

Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Repository

---

1-18-2013 12:00 AM

## Tu envidia es mi progreso: An Ethnographic Account of the Development of Squatter Settlements in San Juan de Miraflores, Lima, Peru.

Brandon E. Rouleau  
*The University of Western Ontario*

Supervisor  
Dr. Regna Darnell  
*The University of Western Ontario*

Graduate Program in Anthropology  
A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree in Doctor of Philosophy  
© Brandon E. Rouleau 2013

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/etd>



Part of the [Social and Cultural Anthropology Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Rouleau, Brandon E., "Tu envidia es mi progreso: An Ethnographic Account of the Development of Squatter Settlements in San Juan de Miraflores, Lima, Peru." (2013). *Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Repository*. 1115.

<https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/etd/1115>

This Dissertation/Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by Scholarship@Western. It has been accepted for inclusion in Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Repository by an authorized administrator of Scholarship@Western. For more information, please contact [wlsadmin@uwo.ca](mailto:wlsadmin@uwo.ca).

Tu envidia es mi progreso: An Ethnographic Account of the Development of  
Squatter Settlements in San Juan de Miraflores, Lima, Peru.

(Thesis format: Monograph)

by

Brandon Rouleau

Graduate Program in Anthropology  
and Collaborative Graduate Program in Migration and Ethnic Relations

School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies  
A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Western Ontario  
London, Ontario, Canada  
© Brandon Rouleau 2013

**CERTIFICATE OF EXAMINATION**

Supervisor

Examiners

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. Regna Darnell

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. A. Kim Clark

Supervisory Committee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. Andrew Walsh

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. A. Kim Clark

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. Lindsay Dubois

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. Adriana Premat

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. Verónica Schild

The thesis by

**Brandon Edward Rouleau**

entitled:

Tu envidia es mi progreso: An Ethnographic Account of the Development of Squatter Settlements in San Juan de Miraflores, Lima, Peru.

is accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Ph.D.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair of the Thesis Examination Board

## Abstract

The following dissertation explores the past 60 years of self-help housing in Lima. Specifically, it looks at the uneven development that has occurred in parts of a municipality called San Juan de Miraflores. I argue that self-help housing is part of a larger modernization project that aims to encourage the emergence of a self-regulating individual. This particular inflection of both liberal and neoliberal principles sees elites working to create a selective history of marginal neighbourhoods, effectively silencing the histories of working class Mirafloresinos. The aim of this ethnographic study is to destabilize official histories and representations about development in marginal communities. The bulk of the dissertation looks at the most recent land occupation in January, 2000 on the fringes of the municipality to understand how progress is experienced by locals. Special attention is given to insert the study in its political, economic, and social context. I conclude that development process at work in Lima since the end of WWII reflects an unresolved tension in the urbanization movement in Peru. Common working class people resist the drive toward a progress that favours individual achievement over community well-being. I argue that underprivileged groups have always been included in development schemes. Social inclusion, then, is not the solution to uneven development. Rather, we need to look to the resistances to development that underprivileged classes mount, incorporating their criticisms into a new vision for society that challenges the merits of the kind of individuality promoted by liberal and neoliberal proponents.

## Keywords

Urbanization, Community development, Development, Governmentality, Neoliberalism, San Juan de Miraflores, Williams, Gramsci, Oral History, Ethnography, Modernization, Self-help housing, Latin America



## Acknowledgements

The following dissertation would not have been possible without the support of a number of people, academic and non-academic. I owe a great debt to the entire faculty at the Department of Anthropology at the University of Western Ontario. Everyone has had some degree of involvement in my training. I could not have done many an administrative task without the efforts of Diane Belleville and Laura Cousins. My special gratitude goes to Kim Clark, Andrew Walsh, Adriana Premat, and Regna Darnell for their constant involvement and encouragement during my master's and doctoral work at the university.

In doing my research I have accumulated far too many debts to mention here. I will keep it brief. Much thanks goes to the collaborators that have talked to me over the past 7 years or so in Lima, especially Lola, Cisneros, María, Elmer, Elsa, and the Flores family (Yolanda and company). My friend Paul Clark has encouraged me along my whole academic journey in Peru and deserves special mention here. Without all of you I would not be writing this dissertation. There are numerous Peruvian professionals from IEP and from my travels in Lima and Peru that have had a part in this project. Aroma de la Cadena, once again, provided sage guidance. I thank them all.

I owe much gratitude to Padre José Escribá for directing me toward PEBAL la Inmaculada where the Director Ophelia Montes López supported my efforts to understand the local population. Luis, Beltrán, Roberto, Angela, Berta and other professionals in the social area were especially patient with my constant questions and requests to accompany them in what they were doing. If I got sick or I needed dental care, the staff at PEBAL fixed me up while doing my research. The administrative area helped on a number of occasions reviewing letters of presentation. I was asked to participate in leadership courses and meetings with the leaders of the Nueva Rinconada on a number of occasions. There was an atmosphere of collaboration that I hope continues to guide the spirit of this institution.

Probably the most important person to thank is my partner Sandy Simon Torres. She helped with aspects of my fieldwork and was there for moral support whenever I needed it. I admire her tolerance to the incessant musings that have found too much of a place in our daily conversations over the past few years. I could not thank Sandy without making mention of our son Roan. He has helped me to see a more practical reason for doing critical ethnographic work: to make this world a better place for our children.

Every step of my graduate studies, my parents have been there. I am not sure that I would have completed this dissertation if it had not been for their unwavering support. In spite of being their son who “thinks too much”, or “has an opinion about everything” he sees, they have faithfully supported me in all of my endeavours.

The shortcomings of this dissertation are my responsibility and a product of the time and resources available for this project. However, like almost all ethnographers, my priority was to understand what it is like to be in a particular place and time. The tension between being a community and getting ahead is something that characterizes the time when I did my ethnographic work here. This ethnography represents my continuing efforts to understand what it means to be a human at this particular juncture in time from the vantage point of those who are the subjects of more powerful members of society.

Funding for this work was provided by the University of Western Ontario. In the first year of my doctoral studies I received an OGS award. While doing my research the Regna Darnell Award provided much needed funds to continue my research.

# Table of Contents

<b>CERTIFICATE OF EXAMINATION .....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>Abstract .....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>Acknowledgements .....</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>Table of Contents .....</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>Table of Figures .....</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Chapter 1 —The Lay of the Land .....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Chapter 2 —Don Malvinas’s Pamplona .....</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Chapter 3 —The Rise of Self-help Housing in Lima .....</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>Chapter 4 —The Legacy of Self-Help Housing.....</b>	<b>103</b>
<b>Chapter 5 —The Nueva Rinconada .....</b>	<b>143</b>
The Re-re-election of Alberto Fujimori .....	151
Versions of the Truth in the Nueva Rinconada.....	174
<b>Chapter 6 —The Invasion .....</b>	<b>187</b>
<b>Chapter 7 —Fighting for a Place to Call Home .....</b>	<b>213</b>
<b>Chapter 8 —Founding of the Fronts and Creation of Communities .....</b>	<b>231</b>
Minas 2000 .....	236
Minas 2000 and Nuevo Pamplona.....	262
Perú 2000.....	280
The View from Above, the View from Villa San Juan .....	298
<b>Chapter 9 —Working Together Toward a Common Cause.....</b>	<b>305</b>
<b>Chapter 10 —Maintaining Narratives of Good and Evil .....</b>	<b>322</b>
<b>Conclusion —Tu envidia es mi progreso.....</b>	<b>344</b>
<b>Bibliography .....</b>	<b>367</b>
<b>Curriculum Vitae .....</b>	<b>379</b>

## *Table of Figures*

<i>Figure 1 Lima</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Figure 2 San Juan de Miraflores</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Figure 3 Pamplona Alta and Asociación Agropecuaria La Rinconada</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>Figure 4 Pamplona Alta, Pamplona Baja, Zonas A-D of the urban area of San Juan de Miraflores</i>	<i>28</i>
<i>Figure 5 Lima 1940</i>	<i>70</i>
<i>Figure 6 Cerro San Cosme and its environ</i>	<i>76</i>
<i>Figure 7 Lima 1954</i>	<i>83</i>
<i>Figure 8 Lima 1981</i>	<i>120</i>
<i>Figure 9 1973 Registered Plan of Rinconada.</i>	<i>202</i>
<i>Figure 10 Legal Survey of Nueva Rinconada 2010</i>	<i>213</i>

## Introduction

On October 27, 2007, ex-president Alan García (2006-2011) dropped the gauntlet against those that he and others who support a neoliberal restructuring of the Peruvian economy felt had become like a “dog in the manger” (García 2007). The dog in the manger was a fable that first appeared in a collection of Aesop’s fables by the German folklorist Heinrich Steinhöwel, owing its origins to the second century Latin compilers of fables Lucian and Sardis (Priest 1985:52). The dog in the manger in these tales watched over the grain in the manger not allowing the horse to eat the grain. To add insult to privation, the dog did not eat the grain either. In its contemporary evocation by García the classic fable is given a different twist. He wrote: “there are a lot of resources not being used that are not tradable, that do not receive investment and that do not generate employment. And all of this because of ideologies that have been overcome, because of laziness, because of indolence or because of the law of the dog in the manger that states: ‘If I don’t do it, then nobody does (García 2007).’ García implicitly makes reference to neoliberal doctrine, echoing the neoliberal orthodox belief that placing products, resources, and services at the disposal of market forces will ensure their efficient, and, by extension, their profitable administration. Those who obstruct access to resources, or that stall business, are like the dog in the manger: they do not need the resources, but they do not allow others access to them either.

In effect, García draws a line between the good that seek material and social advancement, and the complacent that rest on their laurels and the recalcitrant that resist this free market model due to outdated ideological concerns. Temporally, those who belong to the present, and its consequent future, are urged to abandon defeated ideologies and adhere to the ideals of a neoliberal doctrine that gives free reign to market forces. Gone are the days of the social welfare state, or the state that guaranteed the rights of all citizens equally.

The text really fits into a contemporary universe of neoliberal and nationalist inspired authorship that continuously postulates how the people of a nation ought to govern themselves and their resources. According to this discourse, the nation stands to gain by submitting the nation, people, and resources, to the dictates of the market. A corollary of this proposal is that the beacon of desire, nations in the East and West that have industrialized becoming mass consumer societies, can be reached by eschewing traditions that contravene this inexorable advancement. No admission is made that the plurality of cultures that presently inhabit Peru may have a valuable contribution to make about how the country ought to function.

While political ecologists have viewed the text as directed toward indigenous and mestizo populations in resource rich areas of Peru (cf. Babbington 2009), the text also implicates those on the frontiers of cities, like Lima, where people have come since the 1940s to seek this highly touted progress. In the opening paragraph of his article García wrote:

The demand for a property title is very big. Every Peruvian knows that with a legalized, saleable, mortgageable and transferable property one can improve their situation. But, Peru, as whole, has the same problem and does not know it. A lot of its goods cannot be valorized, nor sold, nor can one invest in them, nor generate employment with them (García 2007).

For García, it is evident that the formalization of property and the commodification of Peru's vast resources, tangible and intangible, will bring about the future prosperity of Peru.

García reiterates a firm neoliberal belief when he claims that land titling and the subsequent access to credit that it will ensure will lead to economic growth (cf. De Soto 2000). In the phrasing of García, those who seek land titles are equally disadvantaged in obtaining their share of progress. The progress on the vertical and horizontal frontiers of cities of the country, then, like that occurring in other corners of the country, should be considered as part of a larger developmental vision, the discursive manifestation of a particular vision of how a nation should be constructed and one that is no less fraught with the tensions that are occurring in areas rich in natural resources.

David Harvey in his *Brief History of Neoliberalism* (2005) discusses the historical configuration of economic and political forces that saw neoliberalism rise to prominence as the dominant economic paradigm throughout the world since the early 1970s. He argues that neoliberalism has been a veiled attempt by economic and social elites to retake a disproportionate share of capital, leading to the creation of new elites in places like China (Harvey 2005:19). In the Latin American context, neoliberal reforms were ushered in to address debt crises that were often IMF

generated (refusing to lend to countries that implemented import substitution schemes). Neoliberals sought to invigorate stagnant or failing economies. In the 1970s and 1980s, neoliberalism became the dominant political economic paradigm in the world, with local inflections that reflect characteristics of local power relations. Harvey shows how the application of neoliberal economic reforms were often held to guarantee individual freedoms and human dignity—in spite of the violent and repressive applications of neoliberal orthodox reforms in places like Chile and Argentina. According to Harvey, the type of entrepreneurial freedom sought by neoliberals has resulted in “...a seductive but alienating possessive individualism on the one hand and the desire for a meaningful collective life on the other. While individuals are supposedly free to choose, they are not supposed to choose to construct strong collective institutions (such as trade unions) as opposed to weak voluntary associations (like charitable organizations) (Harvey 2005:69).”

In Peru, neoliberal reforms began in 1980 with Beláunde’s second government. Faced with soaring inflation, a drop in real wages and profligate expenditures in a large state sector, the government attempted to make widely unpopular orthodox economic adjustments. Alan García and his first majority APRA government (1985-1990) attempted, in vain, to deny the structural reforms being requested by international lending agencies (the IMF and World Bank in particular), opting for heterodox reforms (wage increases, request for national capital to underwrite social spending, tax breaks to national economic interests, etc.). Political scientist Jo-Marie Burt argues that the problem with this approach was that García’s rampant and often personalistic spending did not allay the concerns of the



national business elite. After nationalizing the central bank, for fear of capital flight, the economy took a rapid nose dive, generating hyperinflation amidst allegations that García's party had named inexperienced people to key ministerial positions. The reality was that García ignored advisors who cautioned him about his profligate social expenditures (Burt 2007).

Near the tail end of García's first government the public had lost faith in Peru's traditional political parties to resolve the country's economic problems. The 1990 election campaign pitted two newcomers to the political arena in Peru against one another —Mario Vargas Llosa for a centre right-wing coalition (*Frente Democrático*, or Democratic Front), admitting that a "shock" was necessary to stabilize the Peruvian economy, and Alberto Fujimori for *Cambio 90*, or Change 90, promising that he would not introduce austerity measures and would offer a solution to the intransigency of traditional political parties in Peru. Fujimori would win the elections and promptly work to implement neoliberal reforms to the state, using the fear generated by the precarious state of the economy and ongoing conflict with Sendero Luminoso and MRTA (Movimiento Revolucionario Tupac Amaru) to quietly reconfigure class relations and the political and economic landscape of Peru (Burt 2007).

In the case of Peru, neoliberalism could be felt and seen in a number of ways. The right to free enterprise was enshrined in the 1993 Constitution. Labour rights were eroded and the rights of particular communities were stricken in favour of universal rights (the good of communities versus public good). The state sold off

companies and assets that were once state-owned to private interest groups. More guarantees were given to foreign investors. The 1990s saw the negotiation of many multi-billion dollar mining and gas projects throughout the Peruvian territory. Chilean retail giants Ripley and Falabella entered the Peruvian market in the 1990s, offering cheap credit and solid competition to local small-scale industrial production. Peruvian economic sociologist Francisco Durand shows that multinational firms took over a larger share in commerce in the country from the state and national businesses (Durand 2010:Chapter 3). One can begin to see whose formal interests are being referred to when one speaks of the benefits of formalizing business transactions.

What is missing from panegyrics like that of García is the cost that people incur with these bold influxes of foreign capital and the ongoing struggle of those, who, even with a land title, seek to improve their situation in a country that is aspiring to have the economies like we see in the developed world. We are led to believe that people will get jobs from the entrance of large corporations, banks and financiers into the country, despite the low priority place on total employment by neoliberal doctrine (they place more emphasis on controlling inflation). With the introduction of easy credit, those that have formal sector jobs enjoy access to credit that allows them, despite meager wages, to pay for almost any commodity in installments. Yet, the measures mentioned here do little to tell us what life is like under neoliberalism. What is progress? Can it be reflected in econometric indicators like the number of televisions in one's home, the material that one's home is constructed of, etc.?

Social thinker Raymond Williams in his *Keywords*, traces the roots and connections of many terms that have become part of our contemporary world (Williams 1985). Particular words that form part of the discourse around the social and economic changes over the past centuries are given special consideration by Williams. Progress is one word toward which Williams draws our attention. In its 17<sup>th</sup> century sense, the word came to signify a fatalistic journey into the future. This journey picked up inflections from the Enlightenment concern with universal trajectories of civilization that inexorably terminated in incipient secular states in Europe in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Progress thus became entwined with Enlightenment notions of evolution and improvement (Williams 1985:243-245).

We see that this idea of progress as improvement has become part of the discourse on national development in Peru. What this progress signifies, though, has to be extended beyond the realm of discursive formations. We have to ask what progress entails on the ground. Who carries it out, and who is implicated in the instrumentalization of its dictates? Furthermore, we need to recognize ways in which this vision is being negotiated by real actors with complex histories.

To imagine this, I think it is helpful to bring philosopher and historian of thought Michel Foucault's notion of governmentality into our analysis. Foucault sums up governmentality as the "conduct of conduct," or "action upon action," to put it succinctly. He urges us to look at governance not in the narrow sense of government practices, but the practices of everyone who works to implement interrelated subject forming projects and how we as subjects, in addition, act upon

ourselves according to exhortations that may form part of larger strategies, or theories, of governance (Foucault 1991, 1992).

From the brief definition given here one can appreciate that Foucault's insistence that we look at how bodies are governed by particular rationalities of governance can lead us to many sites where actions, or techniques, are used to achieve particular ends that articulate with larger strategies like neoliberal economic doctrine. One of the strengths of looking at practices of governance, as opposed to ideologies that characterize a time period under consideration, is that it shifts our focus to that critical point where abstract doctrines are being translated by officials and how these translations link up, or do not link-up with other techniques of governance perhaps reflecting more pervasive patterns (Schild 2000, 2007). In this study I try to take governmental analysis one step further by looking at the social world that state and non-state interventions have worked to create in the shantytowns of Lima. However, as we will see, the origins of many government strategies involving development seem to have begun as grassroots initiatives to make do, or attempts by underprivileged classes to gain access to the same opportunities as their social superiors.

What I wanted to shed light on in this study is how progress is both enacted and understood on the frontier of Lima. To do so, I chose to look at the history and practices of people whose actions led eventually to the founding of one district in Lima —San Juan de Miraflores. Following Foucault, I wanted to understand that crucial relationship between practices of governance of all sorts and the everyday

lives of the people that make San Juan de Miraflores their home. Because of the importance of the movement to acquire land in Lima, as evidence that one had indeed progressed (cf. Lobo 1982), and the contested nature of this movement, I quickly found myself telling the story of how people came to occupy private property in January of 2000 on the fringe of San Juan de Miraflores. By focusing on this recent land invasion<sup>1</sup> I could see how a new area of the city was organized and how people made sense of this organization, although, admittedly, the circumstances surrounding this invasion were very unique. I could also see who came to lend support from outside and the techniques that they brought with them. As one can imagine, the field of governance is one where multiple actors and organizations work to shape people: the churches, state ministries, NGOs (both national and international), mass media (national and international), neighbours, returned ex-pats, cultural traditions, etc. Add to this the emergence of a politically condoned tradition of seizing control of land as a means of partaking in the social advancement that Lima is supposed to offer to migrants to the city. Given the nature of this complex field of interactions, any project to shape a subject will meet different techniques, reflecting different strategies about how one ought to be.

Throughout this work the one tension that plays out constantly is that between a residual element in the city that values community and stability and a

---

<sup>1</sup> My choice to use the word invasion here is not without reservations. When used by those that did not participate in a movement to acquire land for their family, it seems to act as a condemnation of these practices. When used by those who participated in an organized attempt to acquire land, the word invasion highlights the sacrifices that occurred for them to have a piece of land to call their own and the fact that they had to take drastic measures to ensure their livelihood and that of their families. When I use the word invasion throughout this dissertation it is with the second sense that I make use of the term.

newer element particular to the city of Lima —because it has taken on local inflections— about the value placed on individual achievement and material prosperity. As I write this, this tension has not been resolved, however one will see that in order to maintain political power in Peru it is crucial to balance this tension. To illustrate this point, I trace the pattern of informal urban expansion in Lima. The silver lining in this cloud is the importance placed upon community and redistribution by some at particular moments in time. I do not, however, want to romanticize this element because the sense of community that has come into existence in Lima is a temporary phenomenon.

The following dissertation is an exploration into one of the frontiers of this transformation, that of the city of Lima. The municipality where I decided to conduct my research, as mentioned, was San Juan de Miraflores in Lima. The founding event of this district was a land invasion that occurred on Christmas Eve 1954. Formally, the district was not a political entity until 1965. The 2007 National Census placed the population of the municipality at 362,643 inhabitants living in 69,942 households.<sup>2</sup> It is one district of 43 in Lima, a city that in 2007 numbered 8,445,211 inhabitants.

Much of the municipality is located on the sandy plains of the Pacific littoral. The area is a desert, with any water being provided, like most coastal cities in Peru, by rivers that wind their way down from the Andes. Human occupation in the municipality has now reached into the foothills of the Andes, making the

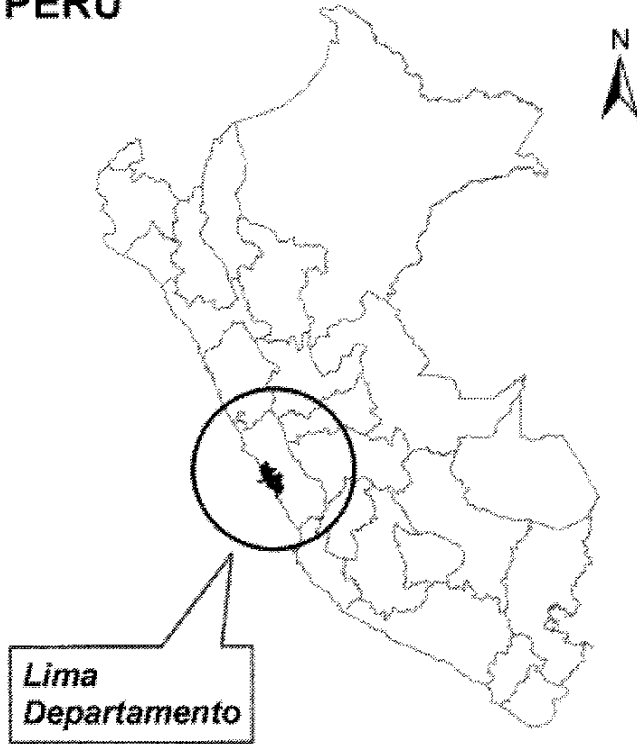
---

<sup>2</sup> The statistics that follow were taken from the 2007 INEI national census.

construction of homes on precarious rocky slopes a necessity. Space for the horizontal expansion of the city is scarce and present concerns are rightly placed on where new generations of *Miraflorinos* will find a home for their families. To understand some of the complexities of this expansion will require a more lengthy discussion that will be picked up later in the following chapters.

If one looks at the statistics for the municipality there are a few noteworthy trends that have occurred over the past three to four generations. These trends correspond with the fieldwork data that was gathered for this investigation. Firstly, there is a general trend for migrants' children, if they spoke an indigenous language, to lose the language. Rates of Spanish speakers increase geometrically over age groups, while the use of Quechua, Aymara, or other languages drops off dramatically. As far as education is concerned, the trend is for succeeding generations to set their educational goals higher and higher. While many parents of the founders had primary education, nowadays it is not uncommon to see most with at least a high school diploma and many with some form of postsecondary education (18.8% of the population over 6, with almost as many not completing their studies). Economically speaking, census results indicate that there is a 3.7% unemployment rate. The employment rate, however, does not reflect the quality of jobs available or the precarity of such jobs, or the fact that most work to eat and slowly construct their homes with aid of friends, family, and neighbours.

# PERÚ



# LIMA METROPOLITANA

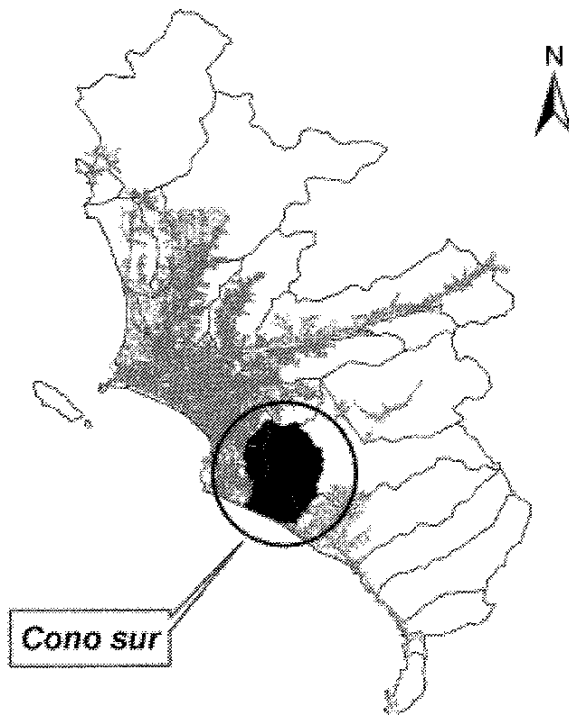


Figure 1 Source: Corzo and Riofrío 2006:9





**Figure 2 Source: Corzo and Riofrío 2006:29 One will notice in the upper left district, San Juan de Miraflores, the dark area in the upper right hand corner of the municipality. This is the area that was invaded in January of 2000, the Nueva Rinconada. From photographs that are included later, it will become clear just how unconsolidated some of the homes are and how a need exists to find an alternative to urban growth in Lima.**

Numbers seem to tell a truth of their own in this district and the country as a whole . Categories collapse into one another. Definitions of what goes into categories open and close, depending on what one wants to demonstrate, or find. At times, respondents are confused by the line of questioning in national surveys. And, yet, they still allow us to see some patterns, however this only gets us so far. To interpret a census one must have experience to know what the numbers show, or do

not show. This is where measuring progress becomes tricky. What constitutes a positive figure? Once again we reach a point where we must ask who possesses the power to represent progress and who decides what progress entails, hardly an apolitical task no matter how much surveyors insist on their impartiality (cf. Ferguson 1994).

Even if the numbers were correct in what they suggest, we are still missing a picture of the world that has formed in a place like San Juan de Miraflores. In conducting this research I wanted to look at how people live their daily lives in parts of this district. This was not an easy task because, as I discovered, not everyone was in the same circumstances. Statistical aggregates do little to tell us about the social world of a population, especially the inequalities that exist. The following is an effort to add a layer of complexity to the numbers, taking the voices of *Mirafloresinos* as a basis for understanding the progress that has taken place in this municipality.

Chapter 1 is an explanation of how I conducted this research and what turns it had to take as I mapped out the material changes in the municipality. In this chapter I try to give a reader a sense of the places where this research was undertaken and the challenges faced in doing urban research. What emerges here is the necessity to focus more on the relationship between places to understand larger development process in the city and nation as a whole.

In the next chapter we look at Don Malvinas's account of the changes that have happened in a sector in Pamplona Alta (one of the six districts in San Juan de Miraflores). He describes how the community has played an active role in

everything from building infrastructure to organizing themselves. I describe how these efforts are incorporated into national and international discourses that tend to see these efforts as evidence of a desire to progress and a reflection of the success of self-help initiatives. This voice that urges households to define their place in the city works a lot like Mikhail Bakhtin's authoritative voice, except that contrary to Bakhtin's notion that this voice is static and dead, I argue that authoritative voices that make demands on how people ought to dedicate their energies have been active and finely attuned to what has been happening in sectors like that of Don Malvinas. Using Bakhtin to theorize the framing of self-help efforts allows us to see the movement of discourses and the relationship between discourse and practice. Following this argument, I assert that self-help discourse is persuasive in the value it assigns to the efforts of people to be socially progressive.

In the next two chapters I explore the emergence and complex history of self-help housing in Peru with a more specific focus on San Juan de Miraflores. What I aimed for here was a genealogy of the practice of invading land and building it up with minimal outside assistance. Over time, governments in Peru have had to simultaneously control and let this practice persist. The result has been a delicate balance where the state has worked to capture these efforts, however at the same time it has given communities techniques to organize and make demands on the state. Foreign aid workers and specialists affiliated with foreign aid in Peru and other developing countries appear to have played an instrumental role in forming the image of the innovative squatter who is quite amenable to the social mobility and individual opportunities available in the city. I argue that underlying this

recognition is a subject making process like that theorized by Foucauldian scholars like Verónica Schild (Schild 2000, 2007). Self-help, in this sense, becomes a practice whereby citizens come to view self-regulatory behaviour as emancipatory (I pick up this point more explicitly in the conclusion). The type of subject posited recalls Harvey's observation that neoliberalism has led to the emergence of a possessive individualism that works against a deeper desire for meaningful communities.

What becomes clear, especially in chapter 4, is that the sense of community found in self-help communities is ephemeral. As soon as basic amenities are brought into communities the solidarity of these communities begins to give way to the tensions that social mobility and assimilative pressures exert on individuals in Lima. These two chapters suggest that a possessive, self-regulating, socially competitive and mobile individual is not a subjectivity that is unique to neoliberalism, but, rather, appears to be connected to the type of progress inherent in a broader global modernist project. Sentiments like that of García, where tradition becomes an impediment to the growth of national economies, make more sense when seen from this vantage point.

In the final section of Chapter 4 I critically assess the proposals of economist Hernando De Soto. Like predecessors that saw potential locked in the ability of the underprivileged to help themselves, De Soto provided the ideological backing for the restructuring of the Peruvian economy, legal system, and imagined destination of the nation. He argued that removing restrictions from enterprise and awarding land titles would allow common citizens to become entrepreneurs. The reality was more

complex. Contrary to the arguments of De Soto, deregulation has meant that international financiers and corporations are able to squeeze out national elites and the state in seeking benefit from economic activity in Peru. Not only that, but economic gains for few in reality have led to social fragmentation in communities that demonstrated a great degree of unity in mobilizing for their rights in the 1970s and 1980s. These changes have been accompanied by a discourse that values iron-handed authoritarian governance practices over dialogue and a careful understanding of social problems like crime. The theme of neoliberalism and punishment is explored in chapters 5 and 9.

Self-help as a governmental strategy tends to complicate current notions of social inclusion in its various forms. What I suggest is that underprivileged migrant groups have been included ever since they began to look at invasions as a means of acquiring a home. Therefore, self-help and this greater push toward individual achievement and social mobility may be part of what is driving communities apart in the city, generating behaviours that undermine trust and unity between neighbours. Discourses around envy and greed indicate that there is a degree to which the competitiveness and individuality found in many developed nations is present on the frontiers of expanding urban areas in developing countries like Peru, despite analyses that argue for a continuity of indigenous practices in the city. What studies that argue for a continuity of indigenous traditions within the city suggest is that there are different ways of being a modern. Notwithstanding this view, the data collected for this investigation suggests that there is a marked tension between

traditional practices and urban practices that, once again, is reflected in everyday talk.

The remainder of the dissertation shifts to an analysis of a land invasion that occurred in January of 2000 on the frontier of San Juan de Miraflores on land that has been private property since it was bought in a state auction in 1968. This particular case allows us to understand how neoliberal reforms have been translated into jurisprudence, especially those relating to issues of private property and housing in Lima. The range of topics that are covered in this remaking of the city allows a detailed analysis of multiple themes. For instance, we can see how political patronage often articulates with community organizations. It allows us to look at community formation and the interaction between sectors and external organizations. We also see how narratives about contemporary events like the invasion of private property reflect underlying tensions in the liberal/neoliberal development process.

The multiple themes that we explore between chapters 5–9 bring us full circle back to one of the central unifying themes of this dissertation: progress. Progress as we understand from multiple vantage points means different things to different people in different positions with different histories. For someone new to the city it might be finding a job, moving out into their own home, and sending their children to a state school. For the children of this first generation migrant it might be getting a high school diploma then attending either a technical institute or getting a university degree. For a middle class professional it might be ensuring that one's

children attend private schools and that employment is gainful enough to accrue status through the consumption of the material and immaterial symbols of distinction and all that they confer. For neoliberal economists and politicians it might mean titling properties, tapping resources, facilitating the flow of finance capital, decreasing bureaucratic impediments to trade and entrepreneurialism, etc.

We cannot help but notice that progress can describe many things. Its polyvalence is part of the devil in the concept. How is it that it can refer to so many things at one, or is that it is being referenced by multiple people to describe the activity that they propose. Where are we going with this progress? Are we going together? I argue that we have to be. Progress is a movement forward, however one that is hardly free of tensions. The ambiguity of what constitutes progress is created by the multiplicity of activities that are described as progress. However, we see that in the move to Nueva Rinconada the argument that the land would be made to produce more with the presence of squatters in Chapter 9 points us back toward the who and the how of how progress is enacted. What practices accompany progress?

Indeed, we see the political frame for how progress is imagined and debated in the context of the 2000 elections in Chapter 5. In this chapter I discuss how invasions became politicized in the 2000 re-re-election campaign of Alberto Fujimori. In emblematic cases like that which occurred in Villa El Salvador the central government and police ignored warnings by the mayor that invasions of private property and state property were being planned. Various requests to

intervene and prevent the invasions were ignored. I argue that in many ways both legislative changes prior to the invasions as well as explicit support for informal sector activities provided a rich culture for popular movements. In what remains of this chapter I talk about the search for truth in the various versions about the invasion that one encounters in the field. I urge that the reader understand these disputes as reflecting a theoretical consciousness, the complement to the practical consciousness that we possess as the result of our daily activities (Gramsci 1971). Seen in this light, the invasion is more about the desire for equality, dignity, and an escape from paying rents or mortgages for a home. Ours is not to place a strong moral judgment on the invasion, rather we ought to try to understand the invasion within a larger political, economic, social and historical framework. In this section I also argue that social justice lies not in perpetuating a struggle between the rich and the poor. Seeing things in these terms tends to prevent us from understanding how social inequality works. However, in Chapter 6 when I move to discuss the circumstances of the invasion, I question the behaviour of authorities who appeared to have involvement in the invasion. My criticism is based on the consequences of the decision to invade private property.

It is not so important to understand who was behind the invasion as to what kind of a precedent this sets. My biggest fear here was that people become accustomed to giving support to politicians who use the necessity of people in order to gain political capital which they in turn use to support economic and political agendas that go against the best interest of the populace. My reference here is to the neoliberal reforms that were implemented using a discourse and program that had



broad appeal to underprivileged classes. In Chapter 5, I revealed that the mass media was used to divert public attention away from the changes to the constitution that were made in 1993 that represented an attack on labour rights and the social welfare state. Much of the cause for the invasion was a deep sense of indignation felt by people who had no home. It was only reasonable then that land that was not being optimally used became a target for a land invasion. Given the previous history of invasions, it does appear that the invasion was part of a cyclical process of growth in Lima. We should not, however, underestimate the social component to the invasion. In many ways it brought many underlying tensions in the uneven development of Lima to the surface.

