Collective Action, Conflict and Ethnicity in Peru

Ismael Muñoz, Maritza Paredes and Rosemary Thorp

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Acronyms and Foreign Language Terms

Acción Popular, AP	Popular Action
Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana, APRA	American Popular Revolutionary Alliance
campesino	peasant farmer
centro de educación ocupacional	vocational education centre
chacra	small agricultural plot
comité del vaso de leche	'glass of milk' committee
comunero	member of an indigenous or peasant community
Coordinadora Nacional de Comunidades Afectadas por la Minería, CONACAMI	National Coordinator of Communities Affected by Mining
Coordinadora Regional de Comunidades Afectadas por la Minería, CORECAMI	Regional Coordinator of Communities Affected by Mining
descampesinizado	'depeasantified'
Federación Intercomunal de Campesinos de la Provincia de Espinar, FICAE	Intercommunal Federation of Peasants of Espinar Province
Federación Campesina de Espinar, FUCAE	Peasant Federation of Espinar
Frente de Defensa de Espinar	Espinar Defence Front
fundo	estate
gamonal	exploitative landlord, generally from the Sierra
hacienda; hacendado	estate; estate owner
Huantino	from Huanta
Izquierda Unida	United Left
Junta Directiva	board of directors
juzgado de instrucción de primera instancia	primary-level court
Liga Agraria de la Provincia de Espinar	Agrarian League of Espinar Province

Mesa de Diálogo	forum for dialogue
mestizo	person of mixed European and non-European parentage
minifundia	very small landholding
Patria Roja	Red Homeland
Programa Nacional de Asistencia Alimentaria, PRONAA	National Food Agency
ronda; rondero	community organisation; member of such an organisation
Sendero Luminoso; Senderista	Shining Path; member of Shining Path
Sociedades Agrícolas de Interés Social, SAIS	Agricultural Societies of Social Interest

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Abstract

This paper explores violent and non-violent collective action in Peru through community-level case studies. It tries to shed light on why widespread political violence emerged only late in the day – the 1980s – and was limited to certain regions of the country. It also asks why extreme inequality between groups has persisted for so long without violence or remedial action, and whether a weak propensity to collective action is part of the answer. The authors find significant evidence of constructive meso-level collective action and leadership; but potentially interesting action is restricted by a corrupt, self-seeking political system. In relatively fragile institutional systems, the poor find collective action more difficult and costly while the relatively well endowed with capabilities can manage it better, shedding some light on why inequality is often long lasting. When so much collective action results in only modest gains, frustration is to be expected, and the authors find that acts of 'controlled violence' on the part of organised communities are instruments to secure negotiation or dialogue and avoid the type of violence that is destructive in intent and based on an anarchic ideology.

The Authors

Ismael Muñoz is Professor of Economics at the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, Maritza Paredes is a Visiting Fellow at Queen Elizabeth House, University of Oxford, and Rosemary Thorp is Senior Researcher responsible for the Latin America programme at the Centre for Research on Inequality, Human Security and Ethnicity, Queen Elizabeth House, University of Oxford.

Emails: gmunoz@pucp.edu.pe; maritza.paredes@qeh.ox.ac.uk; rosemary.thorp@qeh.ox.ac.uk

Collective Action, Conflict and Ethnicity in Peru

By Ismael Muñoz, Maritza Paredes and Rosemary Thorp

1.   Introduction

This paper explores violent and non-violent collective action in Peru through community-level case studies. First, it tries to shed light on why widespread political violence emerged only late in the day – the 1980s – and was limited to certain regions of the country. Second, it asks why extreme inequality between groups has persisted for so long without violence or remedial action, and whether a weak propensity to collective action is part of the answer.

The inequality, first documented for Peru in 1961 by Richard Webb, shows an extreme degree, as deep as that of Brazil.[1] This inequality is embedded in ethnic characteristics: what Stewart (2002) terms 'horizontal inequalities' (HIs), or inequalities between groups, are very severe in economic, cultural and political terms. Marginalisation has led historically to violent mobilisations,[2] but in the last half century or more, the relative lack of major ethnic mobilisation of any kind has been notable, until the huge violence precipitated by *Sendero Luminoso* (Shining Path), the Maoist-inspired movement which arose in the early 1980s and dominated Peruvian life until the capture of its leader, Abimael Guzmán, in September 1992.[3] The Peruvian Truth and Reconciliation Commission has recently documented the horrifying ethnic reality represented by this war: 75% of those killed were of indigenous origin.[4] Subsequently, however, there has been little or no sign of the kinds of mobilisation occurring in Bolivia and Ecuador, or of the growth of ethnic consciousness so evident in Guatemala, Bolivia and Ecuador. There is very little sign, either, of mobilisation on a non-ethnic basis, though recent protests over mining may be signalling a new trend. Generally, the ability of the system to survive with extraordinary HIs and low levels of protest appears to be a key comparative characteristic we need to explore.

Why is there so little recent challenge to the system, violent or non-violent? Why have we seen the extreme violence of *Sendero* in some places but not others? Why does there appear to have been no growth in ethnic consciousness,[5] despite the ethnic consequences of the *Sendero* period? Many of the elements of an answer to these puzzles lie at the macro political level, which is not the concern of this paper. Here we attempt to contribute to the unravelling of this set of puzzles by exploring the

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[1] His calculation gives a Gini coefficient of 0.61, equal to Brazil in the same year (Webb 1977).

[2] Few studies of social and political violence before the 1980s exist. The most important social and political mobilisations of the twentieth century in Peru took place in 1958-64 in the southern Sierra, when landlords and peasants clashed in disputes over *hacienda* (estate) lands. According to Guzmán and Vargas (1981), only 166 people died in these mobilisations; a significant number, but far fewer than those who died in the first year of the armed conflict during the 1980s.

[3] Active cells still exist and *Sendero* should not be written off: as we shall show, the underlying conditions that permitted its success have hardly changed.

[4] The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Peru in its Final Report (CVR 2003) has been able to discern that violence highlighted extreme ethno-cultural inequalities and socioeconomic gaps, which still prevail. Analysis of the testimonies received suggests 75% of the victims who died in the internal armed conflict spoke Quechua or another native language as their mother tongue. According to the 1993 census, on a national level, only 16% of the population shared this characteristic.

[5] Ethnic consciousness is understood as the presence of a collective identity based mainly on an ethnic cleavage, as seen in other Latin American countries such as Bolivia, Ecuador and Guatemala.

phenomenon of collective action in Peru. Our interest is not in the micro level, e.g., in the construction and management of irrigation canals and other such community goods, but in the meso level, the use of political instruments usually for both economic and political ends. For example, several communities have acted collectively to exercise pressure on the municipality for water services or roads. A well-known Peruvian example is the 'glass of milk' movement. Women in Lima pressured the state to obtain favourable legislation that guaranteed the distribution of milk for poor children through local governments. We explore the characteristics of this meso-level collective action. We ask why and from where it is generated, and what appears to make it take violent or non-violent routes. We ask what it achieves. We analyse how far the penetration of *Sendero* can be explained in terms of the relative strength or weakness of collective action of a constructive kind.

The theory of collective action underlines the importance of the Olsonian dilemma of free riders, once numbers exceed the level of the small group in which personal relations provide appropriate mixes of incentives and sanctions for collaboration. Much of the case study material showing how the free rider dilemma can be overcome concerns economic activity at the micro level, where variables such as a clearly specified group of beneficiaries, clear rules owned by participants, and appropriate incentives and sanctions can explain success.[6] At the meso level of communal and intercommunal actions, such variables are unlikely to be enough to explain success. In the literature, cooperation is facilitated by overlapping interests and leadership. For us, 'overlapping interest' needs a broad interpretation which goes far beyond the coincidence of individuals' material gain. It is typically rooted in a common sense of identity, and may be aided by a common ideology and lack of internal differentiation within the community of actors. As we have seen in earlier work,[7] internal differentiation may play both a positive and negative role. It may facilitate leadership through the hierarchy it creates and the resulting sense of order. However, it may also produce internal conflict via perceived inequity in resources and/or power, and via the abuse of power.

