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Arij Ouweneel (Ed.)

C U A D E R N O S D E L C E D L A

Andeans and Their Use of Cultural Resources

Space, Gender, Rights & Identity

25



ANDEANS AND THEIR USE OF CULTURAL RESOURCES

CUADERNOS DEL CEDLA Editorial Board
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ANDEANS AND THEIR USE
OF CULTURAL RESOURCES
SPACE, GENDER, RIGHTS & IDENTITY

ARIJ OUWENEEL (ED.)

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NOTES ON THE CONTRIBUTORS

Christien Klaufus joined CEDLA in April 2008 as Assistant Professor of Human Geography. She graduated in Architecture and Urbanism at Eindhoven University of Technology in 1993 and in Cultural Anthropology (*cum laude*) at the University of Amsterdam in 1999. In 2006 she received her PhD in Anthropology at Utrecht University. From 1999 to 2001 and from 2006 to 2008 she worked as a researcher for the OTB Research Institute at Delft University of Technology, where she examined to what extent self-provided housing contributes to a sense of community. Her research project “Changing social landscapes in medium-sized cities” covers two topics: 1) dwelling, housing, and the social meanings of architecture and material culture in areas with high rates of transnational migration; 2) urbanization processes and urban change in medium-sized cities. This project derives from her PhD thesis, where she asserts that a new middle class instrumentalizes certain architectural forms as symbols and catalysts of social mobility. Elaborating on those findings, Dr. Klaufus investigates the role of architectural preferences in social relations in areas with high rates of transnational migration. Parts of the study have been conducted in Guatemala, El Salvador, Peru, and Ecuador. For her second research topic she explores geographically how both planned urban growth and what is known as urbanization-from-below contribute to the development of medium-sized cities.

Mijke de Waardt pursued her MSc degree in Educational Sciences in 2003 and obtained an MA degree in Latin America Studies at CEDLA. In a collaborative project between the VU University Amsterdam and CEDLA, she started her PhD research in July 2008. Because of the violent civil war in Peru in the 1980s and 90s and the transition process that started at the beginning of this decade, hundreds of different associations of victims of violence arose. Her research focuses on construction, representation, and negotiation of victimhood by organized Peruvian victims of political violence in Peru and (non) governmental development organizations. Grassroots victim activism is an important topic that is connected to recent debates about the bottom-up perspective on transitional justice. The primary objective of this dissertation is to broaden this micro-level understanding of post-conflict societies. Analysis is based on extensive ethnographic research conducted at multiple sites.

Arij Ouweneel has been Associate Professor of History at CEDLA since 1985, and was Special Professor of Historical Anthropology of the Amerindian Peoples at the Universiteit Utrecht (1999-2004). He graduated *cum laude* in Social-Economic History at the Universiteit Leiden in 1983 and received his PhD *cum laude* in Social-Economic History at the same university in 1989. Working with moving images—film, television, Internet—the object of his re-

search is to identify and classify cultural schemas depicted in the vast corpus of the Latin American moving image and, at the same time, to contribute to the theory of Latin American encoding processes. Looking at moving image narratives in selected Latin American countries, the most useful crossover between cultural analysis, semiotics, and social science research on belonging occurs through the ecological schema theory. In this theory, cinema and television broadcasts are studied as the major source of contemporary historical microanalysis to understand the ideas encoded in the scripts and films, as well as possible perceptions of the viewers and audience in decoding them.

Marc Simon Thomas is a PhD candidate at CEDLA and Utrecht University and an instructor at the Department of Cultural Anthropology of Utrecht University. He holds a law degree from the University of Leiden. After a decade of professional experience in the insurance industry and as an executive recruiter, he resumed his academic career at Utrecht in the field of Cultural Anthropology, graduating *cum laude* and subsequently obtaining a degree in Latin America Studies at CEDLA. His master's thesis was on legal pluralism and interlegality in Ecuador. In his current legal anthropological research about legal pluralism in practice in Ecuador, he focuses on how ordinary Indians living in the Andean highlands apply both indigenous and national law to resolve internal conflicts.

Annelou Ypeij has been an Assistant Professor of Anthropology at CEDLA since January 2003. She gradu-

ated *cum laude* in anthropology from Utrecht University in 1990. Five years later she defended her PhD dissertation about the informal economy of Lima at the same university. From 1997 to 2002 at Erasmus University Rotterdam, she conducted post-doctoral research on poverty within the Dutch welfare state in Amsterdam. Broadly formulated, her research interests encompass poverty, gender, and livelihood strategies. She has done extensive fieldwork in Mexico, Peru, and the Netherlands. In Lima, Peru, she has analyzed why female micro-entrepreneurs in the informal economy earn less than their male counterparts do. She is currently working on two research projects. The first is on gender and tourism in the Cusco-Machu Picchu Region and the impact of tourism on local communities. She focuses on the livelihood strategies and ethnicity of women and men active in the lowest echelons of the labor market. The second research project is a new study on gender, family relations, and urban poverty. Dr. Ypeij is formulating research questions on how the urban poor are involved in global flows of ideas, money, people and goods, and how this involvement corresponds with changing gender and family relations and in turn impacts the social fabric of Latin American cities. This research will bring her back to Lima.

INTRODUCTION

ARIJ OUWENEEL, ANNELOU YPEIJ AND CHRISTIEN KLAUFUS

Imagine a young adult girl in Chosica, one of the recent suburbs of Lima. Her parents are of Andean origin, but she was born here. As a young adult, she hopes to start a family. In her community are several routes that lead to family-formation. The first is the traditional and very ancient Andean custom of marriages arranged by parents. For social scientists, marriage is an institution of society, in this case an explicit and formal one. Second, the girl could choose a young man on her own and marry him—another example of the explicit and formal institution. Third, she could start cohabiting with the young man of her choice without getting married. Living with one's chosen partner, while not a formal institution, is obviously explicit. Fourth, she might become pregnant without being willing or able to live with the father of her child at all. As a single mother, her family will be an informal one, but explicit nonetheless. All institutions can become cultural resources; the analytical task is to understand when, how and why this is the case. The palette of cultural resources for family formation can thus be understood analytically as being explicit and either formal or informal. This makes us interested in why and how a certain cultural resource is used: What is the decision-making process behind the cultural resource use?