Chapter 7 goes some way in exploring some of the tensions that came to the surface. Despite the violence of the initial invasion, I argue in this chapter that such acts were not beyond the pale for many squatters but reflected a banalization of violence in the everyday lives of workers in Lima. There was also a sense to which the brazenness of the invasion of private property had a lot to do with the political climate of Peru under the Fujimori dictatorship. According to many of those who participated in this invasion the attitude was very much “do-or-die”.

After the invasion took place efforts were made to create sectorial councils to administer the land that had been occupied. Chapter 8 deals primarily with the creation of communities in the Nueva Rinconada and the tensions that emerged between households and community councils. The threat of eviction tended to generate a culture of fear, distrust, and confusion. At the same time the pretensions

of a front that took the name of Fujimori's political party, Perú 2000, created an environment where people reacted defensively creating a number of counter-fronts to balance the ambitions of Perú 2000 to become the central authority of the area. In this section we look at how a number of fronts coalesced then eventually fissioned due to the inability of fronts to broker a solution with the municipality and the central government. I suggest that such fissioning and the emotions that underlie it are not unlike those found in areas outside the invasion and in more advanced stages of the urbanization process. I suggest that the tensions inherent in the liberal subject are working to generate an air of distrust that came to play a part in the fragmentation of collective efforts in the Nueva Rinconada.

Despite the fragmentation of sectors in the Nueva Rinconada, I argue in Chapter 9 that there was unity in certain moments. The first case of collective unity I discuss is that exhibited in bringing the demands of many invasions to the Peruvian Congress to bring about a number of legislative changes that extended the possibility of obtaining land titles to invasions occurring up until December 31, 2004. Communities also worked together to defend their land from numerous eviction attempts. Patrols were organized and duties assigned to different communities in the case of an eviction. The final case I discuss is that of community policing, which works to bring about sectorial unity, but also indirectly guarantees that certain rules are established for the Nueva Rinconada as a whole. When it comes to regulating the behaviour of households in sectors, though, it appears the character of justice seems to favour productive family-based households that abide by particular inflections of state laws. Community justice is a result of the absence

of the police, a practical need for security by people with families in the area, and a delegation of policing to communities. This delegation seems consistent with spirit of self-help development. It is also noted in this section how policing has much to do with regulating individual behaviours and attaching particular rights and obligations to a nuclear family based household.

In Chapter 9 I illustrate how different discursive positions espoused by property owners and squatters have crystallized over time. The data presented here are an illustration of what collective discourses holding up a particular morally superior position tend to occlude. I argue that mythological stories of the first years of the Nueva Rinconada appear to have worked as an outlet for expressing popular rejection of the abuses of community councils in the area. Compared to more rationalistic alternatives to explain the grueling living conditions at first, I find that both fetishize the social relations and conditions in the area. This seems to suggest that there is some truth to all of this. What I assert is that the only truth that can be had is that expressed in the suffering and pain of families that have had to endure living between councils, property owners, politicians, economists, and others that decide how they ought to live their lives. I think that much hope lies in the ability of people to recognize and comment on the suffering of others. It is only through a more empathetic understanding of the life of the underprivileged that a critical consciousness and possible alternative to neoliberalism can be found.

The final chapter is an exploration into what progress means for people in the Nueva Rinconada. I preface the chapter with a series of workshops where a

strategic plan was formulated for the development of the Nueva Rinconada over the next ten years or so. The plan, however, does not get to the heart of the tensions that affect people on a more intimate level. In this chapter I attempt a cursory application of Walter Benjamin's attempt to collect data on emotions that had become prevalent in modernist Europe (Benjamin 2002[1999]). What I assert is that we cannot speak of development without looking at the demons it tends to create in its wake. In this section I am skeptical of attempts to channel generalized discontent with current social relations into a political movement based on inclusion. From the discussions in the previous chapters it should be clear that social inclusion has been at the heart of modernization in Peru since the 1940s. I conclude by arguing that we need a development that fosters cooperation, respect for difference, balance with life on this planet, and a general environment where our lives are not constrained and channeled by dehumanizing market forces. Let us move on to survey the field of this investigation.

## Chapter 1 —The Lay of the Land

What ethnography has come to be in practice at present is quite complex, especially in a contemporary urban context. The importance of identifying not only global flows (Appadurai 1996), but also local complexity has meant a shift to multi-sited research. George Marcus's observation that anthropologists must now shift between thick and thin analyses, increase reliance upon collaborators, respond to a broadening range of what an anthropologist can pursue in the field and hone their ethnographic skills to deal with complex relationships between different social contexts is a fairly accurate description of the field for many ethnographers these days, and it has been for some time. As a consequence of this complex field, the text an anthropologist will produce nowadays has moved away from the classic all-encompassing ethnography of x culture that became a hallmark of ethnography in the early to mid 20<sup>th</sup> century and more toward a multi-voiced text (Marcus 1995, 2001, 2009).

Thinking about what the fieldwork experience means and how it goes about transforming the ethnographer and collaborator are common in anthropological texts since the 1980s when anthropologists began to question the privilege inherent in previous anthropological writings. The spirit of this reflection is, in many ways, my attempt to build on and engage the recent work of political scientist Allaine Cerwonka and anthropologist Liisa H. Malkki (2007), albeit in a much more

abbreviated manner. In *Improvising Theory*, the two authors expose the heuristic process of anthropology revealing that as an epistemological practice, anthropology involves a complex improvised process of moving back and forth in the field, fraught with constant anxiety, fear and doubt. I would add depression, frustration, anger, and exhilaration to this list because ethnography is a process that defies any sort of planning and often places anthropologists in a position where they feel isolated, misunderstood, and emotionally overwhelmed. What they often do is to load up their metaphorical backpack with as many research and sundry experiences as possible, then hope that they will be prepared for the mostly unknown task ahead.

And so, with metaphorical backpack in hand, I set out to find out how people in the informal parts of Lima experienced rapid urban growth. I wanted to understand the social world that emerged from the meeting of various ethnic groups in Lima under precarious living conditions. This task is difficult for any investigator because nobody can really have the prerequisite cultural understanding to perceive the complexity of a social environment where migrants from different indigenous and non-indigenous backgrounds have interacted in complex ways over the past five centuries, however my hunch from my earlier experiences in Lima was that there was a process of negotiation occurring between newcomers and previous generations in Lima (Rouleau 2007). Understanding development as a process would, I surmised, entail a lot of movement between areas and the consultation of folk spatial divisions.

Throughout my fieldwork I could not help but feel that I was spreading myself too thinly. Collaborators would constantly inquire about where I disappeared to often. At many times, I was moving back and forth between areas to keep people's memories warm. I could not help but feel that I was leaving people with the impression that I was just after them for an interview or to hang out to get what I needed and then be off. It is likely that most people understood that I was doing my job and that meant that I would not be able to return. Nevertheless, that left me feeling that I was missing out on something almost all the time.

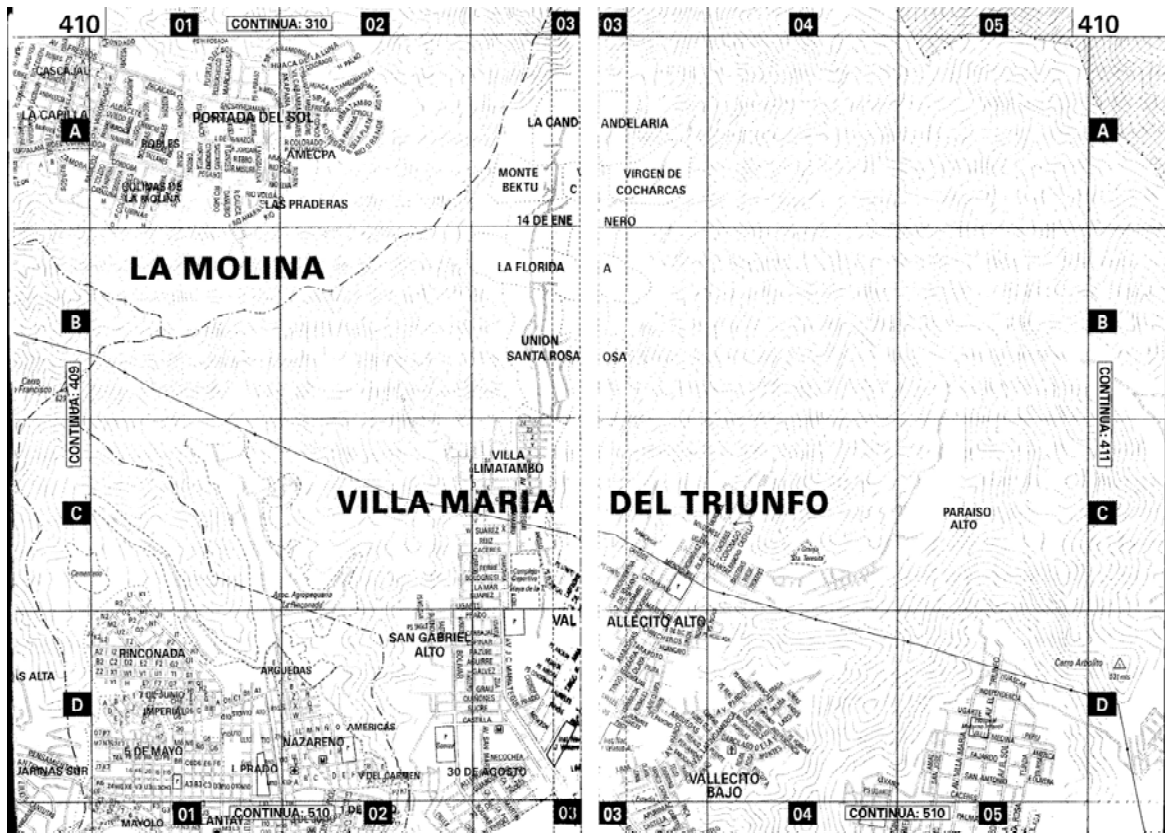


Figure 3 Source Guía 2000 This map shows what would become the Nueva Rinonada. The property marked Asociación Agropecuaria La Rinconada is where events mentioned later in this dissertation would occur. There are numerous sectors here of the upper part of Pampóna: Rinconada, Nazareno, Ollantay, etc.



Figure 4 Source: Guía 200 This map details lower parts of Pamplona Alta, Pamplona Baja, Zonas A-D of the urban area of the central core of the municipality can be noted here. I have circled the area where I lived in Zona A and have also circled the market on Pista Nueva and PEBAL on the map.

What I would like to do in this section is to give the reader a sense of the movement that occurs and the compromises that were made in this project so that the reader may understand why this investigation took the form it did. My hope here, as well, is to provide some detail so that future investigators may improve upon my efforts or perhaps work toward a more collaborative vision of how urban investigations can be done.

Before going back to Lima in August of 2009 I had spent about three months doing exploratory work living with the partner and children of a friend of mine in the urban zone of San Juan de Miraflores. I later discovered the area I was staying in



to be an addition to a planned neighbourhood intended for ex-government employees. I say that this was exploratory because up until that point I had only lived in the central part of Lima; the northern, eastern, and southern municipalities were areas that I had only briefly visited, yet, I began to increasingly feel that they were the focal point for understanding how people changed and made Lima over the past six decades or so. To understand Lima, in other words, one would have to understand how different areas of the city interact, or relate to one another.

Lima was a city that grew horizontally instead of vertically for much of the twentieth century. Now, in the twenty first century, Lima is in a process of consolidation and vertical growth because the cost of occupying increasingly distant flat areas along the coast outweighs the benefit of occupying these areas, not to mention the fact that some areas are protected or privately-owned (Corzo and Riofrío 2006). Growth has been contained by geography, land use designations, land ownership and legislation that explicitly states that land invasions will no longer be recognized by the state. The official cut-off point for land invasions at present is December 31, 2004.

That winter of 2008, my first incursion into Lima South, I lived with Isabel and her two girls. I immersed myself in the routine of a housewife: we cooked, we gossiped, we went to the market, I accompanied her to leave the elder daughter at her daycare and I began to meet her siblings and relatives, accompanying them as well to different places. I became an adopted *tío*, or uncle, to the girls. In the middle of the summer I went back to Isabel's hometown in Ayacucho for two weeks with

her, her aunt and the girls. I met her parents, her two brothers, who stayed there helping their parents with their fields and livestock, her friends and other townsfolk. It was this relationship that would form the starting point for further wanderings in a year.

When I returned the following year around the beginning of August I continued to explore Isabel's area of San Juan de Miraflores (Zona A). I met local professionals and talked to her uncle and aunt about the history of the area. This was not really where I wanted to be. But, my probing here would certainly put things into perspective later on in my fieldwork. It would become a reference point.

I came to realize that I wanted to be in an area where people had more recently squatted, been settled, or a complex combination of the two, and slowly built up homes there, as this was the experience of most people in Lima. Many of the people I was meeting were professionals and entrepreneurs, or people who distinguished themselves from people in Pamplona Baja and Pamplona Alta (see Figures 3 and 4) —areas which they often perceived as dangerous places with gangs, vice, and suffering. Notwithstanding this denigrating impression, it was also recognized that people in predominantly working class Pamplona stand together in solidarity, struggling to get ahead in the city.

It became apparent that people in the commercial core of San Juan de Miraflores were an emerging middle class that were marking a difference from others like themselves who had followed a similar trajectory to Lima, but had managed to position themselves in economically advantageous occupations. While

surveying the district one day with the aunt and cousin of Isabel, we began discussing the people in the hills. She thought aloud: “Why do they come here?” She answered her question opining that people came for education and jobs, things that one does not always find in abundance outside of Lima. Her son chimed in saying that people are exploited in Lima, then moved on to say that social classes do not exist in Lima; what do exist are five socioeconomic levels: A,B,C,D,E, which are present in all districts. This view is one that is championed by professionals in universities who live in more affluent neighbourhoods in Lima. Their analysis and classificatory systems are those of surveys and marketing focus groups, not ethnography or an understanding of the lived experience of people in other parts of Lima. That Isabel’s aunt’s young son, a student at the posh private University of Lima, adopted such a reference is information. So, while one may acknowledge that exploitation and injustice exist, a classificatory system has been generated that neutralizes the feelings and worldview of those in economically and socially disadvantageous position, reducing their lives to alphabetical categories that correspond to income levels or consumer types (cf. Arellano and Burgos 2004). Such studies “discover” that the entrepreneurial mindset is well and thriving in Lima. Consumption of newfangled goods is seen as a burgeoning market, yet not all consumer types desire such commodities due to differences in their consumer types. This view obscures the lives of “those people in the hills,” stripping them of their voice and experiences depoliticizing the development process in ways not unlike those described by James Ferguson in Lesotho (1994).

If I wanted to understand people, I realized, I would have to become more mobile and more enmeshed in the daily activities of people. The problem at this point was that I knew not a soul in Pamplona, that is, except for Maribel, Isabel's older sister who I had visited on one occasion the previous summer.

As it turned out, Maribel worked in a market on the median of Pista Nueva (Av. S. Allende on the map above), the main thoroughfare in Pamplona. What I did not know is that she was the acting president of her section of an eight-stage market. I started to visit the market on a regular basis, spending much of my time with young adults and mature adults. Her support helped me to quickly establish rapport with many of the people who worked in the market. In the evening, I worked as a security guard on several occasions to get a sense of the neighbourhood at night. It took a while, but I got to know something about the people that made their living in this market and the world that they lived in.

Competition to get ahead, as manifested in discourses of envy, gossip, *viveza*, *desconfianza* and the like, was common talk. Yet, also present was a strong social prescription for group solidarity. These values seemed to clash; there appeared to be a tension here between a recognition of the benefits of mutual support and a desire to progress, to make it in the city. What was clear was that people here were actively building communities against forces that were pulling communities apart, forces like gossip, envy, decadence, egotism, ambition, betrayal, *viveza*, opportunism, personalism, etc. I will discuss this dynamic in more detail in the concluding chapter of this dissertation, however throughout this dissertation I will

draw attention to instantiations of these emotions and their relationship to events that I chronicle.

At this point, I formed a working hypothesis, a hypothesis that I would attempt to falsify and qualify: Progress had and continued to occur in Pamplona. Progress, as experienced by people in Pamplona and other working class areas of the city, I discovered, was a struggle to gain a foothold in the city and to gain some measure of dignity in a new environment. Progress was both a material and cultural gain, but a modest gain for most. Aside from building a home or making educational gains, I wondered what type of social dynamic existed in the midst of this transformation.

People often griped about a lack of values, or a moral degeneration that had seemed to accompany material advancement, but they also commented on how things had gotten better over the years. Views differed at times, with some collaborators adopting a very bleak view of the past decades under neoliberal policies and the future of such policies, especially those who remembered times when real wages could buy more (since the 1970s real wages have been greatly reduced making it necessary for both parents to work). Corruption was rife in the view of many older collaborators in Pamplona. Political scandals were the most conspicuous evidence of such a claim. The municipality and central government made headlines for influence trafficking and embezzlement regularly over the months of my research, further fueling local cynical views toward politicians and society, in general.

At about the same time that I began to visit the market regularly, I was pointed toward Programa de Educación Básica Laboral, or The Program of Basic Labour Education (PEBAL). PEBAL is a local primary school, night school, medical clinic, administrative centre, and social development centre run by the Jesuits in Pamplona. It was founded in 1971 and built by the community and the Jesuits to serve the local community. I entered PEBAL and immediately befriended a charismatic and socially conscious Spanish architect and his political scientist compatriot. Alfredo, the Spanish architect volunteering in the social area of PEBAL, invited me to form part of a training course for local community leaders. It was at one of the seminars for this course that I would meet Madelen and Josefina. The latter, a charismatic and forthcoming middle-aged woman, would become one of my key collaborators and friend. Madelen, seeing that I had an interest in getting a foothold in the area offered me her place in the Rinconada Nueva (see figure 3 above).

I had been to the Rinconada Nueva with the elderly father of one of the women who had a food stand in the market that I was working in to feed pigs one day, so I knew that this area was the frontier of Pamplona where people lived in ramshackle homes amongst pig sties. I jumped at the opportunity to have a foothold in yet another part of the municipality. I was getting to know my environment from the perspective of the people who lived here. Much of this information was not contained in books, so I figured my first step was to figure out what had happened and was going on around here. At the very least, I was gaining an experiential

understanding of life in Pamplona and that was getting closer to what I had envisioned myself doing and where the emphasis of my study ought to fall.

Near the beginning of November, I moved into Madelen's place in a sector of the Nueva Rinconada called Esperanza. Her place was a dilapidated shack, dusty from a lack of occupation. While here I became close to Elvira, Don Domingo and their two children –both young adults. I began to participate in community work projects and decided to play the role that the community had cast me in – benevolent gringo come to help the poor and needy materially and emotionally.

I bought formula for orphaned twins, paid for the medical exams of a man crippled with arthritis and unable to work, and organized an art contest and Christmas event for local children. I enjoyed being cast into this role, but a part of me felt uneasy because I felt I was not really researching, or that many people were not seeing me for who I was but more as a shell. It also felt disingenuous, no matter how much these acts reflected my sensitive nature. I wondered what I was really doing. I did not realize it at the time, but I was participating in life here, sharing what I had, and becoming a person in the community. Little by little, I would become a person, distinct, but nonetheless as human as anyone else here. Suffice it to say, people were more comfortable with my presence than I was with being in their presence. It would take time for me to become better synchronized with my surroundings.

While I lived in Madelen's place, neighbours began to tell me that Madelen was a *viva*, or boldly unscrupulous person roughly, for charging rent to take care of a

place that she was not caring for. Neighbours were reluctant to help me improve my new home because they felt that Madelen would be the beneficiary of our efforts. As I became more familiar with the social norms in the Nueva Rinconada, I realized that people who did not live in the area, but looked to benefit from having property there represented a direct affront to those who live with their families in this area enduring regular privations and having to invest their labour in the infrastructure improvements in the area. If Madelen had a place, I suspected it was because of her link to PEBAL, a source of aid to the community. The General Secretary, Wily, as a solution, offered me free accommodation in the sector locale.

When one does not live in a home and maintain it, it becomes infested with fleas and other pests. I really had no idea what to do, or how to get by in this house, and I did not want to stoke the flames of community conflicts. If this was not enough, I became ill with a stomach infection and a chronic cough that lasted much of my time in this house. I became very gaunt. Elvira and Domingo suggested that I talk to one of the Jesuit brothers to see if I could get a room in PEBAL. I did not want to admit defeat, however my health was more of a concern. Recently, a neighbour had died of tuberculosis. I also felt that I was in the middle of internal conflicts that I knew nothing about and wanted to gain some distance for a moment and look for a place that was more neutral. I vowed to return on more favourable conditions, scouting out my future home a little better to avoid unsettling the community in which I would live.



I returned to live near the market in Pamplona in the Jesuit compound around the middle of January of 2010, although I began to pay regular visits to Esperanza not wanting things to cool off in the zone. After Christmas, I decided that I would teach English in another sector called Martha Chavez because the General Secretary, Marta, was much more open and willing to help me understand life in the area. She invited me along on her trips to the municipality and helped me with my paperwork to get into the municipality. I could accompany her and was invited to do so regularly. I taught English there for almost three months in the evenings to an enthusiastic group of local children and young adults.

At the time, I did not realize it but I was paying my dues in the community and demonstrating that I was willing to give to the community in a way that was unique from the approach most NGOs and the state take. I lived with people and I listened to them. I was not really there to tell them how they ought to live then retreat back into a sheltered world of privilege. I made the acquaintance of a variety of people I never imagined I would come to be on friendly terms with –from juice vendors to garbage pickers. My aim was to understand what it meant to be from there, what troubled the minds of people, what moments comprised the brief respites in the daily lives of people here. I wanted to know what living there was really like. At the same time, I was taking an interest in how one went about building a community, a place in the hills, where the land was mostly private property that had been squatted on.

While I lived in PEBAL, I started hanging out with the staff in the social area and participating in their activities in Pamplona. I talked to volunteers and I got to know the locals who worked in PEBAL. I tried to be close and to maintain a distance at the same time, not wanting to become too strongly associated with assistance given by this institution for fear that it would type-cast me or close doors for me in the area I worked in. Whether this was a realistic position or not is certainly debatable.

At this point, being in PEBAL allowed me to maintain contacts I formed near the market, look for new contacts in different sectors of Pamplona, and still maintain ties in the Nueva Rinconada. It was hectic. I knew that at some point I would have to focus in on one particular area, nevertheless I needed to gain a knowledge of the lay of an area that contained 150,000 people before I could do that.

For the next few months I continued to focus on generating a picture from the ground about what had happened in Pamplona since its beginnings in 1968. I talked to a lot of older men and women who had been community leaders in different sectors over the years. My focus shifted to Pamplona mostly and I paid occasional visits to the Nueva Rinconada to keep things simmering up there.

On occasions when I felt that I was not getting enough depth, I consoled myself by saying that I had gone places and learned a lot about an area in which I never imagined I would ever work the first time I went to Peru in 1998. What had been a mystery had become a familiar place that I now knew how to navigate and was not afraid to navigate alone. I had come a long way, I reminded myself. Somehow, in a

place where people were supposedly alienated, nobody cared about anybody and crime was on the rise, I was constantly being aided and was unscathed. I felt humbled and grateful. Things are not always what people imagine or say they are.

That said, many of my acquaintances told me that being a gringo was a strong deterrent for many thieves because if any harm came to me there would be political pressure to see that the case be resolved. I think what really kept me safe was a combination of prudence, paying heed to local warnings about hotspots for muggings and the precedent for compassionate and selfless action that prior foreigners had generated in the community.

At the beginning of April of 2010, I moved with my girlfriend, now my partner, to an apartment in the more affluent side of the municipality of San Luis, an area that started out as a planned neighbourhood –in many cases the first floor nucleus of these homes, being identical in many cases, was evident. The area, in contrast to Pamplona, and even the urban zone, boasted parks that were well-maintained. There were no street vendors, people did not take over the streets to play volleyball in the summer, there were no *polladas* (community fund raising events for sick or needy families), and neighbours kept to themselves more. Nobody cared about me there, save a group of local adults who tried to tease me at first, but tired when I gave them no reaction. I continued to go to Pamplona and the Nueva Rinconada during the day for a few months.

Around July of 2010 I shifted all of my attention toward the Nueva Rinconada. This decision was based on the rapport that I had generated through my generosity,

good will and more intense involvement with people in the Nueva Rinconada. One of the community leaders offered me a place where I could sleep on Saturday and Sunday nights. I spent three to five days a week in the Nueva Rinconada, returning home to type up fieldnotes and decompress from time to time. Living in San Luis meant that I got to talk to people in this area about Pamplona and get their impressions of people who lived in these areas, gaining an understanding of the real lack of contact that exists between more affluent areas and places like Pamplona. To be more accurate, I came across people from areas like Pamplona working as maids, street vendors, or trades people in San Luis. Needless to say, our interaction was very different –this time, they were out of place. People who I could joke with and talk to openly in the Nueva Rinconada would not make eye contact with me when I greeted them, or they would maintain an insurmountable distance. The relationship was entirely different. When I invited friends from the Nueva Rinconada to visit me, they looked and felt out of place. Many never came. It was easier for me to visit them than it was for them to visit me. To some degree, the Nueva Rinconada brought me down to their level, reminding me that there were invisible barriers which divided us. The experience in both places suggested that the role of benefactor that I played in the Nueva Rinconada created a possibility for interaction that did not exist in an area that was more affluent. As the foreign aid worker/anthropologist people would talk to me, however as the gringo in an affluent neighbourhood social dialogue was awkward and out of place.

To be honest, I relished the peace of this area of the city and the indifference of my neighbours and people who surrounded me. Not having running water or

appliances, Internet and other luxuries that I take for granted in the Nueva Rinconada made living uncomfortable. In San Luis, I could live in a way that I had grown accustomed to for much of my life. If I wanted to go to a gym, there was a gym nearby. If I wanted to go to the market, it was nearby. San Luis was a compromise in all senses. The cost of living in San Luis for everything was slightly higher though, but not near as expensive as Miraflores, San Isidro, Surco, or even more affluent areas of Lima.

Being deprived of the conveniences of the contemporary world for extended periods of time generated anxiety, frustration, anger and, yes, even boredom. I wanted to maximize my time, so that I could spend more time on writing and reading, things that are generally not part of the activities of most people in the Nueva Rinconada. I did not want to spend a whole day hand washing clothes. I did not want to go to the market everyday to buy groceries because I had no fridge. I was habituated to technological conveniences, and I had grown accustomed to immediate results and impersonal transactions.

Yet, being in the Nueva Rinconada made me feel the coldness and absurdity that often accompanies an individualistic pursuit for merit and recognition. The long solitary hours of reading and writing were a stark contrast to the almost constant socialization that could be had in the Nueva Rinconada. Being part of the community work projects made me feel part of something bigger than myself. I felt like I was making a visible contribution to the community in which I lived. I was a part of something. We were working toward something together.

I figured I could commute to the Nueva Rinconada during the weekend and during the week and then return home. I think it would have been disingenuous to say that it was fine to live the way people did in the Nueva Rinconada. Most people there are struggling so that their community is like that of areas like San Luis. This is a theme that will receive detailed attention in the following chapters. San Luis and areas like it are the way they are, however, because people have worked together to improve these communities (paying municipal taxes is a major factor here) and there has been a process of economic and social segregation at work here whereby people moving here value the order they have established. It is hard not to notice that most locals around here are either professionals or successful entrepreneurs.

The moral of this tale is that when working in a city people must understand multiple places to make sense of the place they are in and how it fits into processes of urban growth. Viewing the city as something dynamic, processual and relational means that we must be prepared to de-centre our investigation, to lose ourselves in order to find ourselves, as Walter Benjamin astutely wrote (Benjamin:1935). Otherwise, we risk missing the significance of the parts we are working in. The consequence of this is that research becomes less predictable, long term and flexible, leading us places we never imagined. Now, that I have discussed the movement involved in doing this research and given some indication of what will come, let us continue.



## Chapter 2 —Don Malvinas's Pamplona

My first trips into Lima South were made during my master's thesis research into popular fashion. I remember going to La Chanchería, an informal market in Villa El Salvador with a friend to interview vendors about the clothing that they sold and to see what people were buying. Both she and I had never been in Villa El Salvador and we did not know what to expect. We were both ready for anything, knowing that we were in unknown territory. There likely was very little danger. The way that lore and truly harrowing tales about people being brutally robbed because they wandered into the wrong neighbourhood and met the wrong group of people mixed in our minds.

Teresa Caldeira in her excellent analysis of crime and segregation in Sao Paulo, Brazil talks about how perceptions of violence as a contagion that originates in predominantly working class areas of the city often work to reinforce both symbolic segregation (in the form of prejudices and stigmatization) and physical segregation (walls, fences, etc.) (2000:53-101). As in Sao Paulo, fear, especially that based on the symbolic and physical forms of segregation, is an effective barrier to meaningful social interaction between different social classes in Lima.

Despite our trepidation, we got lost, which is an accepted and not uncommon way of arriving in many parts of Peru, and had to ask directions from locals about how to get where we were going. When we did arrive we took a motortaxi —the choice of short-range transportation in Lima's self-made settlements. This was the



segment of society in Lima with whom I felt most comfortable; however, at the same time I lived and worked in circles that kept me separate from them. A line was drawn here that became manifested in everything from body language, fashion, music choice to how people move in the street.

That line between a dominant Creole culture and what is referred to locally by Peruvian anthropologist José Matos Mar (1984) as a “cultura contestatoria,” or counter-culture, for lack of a better term in English, has been the subject of many studies and varying interpretations (cf. Portocarrero et al. 1993, Uzzell 1980, Mangin 1967). The subculture that has emerged in developing cities has been theorized as tactical resistances (De Certeau 1984) to an imposing order, or a set of practices that people develop to negotiate their relationships with institutions that are incapable of designing policy and institutions that are based on a nuanced understanding of people’s behaviour in the real world. According to this view, people make do with elements of a dominant order, transforming institutions and practices to suit their needs. Depending on how one looks at the issue of popular culture and practice, one can view it as a separate set of dispositions in constant flux with dominant value systems (Bourdieu 1984), or as a population targeted for insistent interventions that seek to form a particular subject amenable to prevailing social, political and economic forces (Foucault 1991, 1992). If this is not enough, there are those who proclaim the enterprise of popular classes as evidence that they too are oriented toward personal achievement in ways that are not incommensurable with capitalistic ideals of free enterprise and material reckonings

on the societal worth of an individual (cf. Adams and Valdivia 1991). Effectively, we move between the most critical and optimistic of portrayals.

The feeling people get as they become more familiar with this popular culture is that all of the various interpretations of popular culture contain an element of truth. Nonetheless, we must be cautious about full-heartedly supporting positions that uncritically laud the adaptation of rural dwellers to the urbe. The modern mass media does not tire of reinforcing a divide between tradition and modernity, leading us to believe that either people are modern or they are stuck in an anachronistic traditional way of living. In other words, dominant cultures the world over work to stigmatize difference, despite the exemplary and valiant actions of some to fight this tendency. The survival, and dignity, of those from a traditional mode of living, then, is very much dependent on their willingness to accept modern capitalistic cultural ideals. These ideals are often local inflections of local hierarchies and complex global connections with social elites in other nations.

Matos Mar (2004[1984]), closer to Michel de Certeau, argues that migrants who could not deal with formal institutions, or were discouraged from doing so because of a combination of generalized corruption, abuse and discriminatory practices began to form their own institutions. It follows that more recent demands for equality before the law, full citizenship, participation, transparency, institutions that work for the people, decentralization, fair taxation, equal opportunity and a general respect for human rights are a positive consequence of this counter-culture's demand for fairness and dignity (Matos Mar 2004[1984]:128-129).

Whether these demands are being met is certainly debatable, but, as one will see, equality and dignity are certainly at the heart of working class demands in Lima.

The first impression that the bustle of an urban outdoor market makes on a person is certainly memorable. Instead of chaos, which is a common privileged trope for describing the order that migrants to Lima have (re)created, I just saw crammed repetition, among the curious stares that I met. Years of classes where I was admonished to look beyond the surface for some underlying meaning no doubt led to such an appreciation. I had this feeling that if I wanted to understand what it meant to be Peruvian, I was not going to know from living like a tourist in Lima. Lima, as a place occupied by people with a wide range of practices, was also what was happening in areas of the city where migrants, their children and their grandchildren, and even their great grandchildren had made new communities on the sandy plains and hills of the desert. I came to realize that I was not going to get far in understanding the relationship between people in Lima if I did not live and get to know how people lived in places like the area surrounding the market in Villa El Salvador.

I felt vulnerable, lost, awkward and more exposed than I had ever felt in my whole life. I reckon now that this discomfort was fair and instructive. It was fair because what I felt in certain moments was nothing compared to what someone who is perceived as poor and in need of help experiences throughout their life. I can only begin to imagine how it must feel to have most authority figures and outsiders making judgements, often patronizing, about how you live your life and how you

ought to live your life. And, it was instructive, because like so many anxiety- and fear-ridden experiences in life, when we do confront them, they enrich our outlook on life in a way that more distanced quantitative and qualitative research methods do not. In my own way, I was getting lost or losing my mind.<sup>3</sup>

Now, I had realized what I must do. I had to gain knowledge of everyday living in areas of Lima that had become a housing alternative for the majority. I had to find people who were willing and knowledgeable about local history to talk to me about what happened. Many people are, but it is often a matter of circumstance that brings certain people into our acquaintance. Getting acquainted with Don Malvinas was one such encounter. I was presented to his group through a mutual acquaintance that I met through one of my collaborators in the Nueva Rinconada. When I asked his group if someone would be willing to talk to me about what had happened in Pamplona, his peers recommended him. He was gracious in accepting his peers' recommendation and I am grateful that he shared his perspective on local history with me.

---

<sup>3</sup> I am referring to an essay by Walter Benjamin where he argues that in order to know a city, one must lose oneself (Benjamin 2005[1932]). Similarly, anthropologist Johannes Fabian in his analysis of European epistemological practices in Africa during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries documents the absurdity of a more detached objective stance in data collection that occurred during the colonial period (Fabian 2000). He encourages anthropologists to lose their minds, in a positive sense, eschewing the trappings of detached, impersonal observation. Elsewhere, he questions the denial of synchronous experiences between anthropologists and their research objects, arguing that inter-human research is an intersubjective experience (Fabian 1983). A collection of essays edited by historian James Clifford and anthropologist George E. Marcus effectively explore the objectivist tradition and its historical genesis, troubling the belief that what anyone does in cultural representation is anything but objective. Since all representations are subjective, the truth of an interpretation should rest with the ability of those who are represented to see their truth in that work, not in the authority of the work and the compiler of that work. The authority of the expert must be vulnerable to the scrutiny of the public. This work is, therefore, my subjective interpretation of events that have occurred in an imagined space called Lima. The value of this project depends in large part upon the responses it will generate. I therefore take the position espoused by anthropologists George E. Marcus and Michael Fischer when they maintain that anthropology should be considered a form of cultural critique (1986).