Our initial hypothesis was that a weak propensity to collective action (violent or non-violent) at the meso level was a significant explanation of both the failure to modify horizontal inequality with time, and the lack of violent response to such inequality. What our cases demonstrate, however, is rather different. We find significant evidence of constructive meso-level collective action in at least three of our four cases. We find that Olson's dilemmas of large numbers and free riders are readily overcome with a strong sense of community and local identity, often created by adversity, and that leadership is not lacking.

What our cases lead us to elucidate is the overwhelming importance of the institutional context and the nature of politics at the meso level. For successful meso-level collective action, there must be actors with whom one can interact, with a certain degree of coherence in the institutional framework. Much potentially interesting action runs into the sands of a corrupt, self-seeking political system.[8]

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[6] See Ostrom (1990), Wade (1988), Blomquist (1987) and Uphoff (1986), among others.
[7] See Heyer, Stewart and Thorp (2002), particularly the chapters by Bianchi on Brazil and by Thorp on Colombia.
[8] The work of Evans (1996) and Tendler (1997) is thought-provoking and helpful in this vein. Through case studies, they draw out the importance of the nature of the public-private relationship.

There are many 'layers' to this finding that we are able to tease out through our cases. The different layers reflect different windows on the relation of micro to macro. In a well-functioning political system, intermediaries (local government, political parties) bring an awareness and understanding of wider macro issues to groups at the local level to guide their activity. Intermediaries can facilitate connections to other levels, can take concerns up and down the system, and can negotiate and engage. This role of political intermediation is all the more important, since 'the state' is typically seen from the Andes as *lejano y ajeno* – (far away and foreign) (Ansión and Tubino 2005).[9] However, in Peru in the beginning of the twenty-first century, we have a situation in which the usual candidates as intermediaries – the political parties – have been in crisis since the 1980s, while local political life of all kinds suffered severely through the period of civil war. With the decline of the political parties, a new class of political operator – people who had abandoned their traditional political parties – was available to the 'new' politics of the Fujimori period. Alberto Fujimori was notable for using various organs of the state for his own political ends. The actors did not change with the advent of Alejandro Toledo as president, though the *Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana* (American Popular Revolutionary Alliance*, APRA*) renewed itself and reclaimed some of these political operators. This was hardly a healthy context to encourage communities to constructive collective action.[10] It is not surprising that we encounter in our different cases examples of frustration and disillusionment, and sometimes seduction into a self-seeking system of favouritism and clientelism.

The cases also bring some insight into why inequality is often long lasting, or durable. The relatively poor find collective action more difficult, find that it costs them more, and that they achieve less through it. It is no wonder that they become rapidly disillusioned. The relatively well endowed with capabilities can manage even relatively fragile institutional systems to achieve their aims, and frequently know how to avoid costs. Thus vicious and virtuous circles are compounded.

Our remaining question is why communities engage in violent or non-violent collective action. The previous findings make this question the more pressing; where so much collective action begets only modest gains, frustration is to be expected. We find in several of our studies that various actors, usually external to the communities, intervene in a way that appears significant. Acts of 'controlled violence' on the part of organised communities are instruments to secure negotiation or dialogue in regard to serious unresolved problems, and differ sharply in concept from the type of violence that is destructive in intent and based on an anarchic ideology.

The mobilisation to violence by *Sendero Luminoso* in our most 'violent' case comes from the form the breakdown of the old semi-feudal system took, with a dissolution into conflictual situations and an absence of structures which might have mediated conflict; this provided disastrously fertile territory.

Before we turn to the cases, we set the context by documenting horizontal inequalities and exploring the salience of ethnicity in such inequalities. Then we describe the case

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[9] The Peruvian TV journalist Cesar Hildebrand reported a conversation (21-07-05) with a community member from an extremely poor province of Huancavelica (Angaraes). In response to the question, 'Who is the president of Peru?', he answered, 'I don't know'. In response to the question, 'Do you think about the future?', he answered, 'I prefer not to'.

[10] This section draws on a conversation with Rolando Ames (18-08-05). For insightful analyses, see Tanaka (2002) and Grompone (2000).

studies. We take three district-level capitals and their rural surroundings, and a case of migrants from Huanta in Lima, asking: (1) what are the characteristics of emerging collective action and the factors responsible for its extent and depth; (2) what are the outcomes; and (3) what shapes the choice of violent or non-violent instruments. We finally draw out the comparative conclusions and implications.

Our three Andean cases are: first, Bambamarca, provincial capital in the department of Cajamarca; second, Espinar, provincial capital in the department of Cusco; and third, Huanta, a provincial capital in the department of Ayacucho. Our Lima case comprises the two migrant communities in San Juan de Lurigancho: Huanto Uno and Huanta Dos.[11] (See Appendix 1: Map of Peru showing three case study areas.)

2.   Horizontal inequality and the salience of ethnicity

We have very limited data to analyse the salience of ethnicity in Peru, since the censuses do not ask directly abut ethnic origin, and mother tongue is not a good proxy (the indigenous communities of the northern Sierra speak only Spanish, for example). Figueroa and Barrón (2005) have analysed ethnic origin in Peru using history and geography as a proxy. Being born in the Sierra becomes their proxy for indigenous ethnic origin, however this categorisation excludes the residential areas of the largest provincial cities, where the population is predominantly *mestizo* (of mixed European and non-European parentage). While this proxy is in itself imperfect owing to measurement problems, in particular with regard to second-generation migrants in large cities, it gives a closer approximation than native language. Figueroa and Barrón are able to show (see Table 1) that ethnicity strongly influences chances of education, employment and social class. The table shows that 'white collar' workers have almost identical years of schooling, independent of ethnicity. But on average, blue-collar 'white' people have eleven years of schooling, blue-collar 'indigenous' have eight years of schooling, and indigenous peasants/informal self-employed have four years of schooling. We should also note that in 'white' Lima, 'employers' and 'white collar' workers together form 55% of the total. In the indigenous communities of the Sierra, the same group accounts for 15% of the total. Table 1 demonstrates a fundamental fact about ethnicity in Peru: that socioeconomic and ethnic categories overlap.

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[11] The provinces of Hualgayoc (75,806 inhabitants), Huanta (64,503 inhabitants) and Espinar (56,591 inhabitants) are found in the north, centre and south of the Sierra, respectively. More than 60% of the population of these provinces is rural, and the principal economic activities are agriculture and livestock. Huanta Uno (2,450 inhabitants) and Huanta Dos (1,750 inhabitants) are two settlements in the district of San Juan de Lurigancho, the most populous district of Lima (1 million inhabitants).

Table 1: Class and ethnicity in Peru (2002)

(First numerical entry is mean years of schooling; second entry, in brackets, is the percentage of the population in the category).

Classes	Ethnicity (Region of birth)*		
	A1	D	E
Big employer	17.0 [0.5]	8.3 [0.4]	9.1 [0.2]
Small employer	15.6 [3.9]	7.1 [7.3]	7.4 [5.3]
White collar	15.9 [50.4]	14.2 [11.3]	13.8 [9.8]
Blue collar	10.6 [10.5]	7.9 [14.7]	7.9 [14.4]
Self employed – urban	13.9 [22.1]	7.8 [21.7]	7.7 [23.4]
Self employed – rural	9.0 [0.7]	4.5 [41.3]	4.4 [43.3]
Other	10.4 [0.6]	9.5 [0.1]	10.2 [0.2]
No data	10.6 [11.3]	8.6 [3.2]	8.6 [3.4]
Total labour force	100.0	100.0	100.0

A1: Lima – core (includes the residential districts of Lima where most of the white population live and excludes Lima – periphery, where most migrants live). D: Rest Andes (includes central and northern Andes, where Spanish dominates). E: Southern Andes (where Quechua and Aymara predominate; the residential areas of the largest provincial cities, which are predominantly mestizo*, are excluded).*

Source: Figueroa and Barrón (2005).

However, despite this evidence of a high degree of horizontal inequality, the prevailing discourse in Peru is reluctant to admit the importance of ethnicity. This may be precisely because of its importance, rather than a signal that it is not important – but research is made the more difficult by the fact that people do not share a vocabulary, and that in subjective terms, identity is much more readily defined in class, regional or occupational terms.