Now, imagine a similar kind of young girl, somewhere in a city in one of the Andean countries, visited by a student of the CEDLA Master Program interested in ethnicity. Our student wants to know about this girl's identity. Identity is a theory of oneself. How does she theorize herself? What categories would she like to use, and how does she present herself? She could choose a formal-explicit category, institutionalized by the State: Peruvian, Ecuadorian, Bolivian, Chilean, et cetera; or Limeña, or any other reference to an urban settlement or official regional entity. Some regional categories are explicit but informal, like *andino* (from the Andes), *serrano* (from the Sierra, the Andes), or *huanca* (the Andes around Huancayo). Several ethnic categories may also be explicit, even formal, if they are officially recog-

nized by the State. The term *indígena* (indigenous) is recognized in some countries as an official civil category (i.e., as an explicit and formal institution), whereas in other countries it is not (i.e., an implicit institution). Most ethnic categories should be understood as an implicit institution (e.g., Amerindian, Cholo, or mestizo). In her talk with our student, the girl in the Andean city has a basically implicit palette of cultural resources for her identity formation.

In addition to natural resources, cultural resource use is a major theme defining the role of the continent in an emerging global economy. Philosophers, psychologists, sociologists, and anthropologists agree today that human development, including the brain and its neural architecture, takes place “within very particular and variable *sociocultural environments*.”¹ Resources may be found “out there,” in the world, ready to use. In this *Cuaderno* we regard “cultural resources” as any set of cultural elements within a specific sociocultural setting and conducive to the quest for enhanced self-esteem, status improvement, economic advancement, or a liberated identity; in short: the pursuit of happiness. Cultural elements that are converted into resources furthering progress for some people may simultaneously turn out to inhibit progress for others. Cultural resources can therefore not be studied as “separate entities” with an intrinsic value, as they may be valued only as “resources” or as “limitations” within the particular context of study. As anthropologist Bradd Shore writes:

Cross-cultural psychologists have demonstrated that even basic aspects of perception are influenced by the way that experience is “modeled” by a particular sociocultural environment. [...] So an important part of the evolutionary heritage of the sapient hominid is a nervous system that has evolved under the sway of culture (in general) and which develops in each individual under the sway of a culture (in particular). The human nervous system appears to be dependent on external models or programs for normal operation, and this notion of models has significant importance for anthropologists and psychologists alike.²

This is an incentive to study these “external models or programs for normal operation.”

As the attempt above suggests, one of the words in use for this practice is “institutions.” Institutions are the explicit or implicit rules of the game.³ They are inter-subjective, because all members of society are aware that they exist and have a sense of how they operate. In addition, institutions operate externally with respect to the individual. Their compelling and imperative (wielding moral authority) impact may make them very difficult to avoid, ignore, or decline. Institutions may be viewed as cultural resources, because they are “chosen,”

¹ Shore, *Culture* (1996), p. 4.

² Shore, *Culture* (1996), p. 4 (italic in original).

³ North, *New* (1993), p. 5.

“mined,” or “exploited” by society, whether explicitly (consciously) or implicitly (unconsciously). Explicit institutions are easily recognized by members of society. They may be articulated as human-made physical units, for example as monumental government buildings in cities. But institutions can also be immaterial: consider formal and informal organizations, law, political administration, education, and public service. De Waardt, for example, describes how female victims of political violence in Peru use Andean organizational forms in their pursuit of recognition. Implicit institutions are the customs, values, norms, and patterns that rule social behavior. These are the conventions taken for granted; they count as “self-imposed codes of conduct.”⁴ In Chapter 4, Simon Thomas discusses the complexities of combining formal legal systems (explicit institutions) with implicit judicial customs (implicit institutions) in rural Ecuador. Notions and boundaries regarding gender constructions are another important example and are described by Ypeij in Chapter 2. Social networks, families, and languages figure among the implicit institutions as well. Klaufus explores the codes of conduct with regard to urban public space use in Chapter 1, while Ouweneel deciphers the implicit cultural conventions in his analysis of urban narratives in Chapter 5.

The approach highlights the context to understand the significance of a cultural resource. Cultural memory evolves through the elaboration of complex *artifacts of remembering*, associated with historically new forms of artifact-mediated experience. According to recent insights, artifacts are not just material objects but are simultaneously material and ideal or conceptual. The corpus of artifacts comprises physical traces of humans, such as any materials manufactured or modified by people, as well as narratives, life histories, communication structures; such objects, concepts, and stories have meaning for people in historical and contemporary communities. Generally, these artifacts remain from past communities. Manufactured cultural resources include tools, images, individual buildings, groups of buildings, concentrations of structures, and other forms of manipulated landscapes. In short, as material and non-material artifacts, cultural resources reflect historical and contemporary patterns of behavior, practices, traditions, beliefs, and thought. The context is the relationship of artifacts to each other and the surrounding environment in which cultural resources are maintained and put to use. The different ways of drawing behavior models and designing patterns of social life from the well of local customs, national traditions, and the emerging global practices will be the focus of the coming chapters.