If you were to find someone willing to talk to you who had been actively involved in his community (it could equally be a she) they would get a testimony something like what follows. Some elements are no doubt typical and shared, whereas others may reflect the speaker's political convictions, gendered experience, age, generation, etc. I urge my reader to read between the lines of his testimony, because how he perceives his plight and how he positions himself and others in his position in relation to authority and state institutions will bear some relevance later in this chapter and in those that follow. I would like to start with his voice in this chapter then work into the various scholarly compilations that seek to understand what has happened in his neighbourhood and neighbourhoods like his. I am especially interested in the tone that Don Malvinas uses and his personalization of the changes that have occurred in his neighbourhood. Let us look at Don Malvinas' account, or at least a part of it.

D.M.: The history of here, of our country, above all, of this place, born of the surge of marginal zones, starts with more force in 1940 and onward, because the hacienda owners, the landowners from the Andes, did not permit the children of peasants to study in schools because they knew that they would see with better clarity how unjust it was, that they were being exploited in a brutal way.

Therefore, what happened, the only hope of children and youth of that time was to immigrate to Lima to big cities like Trujillo, Arequipa, Cuzco, Huancayo. So, those spaces began to become overpopulated.

And, what happened here in Lima, above all, is that Lima started to receive an enormous flow of emigrants from the interior of the country, who came from the four cardinal points. And, there was already no housing.

Housing and jobs began to become scarce. So, what happened? They started to practically organize themselves in groups to figure out how to survive and where to find spaces to live.

And, in 1954, four groups, led by a man, López Agreda, the famous “one-legged Agreda,” and Aldave Paredes, decide to invade the sands of the South; and on the 24<sup>th</sup> of December of 1954, they invaded what is, what is today called Ciudad de Díos, giving birth to the district of San Juan de Miraflores.

And according to the history of that time, the invasion swelled to up to ten thousand people, where practically, and that was the hard part, they did not have any type of amenities. There was no water, sewage. Nothing. Not one of those amenities, not even electricity, nothing. They were only provisioned with sticks and reed matting.

According to what people say, around ten thousand invaded, but in 1956, when General Manuel Odría, who was President at that time, built a thousand houses here in Ciudad de Díos only 800 stayed, leaving 200 houses empty. Almost nobody wanted to come.

Later, after that, the flow of provincial migrants coming to Lima continued and people started to spill over [from inner city tenements and other peripheral settlements]. There was no housing. People saturate one area, so they start looking for another. Housing becomes scarce, it is insufficient, all [livable spaces] are occupied.

So, then, in 1964, until that date, until 1963, there was only Ciudad de Díos and Pamplona Baja. Pamplona Alta was unoccupied.

B.R.: And in Pamplona Baja there were only basic nuclei [of houses]?

D.M.: Yes, in the lower part, yes there were basic nuclei. They gave a basic housing unit [that of a sites and services model] that was administered by EMADÉ.

B.R.: And how was that?

D.M.: It was a house at the back, a lot of 180m<sup>2</sup>. At the back, where the garden was going to be, there was a basic dwelling, like a bull ring, or, rectangular, split in the middle. That was a basic dwelling. They left the front part open so that they could continue building.

That was Pamplona Baja, everything that was Ciudad de Dios and Pamplona Baja. Pamplona Alta was totally free. On the 28<sup>th</sup> of May, 1963, Tacora caught fire, which is an avenue between la Parada and Aviación Ave., which was between Aviación and 2 de Mayo Hospital, which is on Grau Ave.

B.R.: I have been there to buy furniture...

D.M.: Yes, so, the mayor of Lima then was Dr. Luis Bedoya Reyes. So, then, he wanted to unite the roads, build some roads to connect Aviación with Grau, but informal entrepreneurs, from blocks 3 and 4 did not want to leave and on the

28<sup>th</sup> of May, 1963 a fire started. Everything was burnt. [The commercial area] caught fire and the occupants left, and Dr. Bedoya Reyes could make his road.

But, because of that, people were transported to that part of Pamplona Alta [that was unpopulated]. The sectors of Nuevo Horizonte and 28 de Mayo were the first settlements in Pamplona Alta. That happened in January of 1964.

Seeing them located there, those people, those dwellings, those people who were living in Ciudad de Díos thought that it was an invasion and on the 6<sup>th</sup> of January...

B.R.: Why did they think that?

D.M.: On the 6<sup>th</sup> of January of 1965, they invaded the sands of San Francisco de la Cruz. I don't know if you have seen the hill in the distance, where Christ the Redeemer is? There, there was a cross.

They invaded those sands. They passed word that there was an invasion. At that time, I lived in Breña district [near the center of colonial Lima]. A family member passed word to me and I too came. The rent was expensive and work was getting scarce. No. There was no way to be able to pay anymore and I came to invade in San Francisco de la Cruz.

In 1966, the lots were surveyed in this zone. But, because it is very treacherous it belonged at that time to San Francisco de la Cruz [it was not an independent sector where he moved because it lacked the conditions to make it a central population centre].

The National Housing Committee (Junta Nacional de Vivienda), said: "No. We are going to survey lots up until the half-way mark because higher up it is going to be impossible to have electricity and water. It can't be done. So, you are going to stay in the lower part." They destined us for this side where, Los Laureles, Los Buenos Milagros y Virgen de Buen Paso would be.

But, people did not want to. They said: "No. That is a pig-sty." Because they raised pigs where the Rinconada is now. That was where they raised pigs, no, swine.

People revolted. So the National Housing Committee surveyed this zone, that was the lowest and flattest and at that time, in 1967. In January of 1967, we moved into that zone, not as invaders, but as surveyed dwelling holders. In spite of that, we were always without any type of amenities -no water, no electricity, none of those things. So, we separated from San Francisco de la Cruz. And, now that we were separated from San Francisco, there was also 28 de Mayo and Nuevo Horizonte. We were totally separated.

So, El Brillante, those who lived here then, we decided to separate, to make our own organization to administer and find a solution to our necessities.

B.R.: That is, before you were part of San Francisco de la Cruz?

D.M.: Yes, we, el Brillante, are descendents of San Francisco de la Cruz.

B.R.: But, spatially, no, but only by descent, is that correct?

D.M.: So, from there, we tried to separate. We said: "They know that it is done practically. They can't [do anything] because there are other sectors and they too... ." So, what happened? We decided to separate, but with one condition, to try and make all efforts to satisfy our needs ourselves and try to eradicate the paternalism that we were always used to: leaving the government, the state, to do everything, to extend our hand.

B.R.: Or, the church...

D.M.: So we said: "You know what? We are going to start to work here to find a solution, to meet our needs: electricity, water, all of that. We need [these things]. So, we are going to present projects, save our money, and, well, make them do our projects."

But, first, when we came here, in the quicksand, no vehicle would enter to leave us water, and people had to walk below, the young women and married women, to Pamplona Baja, to Ciudad de Díos, to bring water in a bucket.

So, our first task was: You know what? We are going to pack the roads. So, we went to the Ministry of Public Works (Ministerio de Fomento). We voiced our demands to the Ministry saying: "You know what? You have the vehicles resting Saturdays and Sundays, so we want you to help us. We are going to pay you: pay the gas, and we are going to give lunch to the workers. We want you to collaborate with your machines to pack our streets." We said this so that the Ministry would accept it. So, on Saturdays and Sundays they began to asphalt everything, to pack, to spread crushed stone on all the streets. It was like this that we were the first sector to pack our streets, all of our streets, so that the cistern truck could enter.

Now that we had our water, we made our cisterns. We had water in cisterns. After, from there, we began to do the paperwork for the electricity, so that they would install electricity, water and sewers.

But, at that time, seeing us here, and Alfonso Ugarte; 12 de Noviembre, Miguel Grau, Ollantay, Leoncio Prado, Los Buenos Milagros, Virgen del Buen Paso, 16 sectors in total started or were born.

What happened at that time was that an organization of the state called SINAMOS, National System of Social Revolution [National System of Social Movement] was functional. So, we went to present our projects, each sector, separately.



So, Monseigneur Bambarén suggested and said to us: “It is going to be difficult and in small groups the projects are going to be more expensive. Better yet, why don’t you unite, organize, create a macro-sectorial organization, and, then, this organization can present the water project, the electricity project and sewers on behalf of everyone.” We did it like this. We joined together in a General Central Committee and we presented one electricity project led by the Secretary General of the General Central Committee of Pamplona Alta. We started with electricity, then water, then sewers.

To do that we united with ... they recognized us in 1974, recognized the unification of Pamplona Alta, with 16 sectors, duly identified. From there, Pamplona Alta has grown more and more. Not by invasion anymore, but expanding, expanding, expanding, with expansions for the children of landowners from there, from the previous owners of lots. They had their children, or other families came. They expanded, expanded to the point that now, I think, Pamplona now has 75 sectors.

(Don Malvinas, Interview recorded on June 3, 2010)

When I listened to Don Malvinas’ story, told within the community library in El Brillante, Pamplona, I thought about the other stories that people had told me about their experiences in Pamplona and the published studies that made Pamplona the field of their study (cf. Anderson 2002, Altamirano 1988, Burns 1994, Riofrio 1980, Riofrio and Driant 1987). These stories can fit into a larger group of stories that I will discuss shortly. When I began to reflect upon these stories, especially after the realization that tens of thousands of people had their stories in Pamplona, I thought about what a story is, who it belongs to and why they told that story. We might more accurately think of these stories as narratives, that succeed or not, garnering precious time in the social spotlight. Each narrative belongs to its time or times, depending on how one parses time, and is in dialogue with other narratives, drawing from one another, in effect (cf. Bakhtin 1981). This makes the task of interpreting these narratives a difficult one. We may wonder why people include

what they do and omit other details; yet, we only get a sense of what details may be omitted by reading, listening, and, if we are doing ethnographic work, immersing ourselves in the worlds of people with whom we work. Even then, as the reader will see, our understanding remains partial.

It should, therefore, be striking to come across narratives that purport to hold a general truth or superior interpretation that excludes the multiplicity of voices that exist at a particular time, or that works to silence some elements of commentary in a social context while elevating others. Much more worrisome is it when these narratives become prescriptive, as we will see shortly.

Mikhail Bakhtin elaborates on such interplay of voices and differentiates between two tendencies, one centripetal, pulling all voices toward it, and the other centrifugal, working against the homogenizing tendencies of centripetal force (Bakhtin 2006[1981]:272–273). Narratives, like that of Don Malvinas tend to simultaneously work against and be scavenged by authoritative sources about what happened in Pamplona. As we will see, threads of his narrative, like the resilience and ingenuity of settlers, are often picked up by academics and politicians who seek to promote a particular vision of the world. Nonetheless, judging by the cynicism of many of my collaborators, this vision and its promise of progress is not accepted uncritically. That said, there does not seem to be much choice in the matter.

Bakhtin referred to the phenomenon of multiple voices existing simultaneously in the discourse of a single person as heteroglossia. Heteroglossia is:

...another's speech in another's language, serving to express authorial intentions but in a refracted way. Such speech constitutes a special type of double-voiced discourse. It serves two speakers at the same time and expresses simultaneously two different intentions: the direct intention of the character who is speaking, and the refracted intention of the author (Bakhtin 2006[1981]:324).

We can often find this double-voiced discourse —that where the speaker plays on the implicit understanding of a second group— in the use of irony, for example. So, one person could be aware of what was being said while another remained in the dark. The concept of different voices becomes more applicable to our case when Bakhtin goes on to discuss its implications for politics and ideology. He states:

The tendency to assimilate others' discourse takes on an even deeper and more basic significance in an individual's ideological becoming, in the most fundamental sense. Another's discourse performs here no longer as information, directions, rules, models and so forth –but strives rather to determine the very bases of our behaviour; it performs here as authoritative discourse, and an internally persuasive discourse (2006[1981]:342).

For Bakhtin these two discourses were engaged in a constant dialectic, such that personality was formed in the space between an imposing voice and one that “was denied all privilege, backed up by no authority at all, and is frequently not even acknowledged by society (not by public opinion, not by scholarly norms, nor by criticism), not even in legal code.” He continues to elaborate, then, on the character of authoritative discourse, describing it with adjectives such as static, dead, complete, magisterial, sharply demarcated, etc. Yet, it still possesses this ability to organize around itself great masses of other types of discourses (Bakhtin 1981[2006]:342-343).

What I would like to take from Bakhtin is his idea of ideologies functioning through the casting and recasting of voices. I think it is very apt when we talk about development processes. However, I want to modify authoritative discourse, pulling a bit from Antonio Gramsci's notion of the importance of consensus in hegemonic projects (1971[2003]:12-13). Authoritative discourse draws in different voices, including them in its corpus to appeal to, if not cajole the masses into participating in its vision, making coercion less necessary. As such, it is by no means static or dead, but very dynamic.

Not only the voices of people like Don Malvinas, but their physical presence is often borrowed in the mass media.<sup>4</sup> They regularly applaud their achievements, shed their tears publicly for their privations, and are congratulated for making their appearance in the social spotlight. The struggle to progress has very much become a media spectacle, with media attention and work directing much energy to those who adhere to neoliberal notions of individual enterprise to achieve financial wellbeing.

What I hope to demonstrate in this analysis is that projects that posit an alternative future outcome to present actions are always a utopic project. When Thomas More first wrote his *Utopia* —an ironic play on words, the translation from Latin being closer to *No Place* because of the idyllic functioning of the island nation described by More— the notion that any vision of society where social unity and

---

<sup>4</sup> This strategy is common practice in national television programs in Peru. If one were to go to a media archive for the past five or six decades they would have ample footage to elaborate numerous studies on this train of thought.

community could be envisioned as an operating principle became a thing of fantasy (More 2012[1516]). Utopia eventually came to refer to a vision of a society that is hopelessly unrealistic, contrary to the idea of an enlightened society that More envisioned. I would like to consider the writings of free market pundits as utopic texts in the sense that critics of a more humanistic society have come to define it. In other words, leaving this world at the will of market forces that seek to extract profits for an elite destitutes and dehumanizes the majority of human beings. That it will bring peace, unity, and justice is utopic in the perverted sense that the word has now taken.

Presently, the notion that there could be a just society seems outlandish. Human beings, as conventional wisdom would hold, are driven by a combination of greed, lust and power. How did such a horrific and cynical view of humanity come about? But, how is it that voices, so specific in detail, do not find a place in public discourse? They do, however insofar as they are refracted and incorporated into authoritative renderings of how society is operating and ought to operate. In the following chapter, I will give another example of how not just what people say, but people's behaviour in trying circumstances was recast as a solution to the housing problems of a growing Lima.

As I listened to Don Malvinas and others, I wondered how much a story had to be made up of verifiable "facts" for it to be recognized as having "objective" weight. Was his version rigorous enough? I wondered what his voice, what the voice of many could say would differ from and complement scholarly research. His reason

for why people came to Lima was too general to be true for everyone, yet he was saying something that he wanted me to understand that was true for him and certainly others. My daily conversations and observations lead me to believe that the peasants' emancipation from the whims of social superiors was far from being won in Lima. Nonetheless, there is a feeling of having triumphed over odds that must have been daunting for the first pioneers who struck out into the desert below where Don Malvinas lived in 1954. He evoked images of this struggle by emphasizing the austerity of these pioneers: they had nothing but "sticks and reed matting." His notion of progress seemed to be based on overcoming immediate obstacles that ensured the well-being of his family and community in a new place.

There appeared to be various discourses at work in the narrative of Don Malvinas. The struggle against rural oppression could very well have been a Marxist discourse adapted to the Andean context and somehow now part of the urban environment. At the same time, the struggle against oppressive forces is no doubt a timeless discourse that finds its words from time to time, coalescing into popular movements –the foil to Bakhtin's internally persuasive discourse. There were elements of a position espoused by many whereby disenfranchised people had overcome odds, uniting to make a living in the city. The media, specifically those sources partial to the message of neoliberal notions of individual achievement, have been very capable when it comes to picking up on working class triumphalism, echoing it back to them to coax them on, downplaying the criticisms, twisting words around to cajole people into active collusion, incessantly bombarding them with

success stories of those who have overcome poverty due to their relentless entrepreneurial spirit.

The starting point for Don Malvinas' narrative is provincial life. While academic analyses tend to emphasize droughts, the draw of urban jobs and an imagined space of opportunity in the city (Paerregaard 1997, Lobo 1982), the loss of land and livelihood (Smith 1988) and even cultural archipelagos (Colloredo-Mansfeld 1999) that are part of a centuries old subsistence strategy, the move to the city, like Don Malvinas's narrative on the struggles faced by his community, was an emancipatory movement. But, it was certainly one that meant people's traditional practices had to undergo dramatic change. It seemed more like another voice came to habitate his mind alongside that of the social revolutionary. The revolution seemed to be primarily about gaining more access to the material possessions and means to social advancement that constitute a modernist society. The only path to liberty in this new context was, ironically, through competition and accumulation at the expense of others.

Somehow, in all the talk about why people were moving, much analysis tended to deny the subjective truths of people who were living development processes in the developing world. There were, of course, exceptions of sorts to the normal paternalistic interventions, and, as we will see, the solution to the problem of Third World poverty was a subject of much inquiry in Peru and elsewhere. The moral tone of the assessments of poverty is important because they work to impart a moral imperative on development processes –people are good if they accept the

status quo and the promised benefit of following the prescriptive behaviours that bring about general progress. How people come to view progress, however, is circumstantial, as we can see from Don Malvinas, yet it still adheres to larger societal projects.

But, it is not as simple as saying that people are inculcated into behaving the way a political and economic elite desires them to behave. Don Malvinas details the daily struggles of people in Pamplona. When they were denied education, as a means of more advantageously managing their rural position *vís-a-vís* hacienda owners, they sought it elsewhere. When they got to the city in search of a better life, they were confronted with a struggle for both work and housing. This forced them to work together, no doubt putting aside regional and cultural differences. When they organized themselves and then set out to seek housing, it was inadequate. This inadequacy led to decades of political mobilization and solicitations to ministers and ministries to lend them machinery or to divert public funding to their community. Yet, not all is struggle and strife. What is common in Don Malvinas' rendition of events over the past decades with many people in Pamplona, starting with his arrival in Pamplona in 1964, is a narrative of struggle and successive victory, thanks in large part to the solidarity of people.

Not all foreground their prior exploitation. Others, like a local founder who played an important role in the maintenance of her sector park, told how short visits to family in Lima turned into a desire for a permanent stay, for instance, choosing not to couch her narrative in revolutionary terms. Her landowning family in the



North did not have the same economic privations as other migrants to Lima had. If there were more people present when Don Malvinas spoke, they would pick up on threads of his narrative and add their own experiences, nod in agreement, and beam with pride. Nonetheless, there would be those who would likely have an aversion to certain elements of his story, detecting the sympathies for General Velasco's corporatist state model at later points in his narrative. We must, hence, be conscious of the differences in origins and how they contribute to the narrative that people will publicly adopt.

This story is woven into the fabric of people's lives here, in their canteen and market talk, in their talk with strangers too. There is a profound sense that people here have made the lives that they and their families now have in the city by working against paternalism, demonstrating that they can do it on their own. To put it another way: people are defiant about how they bring about their own incorporation into a modernist state.

Just as intellectuals draw lines between liberal, populist, national revolutionary governments and neoliberal times, people draw their own lines. The "state" never seems to do enough. If it did, curiously, it was during the well-remembered dictatorships of Manuel Odría, Juan Velasco, or more recently Alberto Fujimori. That all of these governments should be lumped together is telling, for it suggests to people that governments which are productive have to be authoritarian, and that there must be physical improvements in infrastructure for a government to have been perceived as effective (no opportunity is lost to remind the public of

these works through inauguration ceremonies, plaques and naming ceremonies), regardless of the ideological leanings of the government (from corporatist to neoliberal). The state, in this sense, is fetishized, despite the fact that at least the leaders of communities have an idea of how to lobby national government ministries.

It was not uncommon to hear collaborators of different social classes comment that what is needed nowadays is a strong leader who rules with an iron fist. People often make this remark when discussing delinquency, drug use among the youth, generalized corruption and egotism. There is a strong impression that the only time things get done on a national scale is when there is a unilateral idea of what needs to get done, with dissident elements being suppressed. I will have more to say about this sentiment when I discuss the backdrop to the invasion of the Nueva Rinconada.

In spite of this prevalent sentiment that says central executive power is productive, Don Malvinas tells his history, where the protagonists are neighbours who overcome political hurdles to constitute a community. He creates a discursive world where the outsiders are politicians, planners and well-intentioned professionals. He tells how people came together and how they have eventually come to redefine their struggle. People talk about how everyone in Pamplona are *provincianos*<sup>5</sup> and how much they have all had to endure over the years. Yet, as we

---

<sup>5</sup> Being a *provinciano*, or one from the provinces, is something like being country folk as opposed to being city folk. Country folk are usually humbler, less ambitious, honest, hard working, cooperative, forthcoming and they maintain a moral order that contrasts with Creole culture, which is viewed as lazy, passive, venal, sordid, opportunistic and individualistic. This opposition has been widely commented upon by anthropologists (cf. Lobo 1982 or Adams and Valdivia 1991). Blacks, the Chinese, the Japanese, Italians, people from the jungle and other ethnic or cultural groups, constitute

see in the brief history of Don Malvinas, everyone owes some devotion to their sector, to their community, communities within in a city, communities that link with other communities petitioning the abstract and Kafkesque workings of a modernist Peruvian state (both municipal and national government ministries).

It is appropriate to precede a chapter on the background of Pamplona with the recollections of one of the earlier founders. In many ways, Don Malvinas' version is one that has been tempered in his own experience and participation in community politics. It is an insider's view of a phenomenon that has captured outsider attention since the mid-fifties, at least. As we read through his narrative we see how one group of people worked together to develop their neighbourhood, benefitting from the guidance of everyone from archbishops to social revolutionaries, petitioning the government for support to build the infrastructure that would provide their community with the amenities that formal housing projects possess as a rule of thumb. In many ways, leaders of these communities took an active role in their own development working with outsiders who brought their knowledge and experience to bear on the situation in places like Pamplona.

But, how was it that these communities, as Don Malvinas details them, had to organize themselves and then use their resources to complete these essential

---

a local folklore of behavioral types that have their corresponding prejudices. The category *provinciano* was often extended to include multiple generations over vast areas (San Juan, in my case), with people collapsing differences at times claiming that everyone in areas like the one that I was studying were *provincianos*. In a similar manner, people would say that everyone is a *cholo*, a term usually reserved for progressive indigenous migrants from the Andes in the 1950s. Racial differences, despite the insistence that they actually exist, are frequently downplayed just as much by the same people with a popular refrain that in Peru "*Quien no tiene de indio, tiene de Mandingo.*" This translates roughly as: One that doesn't have Indian, has African ancestry. In other words, nobody is pure blooded in a country like Peru.

projects? How did such a relationship come about and how did it change over the decades since the initial Christmas invasion of Ciudad de Dios that would form the spark of the southward advance of the growth of Lima? To understand this we will have to explore the relationship between earlier studies in the shantytowns of Peru and the relationship that they had to developing policy alternatives toward shantytowns and self-help housing in particular. At the same time, I want to consider how the “here” of Don Malvinas was represented by intellectuals. Who were these people to them? From there, we can try to put the pieces together to figure out what kind of transformations were occurring in Pamplona over successive decades.

## Chapter 3 —The Rise of Self-help Housing in Lima

As Don Malvinas recalled, the constant arrival of new migrants in Lima and their desire to have families meant that people were eventually forced to unite to look for land. But, was it really just a matter of people deciding to go somewhere and then simply occupying a piece of land? This section gives a tentative view of what happened leading up to the invasion of Ciudad de Dios and how this invasion was not so different from others that would occur later. We will see that what was happening in Peru helped to establish international policy toward urban development up until the 1980s, and, I would argue continues to be the pattern in Peru based on my interviews and experience in Pamplona, the Nueva Rinconada, and trips to other parts of the country between 2008–2011.

What stands out in this chapter is the ability of the central state and municipalities in Lima along with international housing agencies and experts to capture the insurgent practices of an urban population in need of a home. Effectively, what may have started out as a challenge to state authority came to be absorbed and condoned by the state and international agencies as a solution to the housing problem in developing countries. This tacit acceptance, however, maintained a degree of ambivalence, for it tended to undermine modernist attempts to rationalize the city. James Holston describes a similar undercurrent that rejected modernist architectural practices in Brasilia (1989). He argued that “in the process of appropriating the structures, institutions, and images of industrial modernity, the

underclass transform them into the instruments of new initiatives —into original copies, so to speak.” Yet, Holston recognizes that these initiatives “become the ground for new hegemonies (Holston 1991:462–463).” The high modernist city of straight lines and impressive monumental architecture in the style of Le Corbusier (cf. Scott 1998) is a stark contrast to the squatter neighbourhoods that began to appear en masse after the first land invasions in the later half of the 1940s in Lima. Despite his obvious reservations Holston later writes that these places represent “spaces of insurgent citizenship,” or spaces which contemporary planning must incorporate into its visions of how the city ought to function (Holston 1999). In this chapter and the previous one this is precisely what ministries charged with finding solutions to the housing crisis attempted to do. Yet the result was one, as we saw in Don Malvinas’s narrative, where people became responsible for their own development. Politicians sought to impose order, or to restrict such a style of urban growth, like passing laws to limit the legal recognition of such settlements and to stipulate requirements for the legal recognition of communities (green space, community infrastructure, road widths, lot sizes, etc.). This chapter, then, argues that there has been a complex dialectic between squatters and policy since land invasions became a common practice in the mid 1940s, thus making it difficult to say that these invasions are strictly insurgent practices from which governments ought to draw lessons.

This chapter suggests why Don Malvinas’s narrative seemed to consider self-help housing in such a positive light. The information provided here on its emergence as a housing strategy in Lima and at a national level suggests that a lot of

effort was behind promoting it and casting it in a positive light. One cannot help but notice that the homeless were being made responsible for their own development as part of a larger process of modern subject making. What appeared to start out as a practical response to overcrowding and as a means of saving money, quickly became promoted as a solution to the housing crisis in urbanizing countries throughout the world. Before we move on to look at self-help housing in particular, I would like to provide some contextual backdrop for its emergence.

Historian Peter Klarén pieces together the political economic context for mass migrations to Lima (Klarén 2004:351–368). Prior to and during the Second World War, local markets and exportations boomed, leading *hacendados* (owners of haciendas) to expand their holdings and remove *yanaconas*<sup>6</sup>. Innovations in medicine, like penicillin, sulphate drugs, cortisone led to a drop in infant mortality rates. Changes in public health attention no doubt added to the salubrious effects of breakthroughs in medicine. As a consequence of hacienda expansion and improvements in public health care, rural Peru quickly went from a situation where labour was in short supply to one in which there was a surplus. After 1945, it was not uncommon to hear of disputes between landholders and their tenants in rural areas. Locals began to encroach on landholder lands. Wage labour became more common and where locals were unable to find work locally they often sought it on coastal plantations, mines and urban centres.

---

<sup>6</sup> Yanaconas were peasants who cultivated a portion of landowners' plots in exchange for money, agricultural products, or access to a subsistence plot.

Internally, processes of development were often uneven, enriching some regions, while leaving others impoverished and dependent on wage-labour, which was mainly controlled by dominant social groups. In the Mantaro Valley in Peru, for instance, local communities have undergone dramatic changes since the end of the nineteenth century (until the 1970s in this article), which come to bear on more recent trends. Julian Laite discusses how Oroya, a small community of about 150 adults, went to a bustling city of 25,000 with its inhabitants maintaining a strong relationship to a local foreign owned mine between 1893 and 1922 (Laite 1978). In his account we are uncertain where migrants originated, but we are left to assume they came from surrounding communities. He claims that 80 percent of the workers in La Oroya are seasonal migrants, yet he does not explore this in much detail. Laite's account recounts the complex relationship between local hacienda owners and indigenous communities and the corporation. The corporation at different times was powerful and weak in local negotiations as changing political tides empowered and weakened local resistance. This rich relationship attests to the complex local negotiations that occurred with foreign capital in Peru.

Studies of plantations and haciendas in the decades prior to the end of WWII have yielded similarly nuanced accounts of the relationship between local elites and or enclaves funded primarily by foreign capital and the state, peasants, and foreign labourers (Gonzales 1985, Peloso 1999, Klaren 1973, Lyons 2006). These studies serve to remind us that the relationship between peasants and their masters was anything but smooth. On the contrary, it involved an often tenuous negotiation of interests and expectations. Labour regimes along the Peruvian coast, for example,

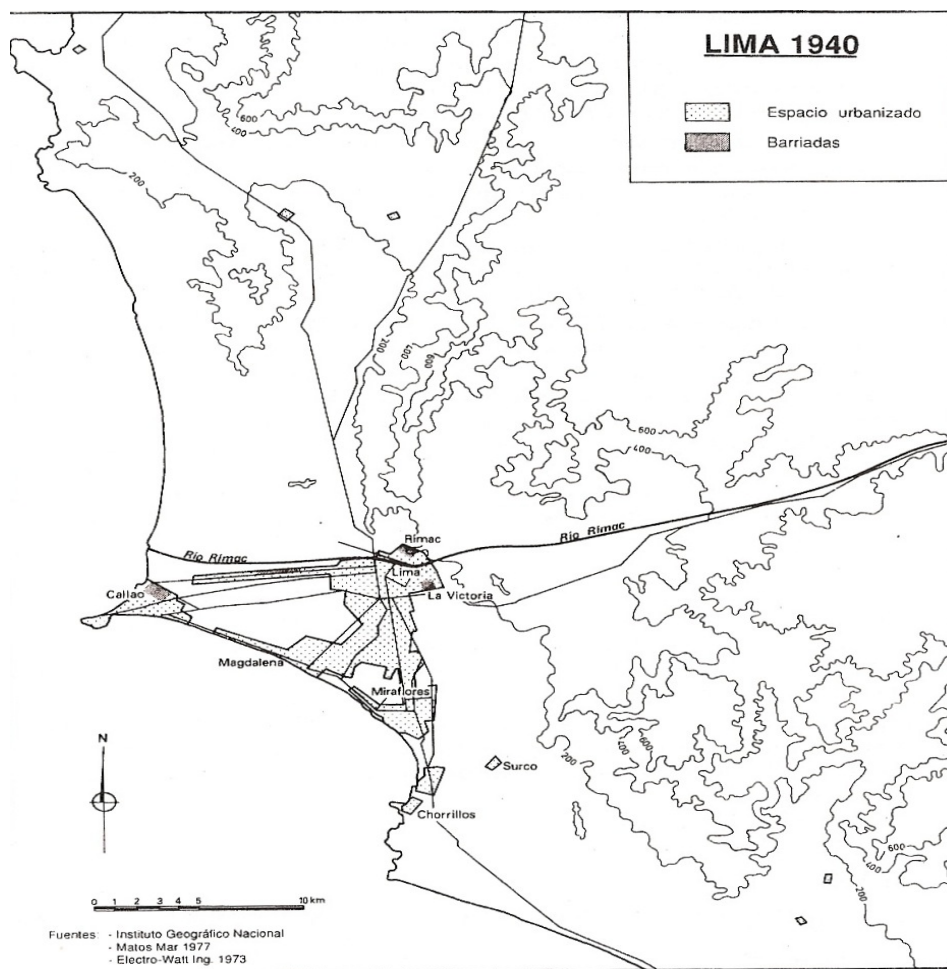


have undergone dramatic changes, with African slaves providing the bulk of labour needs initially, followed by a reliance on indentured Chinese coolies, only to finish with a preference for local seasonal and/or subsistence wage labourers in the twentieth century (Gonzales 1985). Jean-Claude Driant notes that the agrarian crisis between 1940-1945 resulted in extensive jobs losses in haciendas that began to modernize their production due to increasing competition from coastal plantations (Driant 1991:82). Workers of a multiple origins, reliant on this wage-labour, then, often ended up in cities. This explains the rich cultural diversity found in Lima at present.

Around the turn of the twentieth century, many economies, some more successfully than others -Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, and Uruguay being notable cases- began to implement import substitution programs. As various countries pursued modernization projects we see a general move to cities due to improvements in transportation and emerging urban primacy where industrial production becomes concentrated in few cities (Roberts 1978, Cardoso and Faletto 1979). Urban primacy coupled with a pattern where people migrated to where wage labour opportunities were available led many to go to cities like Lima and, in time, establish roots there.

According to Klarén, demographic changes brought about political pressure at a time when an alliance between the American Popular Alliance for Revolution, hencefore APRA, and reformer José Luis Bustamente y Rivero (1945–1948) promised to bring about democratic reforms that would favour the majority of

Peruvians, not just traditional landowning oligarchs and those keen on selling concessions to Peru's abundant natural resources. Internal divisions between moderates in APRA and more radical members of the party, who did not favour a political economic agenda that left aside the interests of indigenous peasants in the sierra, led to multiple acts of violence against the state and those pushing for a more liberal economy. The violence came to a head with an attempted bombing of



**Figure 5 Source: Driant 1991 This map illustrates that Lima was a city that grew from a fortified centre toward the coast and toward the port of Callao. Growth southward had yet to occur.**

a government minister in 1946 and the assassination of the editor of the conservative paper *La Prensa* in 1947. In response to these actions and a plot to

overthrow the government by elements of APRA in the navy in February of 1948, the APRA cabinet was dissolved and a military general, Manuel A. Odría, was placed in power (1948–1956).

Klarén goes on to note that the government raised taxes on exports — particularly cotton and sugar— took a stance in support of labour demands, and began to control the exchange rate. Such measures smacked of interventionism and increased statism for large landholders with a stake in the exportation of agricultural products and minerals.

At this point, one of the more vociferous critics, and representative of landholder interests, came to the forefront. Hailing from the cotton rich area of Cañete, cotton man Pedro Beltrán took the reins of *La Prensa* with other oligarchs. Beltrán, educated at the London School of Economics, was a strong proponent of free market reforms. After a failed coup attempt, APRA was once again proscribed, leaving Odría to push the now highly unpopular and destitute Bustamente into exile in Argentina.

Once Odría was in power, he ruthlessly pursued APRA members. More importantly, he openly rubbed shoulders with figures from the right-wing oligarchy: the Miró-Quesadas (the family that controlled and still does the most trusted newspaper in the country –*El Comercio*), Pedro Beltrán (owner of *La Prensa*) and Ramón Aspíllaga. So, Odría had decided to follow liberal economic policies, naming Beltrán as manager of the Central Bank. As one would expect, orthodox reforms were brought in and foreign investment soared.