Land is another crucial variable shaping inequality and ethnicity in Peru. Agrarian reform helped to extend and consolidate a process of parcelisation which was well under way as early as the 1950s and 1960s in our case study areas. Agrarian reform began in the 1950s in Peru, but was transformed in its seriousness and dynamism under the military government of General Velasco, which began in 1969. The policies were completely distinct in the Coast and the Sierra. In the Coast, cooperatives were created, which principally produced sugar and cotton. Their troubled history is not our concern here. In the Sierra, where traditionally large estates had incorporated peasants in a variety of share-cropping-type tenancies, the reform created *Sociedades Agrícolas de Interés Social* (Agricultural Societies of Social Interest, *SAIS*), which were to incorporate not only the sharecroppers of the former estates but also some of the surrounding communities. Table 2 shows that in 1972, small units predominated, ranging from

minifundia (very small landholding), particularly in Huanta, to medium-sized plots of a few dozen hectares, mostly in Hualgayoc.

Table 2: Land distribution in three case study areas (1972 and 1994)

|	Huanta		Hualgayoc		Espinar	
	1972	**1994**	**1972**	**1994**	**1972**	**1994**
Total number of units	14,178	11,510	12,344	14,777	6,796	8,665
Size of unit	Percentage of total					
Less than 1 hectare	0.47	0.36	0.26	0.31	0.41	0.31
1 to 5	0.41	0.45	0.52	0.52	0.22	0.52
5 to 500	0.12	0.19	0.20	0.17	0.35	0.17
More than 500	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.00	0.02	0.00

Source: Agrarian Census (1972 and 1994)/INEI-Peru.

However, the circumstances under which each land reform process took place had major implications for the kind of 'fertile territory' that *Sendero* was to find in these areas. In Huanta, better-off peasants and those with good connections to the old system gained control of the land. This started a process of increasing inequality and conflict among peasants, recreating and perpetuating overwhelming poverty and differentiation among them. This history of mismanaged reform of a deeply traditional and repressive system led to a highly conflict-prone situation. In Espinar, the recovery of land was a result of decades of violent struggle between landlords and communities, whose victory was facilitated by the crises of the wool industry in the Andean South. In this context, it was simply not possible for the reform to create *SAIS*, as was happening in neighbouring provinces. In these, *Sendero* took advantage of conflict between peasants, who wanted to recover their lands, and the government bureaucrats managing the *SAIS*. Thus, in Espinar, severe conflict in the past has paved the way for a relative lack of conflict today, but with history not far below the surface. In Hualgayoc (Bambamarca), we did not find evidence of a history of conflict during the process of transformation into smallholdings. A relatively non-conflictual history evolved into a relatively peaceful contemporary situation.

In Figure 1, below, we have attempted to capture intuitively the degree of internal differentiation in our cases. This differentiation is ethnic, but coincides with social and economic characteristics, which is the norm in Peru. We express this differentiation through three proxies: colour of skin, language (Quechua-speaking or not) and nature of the terrain. The hypothesis is that higher land in Peru is less productive and typically held in very small units by more indigenous parts of the population. In other words, the higher the territory, the more indigenous it is, and the greater the variation in height, the greater the ethnic differentiation. Hualgayoc, the province in which Bambamarca is situated, has cultivated land at a moderate altitude, varying between 2,500 and 2,700 metres. Espinar is more uniform but very high, with all its land over 3,900 metres. (However, mining introduces a different type of differentiation.) In Huanta, cultivated

land ranges from 2,500 to 3,500 metres, thereby combining significant altitude and variation. Our fourth case, *Huantinos* in Lima, has to be seen as derived from and expressing the differentiation captured here in Huanta. The differentiation takes the extreme form of two physically separate settlements, which nevertheless have a degree of differentiation within them, as we shall see.

Figure 1: Ethnic differentiation in three case study areas
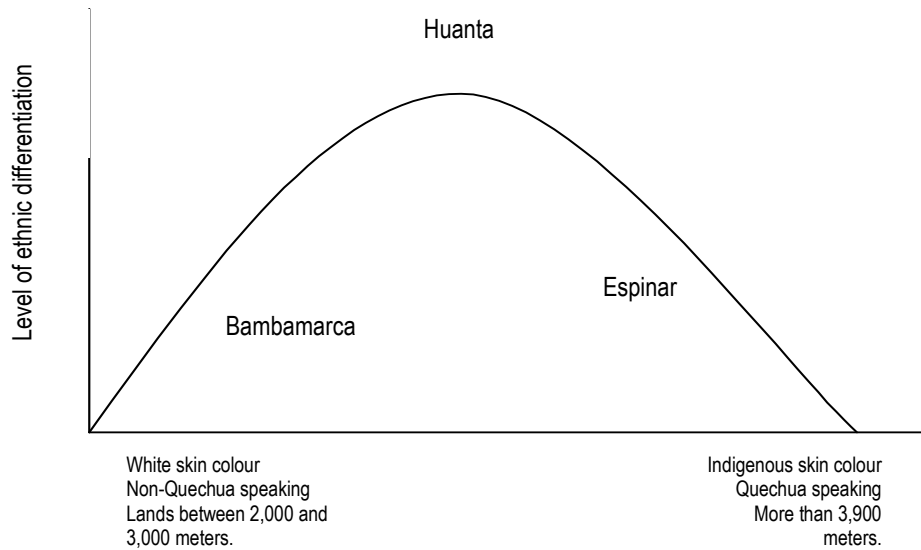
Sources: Banco de Información Distrital and IX CPV (1993) del INEI para idioma y altitudes.

The figure shows that Hualgayoc (Bambamarca) and Espinar have relatively low levels of ethnic differentiation. However, the former has fewer indigenous characteristics than the latter. Huanta, in contrast, has a relatively higher level of differentiation than Hualgayoc and Espinar, and mixed indigenous characteristics.

3.   The case of Bambamarca, Cajamarca[12]

We took first a case where ethnic identity is not strong,[13] where the *a priori* evidence showed powerful collective action and the history was one of non-penetration by *Sendero*.

3.1   Characteristics of emerging collective action

The impulse to collective action came from poverty, vulnerability and state failure, centred in this case on the police and justice system. The generalised state of disorder and banditry led in the 1970s to the formation of an exceptional phenomenon: the *rondas*, community organisations which had their beginnings in patrols against cattle thieves.[14] The *rondas* were a response to the population's generalised feeling of disappointment and distrust (still perceptible) with respect to the official justice system. Not only are the police scarce, they are also inefficient and in many cases perceived as criminal accomplices. In addition, trials are lengthy and require payments to lawyers and bribes to judges, public prosecutors and police.[15] Furthermore, *campesinos* (peasant farmers) allege that they are treated with contempt: they have to wait until last to be seen by public officials; they are tricked because they cannot read or write; and they have to show deference for those titled 'doctor', 'boss' or 'sir'.[16]

Historically, *rondas* were an invention of large landowners. However, in Cajamarca, the land-owning system had already been significantly transformed, even before the official agrarian reform of 1969. The central provinces of the Department of Cajamarca (Chota, Hualgayoc and Cutervo) had been going through a process of transformation into smallholdings as early as the 1950s and 1960s, so the reform helped to extend and consolidate this process of parcelisation.

In this transformed context, the *rondas* were taken on as a community institution. One of the oldest *comuneros* (community members) of the *ronda* in Bambamarca told us that before 1978, when the *rondas* did not exist, *campesinos'* isolation rendered them unable to confront bandits who, for example, threatened to target their houses if they sounded an alarm when a neighbour was being robbed. For that reason, the authorities of various communities, and young catechists[17] like him at that time, called on the community to form a *ronda* like that which had been created in Chota.[18]

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[12] We interviewed a range of actors from the *rondas* in Bambamarca and surrounding rural communities, such as San Antonio Bajo y Alto and el Tambo.

[13] Original ethnic characteristics, such as language, social and institutional organizations, have to a large extent disappeared. Further, people have lighter skin as a result of an earlier process of *mestizaje* (mixing) with European migrants in the region.

[14] There are various historical references to the importance of livestock rustling in the Andes. According to Starn (1991b) and Gitlitz (1983), robberies increased in the mid-1970s because of the economic crisis. The region of Cajamarca was particularly affected because of its proximity to the coastal city of Chiclayo and an increasing demand for meat.

[15] According to Starn (1991b), in a sample of 1,000 cases from a Chota primary-level court (*juzgado de instrucción de primera instancia*), only 10% of criminal cases were processed between 1970 and 1976, of which 76 resulted in sentences.

[16] Interview with Neptali Vasquez (04-02-05), a 70-year-old *rondero* from San Antonio Alto in Bambamarca.