To approach cultural resources dynamically, researchers of cultural resources should rely on semiotics. Artifacts are signs, and se-

⁴ North, *New* (1993), p. 6.

miotics is the interpretation of signs, of what is signified (or the concepts behind a sign that are culturally constructed every time a sign is read and would therefore change over time), and of the signifiers (or the forms of the sign). Describing signs as human-made ideals *and* as material cultural resources designed to mediate goal-oriented behavior, Marx W. Wartofsky and Michael Cole teach us to examine artifacts at three levels. For example, words, music scores, and tools are primary artifacts; as are dwellings, buildings, and plazas, cultural rituals and material traces of the past,⁵ social networks, organizations, and family relationships. Some share at least certain material components, such as ink on paper and sound waves through the air, or are entirely material. Instruction books, sheet music, fictional stories, guides, life histories, treatises, and the like are secondary artifacts because they contain instructions about what to do with primary artifacts or how to read and experience them. Tertiary artifacts work at a more abstract and still more implicit level and include statues and works of plastic art, as well as visions of ideal worlds, rules, law, and political goals. Interpreting artifacts as signifiers connects people to the signified world—in general: the explicit and implicit institutions that formed them. By looking at explicit and implicit institutions as primary or secondary artifacts, research on the use of cultural resources will eventually concentrate on seemingly imaginary worlds or tertiary artifacts. These imagined entities have been “created in the course of aesthetic and theoretical knowing,” which was needed to form “embodied representations” to “color and change our perception of the ‘actual’ world.”⁶ Hence, by looking at their primary or secondary form, the contributors analyze the artifacts in their tertiary form. In the next chapters, the analysis of urban spaces and buildings; of gendered work relations; of Andean grass-roots organizations; of mixed formal and informal legal systems; and of stories of discrimination will illustrate how such artifacts connect people to their life worlds.

A Multi-Disciplinary Approach

When we examine the contemporary development of societies in Latin America “under the sway of culture (in general)” and “under the sway of *a* culture (in particular),” we need to take into account that Latin America has rapidly urbanized in recent decades: more than three quarters of the population now live in urban areas. Scholars are

⁵ On traces in sociology: Gray and Gómez-Barris (eds.), *Toward* (2010); in history: Ginzburg, *Clues* (1989).

⁶ Wartofsky, *Models* (1979), pp. 200-209. Cole, *Cultural* (1996), pp. 118-121, 122. At the end of this paragraph, quotes from Wells, *Dialogic* (1999), p. 69.

therefore interested mainly in urban life and the modernization of rural areas. Considering the urban lifestyle from a cultural resource perspective enables scholars to juxtapose urban traditions against rural traditions (of newly immigrated urban residents) and emerging global influences. “Thinking is for doing,” explain psychologists. They focus on what people do. At a certain time and place, culture is the product of the people present, produced with the resources in their surroundings, the old material world and the new world they create: information from next of kin, community members, migrants, and the media. Gone are the days when the physical form of the Latin American city was thought to determine its social order. Today, cities are addressed by exploring the identity of resistance, as a new face of this New World. To do so, city dwellers have to draw on a series of cultural resources, from ancient traditions to contemporary global features.

Mirroring the gradually increasing weight of the industrial sectors during most of the twentieth century, the urban landscape of the continent boasts some of the world’s most populous metropolises. By creating new employment opportunities, fuelling growth in retail, services, and the public sector, the urban economy gave impoverished rural dwellers the idea that by migrating to the cities, they might improve their livelihoods. But although growth in metropolises comprising millions of inhabitants continued to accelerate in the 1980s and 90s, Latin American urbanization has changed since then. Current urban studies mention that a considerable number of small and medium-sized cities in Latin America have high growth rates, and that further urbanization on this continent is expected to take place not in large metropolitan areas but in the smaller cities. Currently, the largest share of the population—37 percent—lives in urban areas with fewer than 500,000 inhabitants.⁷ Urban life, however, is both global and local. The urban setting encompasses the city and, as may be expected, its direct hinterland. Thanks to emerging trans-local networks, this sphere has expanded globally. Today, the scale of analysis focuses not only on individuals, groups and local communities in Latin America but also on members of trans-local networks on other continents. It necessarily covers activities by the individual through families into transnational networks. In the daily lives of our research subjects, micro and macro are intertwined: residents in cities are connected to people in the hinterlands, as well as to their migrant relatives abroad and vice versa.

In the city, rural migrants encountered a culture that was very different from their traditional homelands. Urban life involves local manifestations of global development, which appear in terms of inequality, lifestyles, cultures and identity formation, problems of social

⁷ Satterthwaite, *Outside* (2006), p. 3.

cohesion and social conflict, economic opportunity, and survival strategies. The daily struggle to improve livelihoods, fight poverty, or adopt an urban lifestyle engendered new meanings for social interaction. True, cities are thoroughly modern places, including fixed daily work schedules and agendas, opportunities for women to work outside the house and for children to attend school and better access to health care. Cities also include office buildings, shopping malls, cell phone technology, satellite television, computers, Internet shops and video camcorders. But the urban poor live in circumstances of social exclusion, performing full-time or part-time semi-skilled, unskilled or domestic labor. They engage in petty trading or work as artisans, remaining unemployed or succumbing to lure of criminal activities. Their housing is poor and usually requires sharing bedrooms with family members. Nevertheless, they do not merely submit to their fates. Their activities constitute a local agency of social groups, categories, and institutions that actively pursue their culturally constituted “projects” rather than reacting passively, simply to survive or improve their social, political, and economic circumstances.

As agents of daily life, the new urban dwellers embody a kind of relative autonomy that forces social science research to extend the focus beyond explicit institutionalization. While critical research used to seek out the organizers and directors of the opposition, assuming that resistance to globalization, exclusion, poverty, and capitalism needed to be explicitly institutionalized to have any effect (and had difficulty finding them), it now concentrates on implicit institutionalization, such as on networks and groups of people and their strategies to survive, develop, or improve in other ways their standard of living, politically, economically, culturally, or socially. Sometimes these networks and groups may be identified as examples of collective action aiming to achieve greater individual, group, network, or community control over daily life, perhaps even influencing political agendas. Research on the activities that control daily life is even imperative to understand the fate of this struggle in terms of its own “logic” instead of by pre-ordained political or theoretical matrices.