Odría's approach to the population of provincial migrants that had swelled Lima from 600,000 in 1940 to 2 million in 1961 was reminiscent of the populist governments elsewhere, especially that of Juan Perón in Argentina. He extended social security to more workers, built a military hospital and raised wages for the military and the police force. He built schools, educating masses of people who would later radicalize in the 60s and 70s demanding social change –mostly peacefully, but some more violently.

In 1961, the population of the settlements that began to emerge on the outskirts of Lima was around 300,000. However, Odría rightly gauged the importance that these settlements would come to play, dedicating resources to them in exchange for political allegiance to his government. When invasions of lands took place, Odría would intervene directly and according to Klarén he openly promoted invasions. The idea here was to divert support from these sectors away from the left and APRA. Public demonstrations where popular support for Odría was voiced were not uncommon. Many of my older collaborators fondly remembered Odría for his support of invasions and his construction of basic infrastructure like roads, schools and hospitals.

At about this point it seems to me that a relationship that my collaborators often spoke of—a “tú me das, yo te doy,” or “you give to me, I give to you” practice—may have emerged in the burgeoning settlements that Don Malvinas spoke of that had the implicit support of Odría, or it may have already been common practice. This practice amounts to a form of political capital that is traded between squatter

communities and federal, provincial and municipal authorities. Odría channelled resources toward and implicitly allowed invasions to occur. In return, people mobilized in support of his government. In practice, the reciprocity implied in this relationship could be reneged upon; for instance, when election enticements that are given to local communities to support a particular candidate in return for a vote. During my research a candidate for mayor donated building materials to a local community along with a stack of campaign posters. When asked why he accepted the gift and the charge, my collaborator, a block leader, told me that the vote was secret. In other words, he was taking advantage of this candidate's generosity for the benefit of his block. This room for negotiation with central political figures gives the illusion that the population of squatter settlements is capable of undermining larger political projects; however I want to stress here that acts like this have not changed the general direction of the Peruvian nation in the time period analyzed in this dissertation. Paradoxically, the individualistic pursuit of power and its concomitant self-monitoring has strengthened.

According to urbanist Jean Claude Driant, it was not until the latter half of the 1940s that the population in Lima reached a point where it could bring about a demographic explosion in the city of Lima, due mainly to the birth averages for women at the time (3.3 children for women born in Lima and 3.5–3.8 children for women who were not born in Lima). Interestingly enough, the shantytowns of that time were populated by people who identified as being from provinces (60%), yet only 22.7% of migrants lived in shantytowns. The majority of people were concentrating in existent housing in the city, mainly the centre of Lima. It is

important to note, though, that 45% of those living in the more affluent neighbourhoods of Miraflores and San Isidro hailed from the provinces as well. Lima was very much a provincial city in the late 1940s, a city in transition (Driant 1991:47).

Economist Carlos Ponce, in his seminal work, *Gamarra: formación, estructura y perspectivas* (Ponce 1994:40–67), discusses the importance of La Parada and the adjacent textile complex Gamarra in the economic expansion of Lima. Despite previous industrial activity in La Victoria that began around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it was not until mayor Juan Carbone was in office between 1920 to 1922 that his housing company, Compañía Urbana La Victoria, began constructing working class housing. Later, during the governments of Oscar Benavides (1933–1939), and the first government of Manuel Prado (1939–1945) working class housing needs were satisfied by private construction companies. Prado's financial group bought part of the Cánepa family's El Pino hacienda and together with the Cánepa family built housing complexes in El Porvenir. Hospitals, schools and stadiums were also constructed by the state in La Victoria during this time period.

The area around La Parada became a new focal point for commerce and small industry after its construction in 1945. It was strategically situated along the central highway that went into the central part of Peru and into the Mantaro Valley. The importance of the Central Market for commerce in the city was quickly replaced by the concentration of activity around the wholesale market. To this day, the area is an informal hub. Most vendors throughout Lima tell of regular visits to this

central market to buy produce and dry goods for their stalls in the early hours of the morning. Interprovincial bus stops and transport routes used to cut through this busy area, as well (some still do), making it a distribution point for people coming into Lima.

In 1946, Cerro San Cosme, the hill behind La Parada, was invaded by box and basket vendors, street vendors, porters, and food vendors, setting a precedent for decades to come. A few months later San Pedro was formed and then, in 1947, came the formation of El Augustino (see Figure 7 below). Apparently, the same people behind the invasion of the Cánepa family lands around the land donated by the family for the construction of the wholesale market also were involved in land invasions around El Augustino (Ponce 1994:61). Driant claims that these invasions, particularly those associated with El Augustino, were brutally repressed by General Odría. However, the reaction of the public was so strong, that he was eventually forced to order the withdrawal of his troops in January of 1947 (Driant 1991:47–48). The shift from private construction companies that built working class dwellings to associations and groups that organized invasions without, or sometimes with, implicit political consent, appears to have been a watershed moment in Lima.

Over the next few years the areas on the other side of the Rimac River and adjacent areas to the now bustling market area around La Parada saw the continuous expansion of informal dwellings (Driant 1991:48). Anthropologist José Matos reveals that the Ministry of Public Works invited these landholders to buy



**Figure 6 Source: Ponce 1994 In the upper right-hand corner one can note Cerro San Cosme. Adjacent to it is El Agustino. One can see the gradual movement eastward here from the working class district of La Victoria.**

their lands from the state. In response to this initiative, settlers from Mirones, one neighbourhood in the affected area, secretly founded an association that began surveying lots, occupied these lots, then set about planning a school for their children (Matos 1977:79–85). These settler-driven initiatives do not seem unlike those described by Don Malvinas, nor those that we will see later when we discuss the Nueva Rinconada.

Not surprisingly, both Odría and the municipality of La Victoria made decisions that would favour the continued growth of this artisan production and sales and distribution centre. Odría, for instance, made the use of school uniforms mandatory in all state schools, providing important business for incipient textile producers in the area. The municipality gave informal vendors a median on



Aviación Ave., a major thoroughfare, to ply their wares (Ponce 1994:64). So, as much as the Odría government worked to favour the interests of large landowners and private capital interests, they also simultaneously courted the masses through populist gestures like these. Favouring invasions and facilitating the emergence of the informal sector were likely important concessions that military governments that still favoured local oligarchs had to make to the increasing power of unions and well-organized political opposition from APRA and the left (López 2004:205–207).

We can look at the implicit support for land invasions as less than a populist gesture, however. The benefits for private interests that utilize the state to achieve their own end are manifold. If factories did not have to provide housing to workers, if housing could be self-built and if that building could take place on marginal state lands, the benefit to industry is obvious. Employers would no longer have to subsidize the construction of homes by paying a living wage plus an additional amount for housing costs, especially a mortgage. If there was not enough credit to satisfy the demand for working class homes, it seemed practical to allow people to invade state lands, so long as private property was not placed in jeopardy. With growth would come more opportunities for investment, more consumption, and real estate values in middle class areas would continue to increase. Holston argues that auto-construction allowed workers to gain a sense of independence and self-worth in Brazil, however it simultaneously contributed to their reproduction as workers in the city (Holston 1991:448).

An additional advantage of allowing invasions is that populations that invaded would have to depend on political patronage to obtain basic amenities. If a population is always waiting for something from the state, it makes them easier to manipulate and control. Keeping people waiting for aid from the state, and the private sector, allows the state and others to impose conditions. As we will see this encourages political divisions among groups competing for the same resources and ensures that those who go against the model of development being promoted by the state and private interests, i.e., capitalist development promoting the individual pursuit of happiness, are looked upon disfavouredly by those who want to improve their immediate conditions and not jeopardize their livelihood. Things would have to look fairly dismal for more radical solutions, like those proposed by Sendero Luminoso in the 1980s and 1990s, to appeal to factions within these urban working class neighbourhoods.

At this point, populist policies Odría and previous governments began to jeopardize the interests of national oligarchs and foreign investors. Legislation and actions that favoured foreign investment and the growth of the primary sector in the country simultaneously made concessions to an expanding informal urban sector that was politically organized and whose interests were represented by strong unions. Striking a balance between pleasing industry and investors and pleasing the masses was a challenge, especially when social reforms made since the 1930s extended education and voting rights increasingly to the public.

Within the context of the Cold War, the battle for countries in Latin America was also heating up. This is where local interests and foreign interests appear to have met. During the 1940s and 1950s Jacob L. Crane did much to promote the idea of self-help housing internationally, contrary to the popular belief that architect John Turner, with key publications in the late 1960s and 1970s, was the main proponent of the policy (Harris 1998).<sup>7</sup> The history, at least the official one, began with the Housing Authority of Ponce in Puerto Rico. Jacob L. Crane, then Assistant Director of the U.S. Public Housing Administration, was instrumental in the implementation of the Ponce project. John Turner would later admit, however, that Crane and his office encouraged his work in Peru.

The Ponce project was meant to be a low cost version of U.S. housing schemes where contractors were hired to build homes that were then made available to rent at subsidized prices. The Ponce scheme had to make do with less available financing. In the earliest stages, the project was a land and utilities scheme, meaning that land with hook-ups for basic amenities was provided to families on which to build their homes. The Puerto Rican project was promoted at a housing conference in the U.S. in 1957, but pilot projects of its ilk were widespread in the Caribbean throughout the 1940s and early 1950s.

From the mid-1940s until his retirement in 1954, Crane untiringly promoted self-help housing through the national and international office of the Housing and Home Finance Agency. For example, in 1948 he arranged for U.S. embassies to

---

<sup>7</sup> The following discussion on self-help housing draws exclusively on the work of Richard Harris.

supply their staff with reports and literature favourable to such an approach. He wrote to contacts in 22 countries in 1949, enclosing his tract *Huts and Houses in the Tropics*. David Vega-Christie, director of Peru's Corporación Nacional de la Vivienda, or National Housing Corporation, was one of these contacts. Crane organized the visit of Vega-Christie, then Chief of Urbanization in the Peruvian Ministry of Works, to his office in the United States. Recognizing that Vega-Christie was in such an influential position, Crane encouraged Vega-Christie to request a housing advisor through the Peruvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In 1951, he placed Donald Laidig in Peru to promote self-help. The next year he had Wilson Longmore sent.

USAID advisors and HHFA continued to work in Peru throughout the 1950s. In 1956, Pedro Beltrán was appointed by Prado to head a housing commission in which Vega-Christie served as a Technical Secretary and Housing Advisor. The result of this commission was a strong endorsement for self-help projects. A number of projects were started. Harris draws a connection between USAID, HHFA and the Peruvian architect Eduardo Neira who worked for the Ministry of Public Works when John Turner first arrived in Arequipa to pilot a self-help project there in 1955.

Despite his efforts, self-help would not be made development policy by the UN until the 1970s, mainly through the publications of John Turner. Peruvian authorities, however, were aware of self-help housing and its endorsement by U.S. experts as a practical solution to the needs of urban migrants in Latin America. Self-help projects later showed up in Africa and India, based on pioneering work that

was done in the Americas. For all the connections that Harris is able to provide, in the end, he is unable to determine what effect such lobbying had on the Peruvian case.

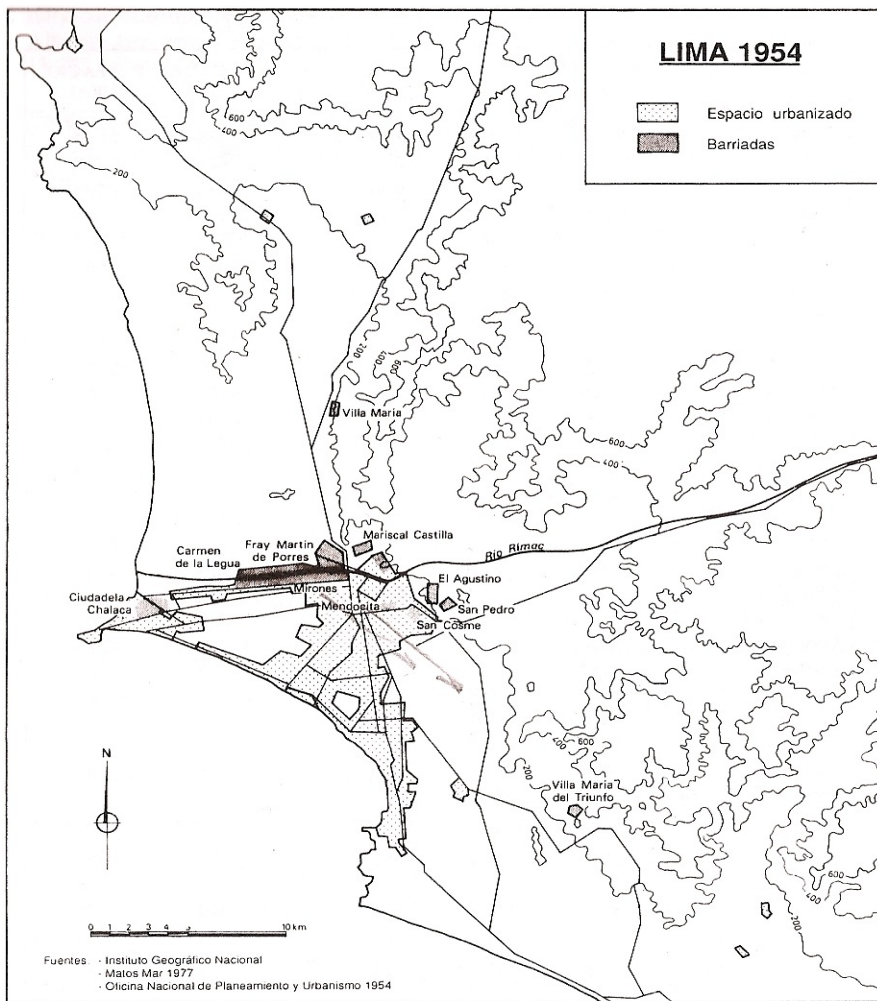
What we can say for certain is that the work of John Turner and a cadre of ex-Peace Corps workers—who not only promoted self-help, but spearheaded a positive assessment of the processes of urbanization that was occurring in Latin America using Peru as their case study—worked to establish the practice in positive and flattering terms (cf. Portes 1971). So, the attitude of government officials and foreign aid workers was likely celebratory and laudatory rather than critical. Their work, as we will see, contested the culture of poverty thesis being promoted by Oscar Lewis in the 1950s and 1960s, which would have been, at least, a methodological foil. I will have more to say about this shortly.

Now, if I can rewind this discussion back to where Don Malvinas talked about Ciudad de Díos, I remind the reader of the apparent grassroots organization of this invasion, with charismatic figures such as One-legged Agreda, hobbling at the forefront (see Figure 8 below). Driant gives some detail on this invasion (Driant 1991:52-53). No sooner was Ciudad de Díos formed, than *La Prensa* gave extensive coverage to the event, arguing that the housing shortage was a critical issue in rapidly growing Lima. Driant shares the details of a census of Ciudad de Díos made in February of 1955 by The Institute of Ethnology at San Marcos University. They found 4,841 people in 936 families. As Don Malvinas had reported, the initial invasion never really spurred on more invaders.

Interestingly, in 1958, the government, after Beltrán's study, supported the squatters, proposing the sale of the lands with basic units —a site-and-service plan plus a basic dwelling on a rent-to-own basis. It seems that some of Crane's proposals had found fertile ground. This program would not persist as government policy, however, and would be only one of many pilot projects. Peter Lloyd argues that Beltrán was an ardent free-market pundit, believing that house ownership and middle class consumer lifestyles would invigorate the Peruvian economy. Lloyd remarks that Beltrán was opposed to the radicalism of APRA and saw no benefit in the paternalism of Odría (Lloyd 1980:43). The site and service model with a basic dwelling provided on a rent to own basis seems consistent with Beltrán's ideological leanings, therefore.

Political movements that sought a middle ground between the left and the right were not adverse to the idea of the poor helping themselves either. Two-time ex-president Fernando Belaúnde's *The Conquest of Peru by Peruvians* appeared in 1959 and served as the doctrinaire foundation of Acción Popular, a party that promoted itself as a middle ground between the left and the right in Peru. Belaúnde in his 1956 campaign tour of the country noted the capacity of politically, socially and economically excluded communities to "help themselves". The inefficient and centralized Peruvian state was viewed by Belaúnde as the biggest impediment to the development of rural Peru. According to Belaúnde, the origin of what he terms *cooperación popular*, or popular cooperation, could be traced back to "the old minka that made the [Inca] Empire great and whose characteristics persist in communities (Belaunde 1994[1959]:40)."

Geographer Ray Bromley discusses the differences between Belaúnde and Beltrán (2003:282–286). Beltrán tended to support the idea of government-sponsored housing projects for the poor, which amounted to a site-and-services model. For him the new shantytowns were focal points for disease and delinquency. He wanted minimal state intervention, leaving housing to private companies with



**Figure 7 Source: Driant 1991 Just to the west of the little block with Villa Maria del Triunfo written above it, one will notice another little population island. That block represents the isolated Ciudad de Días invasion.**

state tax exoneration. Belaúnde, in contrast, had a much grander vision of people working together as communities to build a great nation. Bromley notes that a more

moderate centrist position, which sought to build a nation on attributes unique to Peru —especially the value placed on community and the great public works projects of its past— became commonplace and resonated in even the once radical APRA’s rhetoric.<sup>8</sup> Belaúnde, being an architect, also favoured apartment complexes and believed in a compact city, as opposed to Beltrán’s emphasis on single-family dwellings. In the end, Belaúnde’s apartments would end up being for the upper-middle class and only a handful of Beltrán’s single-family units would be built.

The notion that the poor could have been helping themselves seems to have caught on among intellectuals linked to self-help pilot projects like those of John Turner and anthropologist William Mangin. At this point, I would like to explore the ideas of Mangin and Turner, because there are some peculiarities about their propositions when seen aside their contemporary Oscar Lewis. Turner and Mangin were by no means the first to recognize the traits that they spoke of in the shantytowns of Lima (cf. Córdova 1958, Paz-Sóldan 1957, and Matos Mar 1967), but they are given international credit for drawing attention to the progressive nature

---

<sup>8</sup> The idea of elevating characteristics of the Incas in state discourse, while abhorring contemporary indigenous people is something that had extended to at least the end of the Velasco regime, according to historian Cecilia Méndez. Méndez traces the origins of Creole nationalism to the Peruvian-Bolivian Confederation of 1836-39 in a very suggestive essay (Méndez 1996). I feel uncomfortable with Méndez’s opinion that such a use of history has ebbed. From my appreciations of social interactions in Lima and various parts of Perú, there is still a very appreciable contradiction in the official treatment of indigenous people and practice in the country. The overwhelming majority of my collaborators did not pass their native tongues on to their children, preferring to educate them in Spanish. It is probably more likely that a Quechua speakers child in Lima will speak English, French, German, Japanese or Chinese, than it is that they will speak Quechua. Children of first generation migrants from the sierra or selva go so far as to change their eating habits, refusing to eat foods of their parents in favour of more urbane foods. The same applies to clothing. The Catholic Church worked actively to encourage self-confidence in youths in Pamplona, noting that there was an identity crisis of sorts where being *provinciano* was not a positive attribute. Presidents Alberto Fujimori (1990-2000), Alejandro Toledo (2001-2006), and Alan García (2006-2011), rarely missed photo opportunities with a poncho and traditional garb in various parts of the Andes -all of this while they forced mining concessions on the populations of the Andes and the jungles of Peru.



of nature of land invasions (cf. Portes 1971). These studies remarked upon the histories of various land invasions and the organization of these settlements. What was different with Turner and Mangin is that the two ex-Peace Corps volunteers worked to support official U.S. policy after the Cuban Revolution culminated on January 1, 1959.

Bromley discusses American policy in the Americas during the Cold War (Bromley 2003:276-278). Through the Alliance for Progress military aid and development aid were doled out to recipient countries in different measures. In September of 1960, funding and technical assistance for “aided self-help housing” was made the official U.S. policy toward Latin America. Policies, like “aided self-help housing” satisfied World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank requirements for low-budget programs that would encourage the growth of capitalism in developing countries in Latin America. Bromley claims that 7300 Peace Corps volunteers were in the field, serving in 44 countries. By 1966, this number more than doubled to 15,000. In early Peace Corps efforts, William Mangin served as Deputy Director and eventually Director of the Peru Program. By 1976, after almost two decades of publishing on self-help, the agenda of the 1976 UN Habitat conference hinged on Turner’s concepts (Harris 2003:246).

Harris, in discussing Turner’s brand of housing, stresses his connection to anarchists like Patrick Geddes, Peter Kropotkin, and Lewis Mumford. Turner’s arguments are not so different from those of James Scott or James Holston’s work on urban planning. He tended to stress local initiatives to solving housing problems

instead of authoritarian central planning schemes. Turner, in an article for the World Development journal in 1978 wrote: "I believe that in all contexts a mix of small-scale 'petty commodity' production and local cooperative enterprise is both viable and necessary: and in all contexts I believe that central planning and administration has to be limited to major infrastructures and to legislation limiting concentration of wealth and guaranteeing equitable access to locally scarce resources (Turner 1978:1136)." He goes on to state his disapproval of leftist central planning regimes that were prevalent at the time and in the past, viewing them as inefficient and destructive in their use of resources and psychologically stultifying. Turner sought "another development," as he put it, calling it "fulfilment through convivial modes of production..." (Turner 1978:1137)."

Turner preferred to view housing as a verb, not as a noun, claiming that his view was akin to that of Richard Pirsig's in *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* (1974), or that subjects and objects could not be separated (Turner 1978:1137). I take this to mean that a house should be the product of the will of the builder and not so much some preconceived design that is mass-produced cookie-cutter fashion in the city. Housing was something that people ought to do, according to their means and needs. His critique of capitalist production, or "conservative anarchism," as he puts it, is just as cogent (Turner 1978:1139-1141). Capitalist schemes, for him, are too inefficient at supplying housing to the masses. Not only that, but they are too rigid in meeting the individual needs of dwellers. These statements make it clear that Turner is seeing housing as a way of meeting individual needs, as something that cannot be mass-produced or mandated, as

something that is more organic and creative in nature. Harris, in interviewing Turner, remarks on how Turner became increasingly alienated from the implementation of his own ideas, with his emphasis on dweller control as opposed to a sites-and-services model (Harris 2003:263).

While Turner was slowly becoming the spokesperson for self-help, William Mangin worked alongside him extolling the virtues of self-development too. In a 1960 paper that Mangin prepared for the *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* he notes the following about migrants to Lima:

For many people migration is a response to a change in level of aspiration; for others it is a continuation of some early aspiration; for still others it is forced by economic or political conditions. For some it reflects hope, for others despair. There are migrants who try to carry their mountain cultural patterns over into Lima, and among them are those who succeed and those who fail. There are also those who try to change markedly, usually in the direction of modern Peruvian culture and social class mobility, and among them there are those who succeed and those who fail. Actually most people fall somewhere in between. The largest numerical group, those who preserve a semblance of mountain culture in Lima, appears to be only a one or two-generation category, since most of the individuals involved do not want their children to remain in the same condition. They are in fact markedly and unrealistically upwardly mobile for their children while maintaining low levels of aspiration for themselves (Mangin 1960:912).

He compiled a list of the qualities of a *barriada*<sup>9</sup>. Most adults were provincial-born, being younger with children, as opposed to being older or single. Most had resided in Lima for some time, with few direct migrants from the provinces. Each

---

<sup>9</sup> Name given to shantytowns in Lima. It would eventually be replaced by *pueblo joven*, or young town, during the Velasco regime because it eliminated the stigma attached to the term *barriada*, placing emphasis on the progressive nature of shantytowns in general. The term used nowadays is *asentamiento humano*, or human settlement. I have decided to use the term *barriada* to prevent confusion for my readers and underline the idea that I am referring to areas that have started out as invasions or government assigned lots.

house that was constructed housed a nuclear family. Associations or groups tend to favour established families. The general posture of the group was defensive and a sense of being under siege was pervasive. People were proud to be part of the new group and there was a sense of belonging. Groups tended to be self-appointed and leadership was based predominantly on personality, with kin and regional loyalty being a factor in some instances. People in the neighbourhood often acted as bridgeheads for kin. As time passed, renting became more frequent, with some individuals deciding to sell, lease, or lend their homes, despite the lack of clear title. The overall trend was from reed matting and rudimentary public institutions to cement and brick homes with public infrastructure and institutions like schools, churches, markets, police stations and community centres.

Mangin's observations on the social dynamic of the typical progressive *barriada* are especially pertinent to this study because they indicate that social fragmentation was prevalent before the dirty war in Peru in the 1980s and 1990s. Over time, the group lost the feeling of being separate, becoming more urbanized. Socially, the integration and euphoria of being part of a group that was working toward establishing service and title fades as these objectives were attained. Some of the original dwellers move out. Where unity against outside threats was a must, the disappearance of threats led residents to turn on one another. Mangin described how older inhabitants started quarrelling with one another and how they began to comment unfavourably on new arrivals. It was not long before old leaders moved out, typically amidst allegations that "following a time-honoured Peruvian tradition,

a reform faction accuses them of stealing money and they, in turn, can choose to fight, flee, or sulk (Mangin 1960:914).”

In a psychological assessment of a typical community by a psychologist and Mangin, a number of significant findings were made. For some reason, fear of the dark and bed-wetting were significantly higher than the norm for children up to 12. Local diseases like the evil eye, fright (*susto*), bewitchment (no doubt various ways) were found to be widespread. As one would expect of almost any area without adequate water treatment, the most frequent illnesses treated by doctors were: vomiting, diarrhea and fever. Both the psychologist and Mangin were intrigued by the occurrence of envy, particularly the fact that informants mentioned that they were often the object of envy. They found that envy was directed toward people who had managed to satisfy their “dependency needs”. Severe depression was also quite common among *barriada* dwellers, contrary to the popular belief of outsiders that *barriada* dwellers were always smiling and happy-go-lucky people. Mangin found that the ideal personality type is not “strong and forbearing but rather frightened and ineffective (Mangin 1960:915).” This last assertion flies in the face of studies over the past four decades, however everything else cited above sounds as if it was written at the time that I did my research.

After writing what seemed like a grounded and balanced assessment of life in the *barriadas* of Lima, Mangin published an article, to which Turner makes reference, where he presented squatter settlements as both problem and solution (1967). The article was written to dispel prevailing views held by planners,

politicians, journalists and the public alike that shantytowns were anomic places fraught with crime, disorder, political radicals, provincial attitudes and lifestyles. At the time, only two solutions to the problem appeared: stop migration, or pass laws to prevent the formation of new shantytowns. Mangin, in deciding to emphasize the behaviour of migrants in the city, chooses to "...see the squatter settlements as a process of social reconstruction through popular initiative." (Mangin 1967:67) Here, Mangin is in agreement with the theoretical push of William Thomas and Florian Znaniecki in their classic *The Polish Peasant* (1918), noting that a reconstitution of social behaviour is occurring in the industrialized urban city. Throughout the article Mangin demonstrates a nuanced understanding of the culture of shantytowns. He views the organization of communities as part of the urbanization process.

In a paper published the following year, Turner uses his Peruvian data to construct a transitional model of city growth (Turner 1968). He had people moving to the core of Lima; then, when crowding became a problem, people moved to the outskirts, after which time the outskirts became consolidated, with industry and commerce emerging there. This is not far off the mark, at least on the surface.

While Turner focused on the physical development of the city as a planner, Mangin emphasized the social life of the city. He noted that families were complex, although the general organization of a household was nuclear and bilateral. While some family members fell into hopelessness and depression, others rose. It was not possible to say that the city contributed to social alienation and setbacks. Part of the

problem with Lima, he surmised, was the lack of public institutions in which new Limeños could place their trust. Setbacks aside, Mangin stressed the economic vibrancy of these new communities and their desire to progress. This desire to progress was picked up by anthropologist Karsten Paerregaard in his study of Tapeños in the 1990s (Paerregaard 1997). It was noted by Peruvian and non-Peruvian anthropologists in the 1980s (Smith 1988, Matos 1984, Gölte and Adams 1987), and in the 1970s by Susan Lobo in Callao (1982).

In the picture Mangin paints, migrants are protagonists in their futures in the city, futures that are often envisioned in relation to others in the city. Migrants build schools because they want their children to have the education that they did not. Access to mass media ensures that people are more informed about daily life and the rest of the world than ever before.

People acculturate “to defend themselves (Mangin 1967:79).” Indeed, from the accounts and observations I made, defending oneself is what one does in Lima as a newcomer. People learn the language, especially the slang to demonstrate that they are in the know. One also learns how people negotiate life. People learn to distrust everyone and to cultivate a wide network of people from whom they can draw support because they never know when their fortune will change or when they will need someone to do them a favour or provide a service. People often find themselves accumulating knowledge on diverse matters: legal, political, building trades, commerce, etc. This occurs because one has to keep checks on others. If

people do not know something about something, they are vulnerable to the cunning, or *viveza*, of others who do know.

As opposed to popular belief, *barriada* folk do not all vote for radical candidates, even to this day. Mangin argued that they prefer safe bets, like the paternalistic caudillo populist leader Odría. This does not hold for everyone, but it certainly holds for some people. I will have more to say about this paradox later. Mangin sums up his assessment of Lima's *barriadas*:

The dominant ideology of most of the active *barriada* people appeared to be very similar to the beliefs of the operator of a small business in the 19<sup>th</sup> century England or the United States. These can be summed up in the familiar and accepted maxims: Work hard, save your money, trust only family members (and them not too much), outwit the state, vote conservatively if possible, but always in your own economic interest; educate your children for their future and as old age insurance for yourself. Aspirations are toward improvement of the local situation with the hope that children will enter the professional class. All of the above statements pertain perfectly to *favelas*<sup>10</sup> (Mangin 1967:85).

If we follow Mangin here, *barriada* people are just like people from the United States, except they are living like people did in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. If people continue this way, someday they will reach the level of progress that one can enjoy in the United States. It is impossible to resist the draw of modernity, it would appear. The scorn of more privileged and refined segments of the population of Lima is unfounded. The poor, contrary to popular belief, are social progressives that seek social mobility. Mangin adds that while they maintain some semblance to small town sociability, with a tendency toward gregariousness, this only persists because

---

<sup>10</sup> The Brazilian equivalent of *barriadas*.



of their defensive position vis-à-vis public institutions and the rest of the population in private housing (Mangin 1967:90).

In a collection of essays edited by Mangin in 1970, he criticizes Oscar Lewis and his culture of poverty theory, with its insistence that the culture of poverty represented a subculture of Western society, “with its own structure and rationale, a way of life handed on from generation to generation along family lines (Lewis 1961, cited in Mangin 1970:xvii).” Mangin’s objection is based on his interpretation that Lewis is being “cyclical,” and that his theory “does not account for change (Mangin 1970:xvii).” He takes issue with Lewis’s purported view that the culture of poverty is pervasive, stating that he believes “...the opportunity for autonomous behaviour that reflects some control over one’s destiny, and the possibility of realizing a portion of the desirable goals of a society are not associated with the culture of poverty as described by Lewis.” (Mangin 1970:xxiii) Mangin maintains that migrants to Lima, in organizing invasions, creating their own political bodies, and generating institutions that provide credit and mutual assistance, defy Lewis’s notions that a culture of poverty exists.

My reading of Lewis (1959, 1961, 1963) suggests that he concerned himself more with compiling the voices of some very trusted collaborators to give his readers a sense of life from the vantage point of families that had migrated to the city from rural Mexico. His work provides an emic perspective of life in the urbanization process in Mexico City in the 1950s that is brilliant for its depth, commitment, patience and suspension of disbelief (at least in his ethnographic

work). He focused on the micro-dynamics of families caught up in the rush of the new city, at a point in time when behaviours and expectations about how to behave in the city were being established. The text can be read from multiple angles, as his collaborators were given the opportunity to steer the text in directions that they saw as being relevant.

The concept of the culture of poverty is much more nuanced than Mangin would have us believe (Lewis 2011[1961]:xxxvi–xliii). He is hardly unaware of the changes that were occurring in the city. In the introduction to the *Children of Sanchez*, he wrote that “Many of the traits of the subculture of poverty can be viewed as attempts at local solutions for problems not met by existing institutions and agencies because the people are not eligible for them, cannot afford them, or are suspicious of them (Lewis 2011[1961]:xxxix).” Mangin, Turner, Matos Mar and other analysts note the formation of parallel institutions to meet the needs of migrants in cities. Uniquely, at least for his time, Lewis noted that the sub-culture of poverty had “a residual quality in the sense that its members are attempting to utilize and integrate into a workable way of life the remnants of beliefs and customs of diverse origins.” The scope of Lewis’ theory is intriguing. He writes:

The culture or subculture of poverty comes into being in a variety of historical contexts. Most commonly it develops when a stratified social and economic system is breaking down or is being replaced by another, as in the case of the transition from feudalism to capitalism or during the industrial revolution. Sometimes it results from imperial conquest in which the conquered are maintained in a servile status which may continue for generations (Lewis 2011[1961]:xxxvii).

In short, Lewis realized that cultures undergo dramatic changes, and, that in the process of these changes people are forced to resort to tactics, in opposition to strategies of subordination, which, may, in many circumstances work to their disadvantage as well. Mangin rightly criticizes the tendentious nature of Lewis's work, however, in asserting, for example, that cultural contact between different cultures results in a pauperization and trauma.

It should be noted, though, that both Lewis and Mangin suffer from the crusading impulse of middle class professionals from a society that positions itself at the pinnacle of human development. While Mangin opts for positive behavioural reinforcement, Lewis takes a revisionist tack, focusing on the negative with a hope for social reform, positing by implication a moral mainstream. He wants to see reforms toward "a more equitable distribution of the growing national wealth and a greater equality of sacrifice during the difficult period of industrialization (Lewis 2011[1961]:xliii)." Lewis was attempting to refute the means by which everyone arrives at the same end, it appears.