[17] Lay people working as part of the church to teach people their faith. Such catechists have been an important part of the progressive church, raising awareness of social issues.

[18] According to Don Neptali, the first of the new-style *rondas* was founded in 1976 in Cuyumalca, in the province of Chota. During the following three years, hundreds of other communities in Chota and the neighbouring provinces of Hualgayoc and Cutervo formed their own *rondas*, as they spread towards the

These *rondas* evolved gradually into a source of identity and commitment: if asked how they identified themselves, the fieldworkers and farmers we spoke to would say with unanimity, '*Somos ronderos*' – 'We are ronderos'. Thus, in a region where ethnicity would be an unlikely mobilising factor, since ethnic characteristics have mostly not endured, another powerful identity has created itself – the *ronda*. It was clear they felt no commonality with the indigenous populations of the south.[19] This identity is focused on a feeling of 'efficiency' and on the recognition of their important role in the community. A number of *ronderos* interviewed said that they were proud that the *ronda* effectively resolved problems of rustling, boundary disputes and even domestic conflicts, rapidly and with almost no additional costs: '…we go directly to the place in question, with the actors involved in boundary disputes and in one afternoon we sort out the problem and pass a judgement that is respected...legal processes only waste time and money, and maybe even lives because sometimes the litigants assault each other'.[20]

This finding on the depth and power of identity, and an identity which extends across the *rondas*, is the more striking since in Andean Peru, the principal identity reference is to one's own community, rooted in physical space. Research on Andean culture (Ansión and Tubino 2005) reveals that individuals typically do not see members of other communities as part of a common identity. Even if they are Quechua-speaking – which here they were not – other communities speak 'other Quechuas'.

3.2   The outcomes and limits of collective action

What are the outcomes of this rather positive story? They are real in terms of cultural HIs, and in some foundational sense, for the other HIs. People expressed repeatedly the satisfaction it gave them to feel themselves taken seriously by 'the other'. The spontaneous formation of the *rondas* of Bambamarca results from confrontation with a state representing the 'inefficient' order (which replaced the old order of the *haciendas* (estates)). The state was incapable of constructing a new democratic authority and its bureaucracy was inefficient, prejudiced and exclusive, limiting the *campesinos*' rights to 'security and justice'.

Today the *rondas* have in many places evolved into institutions that administer justice within the community. *Ronda* organisation goes hand in hand with the community assembly and the irrigation committee; together, they increasingly take up issues such as how to confront a mine owner whose mine is causing contamination.

Further, the *rondas* function as a source of education, self-esteem and respect, and provide training in social responsibility and awareness. They also help explain the absence of violent conflict. However, the results of their attempts at greater meso influence, both on the political and economic side, are not clear.[21] The most notable case has been the long-running conflict over contamination and damage to fish stocks in

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zones of the Sierra of the neighbouring departments of Amazonas, La Libertad, Lambayeque and Piura. According to Starn (1991b), in 1990 the *rondas* operated in about 3,435 towns in an area of more than 150,000 square kilometres.

[19] Interviews with Luis Anticona from the *Central de Ronderos* de Bambamarca, Neptali Vasquez and Alfonso Soberón from San Antonio Alto, Jesús Llamoctanta from El Tambo, and Catalino Valdivia and Wilmer Castrejon from La Ramada in Cajamarca (04-02-05).

[20] Interview with Jesús Llamoctanta from El Tambo in Bambamarca (04-03-05).

[21] At the micro level, the *ronda* reduces cost and risks, protecting peasant assets from robbery.

the Llaucano River by the Yanacocha mining company – the largest gold mine in Latin America, which is situated in Cajamarca – which has gone on since 2001 and produced no real result.[22]

A hypothesis that should be explored further is the negative role that political parties have played in the *rondas*. The efforts of parties such as *APRA* and *Patria Roja* (Red Homeland) to control the *rondas* and to make their political discourse dominate is much criticised by the *ronderos*. In interviews, people described the acute divisiveness of the electoral campaigns as a result of the competition between *APRA*, *Patria Roja* and *Acción Popular*, (Popular Action, *AP*). The *ronderos'* efforts to get their own candidate elected as mayor of Bambamarca reduced the prestige of the *ronda*. Unusually, the *ronderos* of the province of Hualgayoc, in a display of unity, managed to form a single front uniting different political groupings which has lasted since 1990. However, our correspondents were all deeply aware of the danger of party divisions and competition, and the damage they could do.[23] A frequent view was that things would go sour if they ventured 'into politics' – which invariably turned out to mean signing up with a particular party and becoming drawn into the petty world of party competition.[24]

Another factor which is difficult to explore, but we mention for further research, concerns the difficulty local groups inevitably have in comprehending the national picture. Real progress in the obvious comparative advantage of Cajamarca – the milk industry – lies in modifying the impact of a mining boom on agriculture at the national level. It is interesting and probably very important that people seemed completely unaware of this. It will also be interesting to observe how far a powerful current effort to generate a regional vision on the part of the private sector manages to gain acceptance and credibility.[25]

3.3   Attitudes to violence

Initially, the *rondas* in Bambamarca used violence without compunction to restore order in the face of cattle thieves, and today corporal punishment is still regarded as normal in their administration of community justice. It is common to hear of whippings, night-time immersions in the frozen lakes and rivers of the Altiplano, hours walking barefoot and

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[22] In 2001, *ronderos* from Bambamarca, Chota and Chugur demonstrated in the central plaza of Cajamarca against the death of trout in the Llaucano River caused by Yanacocha's acid mine drainage. They blocked the highway to the mine and eventually set fire to the office of Yanacocha. A *Mesa de Diálogo* (forum for dialogue) was created, but no results were achieved. In 2002, the *rondas* again took the central plaza of Cajamarca and blocked the highway to the mine for four days. In this case, they protested the government's report on the Llaucano River case, which insisted that the death of the trout was caused by asphyxia, not contamination. Another dialogue forum ensued, to mitigate the tension, but no outcome emerged. Finally, in 2004, the *rondas* were key in the mobilisations against the exploration of a new mining site in Cajamarca. The protest lasted two weeks and led Yanacocha to stop its exploration. However, conflict is ongoing.

[23] According to Zarzar (1991), at the beginning of the 1990s, four regional confederations claimed to represent the *rondas* of Bambamarca, two connected to *APRA* and two to factions to the left. Although, the *ronderos* had united, the new elected president (from the left) was kidnapped and tortured by a committee of *ronderos* who were dissatisfied with the unification.

[24] According to Starn (1991a) and Gitlitz (1983), the *rondas* attain significant consensus at community level but confront each other at regional level. The conflicts often centre on party competition (*APRA*, *Patria Roja*, *Acción Popular*) for regional offices and to put forth their discourse.

[25] We refer to the *Grupo Norte* (North Group) initiative led by Yanacocha and Buenaventura Company, which constitutes a serious effort to delineate the elements of a regional plan, with considerable commitment of funds and enterprise.

even naked in the cold of the night, and forced labour. Many of these tactics were taken from the provincial police, whose methods of torture were well known by the *campesinos*, who were victims of such abuses. However, despite the use of physical violence, testimonies indicated that the *rondas* continue to have legitimacy as a means of correction. Moreover, practices have evolved so that now there is a real awareness of acceptable limits and respect for human life.[26]

A strong ideology of non-violence began to be propagated through the 1980s, particularly because of the influence of the church in Hualgayoc, where parish priests undertook extensive training of young peasant catechists. Today, mobilisations are accompanied by strong instructions about how people should behave and what they should do to make their point. One example is a demonstration organised by the *rondas* of Bambamarca in 2001 against Yanacocha over the death of fish in the Llaucano River. According to our informants, the protest was generally peaceful and the *rondas* firmly controlled violence; however, they could not prevent unrelated violent acts such as the sacking of shops, and fights between *ronderos* and local authorities.

The rejection of violence was much emphasised to us as a reason *Sendero* failed to penetrate this area: this needs more research, but we are inclined to emphasise as much, if not more, the fact that *Sendero* could see it was not fertile territory, an analysis that would include the degree of organisation as much as the lack of resonance among smallholders of a battle cry of anti-feudalism. (Admittedly such academic analysis did not stop them later going into Lima – equally poor ground for their techniques and arguments.)