One particular development merits special consideration. Daily life in cities may have become so complex that people are trying to find better conditions elsewhere. This raises the question of how local spatial transformations are influenced by broader processes, such as transnational migration. Contact with the world in general is conducive to repositioning actors, whether as individuals or in groups, families, or networks. The influence of migration is crucial. At the turn of the century neoliberal reforms put pressure on national and local labor markets and on the costs of basic needs. Although formal employment opportunities have diminished, cost of living has increased, coinciding with a rise in poverty rates. Diminished opportu-

nities to earn a living at home have resulted in large flows of labor migration to the United States and Europe.

The outflow of people has coincided with the inflow of remittances. In many Latin American countries labor remittances have become the primary source of income. Overall, Latin America has turned into the top remittance-receiving region in the world. In 2011, remittances on the continent amounted US\$ 61 billion, a sum larger than the value of international development aid.⁸ Sending a family member abroad has become a new coping strategy for individual households. The increase of divided and recomposed families has of course been accompanied by emotional and social challenges, as well as by labor shortages in specific branches such as in the construction industry. On the other hand, remittance spending has boosted local consumption, which has benefited the retail and real estate markets. Although macroeconomic figures are now clear, the social reality of migrant and non-migrant families tends to be overlooked.

Three questions arise. How do Latin Americans, especially but not exclusively the urban middle classes and the poor, construct their daily lives—considering the significant transformations in the Latin American context? Which solutions do they find to manage their cultural resource use within the urban context? What does this all mean to them? In this *Cuaderno*, through a few case studies, everyday cultural resource use will be explored, both to acknowledge the importance of ordinary practices and to theorize about the relationship between personal and the socio-cultural aspects. One important goal is thus to demonstrate that a multidisciplinary perspective on everyday cultural resource use is viable as a key theoretical and empirical theme for investigating the autonomous Latin American manifestations of global development. The essays in this *Cuaderno* are therefore necessarily a programmatic rather than a thematic collection, with this introduction serving as a programmatic discussion of our shared approach, not as a summary of the themes and contexts of specific case-studies.⁹

⁸ MIF, *Regaining* (2011), p. 24.

⁹ A thematic approach presumes a series of essays that elaborate on one specific theme. The theme is discussed from different angles in the various contributions. The theme gives the chapters coherence. The introduction discusses the overall theme and picks up the several varieties offered by the contributions. A programmatic introduction draws up some guidelines on how to read the collection, based on shared analytical or methodological viewpoints. The selection of chapters follows logically from that programmatic discussion. However, the introduction can also be read as an autonomous text. The approach gives the chapters coherence; thematically, the collection may include widely differing chapters. One case of a programmatic collection that is exemplary to us is Greenblatt's *Cultural Mobility* (2010), with essays ranging from mobility in Portuguese colonial India and tourism in China to the reading of American slavery narratives by Germans and world literature beyond Goethe, preceded by a "manifesto" on cultural mobility.

The theoretical framework encompasses, first, a historical perspective, which reveals processes of interactions between actors and motivations underlying their behavior in the recent past. The historical context is important for understanding the dynamics of the studied solutions over time. Second, a perspective that connects the implicit and explicit institutions to the actors involved is used to explore the geographical, cultural, and gender components in the case studies. Third, recent research has established that the “everyday” (e.g., daily cultural resource use) consists of a relatively autonomous agency, basically motivated by the pursuit of happiness; this includes self-esteem, status improvement, economic advancement, and a liberated identity. Moreover, although the “everyday” is characterized by the singular, it is to be understood mainly as an overarching structure common to larger groups of people. This means: the general in the particular, the structure in agency, the power of—possible—resistance, the experience and feelings involved in institutions and discourse and the macro in micro-analysis. To understand aspects of the general macro world of institutions, discourses, power, and structure in Latin America as described above, the researcher might go micro and investigate resistance, agency, experiences, feelings, and other qualities of the Latin American particular. Considering the theoretical interpretation of the global/local nexus, this means that the agency of individuals, groups, and networks simultaneously incorporates and transforms global processes.

One basic initiative is to fill in the human detail that is missing from abstract representations of human beings and their societies. In this *Cuaderno*, we wish to emphasize the intimate, local experience of ordinary life. At the same time, the questions raised are: what counts as “ordinary”, and whom do these definitions of the “ordinary” serve? In short, addressing how actors position themselves in a local, everyday context allows for interpretation of their subjectivities and spatialization of social difference. By focusing on actors as incorporating and redirecting the structures of global development, research on daily life may lead directly to the development of a theory grounded in intimate knowledge of the specimen cases but oriented toward placing them in the largest possible context, generating a micro-macro theory. Our multidisciplinary approach becomes clear in the discipline-specific interpretations of cultural resources. As a human geographer, Klafus studies how the constructed space is imbued with meaning and can be used to exert power. Anthropologist Ypeij, social scientist De Waardt and legal anthropologist Simon Thomas study how the poor and marginalized use cultural resources to improve their lives and the importance of choice in this context. Ouweneel borrows from cognitive sciences the idea of cultural schemas or mental models to demonstrate how meaning is an

chored in narratives and discusses why the use of cultural resources is restricted to certain spaces and specific places.

The Demonstration Effect

The first chapter in this *Cuaderno* takes us to Ecuador. Riobamba is the capital city of a rural province with a large Amerindian population. Although the urban landscape has always been characterized by social and ethnic diversity, socio-spatial politics were dominated by a white-mestizo middle class. Over the last two decades, Amerindians and rural migrants have been asserting themselves more visibly in urban space. In 2003, a group of professional architects organized an event to discuss the future of the city. While the objective officially stated was to explore creating a multicultural landscape, the themes that emerged proved rather exclusionary. In fact, social and ethnic differences received the most attention. Power struggles between local architects hampered any consensus. Klafus interprets the discussion about the multicultural city as an attempt by professionals to reclaim control over the spatial order. The analysis centers on the conflicting appreciations of local cultural resources that became apparent during the event.