Mangin apparently was aware of the contradictions in his position. He wrote, "When rural people migrate to cities, however, the type of limited aspiration encountered in the closed community can rarely continue for more than one generation (Mangin 1970:xxviii)." He acknowledges the global peril in pursuing a development agenda based on capitalist consumer societies. Near the end of the introduction to his 1970 book he cites Edward Sapir's grave assessment of Western

modernization, after acknowledging the resentment expressed in the work of Franz Fanon:

The transformation of ends is of the greatest cultural importance because it acts as a powerful force for the preservation of culture in levels in which a fragmentary economic functioning of the individual is inevitable. So long as the individual retains a sense of control over the major goods of life, he is able to take his place in the cultural patrimony of his people. Now that the major goods of life have shifted largely from the realm of immediate to that of remote ends, it becomes a cultural necessity for all who would not be looked upon as disinherited to share in the pursuit of these remoter ends. No harmony and depth of life, no culture, is possible when activity is well-nigh circumscribed by the sphere of immediate ends and when functioning within that sphere is so fragmentary as to have no inherent intelligibility or interest. Here lies the grimmest joke of our present American civilization. The vast majority of us, deprived of any but an insignificant and culturally abortive share in the satisfaction of their immediate wants of mankind, are further deprived of both opportunity and stimulation to share in the production of non-utilitarian values. Part of the time we are dray horses; the rest of the time we are listless consumers of goods which have received, no least impress of our personality. In other words, our spiritual selves go hungry, for the most part, pretty much all of the time (Sapir in Mangin 1970:xxxviii-xxxviv).

It turns out that Mangin, despite his misgivings toward Lewis, has some misgivings about the progress for which he advocates. What is unfathomable is why Mangin would come out in favour of self-development. He does acknowledge that the culture of poverty theory has some explanatory power for some people and families that he encountered in the *barriadas* of Lima, however it is not, as he clearly states, indicative of the social reality that exists there. After indicting consumer capitalism, he turns to an article by John Turner (1970) promoting the desirability of self-help housing as opposed to state-sponsored housing schemes (a clear broadside to the state organized housing and community models being promoted by the left-leaning nationalist revolutionary government of Velasco at the time).

I think Lewis intended a moral indictment of the progress that was not only occurring in the working class areas of Latin American cities, but also across the whole planet. He asked us to question what kind of reality we lived in and how our way of living affected others. He questioned machismo, unemployment, individualist egoism (a core value of capitalist democracy), and documented the contradictions inherent in community, the individual and the modern nation state in modernist cities. Lewis did not select data to either support the view that people wanted capitalist progress, or on the contrary, that they wanted to live in a socialist state free of class distinctions. But, he seems to assume the ideological role of “moral demagogue,” instead of promoting any real alternative vision for humanity. That leads one to ask: By whose set of morals would he have people behaving?

I believe that Lewis’s work was tarnished because it was too realistic for the veiled ideological projects of scholars like Mangin and Turner (despite Turner’s insistence that he is an anarchist). Much was at stake during the time that frames this debate. People were torn between two visions of the world, both grotesquely exaggerated by their proponents. Communists were cast as austere authoritarians who stifled freedom, whereas capitalists, with self-regulating economies and liberal democracy, were viewed as greedy opportunists with an insatiable appetite for profit. What was the reality behind these caricatures?

Perhaps if Lewis’s approach had become the norm, policy might have taken a different direction. But, policy still would not have questioned the teleological view that all roads lead to industrial capitalism. We must ask who stood to gain and what

set of practices and ideals would be promoted. What I am defending in Lewis is his desire to render the world of social aspirants in their own terms with a focus on the details of their everyday lives. His representation of the Sanchez family displays a remarkable capacity for self-reflection and compassion that is rich and open to multiple readings, something not found in many texts, or assessments of those who are subjects of power. People are capable of recognizing the injustice of behaviour that they have suffered and also capable of forgiving others. The text does not provide easy answers or pave over the contradictions of adhering to liberal economic principles.

For the sake of clarity, I distinguish my analysis here from that of Mangin and Lewis. My discomfort arises from their support for a model of development that sees the self assuming responsibility for their own circumstances. The intention of Mangin and Turner, like that of Lewis, does not seem to have been to subject more vulnerable social actors to new regimes of domination. Lewis's efforts were appropriated by conservative elites looking for a moral legitimation to support their liberal projects for the less privileged classes. Seeing them as being trapped in a culture of poverty not only explained their economic marginalization, but it justified the paternalistic interventions that made conservative groups look like benevolent philanthropists. Recognition that the poor were more progressive and organized than Lewis proposed with his culture of poverty thesis (while his narratives indicated the opposite) and that they indeed wanted some form of social and economic progress, also had unintended consequences. Here, I see a parallel with the recent work of Verónica Schild and her concept of a market citizen who reflects

liberal economic notions of how an individual ought to function (Schild 2000:4). Under such a conceptualization of the individual, we are all responsible for the choices that we make and are expected to make rational decisions among multiple options available to us. These choices, by extension, in accord with liberal market principles, are to realize the potential of each individual. Those who do not “succeed” or reject the competition involved in getting into a privileged position, or who do not stand on an equal footing, hold themselves responsible for their “failings.” Such a view ignores the complexity of the social world of many actors and treats all social actors as if they had similar opportunities (in a system with obvious structural inequalities), taking exceptional cases as representative of the possibilities available to all. In the last chapter of this dissertation, I delve more into the emotional-behavioural contradictions inherent in the liberal project of limited good for a limited number of people.

Social thinker Raymond Williams, in his writings on the relationship between dominant, residual, and emergent cultures, provides a processual approach to look at the meeting of migrants with dominant liberal notions of progress in Lima, even though he did not have the meeting of different cultures in mind. His ideas push the debate a little further than simply noting that people are adapting to their new environment. Williams defines the residual as:

...effectively formed in the past, but as an effective element of the present. Thus certain experiences, meanings, and values which cannot be expressed or substantially verified in terms of the dominant culture, are nevertheless lived and practised on the basis of the residue –cultural as well as social- of some previous social and cultural institution or formation (Williams 1977:122).

The residual, he notes, cannot be separated from dominant cultural forms. There is always a risk of allowing parallel cultures to persist unchecked. Therefore, it becomes necessary to incorporate residual elements by “reinterpretation, dilution, projection, discriminating inclusion and exclusion (Williams 1977:123).” For him, emergent are:

...new meanings and values, new practices, new relationships and kinds of relationships that are continually being created. But it is exceptionally difficult to distinguish between those which are really elements of some new phase of dominant culture (and in this sense ‘species-specific’) and those which are substantially alternative or oppositional to it: emergent in the strict sense, rather than merely novel. Since we are always considering relations within a cultural process, definitions of the emergent, as of the residual, can be made only in relation to a full sense of the dominant (Williams 1977:123).

To understand Williams’s idea of the dominant, we must make reference to his idea of hegemony. He defined hegemony as:

“...a whole body of practices and expectations, over the whole of living: our senses and assignments of energy, our shaping perceptions of ourselves and our world. It is a lived system of meanings and values –constitutive and constituting- which as they are experienced as practices appear as reciprocally confirming. It thus constitutes a sense of reality for most people in society, a sense of absolute because experienced reality beyond which it is very difficult for most members of the society to move, in most areas of their lives. It is, that is to say, in the strongest sense a ‘culture’, but a culture which has also to be seen as the lived dominance and subordination of particular classes (Williams 1977:109).”

I do not bring Williams into this discussion to interrogate *barriada* culture. On the contrary, I want to apply his notion of a selective tradition as offering “a historical and cultural ratification of a contemporary order” (Williams 1977:116) to the analysts and figures who have seen capitalism and free markets as the best



possible solution for the masses of migrants who would come to make up Lima. In the adoption of self-help as a strategy for housing in developing countries, the World Bank, the Peace Corps, U.S. government departments and foreign government departments began a recasting of self-help, downplaying the complex emergence and functioning of this means of homeownership. The idea of an independent and resourceful progressive working class citizen was more amenable with hegemonic capitalist views than an insurgent indignant citizen.

In the previous history of self-help development we could see the interplay of forces that sought to capture the underground current that seemed to guide most land invasions. The recasting of these invasions as self-help, or as a grasp for progress, however, was an ideological project to inscribe meaning unto these events, a meaning that worked to occlude the underlying political and economic interests behind these developments and the tensions that emerged when people began progressing. The intentions of Mangin and Turner may not have been to provide an interpretation of events that would lend itself to such a project, nevertheless, their positive reading of self-help foreshadowed a tendency for decades to come in places like Peru.

The transfer of survival, or pioneer tactics, often a result and part of a culture of patronage and exploitation, seems to have been a distinct feature of the earliest invasions that began to occur in the 1940s and have continued up until the present. How this behaviour has been interpreted, as we can see from assessments like that of Mangin or Turner, seems to coincide with Williams' observations about how

dominant cultures interact with subordinate groups by incorporating residual and emergent elements into a larger project of liberal and neoliberal development. Even progressive centrist politicians like Belaúnde have not lost the opportunity to incorporate a communal work spirit, something intrinsic to most agrarian societies, as part of his national development program.

The strategy, as we have seen, was to extol what was a necessity, and/or a social mechanism for extracting collective labour, as a virtue. At the same time, the political networks of patronage, identified by historians of the time period, are downplayed and the behaviour is interpreted as evidence that *barriada* dwellers were demonstrating their desire to progress, much like their more affluent counterparts.

A necessary counterpart to this desire to progress has been the anecdote of the poor migrant who finds success in the city. The innate entrepreneurial spirit, so often touted by intellectuals, journalists, television programs and politicians, is a *sine qua non* of this school of thought. Apparently, we are led to believe, commerce and trade, something that has been going on for thousands, if not tens of thousands of years between different human groups, is a precursor and necessary precondition for the more enlightened system of capitalistic democracy.

## Chapter 4 —The Legacy of Self-Help Housing

After looking at the emergence of self-help housing, I turn now to what happened after Odría. As we discussed before, Pardo's second government (1956–1962) created a commission to study the housing problem in Lima. Aside from implementing some experiments in sites and services models, one of the most important laws to be passed in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century for most inhabitants of Lima's sprawling barrios was the 1961 Barriada Law, or Law 13517, as it is known in constitutional law. While it forbade further invasions, it recognized invasions that had occurred up to September 20, 1960 and extended the right to a provisional title, which was held to be a *de facto* title to the lands that squatters<sup>11</sup> had settled. The law set out rights and obligations of both the state and squatters in founding and establishing communities that would work toward formal incorporation into the existent formal land market. It set out guidelines for state expropriation whereby squatters would have to repay the state at no more than 6% interest over a period of nine years for lands that the state bought at fair market value. It set limits to how many lots people could own and whether they could participate in invasions if they still had property. The idea here was to eliminate duplicity in claims, more commonly known as land trafficking.

---

<sup>11</sup> In Peruvian jurisprudence the term *posesionario* is often used to refer to people who occupy land that already has an owner, whether it be the state or a private party. My collaborators often preferred this term because it confers particular rights to people who occupy lands out of necessity and have the legal possibility of obtaining legal injunctions that will award them title to the land. A gloss for the term in English is squatter, however it will become clear that the legal system in Peru is reluctant to favour squatter rights over those of property owners for reasons that will become apparent later.

What squatters ought to pay remains a thorny issue to this day. Some feel that they should pay no more than what the land is worth. What happens though, is that land assayers value land according to the prevailing market values. This means that squatters often pay for their own sweat equity, which leads to demands that lands be appraised at pre-invasion values before people moved in and made improvements. While the Barriada Law of 1961 ushered in formal changes to the relationship between squatters and landowners, it still favoured landowners over the squatters who had a legitimate claim to land and housing.

Another result of the law was the creation of UPIS (Urbanizaciones Populares de Interés Social), or Social Interest Popular Urbanizations. The idea here was for the government to build site-and-service lots that were affordable for even the poorest resident. The nuclei that were constructed around Ciudad de Díos were one instance of this policy. Peruvian sociologist Gustavo Riofrío analyzes the impact of the law in the succeeding Belaúnde government, noting that in practice the government abandoned the initiatives set out upon by Pardo's government, generating unprecedented violent invasions. By the end of the 1960s, people stopped demanding that the government build site-and-service projects. In the end, the government created traced lots for those unable to qualify for mortgages and live in the modernist projects in the core of Lima. Instead of demanding affordable housing, argues Riofrío, people settled for land, and the government understood its position as a provider of that land and not much more (Riofrío 1990:34–36).

After Pardo, there was a short military coup before civilian elections saw the runner-up in the 1958 elections take control for five very tumultuous years. Architect Fernando Belaúnde Terry (1963–1968) took office in 1963 promising sweeping changes to the state and its role in development. Bromley discusses his policies in some detail (Bromley 2003:284–285). In what some viewed as a mirroring of the Peace Corps, Belaúnde formed his own core of community social workers called *Coopop*, or Popular Cooperation.<sup>12</sup> The idea, it appeared, was to lend a helping hand to local communities and work in collaboration with them to develop the country. In the radical political climate of the time many community organizers were accused of proselytizing communities for leftist parties.

Although Belaúnde promised housing for all, what he managed to deliver was quite different. He embarked on the construction of multiple apartment complexes for the people. This appealed to his architectural sensibilities. He felt that a city ought to be compact, have basic services, lend itself to the automobile, or have access to key transportation routes and create opportunities for order and commerce (Bromley 2003:284–285). The architecture of this time is grandiose and modernist with a tropical appeal. San Felipe in Jesús María is emblematic of Belaúnde's vision. The residence is an economically independent core of apartment

---

<sup>12</sup> The adjective “popular” is often used as a politically neutral term to refer to the working class in Peru. Perhaps it goes beyond class usage as the term also incorporates indigenous populations that have come to the city. Marxists refer to the same group as the lumpen proletariat. A self-referential term used by the majority that is striving to improve their lot would be *el pueblo*, or the people, roughly in English. From experience the line between the people and those who are above them is a fine one, defined by taste, attitude, location, language, social contacts, and the standpoint of the observer. Pamplona belongs to *el pueblo*, and those, like myself, politicians, state professionals, NGO workers, missionaries, priests, nuns and Peruvians who have moved out or now have more are seen as being in opposition to the people.

towers for middle class professionals and entrepreneurs. Some 1600 units were built. One of the first area supermarkets belonging to the Wong family became an anchor store in Lima and at a national level. Javier Prado and other main avenues that connect with the downtown core criss-cross the district. It also reflected the importance that commerce, preferably on-the-books commerce, would come to have.

Later, retrospective analyses of the period revealed a peculiar trend. While residences like Jesús María were built ostensibly for the masses, the actual building cost of the housing was such that only those with stable formal income, like middle class professionals could qualify for the mortgages. Sociologist Gustavo Riofrío identified this two-faced strategy toward housing in Lima. One face of the government spoke of building affordable houses for those willing to pay; the other face condoned and collaborated with poorer working class workers to occupy land and build their own homes (Riofrío 1990).

Disappointed with promised reforms to the agricultural sector that did not occur, a left leaning nationalist military dictatorship took the reins of power in Peru. Throughout the 1960s a more radical core of military officers was groomed for the possibility that the military might one day gain control of government. The character of this military junta was very different from previous attempts at imposed change.

Carlos Delgado, a sociologist with visions of a more mobilized and politically active population created SINAMOS —a play on the words “without masters,” in

Spanish. The project was very much a conscious-building project to mobilize people toward the development of national industry and resource extraction for the nation. Bromley describes how SINAMOS incorporated previous state development agencies, like *Coopop*, in the newly formed ONDEPJOV (Oficina Nacional de Pueblos Jovenes), and many left-of-centre professionals and military personnel, to implement its alternative development schemes (Bromley 2003:286–287). The military government eschewed the use of the former term *barriada*, replacing it with *pueblo joven* or young town, in an attempt to inspire hope and take away some of the stigma no doubt attached to living in self-help housing.

Don Malvinas recalled in his interview how organizers from the government came and helped people to form block organizations with a central representative committee. These committees were overseen by different offices of SINAMOS that passed on information to these groups and received their petitions. The legacy of SINAMOS was the sectorial organization that we see in present neighbourhoods, according to Don Malvinas. From what I could tell, while the desire was to administer people from the top-down, the result, as we will see in the next section, was to create an effective system of self-government that could petition the state when land possessors desired so that basic services and rights could be extended to them.

Critics (usually neoliberal) viewed the government's project as authoritarian, as an imposition of the will of the government. This argument is still prevalent today when people urge more state intervention in economic and social issues. But,

as we have seen, previous governors used their positions to promote their own housing schemes, as well. Qualification of Velasco's scheme as authoritarian is a bit of the pot calling the kettle black.

Anthropologist Susan Lobo wrote about how state reorganizing —by reassignment lotteries— in her research site in Callao effectively relocated people away from their kin in the 1970s (Lobo 1982). In this sense, the government did intervene in how people went about distributing themselves; however this reorganization was a result of the impracticality of self-help surveying practices and the lack of provisioning for public infrastructure. In other areas like Lima South, however, the government went about organizing tens of thousands of lots and even setting up industrial and commercial zones for municipalities. Villa El Salvador, with its large square blocks and strong industrial furniture and textile sector, is emblematic of the Velasco area. The fingerprint of the community planning of SINAMOS is an indelible mark on the maps of Lima. Some parts of Pamplona Alta, if one consults the map previously included, bears this mark with its large blocks, ordered streets and spacious parks being indicative of the urban planning of this era.

Gustavo Riofrío (1980), in an assessment of development strategies in Pamplona in the 1970s, after the famous Pamplona invasion in 1971 that resulted in the creation of SINAMOS and the rise of planned settlements, was critical of the state and the rise of NGOs and philanthropic organizations that promoted self-help



housing. Riofrío describes the efficacy of multiple programs that were begun in Pamplona Alta in the 1970s.

Of the kindergarten, primary and secondary institutions constructed in the area, he found that parents often provided labour and made up for construction materials that were not provided by the government for additional classrooms. Donations were a necessity for the completion of many schools. His study concludes that the combined donations of the state and philanthropists are “not sufficient to solve the educative problems in the zone, but they are sufficient to maintain the population in a clientalistic attitude toward said funds and agencies (Riofrío 1980:31).” He goes on to criticize the lack of qualified teachers in schools, the poor quality of instruction, and the expectation that citizens will contribute their resources and labour to make up for state and private deficits.

His assessment of state public health institutions —medical posts in reality— in the area are equally scathing (Riofrío 1980:44–47). Health care institutions were underfunded and understaffed, failing to meet healthcare benchmarks for the population that they served. The root causes for the lack of funding for state institutions, though, is only hinted at. We are left with the impression that the government is renegeing on promises or unable to meet a swamping demand. Closer scrutiny of Riofrío’s assessment is suggestive, though.

With plans to bring water to the zone, Riofrío and his team found that citizens were shouldering the bill for the installation of water. He denounces state companies, like Electrolima, for awarding contracts to bidders without public

solicitation. Effectively, citizens were being asked to pay for public infrastructure that they had no power to monitor in a place where corruption was commonplace.

Riofrío went on to describe the dynamic that had existed between the state and Lima's *barriadas* up until the point he wrote his study in 1980. He argued that the people made demands on the state, often through marches. He wrote:

In the 50s, the fight was for housing and lots in the sand were awarded. Later the invasion of lands became generalized and the State promised to help, at the same time that it repressed them. With respect to this, the newspapers at the beginning of the sixties presented a rich graphic vision of the demand-repression [dynamic]. Simultaneously, the Committee of Housing (Junta de la Vivienda) remodelled old *barriadas*, offering solutions to the housing problem and the police evicted invaders.

When the obtainment of a lot became an accepted mechanism and was recovered by the bourgeois as a "solution," due to the lack of adequate housing, the population demanded minimum living amenities for their neighbourhoods: schools for their children, medical posts, distribution of water, etc. By the seventies, the magnitude of the people that lived in *barriadas* overwhelmed any attempt to "donate" and "help" whatever school that was demanded; and the *barriadas* were in a such a situation that they needed services. The State organized the population on a large scale to generalize, rationalize and bring to its ultimate consequence communal efforts. In all of this process, the population has demanded more than the State could and wanted to give, obliging the State to give political support—spectacular promises accompanied by repression—to be able to maintain an acceptable level of demands (Riofrío 1980:80–81).

The massive social experiment that occurred to the south of San Juan de Miraflores, Villa El Salvador, was a bold step that the government took in organizing a self-supporting district. It became so successful, the people so politically conscious, that the State was forced to repress their demands, to pursue community leaders, according to Riofrío (1980:82). This repression would reach bitter heights in the 1980s and 1990s when civil war broke out in Perú. Both the military and

Sendero Luminoso murdered, disappeared, and threatened community leaders who refused to cooperate with their particular visions for the nation (Burt 2007). These words foreshadow the violence that would be released upon the country in coming decades: all of this because people grew tired of the broken promises, false hopes, abuse of authority, and constant repressions.

Anthropologist Douglas Uzzell gave a perspective on the bureaucracy of the 1970s, which I think still holds true to this day (cf. Huber 2008), despite ostensible moves toward transparency and a focus on human rights (1974). He describes the state bureaucracy as a black box play. In this act, *cholos*, urbanized rural indigenous migrants, make demands of the Creole state apparatus. Lacking resources for bribes, or not having personal contacts, *cholos* make lengthy solicitations in eloquent language to receive the gracious attention of bureaucrats. Outcomes are unpredictable often, ergo the black box analogy. Fortunate solicitors may have a *compadre* who can help, or maybe they manage a bribe, and in some cases they meet a sympathetic person.

To illustrate his point Uzzell considers a group of taxi drivers who wanted to gain access to a coveted route to the airport. The drivers did not know how to deal with the suspected ministerial connections of the airport manager and were unwilling to meet his demand that they renew their fleet. They possibly felt that he would grant access for some sort of benefit for awarding the route in addition to his demand, further raising the cost to the drivers. A political alignment with the Velasco regime was unwise for the taxi drivers because political winds are often

unpredictable. The last thing they needed was association with a radical political party that could be ousted and replaced by another more conservative party. As a shot in the dark, they wrote a letter of complaint to the Ministry of Transportation. Fantastically, when it appeared that the government would eliminate the informal taxi route, the letter of complaint that was sent to the Ministry of Transportation resulted in the drivers being incorporated into another route that had only a few drivers.

Uzzell interprets the inability of the incumbent government to co-opt the taxi drivers as a testimony of their ability to challenge bureaucratic plays. It is impossible to say whether the government submitted to them, or, whether, recognizing the power of unionized drivers, they sought to diminish their power by sanctioning the informal drivers. Uzzell draws attention to the Law of *Barriadas* passed in 1961, claiming it as a similar gesture where the government bends to popular demand, attempting to gain control of deviant behaviour by condoning it.

The case here is germane for two reasons. It shows the extent to which formal institutions work as a toll to the activity of common citizens, and it also shows how the tactics employed by the people are picked up by the state officials and turned against them. Uzzell saw this as a potential levelling mechanism for *cholos*. From my ethnographic work, however, it is hard to determine where this wily behaviour originates. Interestingly enough, my collaborators were almost unanimous in signalling that shady dealing was often initiated from above and that they were merely adhering to the rules of the game. This negotiation that went on then, and

likely some time before that, and that still continues to this day, adds yet another layer to the complex relationship between state officials —who capture the state administrative positions for personal gain— and different individuals in the populace. One wonders how far such a relationship affects the state’s ability to collect taxes for public services and whether or not this relationship comes to bear on the provisioning of public services.

As for philanthropic efforts, Riofrío questions their efficacy and purpose. Intentions aside, because people can have good intentions and still work against the best interests of a population, Riofrío notes the tendency of projects promoted by OFASA, USAID, UNICEF and other secular and non-secular groups to be too narrow in their focus. This creates a group of benefactors who become desperately dependent on aid for their communities. He also questions the function of such projects. For him they are used to mask the nefarious effects of the capitalist system (Riofrío 1980:85–88). The behavioural complex described by Riofrío is referred to locally as *asistencialismo*, or assistentialism.

One could add more detail to the sketch given by Riofrío. Philanthropic organizations often place behavioural expectations on the community. A variety of programs establish myriad conditions. For instance, some groups may demand an equal contribution from the community for projects that they undertake. An example would be volunteer organizations that come to build stairs or other public infrastructure with the condition that the community raise half the cost of materials and participate with foreign volunteers that gain volunteer capital —a formal

requirement for progression in their studies. Others demand a nominal fee for their donation. An example of this would be organizations that build temporary wooden shacks in exchange for a small sum of money and the labour of the recipient in constructing the home. Conditions like maintaining a democratic stable and transparent community organization, as opposed to a divisive and corrupt one, are favoured. Groups may withdraw aid to non-compliant sectors. Monitoring to ensure compliance with philanthropic organization mandates is almost always present. The techniques employed by these groups is not unlike that described by Schild in Chile (Schild 2007). She noted that populations are often corralled into initiatives that are mandated by funding agencies that only nominally involve a participatory process.

Indeed, the panorama is complex. One cannot just isolate the efforts of one group because the municipal government and central government ministries often become involved with events that are promoted by philanthropic organizations. So, birth control, water safety, community security, child rights, campaigning against alcoholism and domestic abuse, health prevention campaigns, even free haircuts may be promoted simultaneously. It is not uncommon for contradictory messages to coexist, especially when it comes to faith-based organizations and secular organizations. Despite their differences, philanthropic and state collaborations look to create a particular kind of subject, whether consciously or not, because they are assigning goals, ideals, and behavioural expectations to *barriada* dwellers. The participation of role models, local middle class professionals and students, or foreign volunteers adds a moralizing layer to these efforts. One is led to believe that

the values espoused in the programs being promoted are a requirement for social mobility. Thanks to Riofrío we have a marker for when these behaviours began and how they operated at the point that he wrote his critique of development practices in Pamplona in the 1970s. But, as we saw in the previous chapter, these interventions were underway by the late 1950s at least and even more so in the 1960s with the Alliance for Progress and the creation of the Peace Corps and its local equivalents.

At the end of the 1970s, the military regime, now under General Francisco Morales-Bermúdez (1975–1980), took a more liberal approach to housing, in the sense that it decided to let the market take care of the housing needs of the masses. SINAMOS was dismantled in 1977, two years after Morales-Bermúdez came to power. Concessions and rights won in the 1979 constitution, after protests had brought the military regime to the negotiating table, were a resounding victory for social progressives. The left had never been stronger going into the 1980 elections.

At this point, it is worth entering into a short exploration of the 1979 Constitution, which was hammered out between representatives of APRA, central political parties and the strengthened democratic left. Article 10 of the Constitution stated that all families had the right to a “decorous home”. Just what constitutes a decorous home is left open for interpretation, however we can assume that the authors were conferring the right to enjoy a life with all the modern amenities afforded to people who live in a private housing project. Here, too, are inherent

ideals about what kind of standard of living people ought to have if they live in a modern city.

The constitution goes on to discuss the right of families to housing, food and recreation (Article 18). It was important to add that laws regulate the use of urban land and that they do so for the common good with participation of local communities. The state also saw a role for itself in these rights, stating that it would “promote the execution of public and private urbanization and housing programs.” It did not stop there. The state promised to “support and stimulate cooperatives, mutual support groups and mortgage credit for self-help and rentee programs. It even vowed to give tax cuts to lower construction costs, providing interest at low rates over the long term, a promise that would find its way into practice with the creation of the Banco de Materiales, or Materials Bank, of Belaúnde’s second government (1980–1985), which provided building materials at subsidized interest rates for homeowners.

Significantly, the constitution obliged private property owners to use property with social interests in mind (Articles 124 and 125). The operative term here is *interés social*, as opposed to the common good. Common good is often interpreted by courts and judges quite partially, seeing the good often as being the good of commerce and growth and not so much the interest of groups that may contend with notions of public good. Public good seems to be interpreted in a similar fashion. By referring to social interest, the Constitution was extending a right of livelihood to all. So, if one belonged to an indigenous community that had oil



beneath their land, say, they would have legal recourse in opposing development projects. In the case of Pamplona, residents could invade land, even private, if it could be argued that it was necessary given their material circumstances and their right to housing. Like liberal values such as equality and freedom, the right to land for social interest is frequently used to demand rights that are withheld in practice. Upcoming chapters on the invasion of the Nueva Rinconada are an illustration of how rights extended, even when rescinded, can be used to make demands on state authorities. What usually happens with legislation that promotes the common or public good is that the interests of the nation —especially enterprising individuals and groups— is held to be in the best interest of all. This is an obvious stacking of the deck, for any card shark, but, apparently, to state jurisprudence, these are the rules of the game, at present.<sup>13</sup>

This did not mean that everything would be a free-for-all. The Constitution also reinforced the rights of property owners. If their lands were deemed necessary for social interest purposes, property owners would be entitled to a state indemnity. This act nullified the right enjoyed in the previous *Barriada* Law to receive market value and interests on their lands.

The rights of particular interest groups, that may not be in agreement with development visions being proposed by financiers, bankers, corporations and industrialists, were protected openly in the 1979 constitution. Yet, at the same time

---

<sup>13</sup> The obvious folly in supporting such an initiative is that the incumbent political and economic system risks losing its credibility with the public. The same can be said of a state that aligns itself with such interests. It is for this reason that Peruvian analysts have been speaking of a crisis in governability ever since the early 2000s when it became safer to speak publically about such matters again.

what was at issue was not so much the end, but the means, once again. We see this in the interest given to cooperatives and mutual interest groups. In 1993 the neoliberal Fujimori government would eliminate such protections under the guise of protecting the right of free enterprise. To this day, there is a constant struggle to reclaim the guarantees provided by the previous Constitution, which was arrived at through a democratic process (the election of 100 delegates from different political parties). The 2011 election campaign was abuzz with talk of returning to the 1979 Constitution. Current President Ollanta Humala and some members of his cabinet were sworn into congress in the spirit of the 1979 Constitution, making controversial reference to the Constitution.

This issue is raised frequently in disputes over public consultations for development projects. In taking away clauses that referred to housing and the right to dignified housing, the state effectively abrogated rights that it had conferred, losing credibility in the eyes of a large sector of the well-informed underprivileged class. Later, we will see how these constitutional changes adhered to a new free market principle that involved the opening of the Peruvian economy to foreign investment. Such an opening meant that constitutional guarantees had to be given to investors to raise investor confidence. The social consequence, though, has been neglected and I conclude that Peru's recent economic success has overshadowed both the road taken and the social cost of current neoliberal populism. But, let us not get too far ahead of ourselves. In the 1980s, academic interest turned toward rediscovering indigenous culture in the city at a time when talk of other paths for Peru were in the making. At the same time, academic interest in evaluating the

progress being made in Lima's *barriadas* stayed in step and maintained its critical tone.

Literature of the time period does much to highlight the emergent "contestatory culture" (Matos 2004[1984]) that had put the traditional land owning oligarchy and industrialists in checkmate. There was every indication of a rising tide that could not be stopped.

During the 1980s in Pamplona, lands settled in the late 1960s and early 1970s were becoming more consolidated and their children were beginning to occupy the second and third floor of homes, with the overflow invading state land adjacent to many sectors. Yet, not all homes were being built with cement and bricks. For some, construction was at a more measured pace. Sometimes neighbours worked together to build their homes. All these efforts were still insufficient to meet the demand for housing (Riofrío and Driant 1987). But, as Lobo revealed, these new alliances in a new place were not free of their intrigues, with trust being an impediment to community based construction efforts (Lobo 1982). While some areas maintained close ties with sending communities, going so far as to establish trade networks that brought local produce and livestock to networks of *paisanos*<sup>14</sup> in Lima, other groups tended to pull together only temporarily to make a new life in the city with previous class relations and tensions playing out in the city (Gölte and Adams 1987).

---

<sup>14</sup> Countrymen

One particular group of Aymaras from the Puno region studied in Pamplona by anthropologist Teófilo Altamirano found that migrants were maintaining group endogamy in the city and spatially settling in the same area (1988). This is not an

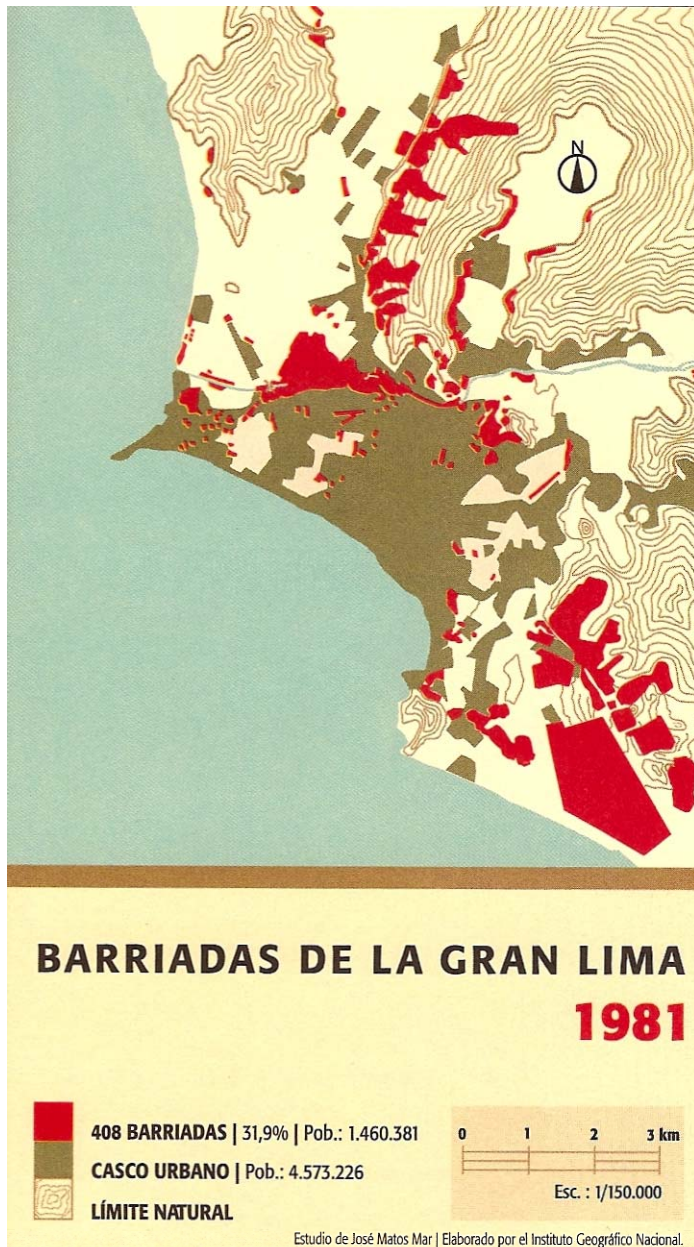


Figure 8 Source: Matos 2004 By 1981 we note here that areas that were invaded in the 1950s and 1960s had become consolidated with significant horizontal growth occurring along massive extensions of state land. The lower large polygon is Villa El Salvador. We can see Pamplona Alta and Baja here as a large tongue which extends into the hills in the upper part of Lima South.

uncommon occurrence, nor is it a representative occurrence. As we have noted, and Don Malvinas talks a bit about this, people tend to cyclically invade new land. Over time, the effect this has, at least from what I have seen in Pamplona, is that ethnic groups intermingle in the city.