4.   The case of Espinar

Our second case, where communal violence has not been strong in the recent past (though by no means entirely absent), is Espinar, in the high Sierra of the department of Cusco. For this second case, we sought an area with as strong a sense of indigenous identity as can be found in Peru, to contrast with Bambamarca, which, as we argued above, has little sense of indigenous identity and history. In the first half of the twentieth century, Espinar was one of the provinces of the high Andes affected by the boom in wool, and drawn into often-violent conflicts between landlords and peasants over access to pasture land.   Uprisings in Canas and Espinar in the early 1920s led to the strengthening of a peasant movement and helped lay the basis for the notable growth of left-wing parties. Land reclamation and the migration of former land owners to the cities strengthened the process of social change based around indigenous communities.

In response to social change and upheaval, some of the most important estates had been broken up before the reforms, with their lands distributed among their workers. It was simply not possible for the reforms to produce the large collective estates (*SAIS*)

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[26] Testimonies concerning the beginning of the *ronda* include cases in which *ronderos* committed extremely violent acts. An early incident involving the *ronda* in Bambamarca appears to have ended with the death of six cattle thieves. Apparently, the fate of the thieves was decided by an assembly of more than 3,000 people, but this could never be proven by the authorities. Such tales rapidly disappear over time, and a discourse expressing concern for human lives and rights emerges in the testimonies. Without dismissing the seriousness of the initial incidents and the crude nature of the physical punishments used by the *rondas*, one must locate them in the national context. According to Starn (199b), during the 1980s more than 3,000 *rondas* were responsible for no more than 10 deaths.

that were being created in neighboring provinces. Further, the rapid links that were developing between the market of Arequipa and Espinar led to the emergence of a relatively important merchant sector in Espinar which began to form a bridge to the rest of the highland provinces.[27] Another relevant factor was the action of progressive elements of the Catholic church and left-wing non-governmental organisations (NGOs), both of which supported peasant claims to regain their land. Two important peasant confederations were founded in this period in Espinar: the *Federación Intercomunal de Campesinos de la Provincia de Espinar* (Intercommunal Federation of Peasants of Espinar Province, *FICAE*) and the *Liga Agraria de la Provincia de Espinar* (Agrarian League of Espinar Province) (Lossio 2005). The *Federación Campesina de Espinar* (Peasant Federation of Espinar, *FUCAE*) was founded in 1980, from the merging of the two smaller movements. The *Izquierda Unida* (United Left) coalition was victorious in three of the four municipal elections in Espinar in the 1980s (Lossio 2005).

Thus by the 1980s, there was a strong sense of ethnic identity based in a successful evolution to community ownership. Strong popular organisations supported this sense of identity and community. However, modernisation and integration into urban culture is generally considered to be weakening this sense of ethnic identity. Interviewees described how young people were losing their familiarity with Quechua through television and schooling as they increased their contact with urban centres.

In the 1990s, nevertheless, a new manifestation of this historical sense of identity emerged with middle-class and urban leaders, in the form of a political party called *Mink'a*, a movement seeking to reestablish the original *K'ana* identity, the civilisation which had prevailed before the Incas in that place. The mayor of Espinar, during the crucial period of collective action which we explore here, was from the *Mink'a* party.

4.1   Characteristics of emerging collective action

Collective action in Espinar has focused upon mining, and particularly since 1980, upon the huge copper and gold mine of Tintaya. The mine was nationalised during the regime of General Velasco (1969-1975). The state company followed a policy of expropriating the land of peasant communities, granting inadequate compensation and sometimes completely inadequate alternative provisions. The community of Tintaya Marquiri was located exactly where the mine was to be developed, and lost all its lands. The collective memory is that they 'took us out of our houses and destroyed them.'[28] From the 1980s, the mine became the focus of collective action, with confusion between the responsibilities of the state-owned mining company and the state itself.

May 21, 1990, is an important day in the recent history of the province, and is celebrated every year. Our interviewees described how between 20,000 and 30,000 people (peasants, shop-keepers, lorry drivers, etc.) mobilised against the mine, led by *FUCAE* and the *Frente de Defensa de Espinar* (Espinar Defence Front). Protestors threw firebombs and threatened mine personnel. Three people were taken hostage but no

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[27] Inexplicably, very little specific information exists concerning the history of the province of Espinar before the 1980s, while there are whole books dealing with the neighboring provinces of Canchis and Chumbivilcas. The history of the penetration of *Sendero* into conflict zones between *campesinos*, who wanted to recover their lands, and bureaucrats of the *SAIS* in the southern Andean region, especially Puno, has been well documented in the literature. Such conflict did not exist in Espinar.

[28] Interview with Aquilino Ccapa and Eduardo Cutimerma, leaders from Tintaya Marquiri (04-10-05).

deaths occurred. The activity served to draw central government attention to their problem; one positive outcome was the electrification of the city of Espinar. However no progress was made with respect to the rural community's problems, such as land access and water contamination.

In the 1990s, the mine was privatised, and eventually sold to BHP Billington, its present owner. In this period, new elements entered into collective action. The rural communities affected began to organise themselves more effectively, and in 1999 they created *Coordinadora Regional de Comunidades Afectadas por la Minería* (Regional Coordinator of Communities Affected by Mining, *CORECAMI-Cusco*). *Coordinadora Nacional de Comunidades Afectadas por la Minería* (National Coordinator of Communities Affected by Mining, CONACAMI) lent support, as did local and national NGOs. At the international level, Community Aid Abroad (CAA), the Australian member of Oxfam International, began to work with the parent company, BHP Billington, on corporate social responsibility. CAA created a 'mining ombudsman', a staff member whose full-time job was to work with all sides in attempting to reconcile conflicts. She spent many months on the Tintaya case. A particularly interesting initiative of CAA was to take a group of top executives on a field trip to India to see the environmental and social consequences of a big mining project first hand through the eyes of the affected population. This had an amazing effect. The managing director of the Tintaya, who went on the visit, describes it as a turning point both for him personally and for the company.[29]

Over the three years 2000-2002, against all expectations, dialogue resulted in significant progress. A *Mesa de Diálogo* (forum for dialogue) was established with regular and increasingly positive meetings, and the company made two agreements: to make an annual payment of US$1.5 million to the municipality for local development, and a second payment directly to the communities. The agreement with the rural communities proposed the distribution of 2,368 hectares of land, the consultation of communities in future explorations and a fund of US$300,000 annually for community projects.

Two important elements in this success would seem to be the relatively strong sense of identity and coherent local leadership. It is important that this was not only external (NGO-based) but came from endogenous organisation among the people. A third element is the degree of responsiveness and real change on the side of the company involved.

4.2 The outcomes and limits of collective action

For all the achievement, the true gains have proved fragile and limited. For this reason renewed protests emerged in May 2005. On May 21 (the same date as the 1990 mobilisation), 2,000 people participated in a mass demonstration, again using firebombs and threats, and took the mayor hostage when he tried to intervene.

Several factors account for the sense of frustration. One parallels directly our analysis of Bambamarca: the nature of the local political system and the communities' lack of confidence in it. This emerged in many interviews: 'leaders from political parties make promises during elections but then forget communities'.[30] The *Mink'a* mayor, who was a

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[29] Interview with Lucio Rios, general manager of Tintaya mine (04-09-05).
[30] Interview with Aquilino Ccapa from Tintaya Marquiri (04-10-05)

powerful force for good while in office, is seen as having lost the next election 'because the people of the city didn't like him working so hard for the people of the countryside'. The next mayor, from the Aprista party, did not generate confidence. The communities feel they do not have a say in the fund established via the municipality.

The second problem concerns capacity. Not surprisingly, the communities have struggled to build consensus on how to manage the money that is pledged to them. Getting consensus on good use of the money and accomplishing all the necessary technical specification has proved very difficult, and money remains unspent. It is hardly likely in such circumstances that the company would wish to increase the amount pledged.

4.3   *Attitudes to violence*

Over the years, we see collective action that brings gains, and does so with what we can best qualify as 'controlled violence'. Threats are used, property is damaged – but few or no injuries or deaths result. The violence is judged to bring the attention of the national government to a greatly neglected area – and it has done so, in an immediate sense. Both in 1990 and in 2005, ministers flew in and the spotlight of the national media was turned on Espinar. More importantly, over years of patient negotiation, communities have built up a level of confidence, ability to negotiate and a sense of their own worth which are real 'goods'. However, as yet, the benefits are not significant enough to give confidence that frustrations can be managed.