In an urban built environment, humans experience a socially constructed space consisting of buildings, objects and public places, to which they attribute meanings. This space and those buildings and places can be used as cultural resources by citizens and authorities to exert power and control over the urban territory. The built environment stratifies and represents a society; buildings and urban spaces are both the means and the outcome of existing social relations, which implies that they influence people's experiences (ideas) and behavior (actions). How the built environment may be seen analytically as a *model of social life* has received extensive consideration in North-American culturist and French structuralist literature. How buildings and spaces may be regarded as *models for (ideal) behavior* has been addressed in functionalist literature.¹⁰ In daily life, however, the built environment is never the rectilinear outcome of people's behavior, nor can human behavior in daily life be steered directly by built forms. Relations between forms, meanings, and human behavior are always complex and multiple.¹¹ Because the built environment

¹⁰ For North-American culturist and French structuralist literature, see: Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton, *Meaning* (1981); Chambers and Low (eds.), *Housing* (1989); Fernandez, "Mission" (1974), and, "Arquitectonic" (1992); Carsten and Hugh-Jones (eds.), *About* (1995). For functionalist literature, see: Jacobs, *Death* (1961).

¹¹ Parker Pearson and Richards (eds.), *Architecture* (1994); Duncan (ed.), *Housing* (1981).

structures and represents a stratified society, theoretical notions such as “architecture,” “public space,” and “cultural heritage” have stratified connotations. Architecture can, for example, refer to an academic discipline specialized in innovative building techniques and historical knowledge about aesthetics.¹² Yet it may also refer more broadly to culturally embedded building traditions, regardless of whether the designers are architects.¹³ The dichotomy between high-brow and popular architecture that is implicitly used in most societies is based not on the distinction between planned and unplanned buildings or between formal and informal construction processes but on that between academic and non-academic design traditions.¹⁴ This difference is important, because it influences the social impact of spatial designs when used as a cultural resource. In our overall framework, stratification of society may be regarded as an institution, as it steers social interactions. Within that social setting, architecture and building traditions may serve as cultural resources. The material and immaterial artifacts mobilizing those cultural resources are the specific design styles and formats and the meanings attributed to them.

To understand how a social effect of spatial designs—as cultural resources—is generated, we use the notion “demonstration effect.” This multidisciplinary concept is applied in economic, political, and tourism studies. In economics the term is attributed to Ragnar Nurkse, who stated in the late 1950s that exposure of the poor to “modern” products would lead to imitation behavior. He based his assumptions on Veblen’s late nineteenth-century theory of “conspicuous consumption.”¹⁵ In political science, the “demonstration effect” refers to the changes in one place caused by political movements in another place (e.g., the 2011 Arab Spring). Political mobilizations can have a catalyst effect across boundaries. In tourism studies it describes an acculturation process taking place as a consequence of contacts between tourists and resident populations. In housing studies the term denotes the effect on social stratification of cross-cultural imitation in house designs.¹⁶ This meaning of the term is used in this volume. In the Latin American urban context, people from lower

¹² Frampton, *Labour* (2002); Norberg-Schulz, *Meaning* (1971).

¹³ Oliver (ed.), *Shelter* (1975); Oliver, *Dwellings* (1987), and, *Dwellings* (2003); Rapoport, *House* (1969), and, “Spontaneous” (1988).

¹⁴ Klaufus, *Urban* (2012); Glassie, *Vernacular* (2000).

¹⁵ James, “Positional” (1987); Nurkse, *Problems* (1957); Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of The Leisure Class: An Economic Study of Institutions*, 1899, re-issued by Forgotten Books (2008), at <http://www.forgottenbooks.org>.

¹⁶ Horowitz, *Ethnic* (1985), p. 279; Fisher, “Demonstration” (2004); Holston, “Auto-construction” (1991); Georges, *Making* (1979), p. 209; Klaufus, *Urban* (2012); Emily Walmsley, “Transformando los pueblos: La migración internacional y el impacto social al nivel comunitario,” *Ecuador Debate* 54 (2001), at <http://www.dlh.lahora.com.ec/paginas/debate/paginas/debate356.htm> (accessed February 2, 2003).

social strata imitate house designs and consumption patterns (cultural resources) of people with more social prestige to achieve social mobility.¹⁷ John Turner, who described self-help housing in Lima in the 1970s, already stated that house designs are important cultural resources through which residents try to elevate their social status. In Europe, we are perhaps more familiar with the notion of the “housing ladder”: a stratification of dwelling types within a society.¹⁸ People who hope to advance socially try to increase their residential prestige on this housing ladder by buying or building a fancier house. In Latin America, “demonstration” in house-building means a process of “informed quotation and combination.”¹⁹ The subsequent stages of imitation and adaptation resemble that of the housing ladder. If many people use their power over self-representation in house designs, the “demonstration effect” of prestigious construction may change in the social stratification of a society at large.²⁰

The act of “demonstration” consists of several stages: individuals observe the behavior of a more prestigious individual, weighing this information against their own current situation, deciding whether copying such behavior would be useful and feasible, and ultimately acting upon that decision.²¹ Things worth copying have in common that they are: (1) highly *visible* to others; (2) to a certain extent *superfluous*;²² and (3) constantly adapted to show *progress*.²³ Three possible “demonstration” outcomes are described in the literature. The first one is the *exact replication* of an appreciated building. In house designs in informal settlements and rural areas this is usually not an option, because residents are expected to add a personal touch to their design.²⁴ The second scenario is an *inexact imitation*, being either a deliberate or accidental inexactness. Fashionable colors are often copied in deliberately imprecise ways, for example by reversing foreground and background colors. This way, residents show individuality while at the same time demonstrating knowledge of local tastes. Accidental inexact imitations occur when exact products or techniques are not available or affordable. Once, a social worker in Ecuador explained that a transnational migrant had sent home a picture of the Sydney Opera House requesting his wife to copy the design for their new house. The architectural design was copied and

¹⁷ Bourdieu, *Distinction* (1984).