In order to have opportunities in Lima, migrants have to make some adaptations to the city. Instead of being proficient in Quechua and speaking some Spanish, more people are forced to adopt Spanish as a first language or second language to ensure their livelihood in this new environment. It was not uncommon to see the children of even first generation migrants to Lima studying a European language instead of, say, Quechua. One would be very hard pressed to find schools that did not have English, French or German in the curriculum, even in the state institutions. Moreover, newer generations of children eschew the value attached to physical labour, opting for careers in manufacturing, tourism, politics, commerce, etc. —the type of professions that one would see in any postmodern city. Mangin noted this drive to adopt urban practices and goals in his early work in Lima's *barriadas* in the 1950s and 1960s.

The danger of an argument that migrants are maintaining their culture and practices in Lima, or that maybe some hybridization process is at work, is that we ignore the signs that something quite different might be occurring in the city with these social groups. I do not think a statement like this is controversial. Cities all over the planet are now populated with people whose histories and previous practices have been drastically modified, if not lost. To return to our concepts from

Williams here, we should be aware that dominant groups—including cross-cultural interactions— always seek to absorb elements of both residual and emergent cultures to maintain the status quo. Following Williams, the study of practices, interactions between different social groups, and the goals and values they share, can lead us to more carefully discern trajectories that may be shared and discern hegemonic processes at work.

Therefore, despite the ostensible anti-systemic posture adopted by some, their demands may turn out to be circumscribed by what options a current virtual ideological hegemony is able to provide as life projects. I would not go so far to assert that these *barriadas* have not produced their own culture, more like cultures; however I argue that like subcultures in Western nations, they do not escape the influence of larger economic and political projects (cf. Hebdige 1979).

What the qualitative work on *barriada* culture does tell us, whether one be sceptical or optimistic about such changes, is that people have come to the city to seek their advancement, whether it be studying to get a degree, or opening a humble hamburger stand to make a living. Progress is relative in this sense. This looseness gives the term its currency. Lima, despite the pessimistic views of the underprivileged at times, is where some people come to get ahead. For it to have this draw, a discursive and behavioural counterpart that expresses city living as a viable pursuit in life exists. People tell stories about the city; they eulogize it in many ways, through their tragedies and comedies. This pursuit of progress generates a tension with residual cultural elements that admonish redistributive

practices. Legislative changes made by legislators partial to neoliberal market values that work to reduce redistributive practices represent a direct challenge to senses of entitlement that previous governments have created and indigenous traditions value. When people say the state needs to do more, they are really asking for more generous redistributive practices.

What anthropologists were able to tell us about the *barriadas* from the 1970s to the 1990s was that people had organized their own economic and social networks on the edges of progress, maintaining practices that existed prior to their migration. The growth of the city depended economically and politically on the battle for the hearts and minds of the masses of people who sought a home and work. After the 1970s, these grassroots political organizations became key players in local and national level politics. As a consequence, masses of people could be organized by political parties vying for public appeal, looking to earn voter blocks, or, on the contrary, blocks could pressure politicians to help them in return for voter support. The options were much richer, if we remember Uzzell. The field continues to be complex with tactical shifts in alliances being ever present.

The 1980s were volatile for Peruvians. War began in 1980 when a group of Sendero Luminoso soldiers burned ballot boxes in Chuschi on May 17<sup>th</sup> declaring the commencement of their armed struggle. From this incident, the fighting between pro-government forces and insurgent groups would rage for the better part of two decades. These events splintered Lima's *barriadas* into those that supported orthodox economic reforms, factions that supported democratic non-

orthodox socio-economic reforms, and forces that fought for revolutionary change (divided between Sendero Luminoso and MRTA). In short, there was a meltdown, no matter how positive changes looked at the beginning of the 1980s (Manrique 2002).

In the midst of all this chaos, municipalities across Peru sprouted, receiving government transfer payments and raising their own income through taxation (although the Fujimori government would re-centralize federal transfer payments). In the 1980s, leftist parties played an important role, especially the Izquierda Unida, or Unified Left, henceforth UI. The municipal administration of Alfonso Barrantes (1984–1986) is emblematic of this time period in Lima. Barrantes is credited with opening the first mothers' clubs, or *Vaso de Leche* programs in Lima at this time. Collaborators recalled meeting him in *comedores populares*, or community soup kitchens, drinking his oatmeal with neighbours. People remember the infrastructure program of Barrantes. Many recalled how he provided machines, cement and engineers to build the stairs in the neighbourhoods of Pamplona. His municipality also gave land titles to many squatters in Lima. Collaborators recalled paying a sum to receive the title deed to their homes.

During this time period soup kitchens multiplied and NGOs proliferated that addressed the precarious situation of *barriada* dwellers. This period marked the beginning of a veritable NGO boom. Klarén argues that charismatic women made incursions into politics in this period, due much in part to their involvement in community-based politics. He traces the roots of this political insurgence of women



to the rise of liberation theology in the 1970s and the radical community-based politics that was characteristic of this period (Klarén 2004:457–459).

This active involvement, through public works, was something that future political parties would emulate to both appeal to voters and demonstrate that they were effective in their administration of municipal resources, something already attempted by both Belaúnde and Velasco. The 1980s were a time of charismatic leadership in the *barriadas* of Lima. For instance, the self-administered Villa El Salvador had a string of prominent leaders that figured regularly in the media.

Belaúnde's second government went back to liberal economic reforms, opting to pursue economic restructuring that undid the reforms of General Velasco that swelled the size of the state. When he won in 1980, for instance, he named his ex-housing minister in his first government Manuel Ulloa as his Prime Minister, who, with a team of Chicago Boys (students of economist Milton Friedman) tried to stabilize the Peruvian economy. The intensification of violent activities by Sendero Luminoso, natural disasters, costly infrastructure programs, and political clientalism resulted in the failure of such reforms (Klarén 2004:451–455). Later, Fujimori would pick up where Belaúnde had failed, incorporating some of the pro-neoliberal figures from Belaúnde's government (Durand 2010).

The misfortunes of Belaúnde left the ground open for both APRA and the UI to make an incursion into politics. Alan García and APRA entered the 1985 election scene with a strong appeal in the *barriadas* and rural areas of Peru. The attempted orthodox reforms of Belaúnde did much to raise the ire of these groups and they

looked to populists like García and the democratic left, at least on a municipal level, to quell the tide of economic collapse. While the UI under Barrantes proposed nationalization of key resources, the renegotiation of state petroleum contracts and a moratorium on areas of the debt along with the nationalization of the Central Bank, García correctly read the trepidation of most humble voters, the middle class and businessmen, favouring an approach that simultaneously sought to appease his lower class clients and stimulate national businesses (Klarén 2004:456,463–464,467).

Despite the initial successes of his heterodox economic reforms, like favouring a national elite of businesses, strategic errors, like refusing to pay the debt to international lending institutions and a lethargic bold large scale national development program, led the Peruvian economy into a tailspin by the end of the 1980s (Burt 2007). By the end of the 1980s, Peru was gripped by hyperinflation and a civil war that looked like it could go on for an indefinite period of time. Prospects were not bright. There was a real sense that traditional political parties and democratically elected governments had failed in improving the lot of Peruvians. A new option appeared in Peru, one that can be seen reflected in the seminal work of Noble prize laureate in economics Hernando De Soto's "other path", as he and his team termed it. De Soto's version of Peruvian reality is encapsulated in the following excerpt.

Within the frontiers of Peru more than one country exists. There is a mercantile country that until the present day they try to reanimate with distinct political forms and techniques, but it already shows symptoms that the body cannot continue; there is a second country as well, that of those who in

anguish look for solutions, but it is lost between destructive objectives of terrorist violence and the impractical and deficient exhortations of progressives; finally, there is a third country that constitutes what we call “the other path”: the country that works hard, is innovative and fiercely competitive, whose most prominent domain is informality (De Soto 1986:313).

In his roughshod interpretation of the French, British, Spanish and Russian industrial revolutions, De Soto argues that the informal sector played an instrumental role in the development of liberal democracies. These democracies, he added, were an improvement on a former redistributive mercantile model whereby different actors like merchants, guilds, cottage industry proprietors, and nobles vied for the favour of the monarchy, who normally sought to control commerce. Free market models, therefore, represented an improvement on the previous mercantile state because individuals were free to seek out their opportunities freely and equally without unnecessary state intervention.

De Soto leads us to believe that informal and formal businesses, the guilds, and larger business owners, merged their collective interests and brought about a new era that was in many ways the next stage in development, the unavoidable march of progress. Once again, De Soto’s words speak for themselves. Here, he describes the scene in the aftermath of the European and American revolutions. He does not extend his argument to the rest of the world at this point, however.

In effect, the countries that reduced their transaction costs and adopted rules that permitted the use of the creative energy of their citizens –facilitating interdependence and specialization between them, opening access to property and business initiative, reducing barriers produced by excessive legislation, and permitting a continuous and more direct participation in government and the formulation of rights- managed to transition toward distinctive economic

market systems with a minimal amount of violence and a maximum amount of wellbeing.

Good law confers and articulates political, economic and social liberties, those which at the same time lead to a growth in competition and the possibility to buy alternatives and control abuses of all types [he is referring to the intervention of monarchs in the mercantile economies]. The discretion of bureaucracies is reduced like this and law and economic life is depoliticized, diminishing, as a consequence, the power of redistributive coalitions, corruption and dejection. The time wasted before in cultivating contacts and making arrangements to get paperwork done can be dedicated now to production. In adapting to a dispersed popular business class, to an economy in rapid technological evolution, the economy and the State recuperate social validity. With this one can minimize informality, control violence, and sensitively and gradually attenuate uncertainty (De Soto 1986:273–274).

De Soto's own succinctness often works against him. He smoothes over the rough spots in history, for instance, downplaying civil wars that rocked 19<sup>th</sup> century industrializing nations. So, we see a transition from clientalistic state intervention to frictionless trade and galloping peace-loving prosperity. De Soto's rendition of this period is onerous and unreal. De Soto's culling of history is a good example of what Williams referred to when he described how hegemonic groups go about creating selective readings of history to legitimate their projects.

Following De Soto's line of thinking, Peru in 1986 was on the brink of a revolution of the kind that Peru's European counterparts had experienced. The only thing that remained in Peru's path to prosperity was its onerous legal system, a relic of past governments' capture by different interest groups: large property owners, formal entrepreneurs, informal vendors and trade unions. We are left to assume that the masses fall in line with these larger conglomerates. The result is a nation that has lived through the struggle between a right that has sought to ensure the

interests of a small oligarchy and a radical left that has sought to make the state “the largest capitalist”, according to De Soto. In De Soto’s opinion, both “are more worried about the transfer of wealth than laying institutional foundations for its creation (De Soto 1986:292).” It only stands to reason, then, that having exhausted its options, progress lies in an aspiring informal sector merging with an established group of larger businesses. If the government would recognize this potential, Peru would be vaulted into the league of developed nations.

For De Soto, the mercantile state has impeded the enterprising informal sector with its anti-business law making. In part, his selective analysis of the informal sector (invasions, street vending and transportation) recognizes the bureaucratic quagmire described by Uzzell and the consequent frustration of some entrepreneurial *barriada* dwellers in realizing their economic dreams.

Years of redistributive tactics, where state laws have been passed to favour different groups of the public due in main part to an overly powerful executive power (apparently a vestige of feudal states and a consequence of clientalistic political networks), have led to the formation of a clientalistic state that panders to the highest bidder or strongest lobby groups. For neoliberal economists, planners, and politicians, the solution lies in providing formal property titles, easy access to credit, laws to protect businesses, private property protections, legal streamlining, free trade agreements, generous and controversial mining concessions, and bureaucratic decentralization. Social justice is part of the program too with churches, NGOs, and state institutions, trying to find points where their efforts can

become more coordinated. Ever since the early 1980s NGOs have flourished in Peru, replacing much state run aid initiatives, suggesting that this vision was being put into practice as De Soto extolled the virtues of these changes.

De Soto's proposals, especially his notion that capital was locked up in Peru's untitled properties (De Soto 2000), were not without local criticism. Riofrío argued that ever since the state recognized invasions in the 1961 *Barriada* Law residents had right to a title of sorts. Not only this, but in agreement with observations like those of Mangin in 1960, residents rented, sold and improved on their lots without clear title. Riofrío expressed concern over the risk of allowing residents to borrow against their homes –the result of years of sacrifice– to initiate less than certain business endeavours (Riofrío 1990:90–115).

On a larger scale, such an initiative draws *barriada* dwellers into that cycle of debt and payments so common in developed nations. With more available credit comes more consumption and people constantly striving to keep up with changing consumer trends (Rouleau 2007). Those who stand to gain from such an initiative are mainly corporations, financiers, banks, and to some degree the state in increased consumption tax revenues. However, the benefit to small-scale producers, especially when it comes to economies of scale, is preposterously touted by De Soto.

What De Soto, and by extension the Washington Consensus<sup>15</sup> and all its devotees did was to pitch their arguments to the poor, making promises based on a

---

<sup>15</sup> Economist John Williamson coined the term Washington Consensus when he was asked to draw up a list of discussion points for a conference that analyzed whether

very partial reading of history. In light of our discussion on self-help housing, the strategy of touting the efforts of the poor while looking out for the interests of others is not new. What would be new is the groups that would be favoured by these changes. Instead of eliminating patronage networks, it brought their activities to a level of insidiousness not seen previously in Peruvian history.

Historians Carlos Conteras and Marcos Cueto discuss the changes brought about by Alberto Fujimori (1990-2000) and neoliberal advisors like Hernando De Soto. Here, I will limit my discussion to those changes which most directly came to bear on those living in *barriadas* or the working class, in general.

One of the most profound changes was made to labour legislation. New legislation favoured the flexibilization of labour. What this meant was that jobs became less stable. New service providers appeared whose job was to contract labour for the formal sector, instead of businesses administering jobs like cleaning, transport, messengers, security, catering, accounting, etc. The idea was to cut jobs from payroll and subcontract these positions out to smaller companies that would

---

old development concepts in practice since the 1950s had been replaced by a newer model. The terminology used by Williamson was not without some misgivings (Williamson 2004). Williamson drew up a list of ten policies for discussion at the conference, which he felt were part of this shift in development policy. The items on the list were as follows: fiscal discipline, reordering public expenditure priorities, tax reform, liberalizing interest rates, competitive exchange rate, trade liberalization, liberalization of inward foreign direct investment, privatization, deregulation, and property rights. After coining the term and creating his list, the conference became a reference point of what he termed “ideological” debate over what were seen as global patterns in policy at the time (Williamson 2004). This casting of the debate as an ideological one positions neoliberalism as an objective, apolitical position, and those affected negatively by such reforms as being ideologically motivated.

be more efficient in how they organized their labourers. Similar cuts were made to government institutions. This resulted in a significant weakening of labour unions that once were able to count on the support of service workers in larger companies and government institutions to pressure these companies and the government for worker rights (Contreras and Cueto 2004:382–384).

To carry out De Soto's prescriptions for increasing the amount of capital in the Peruvian market (point ten of the Washington Consensus), the Fujimori government created an arm of the Ministry of Housing, Construction and Property Clearing called COFOPRI (Organismo para la Formalización de Propiedad Informal, or Organization for the Formalization of Informal Property) in 1996. COFOPRI's mandate was to facilitate the titling of lots in the country. Up until 2003 the organization had successfully surveyed and titled 1.2 million lots (Field 2003). Nonetheless, the jury is still out on whether titling has led to more access to formal credit (cf. Calderón 2011, Kerekes and Williamson 2010).

In an attempt to curry voter sympathies in popular sectors, Fujimori used government institutions to direct public funds strategically to certain areas of the country. Klarén describes how he used FONCODES (*Fondo Nacional de Compensación y Desarrollo Social*, or the National Fund for Compensation and Social Development), nine months prior to the 1995 elections to dramatically boost employment in, and benefactors from, social assistance programs in some of the poorest departments of the country. FONAVI (*Fondo Nacional de Vivienda*, or National Fund for Housing), which built low cost housing, schools and medical posts



in *barriadas* and more isolated settlements, enjoyed a flood of projects. Schools built during this time period are legendary, as was the lack of professors to fill these schools and the shoddy construction of such installations. However, the impact this initiative had was remembered to this day by my collaborators (many of whom were supporters of Fujimori). Klarén goes on to reveal how Fujimori increased food rations, especially to children through PRONOAA (*Programa Nacional de Asistencia Alimentaria*, or National Program of Food Assistance). Prior to the election campaigns he made visits to these the kitchens of this program to boost his public appeal (Klarén 2004:505–506).

Political scientist Bruce H. Kay gives us some sense of how Fujimori managed to afford these projects and the political organization that permitted them (Kay 1996). He argues that money for these visible programs originated from the extensive privatization of public sector companies and a reform of the tax system. Intelligently, Fujimori channelled resources to regions like Puno to sway public opposition to the 1993 constitution, for instance. To do so, he had to divert more decision making power toward the executive office, to counter opposition from different municipalities. This led to a personalistic form of leadership —one where Fujimori personally intervened in public works and could attend his clients directly. All of this occurred in a climate of intense technocratic intervention in the government. Kay reveals that social spending was part of an IMF-condoned approach, although reluctant, to pacify voters for the 1995 election and ensure that economic reforms would continue (Kay 1996:68). Social spending was something that previous governments had recognized as a necessity; however, through the

inefficient functioning of state enterprises and ineffectual tax collection, they had never been able to pursue social spending to the extent Fujimori would. Perhaps for this reason, Fujimori gained tremendous appeal among a sizeable group of the general population.

Peruvian sociologist Francisco Durand meticulously maps out the connections between international corporations, international lending institutions like the IMF, the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, financiers and the movement of their technocrats into key advisory positions in Peruvian governments from 1980 up to the present (Durand 2010). He details who benefited from the 1993 constitutional changes, mainly international corporations, and who lost, national corporations and state enterprises. These changes were very much an inside job, as he reveals, and one that we will see articulates with personalistic leadership and calculated interventions. Given the condition of state-owned businesses, though, privatization was the only solution if Fujimori wanted to re-establish ties with international creditors (Kay 1996).

When it comes to assessing what was done by Fujimori, it is difficult to disentangle who is being critical because they had their own political and economic interests at stake, and who really had an alternative project. David Harvey's analysis of neoliberalism is suggestive (2005). He argues that these reforms were an attempt by social elites around the world to recapture power that had been lost through the adoption of Keynesian state reforms. However, Harvey's thesis does not really explain the shift in the share of the economic pie noted by Durand (2010).

In the Peruvian case, it appears that neoliberal advisors and Peruvian politicians (not just Fujimori) worked to allow the incursion of foreign capital, to the detriment of the local oligarchy, for what appear to be personal gains, or the gains of a particular political parties and their client networks. It does not seem that social elites were merely recapturing power, but that certain elite groups were working against the interests of other groups that had held power before the Peruvian market was opened to foreign capital. It would be more accurate to say that a reconfiguration of elites was at work where some definitely lost economic power in this shift, many to transnational groups.

Fujimori also managed to co-opt the military through strategic promotions of officers partial to his political party (cf. Cotler and Grompone 2000). The military became actively involved in promoting his Cambio 90 party in the 1995 elections. They put up campaign posters, tore down opposition posters and distributed notebooks with a likeness of Fujimori to children. In many ways, the military and their presence safeguarded the defeat of Sendero Luminoso, giving more legitimacy to Fujimori (Kay 1996:77-78).

Amidst all of the political turmoil that Peru fell into during the eighties, the solidarity of communities became apparent. Father Thomas Burns describes the scene in the 1990s in Pamplona (Burns 1994). He tells how on a daily basis people helped one another through these trying times. Whether it was organizing

*picoronadas*,<sup>16</sup> having compassion for a sickly neighbour, forgiving someone for taking food, or overcoming infidelity, Burns gives us a humane account of how people cooperated in the face of hardship. He tells how despite incidences of TB and cholera that were ever present during this time period, people found a place for one another and forged on in their lives, hoping that the reign of terror unleashed by Sendero Luminoso would abate.

Accounts like that of Burns are not isolated. Anthropologist Jeanine Anderson revisited Leoncio Prado (a sector in Pamplona), a focal point for Ríofrio's analysis in the 1970s, telling the story of how Leoncio Prado was formed and came together as a community (Anderson 2002). The tale is one that describes the challenges of uniting people to work together toward common community goals. It gives us insight into the difficulties faced by *dirigentes*<sup>17</sup> to keep people motivated in the community and details the involvement of the state and other philanthropist organizations in the community over multiple decades. Her work also documents the material progress made by residents and the active involvement of almost everyone in the community association. The majority went from reed matting houses to brick homes in the decades leading up to the publication of the book. People felt a real sense of triumph due to all the obstacles that they had overcome together, however they also lamented the recent disintegration of the initial spirit of camaraderie that had existed and the emerging inequality in the sector, possibly a

---

<sup>16</sup> *Picarones* are a pastry that is deep fried and served with a sweet syrup. A *picorondada*, like a *pollada* (with chicken), is habitually done to raise funds for the medical treatment of a member of the community, for instance. These events are also held to raise funds for schools, the construction of community infrastructure, or for other unforeseen expenses.

<sup>17</sup> A *dirigente* is any elected community leader (they can be in charge of social services, public works, sports and be the secretary general within a sector).

result of the contradictory values espoused by liberal individualism and the real limits to who and how many can prosper in a liberal economy.

This is where the optimism of experts seemed to dwindle. Anderson cites numerous residents who describe how their community has been gripped by frustration and has surrendered to the vices of modern urban life. Residents relate how drug addiction and its accompanying culture of violence and counter-violence has become a scourge in their community. Many of the second generation felt that their future laid elsewhere, something that is not uncommon given the growth of Lima's *barriadas*. In the next section, we will see where this desire led some of them. One cannot help but feel that her version is not all that different from Mangin's version. The changes occurring in communities throughout Lima are very similar. As material progress is made, the community organization that characterized these communities is lost.

At first, people organize to invade a piece of land. Then they work together to build roads, lobby clientalistic states (their political banner seems inconsequential) for basic amenities (usually making some form of payment for these services), build schools and medical facilities, build recreational facilities, and when all of this has been accomplished, the community organizations begin to decline, with most residents becoming indifferent to their activities, or seeing their activities as a nuisance. In time, social inequalities emerge and new divisions arise within the community, driving more prosperous residents to envision a move toward more affluent areas of Lima. *Barriada* dynamics are highly complex, to say the least, but

we can see a general trend toward the breakdown of community organization by the end of the nineties and probably beforehand in other communities. Mangin noted as much in the 1960s in the more developed sectors he observed, leading me to conclude that such an occurrence is processual and cyclical.

One thing we cannot lose sight of is that for many development is best seen in the building of schools, the installation of local medical clinics, the paving of dusty roads, or maybe the construction of soccer pitches for recreation. Coupled with this is the expectation that one's prospects for employment or social mobility improve. The feeling of whether these expectations are met or not is mixed, depending largely on individual outcomes.

Accompanying material change, is a move toward favouring modern behaviours like following prêt-a-porter fashion, thinking in liberal ways about relationships, and enjoying contemporary leisure activities that some would argue have become hegemonic in Peru (Portocarrero and Komadina 2001). In this sense, each succeeding generation sets a higher goal from what they consider to progress. Market analysts proclaim Lima as a city that now belongs to everyone and herald an era where everyone can and will, thanks in large part to a process of cultural homogenization, enjoy the fruits of a new consumer driven Lima (Arellano and Burgos 2004). Being a part of progress often means renovating one's ideas, changing one's consumption habits, and even forgetting cultural legacies that do not find a place in the city. The successful commercialization of ethnic fashion, ethnic music and ethnic food suggests that traditional cultural is amenable with capitalist

development to some extent; however the focus of our analysis should marry a concern for changes in content with changes in practices.

The type of progress promoted by De Soto is quite different from that demanded by communities. Neoliberalization argues for an unrestrained freedom of enterprise –an era where the state ensures that laws facilitate commerce and redistributive practices are no longer a part of state processes. To some degree, De Soto’s arguments seem reasonable; however when one looks at the effects of his proposals and what happened in practice De Soto seems to have advocated for the rights of corporations, financiers and large investment consortiums. Once the Peruvian market was opened, what restrictions were left in place to protect small-scale local industrial production? Who got mining concessions where billions of dollars have been invested? The critique of the lack of a trickle-down effect has been incessant in the local media. De Soto’s proposal recognized the entrepreneurial efforts of migrants, the hard-earned home equity they managed to accrue and used these efforts to legitimate an economic shift that would subject them even more to the vagaries of market forces, placing the only security they had, their homes, on the line for risky business ventures in an intensely competitive local market where large investors and corporations would also be given the right to free enterprise. This was no small feat and required much more convincing than just the economic proposals of neoliberals as we will see in the next chapter.

As Lima, and areas like Pamplona have become more consolidated, the potential for more profit, for the incursion of capital into these areas becomes all the

more enticing. Locals resist municipal attempts to repossess land bequeathed to communities. Don Malvinas and his community were fighting to retain control of state land that they had been allowed to use for a community centre. Part of the land had been used for a parking lot to generate income to subsidize a soup kitchen and other activities in the centre. The municipality argued that their operation was a profit making operation to justify expropriating the land, no doubt to sell to commercial interests that have made a strong incursion into San Juan de Miraflores since Alberto Fujimori and his advisors, following much of Hernando De Soto's suggestive text, legislated neoliberal reforms.

The anthropological take on frontiers, especially those on the fringes of civilization, does not share De Soto's optimism. In various ethnographies, frontiers are treated as fast and loose places, where people live according to a different set of rules (cf. Taussig 1986, Ferguson 1999, Brody 2000). One is more likely to see parallels with the Wild West, making one wonder if the problem is indeed a result of bad legislation and a nefarious political culture.

Anna Tsing notes in her ethnography on development in rural Indonesia that modernization is a process fraught with frictions. She describes a resource frontier as:

...deregulated because they arise in the interstitial spaces made by collaborations among legitimate and illegitimate partners: armies and bandits; gangsters and corporations; builders and despoilers. They confuse the boundaries of law and theft, governance and violence, use and destruction. These confusions change the rules and thus enable extravagant new economies of profit –as well as loss. (Tsing 2005:27–28)



The more I investigated the history of Pamplona and the lives of people who had since the 1950s begun *en masse* to push back the frontier of Lima, the more I considered the city as a space with multiple frontiers, something like Tsing's resource frontiers in that their growth has been accompanied by much confusion amidst prospects for gain with their occupants often having to navigate between different political patrons –from both the left and the right, not to mention land traffickers<sup>18</sup> and hucksters of all sorts. The move to the city from rural areas has long been an object of anthropological inquiry. Indeed, the Americas, especially the developing ones, have been captured in a number of ways. There has been no consensus on what to make of this move.

My mind goes back to a vegetable vendor who I asked bluntly why she had decided to come to live in the sand. Her response was very matter-of-fact. She responded that she knew that there would be opportunity in this new place. Where there are people, there are commercial opportunities, she surmised. I do not think that her reasoning was an isolated incident. Judging by the proliferation of informal vendors and service providers, many had the same idea. So, while we talk about government policies and external forces, we need to be aware of local actors who

---

<sup>18</sup> Anyone that invades a piece of property and is not going to live there with a family is considered to be a potential land trafficker. Strict conditions are placed on lot owners to avoid people from taking the possibility of having a lot away from more needy folk. From its use I also gathered that traffickers were people who might work to found a sector then charge people an entrance fee to have a lot in their sector. In a more general sense, traffickers are also people who organize invasions of private properties so that the land can be wrestled from its owner then sold at a profit by those who have taken possession of the land. I met people who had moved from invasion to invasion. Once one invasion became formalized, they moved to another one. Many property owners pointed out that this was a means of accumulating wealth for some people. It seems like yet another way of minimizing one's risk in the city by having multiple incomes simultaneously.

are navigating the sea that these forces stir up, trying to bring home a catch looking for their own progress.

Now, I would like to turn toward a particular study of a land invasion that occurred in the lead-up to Fujimori's re-re-election campaign in 2000. From the previous chapters, I think my reader can more fully appreciate how this invasion may bear some resemblance to or vary from previous ones. What I believe is intriguing about this invasion is the detail available for the sketch I have given of self-help housing and the relationship between particular actors.

## Chapter 5 –The Nueva Rinconada



A photograph of the Rinconada in October of 2011. This shot is from the back of Zone A. Cerro Mina is behind the school in the distance. Sheet metal roofs are covered with dust from the sandy hills on which these homes are built. Photo: Sandy Simon Torres

Nunca te olvides amigo mío

Que venimos un 6 de enero

Del año dos mil todos venimos

Buscando un techo para nuestros hijos

Buscando un techo para nuestros hijos

Hoy cumplimos diez años de lucha

En este pueblo Nueva Rinconada

Never forget my friend

that we all came one 6th of January

of the year 2000

Looking for a roof for our children

Looking for a roof for our children

Today we celebrate a ten year fight

in this community Nueva Rinconada.

Primeros meses no fueron fácil	The first months were not easy
Porque pasamos hambre y frío	because we endured hunger and the cold.
De poco en poco llenamos los cerros	Little by little we filled the hills
De este pueblo Nueva Rinconada	of this community Nueva Rinconada.
Ahora somos 120 pueblos	Now there are 120 communities
Reconocidos por el consejo	recognized by the council
Reconocidos por el consejo	recognized by the council
Luego nacieron las famosas rondas	Then, the famous patrols appeared
Y una central para el pueblo	and a central government for the community.
Frente de Defensa, Nuevo Pamplona	The Defense Front, New Pamplona,
Valle Hermosa, Villa San Juan	Beautiful Valley, Villa Saint John
Minas 2000 y la zona C	Minas 2000, and Zone "C"
Después se hizo la gran marcha	After the big march was organized
A todos unidos hacia el congreso	everyone united to go to the Congress
Para pedir nuestros derechos	to demand our rights.
Una vivienda para nuestros hijos	A home for our children
Una vivienda para nuestros hijos	A home for our children
Pido un aplauso para los hombres	I ask for an applause for the men
Y mujeres de gran lucha	and the women that fought.
Alayo Cota y XXX	Surnames and nicknames of dirigentes
El Nino Osorio, Juana, Velásquez	
Blanca, Ester y Juanita	
Carmelo, Moya y Montoya	
Jaque, Vaquita y Lolita	
Y el gran apoyo del Dr. Robles	And the great support of Dr. Robles,
Que siempre apoya a este pueblo	who always supports this community
Hay que cantar, hay que bailar	One must sing, one must dance



At first glance, it is apparent that the song is both mnemonic device and explanation for why people moved onto private lands belonging to a number of property owners, who, for the most part, bought these lands with their hard earned savings. Most of the owners were, like many of the people here, in search of progress and a future for their families in the big city. Some were livestock or agricultural entrepreneurs, or country folk looking to recover that connection with the earth that had been lost in the move to the city or attempting to make do in a way with which they were familiar.

For those who took possession of this land, the land was an empty space, a place where civilization had yet to take hold. Like the discourse of settlers the world over, the land that they would settle upon had no owners, or the owners would be represented as derelict in their duty to make this land produce. It was in many respects considered terra nullius. The main difference between the kind of settlement that took place before on the lands of indigenous people in the Americas, who had no formal system of land ownership like that of the contemporary nation-state, and that which took place in January of 2000 in this sand-skirted rocky valley in Lima is that the land that would be settled had legally recognized property owners and the settlers were the masses of people that had been denied a space in this city, in this country, people who had, for the most part, lived tough lives fraught with privations, constant change and, in many cases, turbulent pasts.

The settlement of this land also reflects a pattern of do-it-yourself development that has been recognized as a social asset in Peru since the 1950s at

least and can be associated directly with processes of urbanization that saw the rural to urban ratio in Peru inverted in the later half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (see previous chapters). Curiously, if one listens to people here enough, their main complaint is the absence of the state and the inefficacy of state representatives in their presence. Hence, their capacity to help themselves is a product of both the negligence and abuse of authority, with little reason to celebrate. Occupying land is a tactic (De Certeau 1984) that people deploy consciously to gain access to a home and land that they fashion. It is a viable option to the nationally and internationally funded housing schemes that limit the space and creative options for construction that these programs offer as a solution. Occupying land allows squatters to have control over the space they make and the amount of space available to them. That people choose to squat on land still, despite the privations they must endure, suggests that all the sacrifice is worth it.

The populist views of presidents and parties past echo through to the present and guide much state and non-state intervention in working class areas of Lima and rural Peru. What the state lacks in economic resources, the people are expected to contribute in kind, usually with labour, to push the nation toward social and material progress. One cannot help but notice, as well, that by maintaining people in a prolonged state of self-improvement –awaiting interventions from a discontinuous and partial state– a relation of dependency is established between the state and a sector of the population that believes the state ought to ensure the well being of its citizens. This suggests that the perceived freedom attained in squatting works as a double edged sword —it gives them more freedom over the dwelling they produce,

however it also means they must rely on making pacts with outside political actors to meet the legal requirements necessary for formalizing their dwellings and getting access to public utilities. Many of my collaborators recognized that the help that does come must be paid for, that it comes with “strings attached,” and that “nothing is free.” This recognition is the product of decades of populist interventions. Many of the sympathetic professionals I met who envision a more just nation went so far as to argue that this patronage system is a product of the patrimonial relationship that emerged during the colonial period and persists until the present.

At present, it is simply understood that if a law is passed it is because the incumbent political party is looking to benefit its clients, and that it expects a payment in kind from its clients, be they rich or poor. But, the incumbent political party can just as easily betray those clients (either deliberately or for reasons beyond its control), creating a sense of disappointment among the people (*el pueblo*). The same holds true for the clients of the state; they too may renege on their obligation, i.e., not vote for their patrons. This complex interplay is exposed, to some degree, when we begin to analyze this property dispute and will form the basis of a more in-depth analysis once we have discussed what I, with the collusion of my collaborators, have been able to piece together about this dispute. Suffice it to say, populism is much more complex than unscrupulous politicians duping disorganized masses.

I argue that the sweat and blood of the people seems, for some at least, to be an infinite wealth that can be channelled against all obstacles, sufficiently great to



form the foundations of empires. Free labour, in other words, like the silver and gold of the nation, is a wealth that can be placed at the disposal of the state and actors who have the gumption and vision to command the people. We should not forget that the frontiers that mark the expansion of cities or resource frontiers are part of a political vision for which, and because of which, this world works. The discursive trick here has been to turn the sacrifice of the people into a worthy sacrifice, one that they can proudly bear so that the nation will advance. The redemption of the poor, then, like that of the Indian, rests in the blood and sweat they are willing to shed for the nation.<sup>19</sup> But, and I ask this very seriously, how does such an agreement come about? Is it an untroubled agreement? What, indeed, is happening?

This struggle to have something to call one's own, to have a root in someplace, must not be lost sight of in this history, and must, furthermore, be placed within its proper historical context. It is what gives sense to this unsettled dispute. The dispute, I would add, is not just about a couple hundred landowners<sup>20</sup> and thousands of squatters. It is much bigger and also simpler than one might imagine.