As for *Sendero*, the movement was never an important influence in the zone. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission only registered one victim of the armed conflict in Espinar, in contrast to neighbouring provinces such as Chumbivilcas (66 victims) or Azangaro (211 victims). This is attributed to the strength of popular and left-wing organisation, which led to resistance to the ideology and strategy of *Sendero* (Lossio 2005).

5.   **The Case of Huanta, Ayacucho**[31]

5.1   *The nature of collective action*

The need for collective action was more severe in Ayacucho than in our two previous cases. However, collective action of a constructive nature was historically weak; rather, traditions of domination, hierarchy and passivity prevailed. Almost no collective movement emerged to confront the armed conflict that ravaged the department, producing 10,000 victims, above all indigenous people. We consider that the explanation lies in the fact that the emergence of *Sendero* coincided with a gradual but fairly advanced loss of regional identity and population, as we now describe. The region was characterised by growing conflict between rich and poor peasants in the countryside, and between the countryside and the city, as well as by migration and the growing rootlessness of a significant sector of young people. Agrarian reform in

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[31] We interviewed authorities, social leaders and community authorities at four levels of local organisation: provincial municipality (Huanta), district municipality (Luricocha), Lower Council of Huayllay (1,380 inhabitants) and the Community of Pajaihuaico (48 families).

Ayacucho, in particular in the provinces of Huamanga, Huanta and La Mar, led to the emergence of a new version of the old relationships. Better-off peasants and those with good connections to the old system gained control of the land of relatively impoverished landowners who needed to sell at least part of their properties (Degregori 1990).[32] The result was increased inequality and conflict among peasants, and the recreation or perpetuation of a culture not very different from the old, where overwhelming poverty and marginalisation meant hopelessness, loss of identity, and a focus on individual solutions, principally migration and education.[33] *Sendero* was able to take advantage of this conflict, exercising summary justice on peasants accused of being *gamonales* (old-style exploitative landlords) by virtue of being relatively well off. *Sendero* based itself in groups of university students (*mestizo* and rootless, lacking a sense of identity), who were frustrated in their desires for economic and social ascent.[34]

5.2   The outcomes and limits of collective action

The political violence in Ayacucho in the 1980s had a strong impact on Huanta. The 1980s and the first part of the 1990s were years of continual violence, above all in the rural areas. People lived in fear. There were thousands of deaths in the province during this period. *Sendero* also issued threats against the authorities, and people went missing because of the actions of both sides. The level of violence was a serious block to collective action, above all in the political sphere. Moreover, the armed forces influenced how the population organised itself, which was principally through self-defence committees. These played an important role in the confrontation with *Sendero*, especially among the communities of the high Andes that survived the initial onslaughts of *Sendero* and the army. Other groups learned techniques of surviving between the two forces, paying lip service to both.

From the mid-1990s, the situation changed, with the ending of the armed conflict. Peasant communities today fiercely resent *Sendero* for its role in initiating the violence. In the urban centre of Huanta, political life has restarted – but without any evident effort at education and preparation. As a result, public administration is weak and the population is ever more alienated from the political sphere. Meanwhile, communities from the highlands remain extremely isolated, with little opportunity to participate in public decisions affecting them; they struggle constantly not to be under the thumb of communities at lower altitudes.

While the armed conflict was raging, the only organisations in evidence were the self-defence committees. Today these are less evident, while many other organisations are more dynamic, such as mothers' clubs, *comités del vaso de leche* ('glass of milk'

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[32] When Velasco's agrarian reform was implemented, it affected only a small number of *hacienda* lands, as many landlords had already sold or given up part of their land to neighboring communities, or simply abandoned their lands in fear. Between 1970 and 1980, the state expropriated 1,493 *fundos* (estates) and *haciendas* throughout the country (a total area of 7,677,083 hectares). In Ayacucho, just 324,372 hectares were expropriated during the agrarian reforms. In the whole department, only one *SAIS* was created with 1,432 hectares, benefiting 26 families.

[33] According to Degregori (1990), who cites data from the Planning Department of the Universidad Nacional San Cristobal de Huamanga (UNSCH), the UNSCH grew from less than 400 students in 1962 to nearly 2,300 at the end of the 1960s to more than 7,500 at the end of the 1970s. Many young *campesinos* enrolled at the university in hope of achieving social mobility.

[34] According to Favre (1984), Degregori (1990) and Manrique (1989), *Sendero* found its initial support among young *mestizo* who migrated to the cities of Huanta or Huamanga. Because of displacement, these young people had become rootless, divorced from their original culture and identity.

committees) and also producers' associations. But collective action remains weak: people describe others as 'egoists' who are unwilling to put time into organising communal affairs. The president of the fruit-growers association of the valley of Huanta told us: 'Farmers do not participate; there is apathy and lack of interest. They think that working alone can make them advance but that is impossible. There is too much egoism and envy; my house has been robbed and my possessions taken. Farmers do not have any specific association they belong to. What exists is distrust, probably as a consequence of the social problems here'.[35] The Truth and Reconciliation Commission has met with approval – but notably no collective action has emerged to pressure the state to implement any of the recommendations that would benefit Huanta.

5.3   Attitudes to violence

Why did violence develop in Huanta? Why was *Sendero* successful? The perception is that *Sendero Luminoso* took advantage of conflicts between rich and poor *campesinos*, and between *campesinos* and the growing populations in zones of lower altitude and in the cities. In lower-altitude zones, as a consequence of the crisis of the *haciendas*, the traditional *hacendados* (estate owners) had been slowly replaced by a handful of privileged *campesinos*. In the cities, a weak and poorly networked sector of commercial intermediaries and bureaucrats had taken the dominant place of the former class of landlords. They were quickly discredited in the eyes of the community for their indifference and arrogance in the face of regional problems. According to one of the *campesinos* interviewed, '...the authorities were like gods...public works and other local and central government activities were carried out on the basis of the arbitrary criteria and decisions of the authorities.'[36]

At the beginning of its penetration into the rural areas of Huanta, *Sendero* carried out summary executions of *comuneros* who expressed opposition or whom they considered 'rich'. They were subject to 'peoples' trials' and charged under the general accusation of being *gamonales*. One *campesino* related, '…they killed *campesinos*, saying that this one was a landlord, that one a *gamonal*, another who had five or six hectares had become a *gamonal*... and they killed them'. In the absence of a *gamonal* class, any authority or *campesino* with more resources than the average was used to justify the discourse of the anti-landlord struggle (testimony collected by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (CVR 2003)).

A further consequence of the persistent poverty and exclusion of the majority has been a loss of population in the area, owing to the expulsion of people from the department and movement within the department from the countryside, especially the highlands, to the city. Migration has been particularly high among young people whose families sought a way to progress through their children's education.[37] This process was accentuated by the violence and armed conflict. From these displacements, which began long before

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[35] Interview with Héctor Merino Gutiérrez, president of the Fruit Growers Association of the Valley of Huanta (05-13-05).
[36] According to Degregori (1990), the development of capitalism and the focus on exports negatively affected the landlords of Ayacucho. They did not possess any interesting resources for foreign or national capital, nor did they become linked to any important sectors of the national economy. Further, they were affected by the decline of mining in Huancavelica and the growing importance of the central region (Huancayo), as a result of the development of the Central Highway.
[37] In the period 1967-1972, Ayacucho was the department with the second-highest migration rate (an annual net rate of 140 per 1,000) after Apurimac (with 160 per 1,000) (Degregori 1990).

the conflict in Huanta, three social groups formed in the province which remain relevant today: first, *campesinos* from the highlands, sometimes called *chutos* because they have indigenous characteristics and used to work as servants for the landlords or *gamonales*; second, the inhabitants of the valley of Huanta, rural producers with some education, who were formerly called *nobles* or *misti*; and third, migrants to the city of Huanta, located in the marginal urban neighbourhoods of the province.