¹⁸ Turner, “Housing” (1968); Hannerz, *Transnational* (1996); Howard Husock “Repairing the Ladder: Toward a New Housing Policy Paradigm,” *Reason Foundation*, at <http://reason.org/news/show/repairing-the-ladder> (accessed March 5, 2011).

¹⁹ Holston, “Autoconstruction” (1991), p. 460.

²⁰ Barriendos Rodríguez, “Arte” (2007).

²¹ Fisher, “Demonstration” (2004).

²² Veblen, *Theory*, 1899 (2008), at <http://www.forgottenbooks.org>, p. 59.

²³ James, “Positional” (1987); Pezo, “Arquitectura” (2009).

²⁴ Klafus, *Urban* (2012); Holston, “Autoconstruction” (1991).

adapted for local living. It never became an exact copy of the original, but then that was never the aim. The third scenario, known as “social learning,”²⁵ occurs when imitation is financially or technically impossible. In that case, people try to achieve the same result through other means. In Ecuador, families of transnational migrants gain social prestige by demonstrating cosmopolitan lifestyles. Families without members abroad often encourage their children to use social media to demonstrate alternative transnational connections.

Once people begin to imitate and adapt spatial forms to their own situation, a process is set in motion. One person copies the other, each neighbor commenting upon the results of the latest remodeling activity by others. When specific architectural designs become popular, others will copy elements of these successes to integrate them in their own house designs. The individual act of demonstration recurs, and a chain effect spreads across territories, gradually transforming socio-spatial environments on a larger scale. Analytically, this shows the interconnectedness of individual uses of cultural resources and changing social structures in or across geographic territories.

Livelihood, Choices and Liabilities

Ever since the study of poverty discarded the one-dimensional focus on its material aspects, such as levels of income and disposable income, interest has increased in its cultural dimensions. With the introduction of the livelihood strategies concept and the capital/capability approach, poverty is conceptualized as having insufficient access to material *and* cultural resources. The poor and marginalized are increasingly perceived as agents (or actors) who—under the right circumstances—are capable of making choices as social and cultural beings.²⁶ Lacking the freedom to take decisions, having little control over one’s own life and body, suffering humiliation, and being deprived of a decent life according to one’s own cultural standards aggravate a state of poverty. The daily life of the poor and the marginalized then becomes a struggle not only for material resources but also for freedom of choice, control and respect.²⁷

The cultural dimensions of poverty are obvious when considered with respect to household gender relations.²⁸ Scholars using quantitative methodologies long regarded households as a unit or—as it is

²⁵ Fisher, “Demonstration” (2004).

²⁶ For strategies: Gonzalez de la Rocha, *Resources* (1994); Roberts, *Households* (1991); Ypeij, *Poverty* (2000a), *Producing* (2000b); for capabilities: Sen, *Development* (1999). See also Long, “Paradigm.”

²⁷ Ypeij, *Single* (2009).

²⁸ Benería and Roldán, *Crossroads* (1987); Gonzalez de la Rocha, *Resources* (1994); Stack, *Kin* (1974).

often called—an “individual with another name.” From the 1970s onwards, feminist scholars looked inside households. They analyzed gender inequalities, showed that men and women might have rather divergent life goals and proved that within the same household women might be poorer than their menfolk.²⁹ As Ypeij argues in the third chapter of this *Cuaderno*, the concepts of gender and the sexual division of labor are important instruments for operationalizing these gender inequalities. Gender may be defined as a network of beliefs, personality traits, attitudes, feelings, values, behaviors, and activities differentiating men and women through a process of social constructs, ranking traits, and activities in such a way that those associated with men are ordinarily attributed greater value. Ranking and the consequent formation of hierarchies in most Latin American societies is an intrinsic component of gender constructions and results in women having less access to resources than men.³⁰ The notion of male authority and domination is widespread, as is the related expectation that women should submit to this situation. *Machismo* values give men greater freedom than women to leave the house whenever they like. Men standing about in the street drinking with their friends or being sexually active and engaged in extra-marital affairs are often perceived as very manly.³¹ The street is associated with masculinity, while the home is considered to be a feminine space: *La calle es del hombre y la casa de la mujer* (the street belongs to the man and the house to the woman) or alternatives to this saying are popular expressions in many Latin American societies of specific cultural boundaries and liberties.³² Taking care of the house and being a good housewife can give women some informal power, as it may cultivate respect from others.

The house as a cultural resource, however, has little value in a state of dire poverty that forces women to seek income-generating activities outside. Cultural notions that may benefit men in performing their income-generating activities and may be of use as a cultural resource may simultaneously present a cultural liability for women. The association between the street and masculinity offers men freedom of movement and opportunities to cover vast distances in search of an income. The home-femininity association, however, means that women who want or need to be away from home have to overcome cultural barriers. The *casa-calle* (*house-street*) notions are also related to a gendered division of labor, in which men ideally earn a decent

²⁹ Benería and Feldman, *Unequal Burden* (1992); Chant and Craske, *Gender* (2003); Folbre, *Who Pays* (1994).

³⁰ Based on Benería and Roldán, *Crossroads* (1987), pp. 11-12.

³¹ In Mexico the notion of the *casa chica* (little house) indicates the second household a man has set up with a new wife while also maintaining relations with his first, i.e., the Latin American version of polygamy.

