a leader, but at the expense of his work. Unfortunately, he says, not many are willing to do it. Now he is disillusioned.

6. Conclusions

Our initial hypothesis was that a strong prejudice against *cholos* and *indigenous* people, mainly in Lima, and against *indians* in the Sierra, was a significant explanation of the fluidity or weakness of identity in Peru. It was presumed that people would try to escape this negative stereotype and hide those traits that allowed others to associate them with it. What the data and the interviews reveal, however, is rather different. We find evidence of a strong sense of ethnic identity in the three cases, mostly among those who self-identify as *cholos*. In the interviews, the category of *indigenous/andean* strongly overlaps with the *cholo* category: both emphasise their common place of origin, the Sierra, but it is among *indigenous* that we have identified the need for differentiation from the *cholos*. There is also evidence of the importance of skin colour for some groups, particularly *whites* and *mestizos*, whether as an important marker in itself or as the most easily comprehensible element when struggling with an understanding of identity (this seems to be particularly the case for poor women in Cajamarca).

We find that being subject to ethnic prejudice has not only resulted in passivity, denial of the group or alienation, but also, in other instances, in a new appreciation of an individual’s own identity. However, it is clear that, coming from an environment that is very prejudiced against indigenous peasants (‘indians’ or ‘*chutos*’ as they are known in the Sierra) *serrano* people are horrified when they arrive in Lima and discover they are being put in the same category, one that they themselves regard with such contempt. In this context, we can understand better the need for denial or suppression of identity, or the creation of clear differences between uneducated *cholos* and *indigenas* (*indios*, *chutos*), and educated *serranos*. The imperative of this differentiation can include harm to an individual’s own group.

⁴¹ The overwhelming difference that ‘contacts’ and ‘managing the system’ make for successful and less costly collective action in Lima has been pointed out by Munoz, Paredes and Thorp (2005).

Our cases also bring insights as to the different effects and consequences of salient ethnic identities. Most people are aware of the effects of racial and cultural traits on people's chances of getting access to jobs. While much has been accomplished for them or their parents through the process of migration and education, still the most desirable jobs in the private sector seem to run up against the devastating exclusionary power of appearance, whether this is purely aesthetic or ethnic. In the government, access to opportunities comes up against problems of connection and corruption. This probably explains why so much sacrifice results only, in the best of the cases, in moderate achievements. Power is seen to be in the hands of whites and *mestizos*. In the provinces, *mestizos* are aware of their power locally, but in Lima, all agree that power is in the hands of the *whites* in most institutions of the government, and even more so, in the private sector. People are less aware of the impact of ethnicity on education and they considered education to be an accomplishment that relies on an individual's own efforts. However, here it was found that the effects of ethnicity are embedded in the mechanisms of education supply. Education is not only limited for the poorest -- the indigenous in the highlands -- but its quality is tremendously poor for those living in urban settings. What becomes clear is the overwhelming importance of the "structural arrangement", the necessary loss of in-group ties (language, clothing, history) in the search for education and employment, and the still deep division between the Sierra and the Coast that fosters longstanding ethnic stereotypes.

Organisation is weak, with the exception of Cajamarca, where the *rondas* have done much and people see their community as more harmonious and collaborative. In Huanta and in Lima division, distrust and prejudice predominate, with the exception of the better-off community formed by the urban "huantino" families. Severe ethnic insults appear when the barriers of moral convention are lowered, such as when people are drunk at parties. In these circumstances, organisation is almost impossible. Leadership appears with much enthusiasm, but rapidly gives way to disillusion. The system is too complicated: important contacts are essential and politicians are seen not to care, 'they forget'. When community organisation is so difficult, the goal of overcoming prejudice against *cholos* and *indigenous* people seems even more complicated, more difficult to achieve. It not only requires a huge personal effort, such as that made by some of our *cholo* respondents, to overcome the prejudice themselves and challenge the myth that individual dedication to reach progress and education will save them from the humiliation of being "choleados", it is also necessary to bring the topic of prejudice out from the private to the public sphere. That is when the reality of the situation becomes too overwhelming: too many people from different places to trust, too many different and complex steps to manage the system and too much risk in the informal economy and insecure jobs. The result is the frustration of leadership and the belief that any political effort will run into the sand of a corrupt system.

7. References

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