Sendero had its greatest influence and recruitment amongst the third group: migrants to Huanta, above all students in search of progress and a new order. Displacement and frustration at the lack of opportunities in the city prompted a loss of identity and rootlessness amongst this population, a process which in Quechua the *campesinos* call *chaqwa* (extreme chaos and confusion). Meanwhile, the *campesino* population was the least susceptible to the influence of *Sendero* and the first to react to combat it.[38]

If, initially, *Sendero's* actions against bandits and thieves and the punishment of adulterers and drunkards won the sympathy of the people, they soon began to reject the call to confront other communities and the prohibition of regional fairs or markets, such as that of Huanta. The closure of the fairs had a greater effect on the peasants of the highlands than of the valley, for at higher altitudes the fairs were the only way of conducting trade. Their prohibition by *Sendero* was a brutal act of repression. A local leader told us, '*Sendero* made inroads with false promises. By this means it at first got support, but soon practically all the community turned against them. This led to the massacres of communities by *Sendero*'.[39]

The CVR recounts how the *Senderistas* based in Huancasancos and Sacsamarca, lower-altitude communities that were more *mestizo*, attacked Lucanmarca, a highland community that had broken away from Huancasancos a few years before and rebelled against *Sendero* directives. 'In reprisal, on 3 April 1983, the PCP-SL [*Sendero*] penetrated the community of Lucanamarca, in the province of Huancasancos in the department of Ayacucho, and killed 69 members of the community, among them children, women and the elderly, in the most horrible way, with knives and machetes. Along with other attacks on communities at high altitude in Huanta, this was the first large-scale massacre carried out by the PCP-SL against populations on whose behalf they claimed to be fighting' (CVR 2003).

In Huanta, violent mass conflict is clearly facilitated by the existence of huge HIs and the loss of the prior sense of identity without the creation of an alternative. *Sendero,* with its totalitarian discourse, was able to take advantage of the vacuum, in identity and also in authority, and to exploit frustrated expectations. The communities' defensive response

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[38] Degregori (1990) explains how for the young *descampesinizada* ('depeasantified') population, *Sendero* appeared to be a path for social mobility within the 'new state' that opened up when the existing paths of social mobility were closing. ased on interviews with prisoners, the author explains how the accelerated development of secondary and university education in Huanta produced a confrontation between traditional identity and 'modern' education for the young new migrants. *Sendero* found its principal social base among this intellectual *mestizo* population, which was experiencing a painful process of rootlessness and frustration, offering them a new identity based in Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. In contrast, the highland communities continued to recognize themselves as *campesinos* using ancient forms of production and of work. They continue to use traditional ways of sowing and harvesting barley, for example, and identify with traditional songs from the places they live. They speak Quechua and Spanish, but a majority told us that they prefer to speak Quechua because they understand it better. Interviews with local authorities in Huayllay (05-14-05).
[39] Interview with Feliciano Vargas, mayor of Huayllay (05-14-05).

was extremely weak since their internal structures had been weakened over time by internal conflict and by divisions between rich and poor peasants, and between the lowlands and the hills. Tensions were aggravated by the continuing failure of the state bureaucracy to generate a modern accountable process. Our additional hypothesis is that migration and the death of leaders and authorities in the armed conflict served to weaken further the communities' response capacity: this led us directly to our final double case study, of *Huantino* migrants in Lima, to which we now turn.

6.   *Huantinos* in San Juan de Lurigancho, Lima

We have emphasised the degree of social differentiation we encountered in Huanta. Our final double case study provided an unusual laboratory to analyse further the way collective action varies with prior capability endowment, for the migrants naturally formed two settlements. Huanta Uno comprises the middle-class former *nobles* in the valley, who often also had family and property in Huanta itself, while Huanta Dos is populated by highlanders, peasants who fled from severe experiences of violence to sanctuary, initially with relatives somewhere in Lima. The two settlements emerged in 1984 under the initiative of Dr. Oscar Venegas, mayor of San Juan de Lurigancho and a *Huantino* himself. Huanta Uno was founded by a peaceful occupation on September 15, 1984, and Huanta Dos, on October 14 the same year.[40]

The population of Huanto Uno, some 300 families, was made up of professionals, with a large representation of teachers – 86 according to one of our informants. People owned property in the city of Huanta (houses and land in the valleys) which they were able to sell to fund their settlement in Lima. Huanta Dos, settled originally by some 360 families, comprised smallholders or *comuneros*, some cultivators of coca from the Ceja de Selva, and people who had come from a much more traumatic experience of violence, with family members dead or missing, livestock destroyed and land abandoned.

6.1   Characteristics of emerging collective action

The initial impulse to collective action was parallel in the two groups: the need to establish themselves with housing, basic services and living conditions, in a situation where all faced discrimination as possible terrorists because of being from Ayacucha. All informants described how difficult it was – and remains – to find employment for that reason.

Given the poor record of constructive collective action over the years in Huanta, it was surprising how vigorously both communities organised themselves in the first year or so, to get the *Junta Directiva* (board of directors) registered, to develop elections and statutes, and to obtain water, sanitation and electricity. Both groups succeeded. It was clear from our interviews that the essential quality of the collective goods drove the community, which was also united by a sense of menace from a hostile world. There, however, the parallels end.

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[40] This occurred at the time the central government, under Fernando Belaunde, initiated an important housing project in an area called *Ciudad Constructore*, then called *Ciudad Cáceres*.

6.2   The outcomes and limits of collective action

The first difference lies in the ability of the two groups to manage the system, a function of education and contacts. Although by no means well off by Lima standards, Huanta Uno has a huge concentration of professionals – those 86 teachers! In interviews, people revealed their strategy for making friends: they dealt with bureaucrats by inviting them to the community and showing them Ayacuchan hospitality, food and music. They know the importance of stamina and perseverance in pushing for their goals.

While the inhabitants of Huanta Uno never resorted to marches, it seemed that the inhabitants of Huanta Dos only used marches as a strategy.[41] They find the world of official paperwork very difficult, frustrating and obscure. The secretary general recounted that there was always something missing from the paperwork, always another day wasted. The world in which they have to function is alien and unfriendly, and they have no good strategies to deal with it. This sense of helplessness was aggravated by the fact that they felt abandoned by their initial sponsor, Venegas – though his version is that they were impossible to work with. They wanted more land and attempted to make the case for acquiring that of their neighbours, the settlement of Jose Carlos Mariategui. The mayor claims they made an obviously false case. When they staged a protest march, they were easily outwitted.[42] This kind of discord and harassment led to many families simply leaving. Other families were brought in, from a variety of provinces, weakening the sense of unity that came from a common origin.

Distrust and divisiveness, while evident in both cases, have been far more evident in Huanta Dos, possibly as a result of, but perhaps also simply as a reflection of, greater need and vulnerability. This has made collective action difficult, as descriptions of discord over the nursery and the communal kitchen attested. But the stories made clear that, as in our other cases, much of the divisiveness was a product of other factors: above all, the way state agencies enter the picture and the weakness/fragility of institutions, e.g., property rights. Thus the *Programa Nacional de Asistencia Alimentaria* (National Food Agency, PRONAA) had related only to the small group running the communal kitchen rather than the board of directors or the assembly. An active dispute concerning the nursery school resulted from a lack of clarity over to whom it had been handed over by the NGO who had built it. We never encountered such divisions in Huanta Uno. This is in part because at higher levels of income, the residents of Huanto Uno did not experience the encounters with different state actors that proved so divisive in Huanta Dos. But it is also probably the case that the greater level of education in Huanta Uno allows them to manage this institutional incoherence. The divisions of Huanta Uno, although less marked, still had their costs. They arose from the seemingly

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[41] Though they were good at this. One member of the group we interviewed provided a brilliant description of the events of International Women's Day in 1985, when they had to force themselves on the attention of the Municipality of Lima, since Venegas was refusing them recognition. They took advantage of the big meeting in Lima to celebrate the day, smuggling themselves in small groups into the municipality, secretly clutching food supplies to be able to settle down to a hunger strike and carefully placing women and children on the edge of the group. By 8 pm that evening, they had been recognized (group interview with the community of Huanta Dos, 08-11-05).