---

<sup>19</sup> In his second essay of seven that sketch the social, economic and political life of Peru at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century José Carlos Mariátegui makes a number of observations about the character of Republican rule that resonate with this current study. In describing the "Indian problem," he gets into a polemical discussion of the abuses of the Creole class that are pertinent to our discussion here. He describes how Creoles, in their laws, extended the liberties of the revolutionary movements in the United States and France, but, that in practice the new governing class was much more rapacious than their colonial predecessors. He describes the redemption of Indians as "demagogic speculation of some caudillos." Claiming that Creole political parties had "enlisted them in their program," and by doing so they had "diminished in this way the desire to fight for their demands." Guided by newfangled liberal principles, the task of Peruvian state was to "elevate the condition" of the Indians. (Mariátegui 1985[1928]:44–49) I cannot help but feel that the character of rule that Mariátegui is describing is not so different in quality from what I will describe in the following pages.

<sup>20</sup> Those who possess clear title to property.

When we begin to look at the voices of people and the actions that are occurring, what emerges is a cry, a desire, to have a place in this world, to be worth something, to be recognized as a human being worthy of dignity and respect. It is a demand for a niche, a foothold, from which one can either securely roost, or from which one can reach for yet another perch. Not all humans are conformists, after all. This is the simple part because all humans have this most immediate necessity.

But, why they should desire a home of their own, good education for their children, financial independence, or, on the contrary, just acquiesce to their daily circumstances, should arouse some curiosity. This forms part of the reenactment of a development process that we discuss in previous chapters whereby people squat, or assigned lots that they slowly build homes on. The Nueva Rinconada is remarkable in that people here have continued this tradition of building one's home instead of opting to become part of a formal public housing program. What we notice here is a gambit of lifestyles and life histories, all coming together in a grand melange, multiplying in complexity over time, incorporating residual, emergent and dominant discourses and behaviours. Possibilities, reflected in people's narratives, are constrained and abetted by their social, economic and political circumstances.

The stage on which this cry takes place is, in this case, a tract of land, the Nueva Rinconada, like the name says, a corner, in the hills of Lima. The bigger picture is that this case represents countless lines in the history of a nation of distinct peoples, a social network and a family has fought to extend their sphere of influence and maintain the structures that form the framework of the particular

social group. We have already seen how this line keeps getting pushed back horizontally, and, from the picture that opens this chapter, up into the hills that eventually become the Andes. This interaction, it stands to reason, involves a negotiation of interests in a complex field. Within this nation many fight to be regarded in the same light as those who are the privileged members of the nation.

At this moment in history, most humans are driven by a desire to progress. Just what that progress means is a subject of great interest and relevance for this case. It is in many ways the driving force behind the actions of many actors these days. Here, as we saw before the struggle to build a home is re-enacted with a new generation. For now, I would like to discuss the political context of the incursion of people into the Nueva Rinconada.

## The Re-re-election of Alberto Fujimori

In the previous chapter I talked about some of the strategies that Fujimori used, with the approval of international financiers and neoliberal pundits, to court voters in the 1995 elections. For the following interpretation of events is based on a selection of the print media in Lima from December 1999 to March 2000. As the reader will see, the events leading up to the 2000 presidential elections had a lot to do with what would happen in the Nueva Rinconada. To large degree the historical context gives great insight into what happened and why.

This analysis relies on two opposition newspapers, *Liberación* and *La República*, a weekly magazine, *Caretas*, as well as one of the *chicha*<sup>21</sup> papers, *El Chato*, to reconstruct the position of the *Fujimoristas*. My decision to use *El Chato* as representative of Fujimori's political party is further reinforced by a conversation, taped by Vladimir Montesinos and his associates of the now defunct National Intelligence Service (SIN) in 1998 between Montesinos and ex-president of the Council of Ministers, Víctor Joy Way, discussing their use of the so-called yellow press to continue disinforming the public in the lead up to the 2000 elections, especially the public in *barriadas*. Below is an excerpt that was printed in *La República* in February of 2001.

Montesinos: For how much do they want to sell?

Joy Way: Alex has not given me a figure (presumably Alex Wolfenson). He said, "Look," he said, "We sell between 90 to 80 thousand El Chinos and some 60 to 70 thousand Todo Sport [two newspapers]."

Montesinos: Yes.

Joy Way: He even said to me, "I can't live, I can't handle it. Everyone pressures me, the opposition. If they call me (intelligible), I am afraid all day.

Montesinos: If it suits us, we will buy it next year [1999]. I will buy it for SIN, but as a front organization.

---

<sup>21</sup> *Chicha* is a beverage that is made of purple corn and served throughout the country in restaurants and by street vendors. It is also a musical genre that fused Andean *huaynos*, songs that bemoan the condition of Andean people and celebrate their folk culture, with Colombian *cumbia*, upbeat tropical rhythms often revolving around euphoric encounters of young and old adults, becoming highly fashionable among lower class migrants in the 1970s and 1980s. *Chicha* press refers to the vulgar cheap newspapers that are sold in kiosks throughout the country for a fraction of the cost of more "serious" newspapers. The language in these papers is colloquial. Mainstays of this type of journalism are semi-nude *videttes* (exotic dancers) on the cover page, or last page, sensational and inhumane coverage of crime stories (the bad guys usually get their just druthers with photos of murdered criminals, sometimes for the theft of a house, for instance, being common), sports coverage (usually soccer), pro-development and enterprise stories and material, and usually distorted politicized interpretations of national events that favour incumbent economically liberal parties. Canadian poet and musician Leonard Cohen's line "The rich have got their channels in the bedrooms of the poor," is very apt here. The collocation of the adjective *chicha* here is patronizing and misleading. It masks a repudiation of vernacular cultures in Peru.

Joy Way: Correct, then, I can't (unintelligible).

Montesinos: Try to lower it as much as you can.

Joy Way: It is that he's interested in us (unintelligible).

Montesinos: No, no, we already have, we have five newspapers, we have four, is that right? We have El Chino, El Mañanero, La Chuchi, El Tío and El Chato. Now we have El Chato. We have eliminated a newspaper, you understand me? Now we have El Chato. So...

Now, we are not owners, but we finance them, the four of them. Now, yes, they are men of El Chino, El Chino has Todo Sport y Todo Sport is sports. Todo Sport sells like hell, like hell. It sells because it is soccer. What shit.

...

Montesinos: No, but you know that all (unintelligible) of intelligence has its channel and its newspaper, that do not appear in the organization, but, fuck, it keeps up the bullshit.

Joy Way: And there is a person that I can tell to buy it.

Another man present: Crazy Marsano.

Montesinos: No, but crazy Marsano is not suitable.

Joy Way: No, it's that why, if we can pay it, so, why?

Montesinos: (unintelligible) I buy the newspaper here, SIN does not appear, but I buy it, put an idiot as front man, brother.

(Anonymous 2001a:5)

Movies and spy novels do not get more specific in the detail that was provided by the surreptitious recordings of ex-SIN head Montesinos. What is important here is that from this conversation we can establish without a doubt that journalists were being paid to toe the party line, and that there was a deliberated and concerted effort to put together slanted press coverage in a very particular way that would appeal to working class sectors of the population. Other videos showed Montesinos bribing television stations not to broadcast opposition campaign advertisements for

the 2000 elections. The release of these videos led to the resignation of Fujimori on November 17, 2000. Most middle class collaborators I have known over the years dismiss this sensationist coverage as vulgar and inappropriate; however, if one spends time in working class areas of Lima, these papers are well-read, often passing through many hands, being left to be read in restaurants, juice stands, and other social hubs.

To add more credibility to this recording, one can also consider the defection of a number of ex-workers and reporters from *El Chato* during the 2000 election campaign. In the February 1<sup>st</sup> edition of *Liberación* they claimed that they were still awaiting a decision on a court case for the violation of their civil rights. Journalist Hugo Borjas was threatened for making the case public. The ex-workers claimed that in October of 1999 the newspaper received headlines against presidential hopefuls Alberto Andrade and Luis Castañeda from the beginning of 1999. For this service the owners received a total of \$180,000, \$6,000 daily, in cash (so there was no paper trail) (Aylas 2000a:4).

Similar to the scene we will see in the Nueva Rinconada, the print and electronic media function to distort reality, to provide contradictory interpretations of current events and social reality. Not only this, but as Peruvian anthropologist Carlos Iván Degregori explored in his *La Década de la Antipolítica, Decade of Antipolitics*, this



A typical kiosk where newspapers are sold in Lima. Kiosks like this can be found in most municipalities, although the range of material varies depending on the location. Here we see a kiosk in a pueblo joven. The majority of papers being offered here are 50 cent and 80 cent papers, which account for the majority of sales of print material at this kiosks. Photo: Sandy Simon Torres

media project was well in place by 1996 (Degregori 2001). He details how Fujimori, in collaboration with his henchman Montesinos, set about co-opting major figures in Peruvian television —like opinionated talk show host Laura Bozzo— with bribes.

Degregori observed how she went from talking about domestic disputes one day, to a focus on peace in Peru the next. This was a characteristic spin of those days, emphasizing the peace that Fujimori had restored while playing on fears of Sendero Luminoso and the FARC in other instances. Stories of crime or social deviance were also commonplace, lending credibility to the authoritarian tilt of the regime and demonstrating to the public that his rule ensured stability and justice.

By the end of the 1990s, bastions of free speech, like the newspaper *El Comercio*, or the late night television news program of César Hildebrandt, proved to be a thorn in the side of the Fujimori regime (Hildebrandt resigned prior to the 2000 elections, but stayed active as editor in chief of *Liberación*). These few news sources tried to dampen the din of the yellow press and numerous state controlled national television stations. Although they would eventually fail to prevent the re-election of Fujimori, they did reflect a growing resistance to the strategies being used by the Fujimori regime to remain in power.

The previous conversation between Montesinos and Joy Way was not an exaggeration or overstatement of what the government was capable of according to accounts like those of the ex-head of the Commission of Truth and Reconciliation in Peru. These measures, though, tended to generate public opposition with marches and vigils in front of compromised television stations becoming the norm.

Degregori noted how during the election campaign of 2000 the yellow press and their electronic media mirrors maintained a constant and orchestrated demolition campaign against political candidates that were perceived as a threat to the regime, like that mentioned of political opponents Andrade and Castañeda. During the 1997-1999 period, government funding of advertising on national television increased by 109%, while, for the same time period, advertising by the corporate sector, beer companies, banks, soft drinks, detergents and shampoos dropped from between 38-52% (Degregori 2001[2000]:120). The press maintained that they were not allowing opposition politicians to buy air-time



because they would lose money from their sponsors. At other times, token spaces were given, it seemed, just to counter these allegations.

Degregori gives an expert local eyewitness account of the situation of the media climate at the time of the 2000 elections. He wrote,

There were no political programs: police stories opened the news, followed by “social themes”; paid electoral programming was not even allowed. Apparently, the objective of the regime was the depoliticization of the electorate, the classic bread and circus, because, in reality, the kidnapping of open signal television and the harassment of independent media was part of a “political re-education” or perverse authoritarian politicization [of the media] (Degregori 2001[2000]:117).

In what follows I reconstruct elements of this compromised media coverage, bearing in mind the co-optation of the press source that I use, and the simultaneous coverage of opposition journalists with respect to the invasions occurring in the lead-up to the election campaign of 2000. Compared to the strategic allocation of state spending discussed in the previous section, the control of media content discussed here represents a refinement and extension of state and security attempts to influence the population. The aftermath of these politically motivated tactics will be explored thereafter. I focus on three months specifically: December, January, and February.

December was a decisive month for Fujimori. During this month he had to respond to allegations of the opposition that he and his political party had included two million people on the electoral roll who should not have been included. On this list were military personnel (the military and police are not allowed to vote in Peru),

police officers, thousands who had passed away since 1984, people who migrated from one area of the country to vote in another, and others who had emigrated to foreign countries. Opponents feared that these ballots would be cast in favour of the incumbent President. The discovery of this illegal roll led opponents and civic activists to denounce the case to the Jurado Nacional de Elecciones (National Electoral Committee), asking for the withdrawal of Fujimori from the 2000 electoral campaign.

The pro-Fujimori press claimed that the case was against his re-election, or his use of the slogan *Perú país con futuro* (Peru, country with a future), omitting the details behind the opposition to his re-election. The case was to no avail (his party had strong support in the National Electoral Committee) and Fujimori continued to run as the representative of his political front, despite concerted national level protests by labour unions, teacher unions, health care worker unions, student unions, opposition political parties, mayors, and other concerned citizens.

During the middle of January 2000, slogans for Fujimori's party appeared illegally on military bases. His slogans and motifs also appeared in state schools. Not only this, but the military sent guards to ensure that these slogans and motifs were not removed. Newspapers denounced the removal of opposition political party paintings throughout the country, with common instances where military personnel painted over previous paintings with Fujimori's slogans and motifs. The use of state resources for political proselytization was forbidden by the Peruvian Constitution. This obviously did not matter, though.

In his defense, Fujimori claimed that these propaganda efforts were perpetrated by party militants that were beyond his control, but, obviously impressed by his accomplishments. *El Chato* reported that mayors were ensuring that candidates complied with ordinances that ensured that political propaganda was not placed on public institutions or on walls without approval of property owners. As one will see, Fujimori always maintained deniability.

Newspapers like *Liberación* and *La República* denounced this constant gerrymandering for months leading up to the April elections. Recipients of government aid were told that they had to help in his campaign. Soup kitchens kept a portrait of Fujimori to remind recipients whom they could thank for the food that they were eating. During the time of my research a portrait of Alan García could be found in many soup kitchens. Organizers of literacy campaigns were told that they had to campaign for the president, or they would be fired, and, some were. One gets the sense that Fujimori and his mafia were pulling out all the stop signs to win the 2000 elections.

Their response to these accusations were base and crude, with name calling, like referring to presidential hopeful Andrade as a “pig,” or a “*pituco*”<sup>22</sup> being commonplace. If candidates denounced acts of intimidation like anonymous threats or someone hurling a Molotov cocktail against their home, the pro-Fujimori press labelled them as crazy, or suggested that such actions were a ploy to manipulate

---

<sup>22</sup> This is a denigrating term for white middle class Peruvians who put on a stereotypical affected attitude of superiority over working class Peruvians. By referring to Andrade as a *pituco*, the editors of the yellow press were implying that he was too white and too refined to be a candidate of the people.

voters. Another strategy was to paint the opposition as populists or as a threat to the interests of the informal economy. As the reader will recall, De Soto played strongly to the potential of the informal sector. Mayor Andrade removed street vendors from the central core of Lima to organize this commercial centre. Actions like this, however, were drawn on by the pro-Fujimori press to paint Andrade as a threat to informal businesses throughout the city. *El Chato* reporters regularly made improbable claims like: Castañeda called mothers who volunteered in soup kitchens *burros*, or donkeys (donkey are idiots in Spanish), or, if elected, Andrade would cut all aid to community food aid programs. They went so far to refer to Andrade as a populist.

Fujimori's government used the yellow press to promote programs that appeared prior to the election. He promised school bursaries to the children of state workers, the police and military, and one-time payments to retired people. He announced credit programs for housing, draws for free houses, draws rewarding those who made payments on housing credits, and initiatives to supply water to those without water, for instance. For these bursaries and one-time gifts people had to sign up before the election, with the expected delivery of these funds coming after his election. A fervent tour of public inaugurations was also part of the backdrop to his campaign. His press announced the securing of international loans, on occasion, released, just as chance would have it, prior to his third illegal election campaign. Ironically, they also spoke of fiscal transparency and laws being designed to improve it. Promises that jobs would increase for urbanized indigenous migrants

were interspersed throughout yellow press coverage. By all appearances, Fujimori was a busy man, busy building up his country.

The moral element of the Fujimori press coverage was critical in establishing his legitimacy with the populace. As Degregori noted, cases that would arouse public indignation and opinion were a fixture: the rape of children, shootings of innocent civilians, crimes of passion, drug consumption and commercialization and theft were recurring themes. The public could also enjoy the moral backlash of society with stories that featured the capture of thieves of all ilk (house robbers, hucksters, adulterers of products, armed robbers, car thieves, etc.). It was common to see morbid photographs, like the denuded bullet-ridden body of a thief that was murdered by a homeowner who took justice into his own hands. The country was in need of justice and Fujimori guaranteed that it would be given, even if that meant tolerating acts of self-retribution. The use of retributive justice was a key feature of the public approval for Fujimori then and it continues to be a strong feature of his daughter's rhetoric. David Harvey talks about neoliberal reforms in the United States being brought in with an appeal to personal liberty (2005). In Peru, neoliberalism was brought in amidst calls for justice and order.

Fujimori was remembered by collaborators as ruling with an iron fist and showing little mercy to law-breakers. This impression, both real and generated by constant media coverage that showcased these activities, led many to reject the stories of corruption that were appearing. Many of my collaborators, when confronted with my claims that Fujimori and his counterparts were a corrupt mafia,

responded that all politicians are that way and that at least Fujimori did something for the people. This statement should be taken very seriously because it reflects a generalized cynicism that prevails in Peru. It also speaks another truth that opponents of Fujimori do not easily admit: he was a man of action.

I could not help but notice the corollary to all of this negative press was that people had a very low opinion of their compatriots. It was common to hear that people in Peru had a lot of ingenuity, but for the wrong things. Or that what Peru needed was a good dictator again to put people back in their place, to clean up the streets. While most recognize that people rob, sell drugs, or break the law due to economic need, there is also a harsh intolerance for such acts, mostly because the majority of people go through great efforts to sustain their families in Lima working long hours in exchange for subsistence level wages. Fujimori's press coverage captured the issues that were important to the majority of the public, listening sympathetically and giving people the retribution that they sought. It also astutely read the desire for progress that most families sought in not only Lima, but also in the provinces. His massive infrastructure programs rightly gauged the previous lack of investment by previous governments in these projects (recall the self-help efforts discussed by Riofrío in Pamplona, for instance).

It was common practice to play on the feeling that social superiors were holding back the majority and that through the construction of schools, literacy programs, the distribution of free school materials (with political slogans and motifs), etc. Fujimori and his supporters were working toward, as their 2000 slogan

implied “a country with a future.” The press often criticized Andrade as looking out for the interests of more affluent Peruvians, alleging that he had no intention of safeguarding the interests of the informal economy, the backbone of the Peruvian economy by the estimation of these sources.

There was a very manly side, in the patriarchal sense, to Fujimori’s press. The covers of the yellow press unfailingly featured a scantily clad woman suggestively pushing her buttocks toward readers. Supplements on sexual positions were promoted. With much talk of the sexual exploits of videttes, something like playgirls or porn stars, came the promotion of the only true game for men: soccer. Although the Fujimori government created the Ministry of the Woman, the pro-Fujimori press was also the most vociferous proponent of the denigration of women and the promotion of entrenched male chauvinist attitudes. Fujimori managed the economic contradictions in his government’s program by surreptitiously encouraging practices that he condemned, making a mockery of the values, like sexual equality, that he embraced for consumption of the international community. The strategy of his party seemingly was to please everyone despite the contradictions this generated.

A form of neoliberal impression management was at work (Goffman 1958). The idea here is that state reforms brought in by the Fujimori government curtailed union strength and civil rights and weakened or nullified the power of the congress, senate, press and judiciary to do so. To keep the act going, Fujimori used an assortment of demagogic practices to manage the real impacts of his policies. Most

people did not realize that Fujimori was using public funds to finance his almost wholesale buy-out of the fifth estate. Schools were built with the sale of state enterprises, the sale of national resources to foreign corporations and the increased power of tax collectors. In a nation-state, some of these measures may have been favourable, but we must remember that when schools were built, roads paved, dams built, etc., Fujimori or a representative of his party was almost always present for a photo opportunity and these inaugurations often had preferential coverage in the press. This personalization of public offices is a hallmark of Peruvian politicians of all political persuasions.

When we consider the invasion of the Nueva Rinconada we have to put it within the contradictory universe of the possible at this moment. The invasion of the Nueva Rinconada was one of the first to be reported in the press in the lead-up to the elections. However, despite its size, it received little commentary in either the opposition or pro-Fujimori press. It did not receive the media attention that an invasion of similar magnitude that occurred on January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2000 of private property in Villa El Salvador did in which five invaders were killed and dozens injured by thugs hired by the property owners. This event led many to realize that throughout Lima, and even outside Lima, people were becoming emboldened enough to invade private property and land set aside for municipal projects like schools and parks.

Martin Pumar, then mayor of Villa El Salvador, had asked for police intervention well in advance of the planned invasion. The Minister of the



Department of the Interior denied receiving such correspondence in the beginning, however press coverage forced him to acknowledge that he had received said requests. Fujimori and representatives of the local police claimed that they had not intervened or deterred further involvement to avoid bloodshed. At times, it looked like the government turned a blind eye. Once the opposition press shone a spotlight on the invasions, denouncing them as a vote-for-title scheme, the police became more vigilant suddenly, evicting would be invaders throughout Lima. Martín Pumar and others claimed that the invasions were designed to damage his credibility and by extension Fujimori's main political opponent of the time Andrade and Somos Perú. In calling for police intervention, the pro-Fujimori press made Pumar out to be an enemy of the people and their desire to have a home of their own. This left the stage open for Fujimori to play saviour to the masses.

Fujimori's proponents claimed that Pumar and Andrade were behind the invasions. They had encouraged their supporters to invade because they wanted to create a scandal in the management of the invasion, i.e., deaths of invaders and police. Further speculation revealed that Andrade wanted to benefit his friends and family in the relocations he and his political allies had suggested as a solution to the impasse between property owners and the squatters. The pro-regime press accused Pumar and Andrade of wanting to play saviours in proposing a solution, mimicking the opposition critique of Fujimori and his supporters. The solution they proposed was eventually criticized as being ineffectual. Unlike the opposition press, the claims of the President, Ministers or party members were never substantiated by journalistic investigations among invaders and almost always involved speculation.

Opposition journalists, in contrast, often did investigative work and would eventually call for public inquiries into the invasions.

Doing what it claimed its opponents had in mind, the government finally announced plans to form a special agency to sign-up citizens in need of a home called Profam (which fell apart as soon as Fujimori's government collapsed in the later half of 2000), so that political agitators could not take advantage of the needy. Critics stated that the program was an election ploy to gain voter sympathy. The program was also criticized as unrealistic in that the government lacked funding to make it a reality. Others pointed out that the government already had an organism whose specific task it was to address the housing deficit since 1996 called COFOPRI. Analysts claimed that this organism had failed to take such actions and that the new program masked this failure. In the ten years that Fujimori had been in power, he had provided 20,000 lots with basic services and 100,000 homes to meet a demand of a 1.5 million homes, according to Jorge Ruis de Somocurcio, then head of the Metropolitan Institute of Planning for Lima (Aylas: 2000b:3). At this rate, the housing deficit would be met in more than a hundred years.

The enrolment of household heads in need of a home became a fiasco, with high schools being used by government workers to sign up people for lots, claiming that they had a computer system to check if people already had lots. It was not uncommon for people to wait in lines in vain, highlighting the impromptu nature of Profam. Prominent figures from the Catholic church, opposition politicians and

experts in housing issues were open in condemning the government support and denial of involvement in the invasions.

Under public pressure to resolve the standoff in Villa El Salvador, the government relocated thousands of families to a project originally begun but abandoned by García's government in Ciudadela Pachacútec in the province of Callao (contiguous with Lima). The military was called to help organize the resettlement: machinery was brought in to create roads, hundreds of surveyors from COFOPRI drew up plans hastily, water was provisioned, food was brought in and promises were made for the prompt granting of titles. It was very much part of the pre-election spectacle for analysts who were not pro-Fujimori and felt uncomfortable with the use that the government was making of the real need people had for a home.

Monseigneur Luis Bambarén, who was jailed in 1971 by ex-Minister of the Department of the Interior Armando Artola for promoting the invasion of Pamplona that led the foundation of Villa El Salvador, noted how the allegations by Artola that he was behind them reminded him of what was happening in Villa El Salvador. It would later be demonstrated that Artola was responsible for the incident. Bambarén in the same interview noted the oddity of the invasions that were occurring, saying that never before had people invaded private property. The norm is to ensure that land is state-owned (Escobar 2000:33–35). Fujimori and his ministers, in providing a solution to Villa El Salvador and in repressing other

invasions, claimed that it was defending private property, thus, simultaneously reiterating the sacredness of private property.

The celerity with which people were relocated and basic infrastructure was installed raised suspicions for many people. From accounts like that of Don Malvinas, it should be clear that infrastructure comes as a result of persistent solicitation for government intervention and at a considerable cost to communities. That everything came together so quickly in Callao was highly abnormal.

Fujimori had failed where the previous governments of Belaúnde and García had failed, resorting to the ineffectual stand-bys of previous decades. What was needed was a practical solution to the housing problem in Lima. COFOPRI did manage to title over 730,000 properties, according to Ministry of Transportation, Communication, Housing and Construction, Alberto Pandolfi; however, it appeared at times that the titling process may not have been impartial (Anonymous 2000a:2). Press coverage that highlighted various cases in the period prior to the elections revealed that COFOPRI tended to be strategically titling to its clients at times. A number of interviewed invaders claimed that insiders in COFOPRI had promised to grant titles if they invaded lands. There were those in the Nueva Rinconada who made the same claim.

In the coverage of the invasions, a number of common arguments can be cited. In interviews given to journalists, invaders often claimed that land was not being used, perhaps expressing a hope that previous legislation that provided grounds for

expropriation based on social interest may have motivated these invasions. Many times, they had been informed by government workers (with a connection to the

## HEDUARDO EN SU TINTA



Source: Caratas, February 21, 2000:13 This political cartoon depicts a cynical conversation between two old men discussing Fujimori's suspected gerrymandering and the possibility of Fujimori being behind the land invasions that began in late December of 1999.

regime) that lands were not registered or that owners had not been keeping up with property taxes. Others argued that lands were not being put to use and proceeded to destroy evidence that property owners were using the land. Invasions often

adopted names that made reference to the President and President's political party. In many instances, it looked like the police and military were facilitating the invasions instead of protecting private property. Many invasions were organized in advance and were peculiar in targeting land earmarked for community development or belonging to private groups. In many cases, journalist noted that squatters were prepared to pay fair market value of the abandoned properties.

Closer scrutiny and an analysis of legislation passed during the Toledo era (2001–2006) (the amendment to Law 28687 in particular) explains why these arguments were being made. This connection slipped press coverage of the time for some reason. On September 15, 1999 an opportune Executive Order 032-99-MTC<sup>23</sup> established the conditions for a reversion in state lands that had been sold or leased to private individuals or groups, for any use. Land could revert to the state if agreements were cancelled, judicial rulings did not favour landowners, lease agreements expired or if legal sanctions were levelled against property owners. These conditions allow us to make sense of claims that landowners were not paying taxes, that land was abandoned, etc.

Not only did the order establish conditions for the reversion of prior state land, but it also established favourable statutes of limitations on legal processes against squatters. Two of the main conditions for a statute of limitations whereby land is awarded to squatters are public and peaceful occupation. In article 11 the law states that even if force was used to gain possession of lands, from the initial act

---

<sup>23</sup> The term in Spanish is *Decreto Supremo*. I could have translated it as Presidential Decree, however it does not reflect the fact that it was the Ministry of Transportation, Communication, Housing and Construction that formulated the law.

of violence the time for a statute of limitations against squatters would begin, notwithstanding any acts of violence to dislodge them. Moreover, even if charges were pressed against squatters or legal suits initiated against them, this would not change the impending ten year statute of limitation against land usurpation. Agricultural lands were exempt from this law, so it was directed at urban expansion.

Given the realistic timeline for people to gain title and basic amenities (I have heard of cases in Pamplona that have taken up to fifteen years), this executive order placed no obstacle in the path of squatters who could get a foothold on private property. It assured them that within ten years the land would be theirs. From the perspective of most people, this would have been no different than their present reality. It is important to note that eventually all parts of this order but those dealing with reversion were rescinded by the Toledo government, no doubt for the contradictions introduced in protecting private property rights and the implicit backing it gave to violent land expropriations led by land traffickers and/or political opportunists.

Laws like the above did much to encourage invasions of private property. We will see in what follows how squatters and their lawyers often attempted to make their circumstances conform to the civil code and legislation passed to formalize informal properties. Economist Robert Webb and his colleagues, in analyzing legislation for the formalization of property from Prado to the present, concluded that legislation has tended to support informal land invasions (Webb et al. 2006). Only recently, with the exhaustion of state lands in many areas, has this implicit

support led to increasing confrontation between squatters and landowners. Hence, we ought not be too hasty in marking a distinction between Fujimori and his predecessors. The nearness to the 2000 elections and the changes that were made to the laws do seem conspicuous though, highlighting the political interests that accompany changes to property legislation.

It seemed that for every allegation that the opposition made against Fujimori, he was able to make the same allegation against his opponents, or, at least generate counter-information that made any allegation dubious. For every accusation he had a plausible response that the media he had bought was ready to write or broadcast. I wonder how the public was able to discern what the truth of any matter was with this type of media climate. But, if we accept that most were deceived, we underestimate the intelligence of the public and fall into that tempting patronizing fallback where society takes the blame for the abuses of its leaders. The implication of this position is that only honest leadership, and not public action, will lead us to a better condition.

What people did know was that Fujimori was in power and was ready to deliver to those who gave their allegiance to his style of rule, no matter what the consequences seemed to be. From what most people could tell, and he reinforced this constantly through his discourse, he was with the people against the corruption of past governments and the authoritarian proposals of left-leaning dictatorships. In practice, though, many of his postures and the practices of his government were



# HEDUARDO EN SU TINTA



Source: Caretas, February 13, 2000: 4 This cartoon features a distrustful old man discussing gerrymandering and the use of schools to enlist people in a family lots program (Profam). The man makes a snide comment at the end saying: "Then they say that the government doesn't pay any attention to the education sector."

little different from previous governments, especially populist gestures to curry the support of the informal sector. And, he was effective in doing this. He had to be to

receive such tremendous support. Given the ends he and his cronies had gone to in order to stay in power, it may not have been wise to go against the grain.

Nonetheless, contradictions abounded in what Fujimori said and did and thousands were complicit in maintaining the impression that this complex network sought to create. In hindsight, Fujimori toed the neoliberal line and preached a populist refrain excellently, to such a degree, that his daughter, Sofia Fujimori, was just narrowly defeated by Ollanta Humala in the 2011 run-off for the presidency.

I would now like to turn to a brief discussion on the context of this research so that the reader might get a better sense of the reasons behind the fragmentary information that will be provided. There are limits to the accessibility of the truth and interesting questions about truth making that arise when one considers the case of the Nueva Rinconada. I also want to take this opportunity to talk about the morality of doing research in this context and what I believe should be the position of the researcher in cases similar to this one.

## Versions of the Truth in the Nueva Rinconada

The line between moral and immoral becomes blurred in the tale of the Nueva Rinconada—it is all a matter of perspective. These perspectives have become charged due to competing claims for the same land. If you have endured a life of struggle, hardship and privation, this is a story of the heroic struggle of the majority of Peruvians who fight for their own progress. In this case progress is attaining a property title, basic amenities, and access to public infrastructure. It is a fight for dignity, to quell the fire of resentment, to push back frustration and impotence, to

strike out against a system that pits all against all and bars no holds. If you are one of the few that managed to get a leg up on others —purchasing some land that someday might become a windfall, or perhaps would allow you to supplement your income with yet another income— this is a story about how a few unscrupulous politicians, their clients and professionals swindled you and the ignorant masses out of the fruits of your labour and your livelihood. It is a story of how the law was broken and how the law has prevailed in a place where laws are enacted by and enforced for the powerful. Yet, that moral line that is based on dignity and respect re-emerges, popping up from time to time, despite the injunction that one ought to maintain a certain position no matter what or betray the cause.

Due to the contested nature of this story it is very unlikely that uncontested facts will ever become clarified. This might seem to be a problem for the investigator who seeks something close to a partial truth or some coherent narrative. Yet, as time passed, I began to realize that disinformation, or lack of information, or murkiness and confusion and the hope for progress are often bedmates. I felt like Kafka's K trying to figure out how to get into the castle, meeting people whose behaviour and motives evaded me much of the time, and ever so often finding myself with someone who I would desperately cling to hoping that they would somehow help me decipher my surroundings and the workings of these surroundings. I kept wondering: who or what is behind all of this?

The following is by consequence and probably for posterity always going to be a partial account. If anything, this account sheds light on the politics and the

assumption that there is a coherent perspective of the world that workers, the middle class, or the elite have. Social realities are lived as cacophonous claims on an objective truth that multiple voices convince others of possessing. It reveals that common people hear varying accounts and that the discrepancies inherent in different accounts are part of the everyday life of most people who live in Lima, and most likely other parts of the country. These accounts talk to one another, responding to the claims that different positions make with certain actors possessing more nuanced versions. Being informed, from this viewpoint, is more about the tactical expression and adoption of certain discourses, to varying degrees, than about the origin and veracity of the information that one possesses. In general, those who are more aware of different viewpoints are in an extremely advantageous position vis-à-vis local and extra-local power relations. With the knowledge and manpower they possess, they are able to confuse or suppress certain viewpoints. Being poor in many senses is being impoverished about the knowledge and inner-workings of social groups that seek to monopolize and traffic (dis)information. But, as will become clear, even the privileged have to work to have their voices heard.

Figuring out what is the truth, thus, is about gaining a more accurate sense of the field of possible viewpoints that can and do exist within a certain social space, or networks of social relations. It involves discerning individual and group motives, which, as will become apparent, is and can only be speculative. The more viewpoints one is capable of seeing, the more capable one becomes of interpreting information, oral and written, that is in constant circulation. What will become apparent in the history of the Nueva Rinconada is the manner in which information

can be suppressed or distorted. At the same time, a plurality of viewpoints emerges. So, unlike situations where a certain discourse becomes hegemonic because of media control (cf. Chomsky and Herman 1988), what we see occurring in the Nueva Rinconada is a proliferation of viewpoints espoused by different actors with different motives. As we saw in the previous discussion of the coverage of invasions of this time, speculation about who was behind the invasions and why they occurred was difficult to nail down. Paradoxically, while people adhere to the hegemonic depiction of progress promoted by the press, they simultaneously disregard press coverage or versions of the property dispute that do not favour their position. Official positions, in this context, are open for interpretation, often because of the tangled promises and inability to deliver on those promises. To give an example, while there are instances where state institutions intervened with the intention of resolving the conflict, or legal cases ruled in favour of the property owners, these events are frequently underplayed or represented as cases when the authorities were bought by the property owners.