³² Steenbeck, *Drempel* (1995).

income, while women stay at home to do household chores. During the previous decades, in which globalization has resulted in the restructuring of Latin American economies, men have increasing difficulties fulfilling these breadwinning responsibilities, and some scholars relate this to what they call the crisis of manhood.³³ Rarely, however, do men compensate for their reduced breadwinning success by helping their wives with household chores, as this might call into question their masculinity. Real men do not do household chores. Women, on the other hand, increasingly generate an income *and* do all the household chores. This severely limits their mobility and the time they can invest in paid work. Even today, the gendered division of labor may result in greater freedom of movement and increased chances of economic success for men, while curtailing those of women.

This does not mean that women are submissive. On the contrary, the case of Lima has taught us that people at the grassroots level are highly capable at social networking and forming organizations that help them confront their poverty.³⁴ Nowadays, women's soup kitchens and female leadership may be regarded as new cultural resources available to women. When the first grassroots organizations of women appeared in the 1980s, however, women had to negotiate and at times literally struggle for more freedom at different levels: with their husband for permission to leave the house; with other grassroots organizations to grant them autonomy; and with local governmental and non-governmental organizations to take them seriously and allocate funding. These grassroots organizations have helped women confront the poverty they experienced in their daily lives by reducing household spending and cooking together. Over time, these organizations acquired additional significance as social female space. Working in these organizations enhanced women's self-respect. They learned that what they had at first perceived as personal problems were in fact related to their gender position and shared by other women. This awareness has been important in their daily struggle, not only against poverty but also to achieve gender equality. While the *casa-calle* notions may still be a cultural liability for women, their organizations form an important compensating cultural resource.

The capability of women as social networkers is demonstrated in the third chapter of this *Cuaderno*. De Waardt discusses associations of victims of the 1980s violent conflict in Peru, which she relates to the Peruvian cultural tradition of grassroots organizations. She conveys the substantial existence of victim-survivor associations, the social support its members find amongst each other, and the degree of collective survival strategies people develop. Nevertheless, implemen-

³³ Chant, *Crisis* (2000).

³⁴ Ypeij, *Producing* (2000b).

tation of policies addressing victim status and participation by these associations in political decisions on victim-related issues is not taken for granted. De Waardt analyzes how the context in which victimhood is presented determines the socio-political emergence and acceptance of such associations. In the fourth chapter, legal anthropologist Simon Thomas stresses the different legal channels available to indigenous people living in the rural Ecuadorian highlands. They use both customary law and national law in cases of internal conflicts. During the past thirty years, the literature on legal pluralism suggests that customary law is often preferable to national law because of an ongoing counter-hegemonic strategy aimed at preserving and enhancing autonomy. While this may hold true for indigenous authorities and the indigenous movement, the empirical data show that statements and actions by individuals are more qualified. In this chapter, the author argues that the concept of forum shopping is more useful in analyzing ordinary indigenous people's legal decision-making processes in daily practice.

Triggering Schemas

Discussing another specific case, in the final chapter of this *Cuaderno*, Ouweneel underscores the relevance of research on the use of cultural resources for contemporary Latin America, articulating them as a kind of laboratory situation: the life of Andeans in an alien environment in Spain. The cities of the former colonizer provide not only work and income but are also venues of danger and violence. Even here, thousands of kilometers from home, Ecuadorians and Peruvians use their traditional cultural resources, combined with new ones. From the cognitive sciences, we could learn that this is because even in their new Spanish worlds, they activate their Andean mental schemas. In this view, culture consists of shared cognitive representations of above all status, socialization, and relationship in the minds of individuals. Humans are actors and any role on a stage is scripted—such scripts form parts of schemas. A schema is a shared cognitive representation (whether real or imagined knowledge) of a class of people, objects, events, situations, or behavioral codes. It is used to act and behave in situations on stage.³⁵ This includes a concept or a type of stimulus—like its attributes, attitudes and social location of those attributes—or of past experiences. Sche-

³⁵ Markus, "Self-Schemata" (1977); Mandler, *Stories* (1984); Cole, *Cultural* (1996), p. 58; Atkinson, *et al.*, *Hilgard's* (1996), pp. 289-290; Sumbadze, *Social* (1999); Nishida, "Cognitive" (1999), p. 755; Sharon Alayne Widmayer, "Schema Theory: An Introduction," at <http://metablog.bornthothink.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/1932-Bartlett-Schema-Theory.pdf> (accessed October 9, 2012).

matic encoding and decoding occur rapidly, automatically and unconsciously.

Schema theory originates from Frederick C. Bartlett's book *Remembering* (1932). Assuming that cultures are organized collectivities with shared customs, institutions and values, of which members form "strong sentiments" around valued, institutionalized activities, Bartlett was among the first to take up the question of culture and memory. These values and their expression through culture shape psychological tendencies to select certain kinds of information for remembering. The cultures have assimilated knowledge through their operation and then constituted schemas upon which the universal process of reconstructive remembering operates. Perceiving and thinking in terms of schemas enables people as individuals and as groups to process large amounts of information swiftly and economically. Instead of having to perceive and remember all the details of each new person, object, or situation someone encounters, they are recognized as an already encoded schema, so that combining the encoding of this likeliness with their most distinctive features is sufficient. Driven simultaneously by structure and meaning and represented propositionally, schemas are actively constructed neuronal networks.³⁶

Although the number of schemas is infinite, some may be easily foregrounded.³⁷ For example, where we speak of "me" and "I" the active schema in our brains is called a self-schema. Schemas about "what ought to be" are referred to as attitudes. The stereotype is a schema to classify people in general. An important procedural schema is called an event schema or script, which contains encoded sequences of events in particular situations, places or between groups of people—believed likely to occur and used to guide our behavior in familiar situations. Even the experience of illness may be conceptualized as schematic. Hawai'ian psychologists Jeanne Edman and Velma Kameoka have shown how event schemas exist that provide information pertaining to illness events. Illness schemas, they write, "can be viewed as mental representations of the illness concept."³⁸ Illness is the interpretation of disease and a person's illness schema is the "conceptualized link" between disease and illness. And so is cure.