[42] Dr. Venegas tells how once the march was launched, the inhabitants of Mariategui, alerted by his staff, moved quickly to flatten the whole settlement of Huanta Dos. When the march arrived at his office and he told them Huanta Dos no longer existed, they turned around in panic to defend what was left (Interview with Oscar Venegas, 08-18-05).

inevitable incursion into politics, which brought discord and so led to the collapse of significant external aid, according to Venegas.[43]

While conflict caused damage in both cases, nevertheless we found clear evidence overall of vicious and virtuous circles. One example of success in Huanta Dos in collective action was in basic services. Here, two members of their board of directors worked in a private firm which does contracting for water, sanitation and electricity. The connection was important. The firm, *COPESA*, helped with finance and organised residents into marches with people from other zones to get the formalities completed. But they had to pay, with cash as well as time, whereas in Huanta Uno they achieved the same basic services through a government agency at a subsidised rate. It is significant that the poorer community paid more (absolutely) for its services, and also paid for the land where Huanta Uno did not (the government Housing Agency, ENACE,[44] bought it). Moreover, while urban middle-class migrants of Huanta Uno were able to sell houses in Ayacucho to invest in their settlement in Lima, the *campesinos* of Huanta Dos lost their cattle, and if they retained *chacras* (small plots), these were abandoned and effectively worthless, as a result of the destruction of infrastructure in the violence.

In addition, residents of Huanta Uno had a wider agenda including education – a school and *centro de educación ocupacional* (vocational education centre) – as well as asphalted roads that they persuaded the army to build. In Huanta Dos, after residents obtained basic services, although they continued to press for a road and parks, the impetus somehow was no longer there.

6.3   Attitudes to violence

All people from Huanta Uno and Dos faced violent intimidation as possible terrorists from Ayacucho. They remember the time when the police broke into their communities in the middle of the night, took the families to the park and searched their houses. All informants recounted how difficult those times were. However, people from Huanta Uno told us with confidence that nobody within the community was a terrorist and that they were not afraid of the police finding anything. The situation in Huanta Dos was quite different. Distrust was a widespread characteristic of the neighbourhood. The population came from a variety of places in Huanta and other provinces, and had only come together during the settlement. They were alert to the probability that *Sendero* had infiltrated their community in some degree.

While Huanta Uno was founded by peaceful occupation, residents of Huanta Dos experienced severe conflict in the course of securing their lots: violent clashes occurred between people from José Carlos Mariategui and Huanta Dos. Painful memories of hostility and violence are still there: of the burning of their temporary houses, the loss of a son, threats and insecurity.

Finally, what of the impact of migration in weakening collective action back in Huanta? Migration has clearly deprived Huanta of a competent educated middle class, who were able to move away early, anticipating the violence in some cases. However, our impression is not that they would have been enormously effective had they stayed but

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[43] He tells how he was on the point of closing a deal with the Dutch Royal family when an unpleasant incident occurred during the visit of their representative, causing the deal to collapse (Interview with Oscar Venegas, 08-18-05).

[44] A government enterprise responsible for funding housing development.

rather that the context of weak institutions, incompetence and lack of professionalism defeats potential leaders. The telling phrase from an ex-leader of the board of directors is that Ayacucho is full of *líderes dormidos* ('sleeping leaders').

7.   Review and conclusions

As we described in Figure 1, our cases are ranked according to the degree of ethnic and social differentiation they present. As is the norm in Peru, this coincides with social and economic characteristics. At the peak of ethnic and social differentiation is the case of Huanta, where a long history of oppression, discrimination and near-servitude was coupled with economic crisis and mismanaged agrarian reform. This led to increasing internal differentiation and local conflicts of many kinds which paved the way for an external actor with an anarchic and violent agenda, who was able to take advantage of weak identity and collective action as well as rootlessness and resentment.

The migration that accelerated because of this violence led to settlements which took the degree of internal differentiation to the point of physical separation. Relatively educated migrants were able to form a fairly homogenous community (Huanta Uno) with strong identity, and to use their capabilities to manage the (somewhat) more promising institutional scene confronting them in Lima. Meanwhile, the migrants that formed Huanta Dos were more severely traumatised, less united from the start, and continued to suffer violence and discrimination. Their capacity for collective action was greater than similar groups in Huanta, but far weaker than their better-endowed neighbours.

Much lower levels of ethnic and social differentiation are found in Bambamarca and Espinar, which possess more homogenous internal characteristics and a strong sense of identity (*campesino* and *rondero* or *comunero* and indigenous). Both communities have organised significant positive collective action with great effort and energy, and with positive outcomes for their communities; however, the results in terms of overcoming poverty and high HIs are still limited.

Thus our first conclusion from this analysis relates internal differentiation within the region to the potential for violence. While we cannot generalise from a single case, we do have clear evidence on a likely precipitating set of circumstances for inequality – principally horizontal in nature – to be associated with violence. We see in the case of Ayacucho how extreme HIs were combined with an oppressive and hierarchical system. This system came to an end in a confused and conflictual way with the emergence of many new tensions and differentiation, but little solid institutional framework to help manage the tensions. The arrival of an external agent in this situation, with a discourse that draws attention to and emphasises inequalities in order to justify its message of anti-feudal landlord struggle, made it very probable that violent conflict would erupt. For this, it is not necessary to enunciate the ethnic dimension of the HIs. However, the burden of the violence was still borne very heavily by one side of the ethnic divide, and society's willingness to tolerate those casualties links back in part to racial attitudes.[45] Thus the 'mass' nature of the resulting violence emanates at least in part from societal attitudes.

Our second conclusion concerns our initial hypothesis that a weak propensity to organise and unite in coherent collective action, whether violent or non-violent, provides

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[45] CVR (2003).

an explanation of why extreme HIs have persisted so long in Peru. We have in fact found extensive evidence of non-violent collective action, leading to potentially good outcomes. In two of our rural contexts, external threat created a quite deep and broad sense of identity, and local leaders were not lacking when activity appeared worthwhile. The degree of violence in these cases was 'controlled' and used as an instrument for negotiation. We found this in Espinar and Bambamarca, where mobilisation was used to secure attention from the authorities and/or the mine. But strikingly, the benefits were limited while the action remained at the micro or even the meso level. The principal explanation emerging from these cases is that community-level action needs an intermediate level to achieve change successfully. If the intermediate level is controlled by political parties that are fragmented, corrupt, and prone to personalism and favouritism, then the connections go sour. This is even more true when the state at the other end of the spectrum is seen as 'alien and far away'.

The lack of intermediaries connects directly to an important theme that has lain behind our observation of the difficulty of connecting collective action to political action: decentralisation – or rather, its weakness. Peru has done very little so far to create local spaces of participation and has barely begun the long slow task of supporting capacity building at the local level. The ability to make progress (e.g., in Espinar, in the use of resources from the mining sector) was dangerously dependent on the rare event of a progressive and committed mayor. However, there are interesting signs of willingness to make progress at the level of 'macro regions', which in the future could facilitate greater integration between the macro, meso and micro levels.

Our conclusions on the importance of the nature of institutions and the form of state-society relations to the degree of and success of collective action are heavily underlined by the Lima case study. The relatively greater degree of institutional coherence in Lima compared with the Sierra allowed the more educated population of Huanta Uno to move away with agility and achieve significant gains. But the degree of coherence was still not enough to be other than frustrating and alienating to the poorer and less educated population of Huanta Dos. Furthermore, the very way state actors interacted with the population reduced the ability of the more fragile society to act collectively.

From this contrast comes an insight as to how horizontal inequalities are sustained and augmented. The group less endowed with capabilities pays more for its collective actions, has greater difficulty sustaining actions and ultimately achieves less. Relevant actors with whom the group can interact can be extremely important for successful meso-level collective action, particularly in the absence of the state and with an incoherent institutional framework. From Espinar, we can conclude that the responsiveness and real interest for dialogue on the side of the company was important in achieving significant results, solving conflict between the mine and communities of Espinar. However, without a coherent institutional framework, what the company and the communities can achieve by themselves is still limited, leading to a sense of frustration.

A further reflection concerns the state's lack of capacity to act. If we consider that any state has a finite capacity to solve problems, initiate and manage projects,[46] and that where a mature civil service is lacking, this finite capacity represents a severe constraint,

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[46] This builds on Albert Hirschman's notion that state capacity for problem solving is as much a bottleneck as the more conventional concepts.

then it is clear that such a state cannot be everywhere at the same time. If a way of rationing response capacity is to fail to provide the minimum of basic services as a right and to respond only when pressured (the effective pattern of recent urban settlement in Peru), then for the poor, limited capacity for expensive collective action gets exhausted on this aspect of life. The better-off can use their collective action to get further ahead.

8.   References

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Appendix 1: Map of Peru showing three case study areas