³⁶ The price to be paid of course is distortion, if the schema used to encode it does not fit well. Research over the past decades has confirmed Bartlett's suggestion. In her college note, Widmayer, "Schema," at <http://metablog.bornthothink.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/1932-Bartlett-Schema-Theory.pdf> (accessed October 9, 2012), mentions interesting examples and some links that can easily be followed.

³⁷ Fiske, "Thinking" (1992); Hogg and Vaughan, *Social* (1995), p. 49; Atkinson, *et al.*, *Hilgard's* (1996), pp. 598-600; Hilton and von Hippel, "Stereotypes" (1996), pp. 240, 248-251; Kunda and Thagard, "Forming" (1996); Spears, *et al.* (eds.), *Social* (1997); Nishida, "Cognitive" (1999).

³⁸ Edman and Kameoka, "Cultural" (1997), p. 252.

Because schemas are interrelated, forming a network of schemas to generate interactive behavior, a change in one schema causes changes in all the others and finally in the entire system. Nevertheless, specific changes, for example in the self-schemas, are made only after continued experience of severe failure in particular situations. Once formed, people tend to keep their schemas intact and to protect them as long as sustainable, by uncritically relying on their own previous judgments. Schemas tend to become increasingly resistant to inconsistent or contradictory information, although, Hazel Markus notes, “they are never totally invulnerable to it.”³⁹ Schemadisonfirming information is in general disregarded or reinterpreted. While individuals build schemas unique to their personal experience, their schemas are confined to the forces of culture and language. When people communicate, they depend on shared schemas.

The cultural psychologist Michael Cole stresses that a story schema is at hand in the “narratives-people-tell-themselves.” The story schema is another mental structure, this one consisting of sets of expectations about how stories progress. It refers to any kind of stories, from telling the flight of a bird from one tree to another or the graph representing economic decline, to the fairy tale of Red Riding Hood or the novel *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. With the aid of artifacts, narratives are transferred through learning to the next generation. Each narrative survives generation after generation, until “something better” is found. As more instances are encountered, story schemas become more abstract and less tied to concrete instances. They also become richer and more complex, as more data need be processed—“modernized.” We may recognize complexes of local schemas as the culture people inherit and may describe these as “living” at a certain spot in space and time. Cueing is culturally dependent—limited to space and time, to its “residence.” Certain cueing of schema activation is, so to speak, a feature of certain groups of people who share language, religion, ideologies, and norms and values. They share the same cultural memory. The artifacts are the instruments people use to assist the process. Cole advises his readers to understand artifacts as both material objects manufactured by humans and as something produced by material culture. This definition includes texts. The artifact is material *and* ideal, conceptual. Triggered by artifacts, in Latin America schemas also tell Latin Americans how stories should develop, and hence how developments may advance.⁴⁰

The researcher tends to look at the encoding and decoding going on between individuals, family members, and other groups of people at a certain stage during a specific period in time. The features

³⁹ Markus, “Self-Schemata” (1977), p. 64.

⁴⁰ Cole, *Cultural* (1996), pp. 119-120, 125; Tice, “Self-Concept” (1992); Hogg and Vaughan, *Social* (1995), pp. 56-60; D’Andrade, *Development* (1995).

thought to be encoded or decoded reveal something about the cultural schemas triggered between these people, at that stage and that moment. Continually switching between empirical observations and theoretical interpretations, hypotheses are formulated and perhaps even tested about the characteristics of the cultural schemas. The ultimate objective of this analysis is to explain behavior—by these people, on that stage, at that time—to schematize future behavior in similar circumstances.

Concluding Remarks

Let us return to our master's student, conducting research in the Lima suburb of Chosica. He or she has witnessed the wedding of a young girl. The girl—or the couple or the family—has not opted for the explicit and informal alternative of cohabitation but has chosen the explicit formal institution of marriage. To analyze this case, the master's student may trace the process of decisions and limitations that resulted in this marriage. It has been based on a set of possibilities found in the cultural community of which the girl, the couple, and her family are members, possibly influenced by magazines, Internet, the cinema, and other media. They have, as it were, “mined the available cultural resources.” Such resources are institutions—formal or informal, explicit or implicit—and may be found “out in the world.” Our master's student has found more such resources, for example while interviewing everybody at the wedding and asking them to identify themselves. The interviewees filled out a questionnaire with questions about the terminology in use to identify themselves—some of the categories are formal-explicit such as Peruvian and Limeña; others are informal-explicit, such as *andino*, *Serrano*, or *huanca* or informal-implicit, such as *indígena*, *cholo*, or mestizo. Walking around Chosica and observing, our student encounters a series of other traces of decisions reached by the population to survive poverty, to improve their lives or even to advance socially. Although most of these traces can be read semiotically as implicit institutions, others may be explicit and even formal, such as participation in social organizations.

Below, a series of cultural resources chosen by Andeans will be presented. Interpreting signs like the built environment, networks, and grassroots organizations or judicial institutions, people make decisions that are dynamic and ecologically confined—e.g., in interaction with their direct physical surroundings and with each other. These decisions are made in specific places and on the spot. Although most of this research is at the grassroots level of relatively or absolutely poor individuals, groups, networks, and organizations, the approach offered in the coming pages also includes middle-class

groups, scholars, and architects. Time and again, the question arises as to which cultural resources are in use, and how and why the people involved chose them. Another fundamental question is whether the outcome of this decision process is favorable, and whether the cultural resource is an asset to “*superar la vida*” (social climbing) or a liability.

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