What emerges is that behaviours of *dirigentes*, property owners and squatters are understood according to a network of associated behavioural ascriptions. Many leaders complained that personal appetites had destroyed the unity of people in the area. Collaborators spoke of a virulent form of egoism that led leaders to turn on their people. If one spoke to one leader of a sector it was not uncommon to hear another criticize them for being authoritative, using their position for personal gain, or being incompetent for x reason. If one relayed this view, the response was that so-and-so was envious, or bitter because their attempt to turn their position into an

opportunity for personal gain had been spoiled by them. Ambitious newcomers sought to unseat community leaders because they suspected that they were stealing from the community, or that if in power, they could surely do better. People who invaded land marked for the growth of another community called those who dumped rocks in their water barrels greedy and insensitive. I wondered what made this moral commentary possible and I also noted that it did not just apply to the local leadership or the desire of some to have a lot of their own. Rather, there appeared to be a moral undercurrent to assessing the conditions in which a particular form of progress has been occurring. The area looked more like a landscape of nuclei that were all vying against one another but working together at times to improve their living conditions.

The problem of distrust, or *disconfianza*, is one that is a result, we will see, of a combination of deleterious social behaviours like greed, ambition, selfishness, boldness, and envy to name some of the more prominent behavioural ascriptions that are ironically either normalized or touted as qualities that a person must possess in the very idiosyncratic form of capitalism that has taken root in Lima (I will discuss this in more depth in the last chapter). I feel that there is a strong correlation between the particular type of possessive individualism promoted by liberal and neoliberal economics and these behaviours. In other words, there is a practical base to these moral behavioural ascriptions. That they are negatively viewed suggests that there is a foil to these behaviours, a rejection of this reality. This is a critical flaw in theories about the culture of poverty because it shows that the underprivileged are, contrary to the belief of Lewis, quite moral (as his own

ethnographic material demonstrates, curiously enough). The existence of a darker underbelly to the competitive progress promoted by liberal and neoliberal capitalism tends to complicate the work of those who promote self-help as a solution to poverty (recall Mangin and the co-optation of Turner's ideas around housing). At times, it looks as if the expectation that one is lying works to generate situations where people act pre-emptively, thus leading to evasive behaviours (which preclude cooperation), or in the worst case, reactive responses (he/she is surely skimming from donations, so I will do it too). It seems as if these behaviours, or the belief that they underlie the behaviour of others, is leading to a fragmentation of communities. It acts as a complement to exhortations that people ought to manage themselves and look out for their own good. Self-regulation is not only about being hygienic, or looking for the best choices to improve one's odds on the job market, it also involves a myriad of other behaviours that are inimical to social communities that simultaneously hold equality and mutual benefit as ideals. Looking out for oneself involves an ongoing negotiation of individualistic and community demands.

The condemnation of envy, egoism, boldness and related behaviours represent a ray of hope, calling into question more hegemonic liberal notions of economic progress. Discursively, progress was understood by my collaborators as referring to having a home, which is a positive and practical pursuit, thus making it appealing. Yet, some people are still able to note the negative impacts of a more individualistic pursuit of progress that tends to undermine the values of communities working together to procure land titles, services, and public infrastructure. This complicates

Gramsci's notion that practical experiences of social classes generated a practical consciousness which kept them passive and inactive and that intellectuals possessed a theoretical consciousness that ought to be used to guide oppressed classes. The existence of these discourses on inimical social behaviour, however, underscores their presence as a part of current social practice that cuts across classes and social groups. The belief that things could be different, that people should work together, that materialism is vacuous, etc., is the hope of this time. It is a peoples' theoretical understanding. Gramsci was correct that all political action for change must be rooted in an ethical field and that these would lead to political action (Gramsci 1971:333).

It therefore becomes of significant interest when this desire for collective action to set straight the social ills that underprivileged people encounter is absorbed into the discourse of political parties. Political parties use this theoretical understanding in their media work to persuade the masses that they are fighting corruption, crime, etc., although simultaneously enact legislation which ensures perpetuation of the inequality of resource distribution and opportunities that are generating these behaviours. The positive valuation of self-help and survival practices in the informal economy are two ways in which hegemonic groups and ideological projects like that of neoliberalism co-opt the efforts of the subaltern into projects that work against their interests.

The complexity of the moment, really a period of time, made me think about the pieces that are left for the historian. Official history misses the inside or



backstage of what people decide to tell the journalist, the anthropologist, or how to make sense of the pieces left behind. The interpretive process, as I will discuss briefly, is one in which an ethical position must be taken –we either bear witness, or we omit the pieces that do not fit our political agenda. Trying to find a more “objective” ground is anything but straight-forward, if possible at all, and will often entail the betrayal of those we encounter. However, the researcher should work toward mutual understanding and balance, to use that privilege of being able to move between positions to give insight to varying positions, to generate a position of aporia whereby actors are forced to reassess their assumptions and the validity of their position for overcoming intransigent and dehumanizing positions.

Despite wanting to work to generate trust, it was hard to deny the circumstances of the Nueva Rinconada. Continued manipulations for political or personal reasons had left the area charged with much rancour and distrust. In the Nueva Rinconada, many of my collaborators told me that the secret service had sent spies into their communities to figure out what was happening and who was leading the people. A spy, as one collaborator pointed out, could be anyone, even the humble peasant woman from rural Peru. People even joked that I could be a spy. What this shows is that even if one wants to overcome distrust they are brought onto the local stage where roles and motivations seem prescribed, for better or for worse.

This belief is well-founded because in the beginning the landowners infiltrated the meetings of the people who began to squat on their lands. I was shown pictures

taken of local *dirigentes*. Many of the charges pressed by police for armed robbery, or land usurpation, were a result of spies passing information on to landowners and public prosecutors. Interviews with *dirigentes* also revealed that they had been gathering intelligence on the property owners. In effect, boundaries between groups were permeable membranes, allowing certain information to pass and other information to become trapped in vacuoles, often by design.

I tried to contact as many people as possible to compile this oral history. The major obstacle is that I had to search for people and get other people to pass along phone numbers of people with whom they felt I should speak. Many of the original *dirigentes* had disappeared from the area, left the country, or moved to more comfortable areas. Much of the information that I acquired was not volunteered. Many expected that I had some previous knowledge of what had happened. In order to ask a question, you have to know already what information you are seeking. Much of my time was spent listening to people in casual conversations trying to glean clues that I could later attempt to phrase as questions or comments that would illicit clarification. I began to feel that the oral history I sought to compile was a fool's errand, and was told so by my collaborators.

To get to the point where people trusted me, as I mentioned previously, I had to prove that I was really on their side. I always felt that information was being withheld. In hindsight, though, I realize that each person had their version of events with some versions being more elaborate than others. Those who were not politically involved were often hesitant to opine, while others warned me to be

careful about what I said or asked. Yet, I was often told that there was no personal danger for me. It was hard to know what to think of all these countervoices.

The most common position in the Nueva Rinconada is that of the majority, those who squatted on land there, despite factions that may have existed in the beginning. By talking to the landowners, one is perceived as being a traitor. Not until I was wrapping up this investigation did I decide to search for the landowners. In fact, this will be the first time I have expressed what I think about the situation openly. Now that I have reached a point where I can no longer investigate and am forced to write, I must make an assessment that is fair to all who shared their views with me. How does one be fair to everyone? Is it possible?

The answer to this question eluded me for some time, however by chance I happened to read *The Brothers Karamazov* by Fyodor Dostoyevsky whereupon a position that satisfied me was presented in the famous speech of the Elder Zosima in his last living moments. Zosima, in discussing whether one human has the right to judge another human, says:

No man on earth can judge a criminal until he understands that he himself is just as guilty as the man standing before him and that he may be more responsible than anyone else for the crime. Only when he has understood this can he become a judge (Dostoevsky 2003 [1880]:429).

The notion that we are all responsible to some degree for the state of affairs of this world is a theme that works its way through Dostoevsky's brilliant snapshot of a Russia in the process of defining itself as a modern nation-state vis-à-vis the civilizing force of a Europe giddy with dazzling material and political changes. We

are all placed on trial at the end of the novel. It is the trial of socialism, monastic life, the Russian aristocracy, modernists, the peasantry, the hedonistic, the righteous, the meek, and the saintly. The verdict is really left unresolved, befitting for a contemporary world that still has to understand its many contradictions.

Nevertheless, by accepting that we may all share some degree of responsibility, the possibility is opened to interrogate everyone as being somehow complicit in the ills of the contemporary world. Such a position also eliminates the political machinations of various interest groups who seek to impose their representations of events, in many cases covering abuses of authority or superficial understandings of certain positions. The notion of universal responsibility invites everyone to reflect on their degree of responsibility in a conflict, which is important if any type of reconciliation or emergence of a more complete consciousness is to occur.

The temptation of a situation like that of the Nueva Rinconada is to be swayed by the material conditions of the people living in the area and fall into a knee-jerk apologetic for their actions, pitting the “good” poor against the “evil” rich. This is what Fujimori and his supporters did. This posture gets us nowhere in understanding what is happening and how we might go about changing society so that things could be more just. In fact, it is a position that works toward continued social injustice occluding the contradictions of both the rich and the poor. It is a dehumanizing stance, in short, because it denies the humanity of both groups and forecloses any nuanced understanding of what happened and continues to happen. It is an easy way out and only results in the prolongation of a social standoff.

As soon as one begins to pit the poor against the rich in their discourse, or vice-versa, both sides retreat into their trenches. This ineffectual way of communicating differences does not generate conditions where each side may assess their degree of responsibility in problems which have a nefarious effect on one or the other party, and most frequently both parties. The recent Presidential elections in 2011 and the posturing of privileged groups in Lima and the provinces against the south-central provinces and lower income sectors of Peru brought into bold relief the social rift between the haves and have-nots in Lima, and Peru as a whole. The existence of this rift makes it incumbent upon those with knowledge to facilitate understanding and take action in a way befitting to their circumstances.

My position consciously denies the Hegelian slave-master dialectic and Marx's derivative notions of dialectical materialism. I do not think that we need view a slave and a master as locked in opposition and that the only exit is for the slave to overthrow the master. Such a view is famously taken up in revolutionary doctrine (e.g. Fanon 1952), yet we must question it. Such a prescriptive solution, however tempting, is overly simplistic and is not based on the possibilities suggested for change in a complex social reality. The truth, I will argue at this moment, is that most of us are slaves to our ambitions or drives to prosper. The drive to progress, in other words, is a part of most of us, and, therefore, must be seen as a problem that involves all of us. In stating things this way, I do not wish to downplay the very real global struggle for dignified treatment. Instead of defending one side or the other, I want to direct my attention toward what does not allow us to consider one another as living beings equally entitled to dignified treatment.

The following account uses the names of professionals and politicians who had a position of authority or power in the events that would unfold in the Nueva Rinconada because they have chosen to become public figures. I do not aim to indict individuals, rather I seek to indict cultural norms and values, drawing constructive attention to the circumstances that the majority of Peruvians endure.

The guiding spirit of this compilation and what I say about the lives of people that live in Pamplona is my attempt to bring about some understanding, and hopefully, the possibility for empathy and reconciliation. If other people gain insight or encouragement from such an effort, this will have been a success in my eyes. Let us look at the Nueva Rinconada before people decided to move there en masse.

## Chapter 6 —The Invasion

The multiple invasions that would mark the incursion of waves of people into the Rinconada had to start somewhere. People had to organize and they had to have a reason for moving into this area. The movement should not be seen as an isolated event. The Nueva Rinconada was one of many invasions that were purported to have been condoned by Fujimoristas near the re-election campaign of Alberto Fujimori in 2000. I have shown that Fujimori's campaign politicized the invasions, providing a rapid and visible solution to some of the squatters' requests for government intervention; however, others like those in the Nueva Rinconada were left behind.

In San Juan de Miraflores the representative of Fujimori's offshoot party *Vamos Vecino* was Adolfo Ocampo. He entered his third term as mayor in 1998 and was removed in 2002 with just months to go in his term. The charges against which he had to defend himself were financial irregularities and embezzlement of public funds. If the municipal council removed the mayor on these grounds, one can only imagine what the inferiors of the mayor may have been doing. We must, therefore, place the invasion within the context and practices of this municipal administration and its affiliation with practices that made Fujimorism synonymous with influence trafficking, embezzlement and abuse of power. The degree to which Mr. Ocampo had anything to do with the invasion is open for speculation; however, I will attempt to give the reader a sense of the debate that surrounds involvement of authorities in

the Nueva Rinconada. A certain “murkiness” remains from this time and persists, to some degree, to the present moment.<sup>24</sup>

At the same time, the invasions are part of a process of urban growth that has really existed in Lima and other cities since they were founded –they are part of that continual search for new opportunities on new frontiers. Many people came for the economic growth that would accompany the demographic growth that occurs with land invasions. The frontier of the city, then, like many frontiers, is recognized as an area of opportunity, of quick fortunes for the savvy.

To move onto the lands that were being used by the landowners for the purpose of raising pigs, among other agricultural practices, near the end of 1999, people had to organize and have some guarantee that there would be political support for their actions. Locally, people would have known that the area was private property by the signage that surrounded the area and that appeared inside the Nueva Rinconada. To discourage people more in 2000, the state only recognized land invasions until 1996 in 2000. However, as I have discussed previously, legislation was passed that made invasions of private property attractive. So, we must ask: Why did people decide to invade those lands? Surely, it must have seemed risky. The reasons, we will see, certainly crystallize, however they are far from what one would expect. Reasons, from a social perspective, are multiple and

---

<sup>24</sup> Perhaps, all reality is like that to some degree –only partial versions of some larger narrative that binds us together through history. Unfortunately, reality is not so abiding. Individual narratives weave in elements of larger narratives, sometimes contesting certain details, sometimes elaborating on larger narratives. People indicate their position on certain political and social issues in the Nueva Rinconada by adhering to particular narratives or eschewing certain elements.



cumulative in a social world where different versions of events simultaneously circulate.

But, to have reasons we must have voices. In this section I use the voices of many *fundadores*<sup>25</sup> and others to piece together the context and events that led up to the multiple invasions of December 31, January 4, 5 and later. Let us start with the story of Doña Maria. A stout greying woman with long wavy hair and brilliant eyes, she began to tell me her story after I helped her son remodel their shack. It was drizzling a bit when we started the interview. Intrigued, her son listened as he continued to put things away behind a partition.

Here is what Doña Maria, one of the original organizers of both the 1990 and 2000 invasion of the property belonging to the Asociación Agropecuaria de la Rinconada de Ciudad de Dios and posterior Asociación Agropecuaria Industrial La Rinconada (as of 1994), had to say about the organization of the initial group that would successfully gain a foothold in the hills of lands belonging to the association in January of 2000. She talks about the people that came to visit her fruit stand at the time.

D.M.: People came to complain. They said, "I have no land, they kicked me out." And, they cried, and I cried. They had gone everywhere. "I don't know what I will do," a women who came before said, "The rent, for a month, I pay 100, 100!? I don't know how I am going to pay it," she explained. So, I went to a man who was mayor. I can't say the name, heh? So, I said to him: "We want land because there is a lot, heh, and I don't live well with my husband, I wish I had land," I said to him, "There wouldn't happen to be any? And, that [land] is for us to enter." "Yes," he said to me, "Yes."

---

<sup>25</sup> *Fundadores* were the original people who moved into the area and were instrumental in the organization and administration of the communities in the Nueva Rinconada.

B.: In what year was that?

D.M.: Ten years ago, in the year 2000, before 2000, 99, that was in 99.

B.: During Fujimori's time?

D.M.: From the time of Fujimori, of Ocampo, Ocampo was mayor. I told him, hey, come on, I told him, as I knew where he lived...

(Doña Maria (early sixties), Interview recorded on May 23, 2010)

From here Doña Maria jumps back in time to 1989 and recounts the story of how she delivered flyers and signed up 50 people, the majority young men, to invade lands in what would become the Rinconada, which at the time was partly state land and partly private. Police threw her in jail for being involved in the organization of this invasion; however she was quickly released thanks to a police major who took her age into account. The property of this invasion belonged to the Cotrina family, who I am told by local landowners did not contest the squatters' presence on their land, eventually losing possession ten years later because of a statute of limitations on the usurpation of land. The association under the leadership of Mr. Gamarra and Mr. Montalvo took no action against such incursions and would eventually tell association members that they had to give up the lands in compensation for remnant lands,<sup>26</sup> which turned out to be one of many fabrications

---

<sup>26</sup> This is private land that was not accurately surveyed due to the use of an optical transit as opposed to the more accurate total station transits that came into use more recently. It has become the source of much conjecture with some *dirigentes* arguing that property owners bribed surveyors to enlarge their lands, thus reducing the size of state lands for which squatters could be conferred free land ownership. I consulted with an independent surveyor to see if a 10% error on a large piece of land is reasonable. According to him, the margin of error for a larger piece of land would be so small, that error should be minimal. Another *dirigente* clarified what had happened when he told me that the original lots that were registered did not contain all the land that the Association had bought but referred only to the lots that were surveyed. Therefore, the remnant that remained belonged to the Association as a whole and could be sold by the governing body or legal representative of this body.

and shady dealings in which the two would engage during their terms, according to local lore.

Later, I discovered that those who had generated this rumour were responsible for forging documents to vacate Mr. Montalvo as the President of the Association. Once in power, this group sold lots and apparently acquired new properties by placing their names on titles that had not been registered. Mr. Montalvo, according to other collaborators, is the most knowledgeable and honest of the association presidents. Such partiality is quite common among locals, making it very difficult to discern whose truth one is listening to, but, at same time, it shows how versions of events tend to coincide with personal and larger political interests, which are anything but clear to most who are not generating these rumours or positions. It does seem apparent that there were internal divisions within the Association that worked both with and against the squatters in ways that are far from apparent to even an interested outside observer. Many told me that things had become so murky here because of the desire to profit and control land in the area. Could it really be so simple, I thought? The intrigue in the Association certainly added another layer of speculation. Bearing these divisions in mind, let us continue with Doña Maria's account of her experience.

Doña Maria was one of the organizers of the invasion in 1990 and the invasion in 2000. Near the end of 1999, she had flyers and tickets (the type where one half remains with the person issuing the ticket and the other half is given to the person

---

The varying accounts of where this remnant originated reflects the general level of distrust among the population here.

who writes their name on the ticket) printed up. She gave some young women money for their bus fare, instructing them to go to Callao, Villa El Salvador, and Chorrillos (a province, and two adjacent districts) to deliver flyers in places where people walked (market areas, busy junctions, etc.) for people who needed land. The flyers gave information on the place and time that people would concentrate to make an attempt at entering the Nueva Rinconada. It was imperative that people coordinate on the specific date because as Doña Maria stated: “They were not going to permit the authorities to get their way, being that there was so much land thrown out over there for nothing.”

The idea that land was in disuse, or was simply not being used, was sufficient reason for people to invade. To understand this sentiment, we must put the invasion into a larger historical context. As the reader will recall, the policy of leaving the homeless to help themselves for the most part has been a constant since at least the 1950s in Peru. After promoting it for decades, then implicitly supporting it through legislation that grants title to people who by necessity establish their home in this manner, it is hypocritical to condemn what has become a normalized means of making a living and having a space for one’s family. For many, land that was not being used and vast was propitious for settlement. As it turned out, many more people arrived than were anticipated, between 300 and 500.

How a humble fruit vendor found money to print flyers, tickets, send people in buses, etc., remains a mystery. Yet, if public accounts of previous invasions are considered, the modus operandi shows various commissions organizing an invasion.

Doña Maria likely belonged to the propaganda commission whose duty it was to spread news of the invasion without drawing official attention, although she does suggest that the mayor had given his implicit approval. The actual date of the invasion is often kept secret.

This hypothesis gains strength when we consider news coverage of the invasions at the time. In a report on the rash of invasions that occurred in early 2000, journalists Marco Burga and Marianella Ortiz looked for the reasons why people decided to invade private property nationwide. They wrote:

A humble settler confirmed that neighbourhood *dirigentes* that work with the government signed up settlers for this invasion and assured them that the police would not intervene and that the Commission for Land Formalization [COFOPRI] would hand over their title deeds because the property owners had no documents that accredited them as such (Burga and Ortiz 2000:n/a).

The authors go on to reveal that landholders were told that if they wanted to guarantee their title deeds, then they should vote for Fujimori. When we put the invasion into its context, these assertions seems likely. There was a tight election race and the opposition was trying every legal manner possible to disqualify Fujimori as a candidate and denounce his mafia's attempts to win a third consecutive election.

In such a political climate, it was necessary to maintain a low profile. What we do know seems to confirm suspicions that the Fujimori government silently condoned the invasions, and it seems likely that people with channels to the administration were involved in the invasion of the Nueva Rinconada. From

accounts on both sides we know that property owners awaited the entrance of the invaders and, as we will see, repelled groups a number of times.

With the help of flyers and promoters, it was not long before rumours of an invasion spread. The movement of information between neighbours is one of the most common qualities of working class neighbourhoods in Lima. If you did not get a flyer, then a neighbour or someone in the market passed on the information that there was going to be an invasion on the 31st of December. In reality, there were two failed attempts before the successful attempt on the eve of the 6th of January. Most of the people who would invade land were mere *marcadores*, or land stakers, who risked nothing compared to the intrepid few that entered the night of January 5. The presence of more people, however, worked to bolster the strength of the invasion and deter the police from executing eviction orders. Those who did participate in the invasion are locally venerated, being referred to as *fundadores*, or founders. Many of those who I tried to speak with about this history were *fundadores*. It is worth noting that *fundadores* often gripe about the ungrateful attitude of *marcadores* and those who have bought lots from traffickers, or weary landholders. We will see more of what happened near the end of December, shortly.

The original group who would move onto the land was by no means in the dark. One of the *fundadores*, now a faithful adherent to an evangelical sect, confessed:

But before we entered we saw a plan here that the municipality [of San Juan de Miraflores] had said very clearly, that they were not up-to-date with their lands [talking about land taxes], that those lands were thrown out, practically.

There were people from the very same municipality that knew that. And they have entered here to invade, as well. People say the mafia, heh, from below. And so we saw the plan and based on that plan we entered through the hill on the right and the hill on the left, which is here.

(Sonja (early to mid-fifties), Interview recorded on November 14, 2010)

Here, once again, we have one of the original roughly 300 who managed to enter and gain a foothold, telling how they had inside information and how people in the municipality had provided information and participated in the invasion. The part about landowners not paying taxes could never be confirmed because when I went to the municipality and looked for records from years prior to 2010 I was told that such records were either destroyed or in the hands of workers and officials from previous administrations. Nobody provided any evidence that taxes were not being paid, while landowners offered to, and did provide receipts to demonstrate that they had, in fact, paid taxes. Local *dirigentes* who had bought their land instead of placing their bets on the promises of lawyers with dubious intentions corroborated the legality of the land ownership of landowners, as well. Such leaders recognized from the beginning, after going to the public registries, that the landowners had clear title to the land in the Nueva Rinconada. Others *dirigentes* lauded those who bought initially for their pragmatism.

That workers from the municipality facilitated the invasion and became involved is believable. One local counsellor was rumoured among *dirigentes* to be trafficking lots in the Nueva Rinconada while exercising a position in the municipality. Many of my collaborators frequently told me that everyone knew that so-and-so was corrupt, and that they could not understand why people believed

them. The blame for being scammed, then, is placed solidly on the solicitor. The answer to their bafflement is not so complex. Some professionals and leaders, unfortunately, also are unscrupulous professionals who possess knowledge that places them in an advantageous position. Knowledge, experience and eloquence lead people to trust what appear to be people in the know and people committed to the people. The abundance of disinformation (which could easily be misinformation), however, makes it very difficult for an inexperienced worker with a family and responsibilities to confirm rumours. They may not even know that so-and-so is a scoundrel until it is too late. Or, perhaps they think that it is better to have a scoundrel on one's side if one is going to deal with scoundrels. Thus, one is forced to depend on those who possess know-how.

One gets the sense that while this behaviour is widely condemned, it is also colours how transactions of all sorts occur. The behaviour alluded to above is what novelist Mercedes Cabello de Carbonera decried in 2000 among public servants for "whom public affairs are seen as a personal patrimony of which they ought to take advantage." She described Peru as a country where "...the Minister robs, the fiscal cashier speculates, the deputy sells out and the secretary puts her price on her services." (Cabello de Carbonera in Huber 2008:59) The state at this time, and to some extent now, functions as what has been termed by Deborah Poole as a kleptocracy (Poole 2000). Analysts concur that the weakening of the state and the elimination of political opponents during the Fujimori era allowed his mafia to effectively capture control of the state (Tanaka 2005).



Ludwig Huber views the talk around corruption as a discourse, in a Foucauldian sense, permitting discussion around a particular theme in a particular manner for a specific end (Huber 2008:66–67). This argument suggests that such talk is productive in the sense that it generates certain expectations and ideals around what would be effective governing principles. Huber draws our attention to the work that negative characterizations and stigmas have on populations and nations; they work to elevate the privileged and occlude the means by which such privilege has been gained. In what seems like a rehashing of colonial discourses, the failure of developing countries is the result of their inability to adopt more civilized behaviour patterns. The failure of this discourse to work, though, in the sense that it might eliminate corruption, leads Huber, rightly, to consider the practice of corruption in Peru.

Huber, in looking at practices in the education system in Ayacucho, found that a similar pattern holds true for the country at large. Extensive social networks were being carried over into institutional practices in Peru. So, one could use origin, friends, relatives, etc., to gain access to particular people, arriving at mutually beneficial “arrangements”. He noted that the practice involves a high degree of social dexterity in fixing agreements with the right people. He argues that the division that might exist between Weberian bureaucracies, that separation between a private and public sphere, is not intact in a place like Peru. Unlike the older version of patronage, neo-patronage, the type that has existed since the early 1980s in Peru, sees the middle class and bureaucracy tending patron-client networks (Huber 2008:137–145).

While I may concur with Huber's view that a cultural approach to corruption is necessary, I think that the consequence for social relations and the public who must rely upon bureaucracies throughout their lives makes a moral condemnation appropriate. I would make this argument in the context of developed nations as well. When one considers the effect that informal negotiations have on the trust that people place in their *dirigentes*, their institutions, or their local politicians, the behaviour seems beneficial only to those who acquiesce to the passing patron-client network that has appropriated public institutions for its benefit. Such practices can only contribute to the political fragmentation of the public sphere and loss of faith in public institutions because it increases cynicism, distrust, short-term tenuous social connections, opportunism, etc. These values, it should be noted, are against commonly held notions that people ought to work together, honesty is beneficial, etc. reflected in the daily talk of subordinate groups. Much of the confusion and intransigence seen in the Nueva Rinconada is a consequence of the complex functioning of this neo-patronage system. Let us continue with the history of the Nueva Rinconada.

Many people commented that they were unaware that the landowners, also known as the *chancheros*, or pig farmers, owned the vacant lands in other parts of the area. If one owned land, many believed one ought to use it, otherwise, it was clearly in disuse and therefore available. This belief suggests that many feel that land ought to be used for social purposes if it has no other productive use, an allusion to the Constitution of 1979. This belief was fed, or perhaps generated, by local lawyers, local politicians, and *dirigentes* for motives about which we can only

speculate. The legal and political climate of the time may have led many to believe that there was a hope of invading the lands and receiving some sort of state intervention to resolve the dispute in favour of the squatters. However, it is hard to deny that there were also sentiments of indignation behind the invasion. Sonja, one of the original leaders of the group that pushed into the Nueva Rinconada, expresses the sentiment that many felt at the time.

And they said that this settlement, that is here now, this hill is deserted, that one part belongs to the state and the other part belongs to the pig farmers, that have bought [the land] for a miserable price of 50 cents, and, they are taking over the rest of the land that they have not bought, state land. And, people passed word, those that don't have land, those that are lodged in their parents' house, have to invade the hill, heh, so that we can live there because the pig farmers, the pigs are not going to have more opportunity than us. Those pig farmers there have a house. There are only pigs there. There is a lot of land, to live on. I said, well, I don't have somewhere to live, so I decided to come.

(Sonja, Interview recorded on November 14, 2010)

At first glance this seems sensible. It gets more interesting when one reads papers and listens to the press coverage when it comes to sentiments like that cited above. I used the word "indignation," whereas the noun used by many journalists, who also favour the new neoliberal Peru, is "*resentimiento*"<sup>27</sup>. People are usually resentful because they have failed in the game of social climbing. As a consequence, they seek to undermine the successes of others. The noun "envy" would also work to explain the behaviour of Sonja. This theme recurs frequently. My point here is to question why it could not be seen as indignation, frustration, confusion or any other combination of nouns. The process at work is not dissimilar from that described by

---

<sup>27</sup> Resentment.

Elaine Scarry in her explanation of what allows humans to wage war upon one another, or what allows the torturer to torture another human being. She argues that language works to silence or dissimulate the suffering of another human being (Scarry 1985). I suggest that a similar process works in the media and social practice to numb the pain and indignation of social inequality in Peru.<sup>28</sup>

Eager to learn more about why people had invaded, I searched for Dr. Manuel Robles, one of the original lawyers hired by the squatters in the Nueva Rinconada to help resolve their problem. Lawyers were changed on numerous cases when locals lost faith in their effectiveness. The following excerpts come from an interview with him and two other acquaintances on June 7, 2010.

The invasion occurred as the result of a natural process of expansion in Lima whereby every generation children of people who have invaded land look for their own property, according to Dr. Robles. He explained that the majority of people in the Nueva Rinconada are from Ayacucho, displaced during the recent civil war. Later, in a document that was prepared to request public investment in the Nueva Rinconada, I noted in a footnote that the population was described as being mainly comprised of Ayacuchanos displaced by the dirty war.<sup>29</sup> Dr. Robles recounted how

---

<sup>28</sup> A meticulous application of Scarry's ideas would yield much fruit, especially in the area of social discourse around poverty and social inequality.

<sup>29</sup> Both oral testimony of original squatters who participated in the invasion and the diagnostic surveys of the population conducted by PEBAL (Dalguerre 2008, Uriarte 2009) reveal that the demography of the area is complex. Angela Dalguerre's survey of a sample of 126 lots of a sample size of 1260 lots found that 59.3% of the population was from Lima, whereas Beltrán Uriarte survey of 649 households found that 29.6% of the population was from Lima (including Callao). Once again, even with numbers it is hard to discern objective facts. Locals tell me that there are people from everywhere in the Nueva Rinconada, which was illustrated by both of the previous surveys. Some sectors have higher concentrations of people from outside of Lima, whereas others have lower concentrations. The claim that people here were displaced by the dirty war is true to some degree.

the lands had been abandoned and that the original conditions to upgrade lots with water, electricity had not been met. A visual inspection conducted by the municipality of Lima stating that only 10% of lots had been in use in 1987, also reinforced his claim that the land was in a state of abandonment prior to the invasion. He went on to explain that in January of 2010 penal cases against the original invaders had been archived.

Later, near the end of my fieldwork, when I began to talk to the landowners, things became clearer. In 2003, the initial legal demand based on the abandonment claim had been dismissed. The legal resolution went back to the 1973 registration of all the lots in the Association by the Cotrina family, who planned on developing the area but were unable to do so when the first government of Alan García passed a law freezing zonification changes in 1986. The title was legal or clear, in legal terms, and as far as the law was concerned the legal claims of Dr. Robles had no weight. This information was withheld from coordinators and households, while Dr. Robles and the General Secretary for Nuevo Pamplona at the time, Velasquez, continued to attempt to extract payments for a legal appeal that would not occur for roughly two more years. This stalling to share the legal finding, as one reads in the minutes of Nuevo Pamplona, generated tension with the group.

Some argue that land may be granted based on a statute of limitations on the invasion, but this argument is legally untenable too. While a penal case has a statute of limitations, the same does not hold true for a civil case, according to property

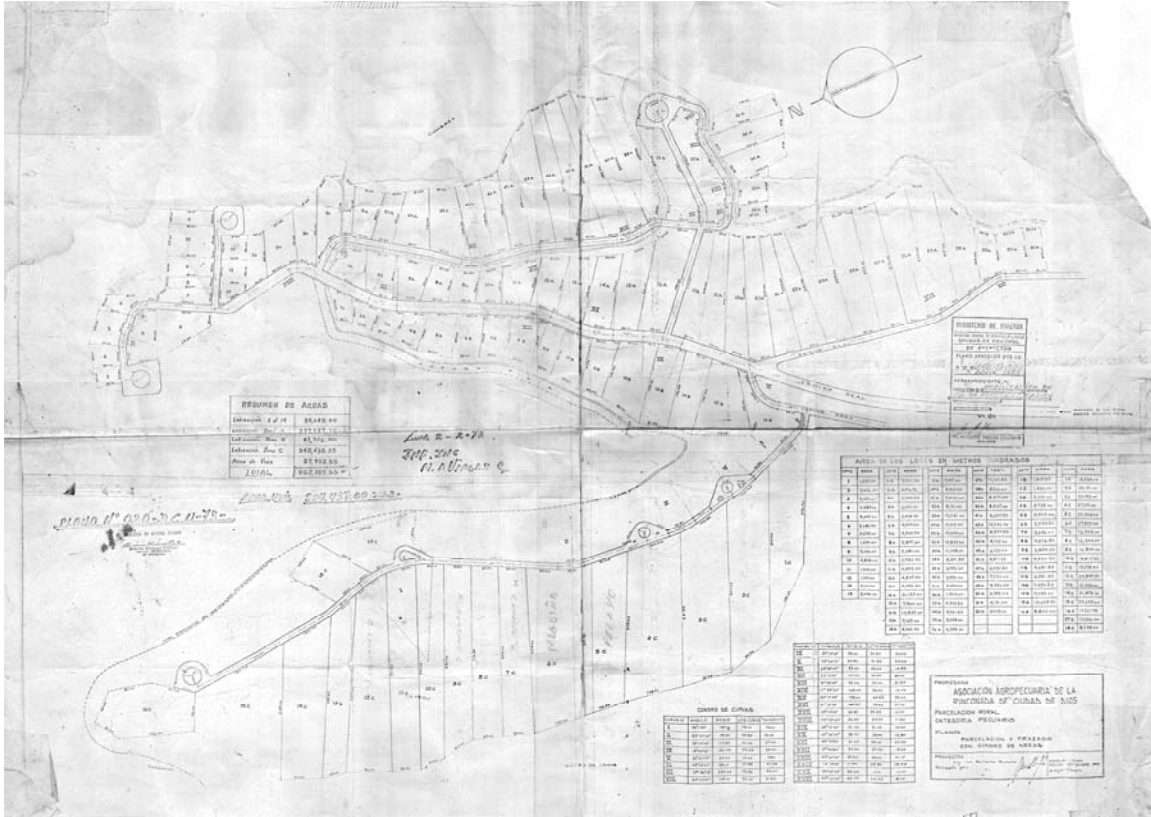


Figure 9 This is a scanned copy of the plan that was registered by the Cotrina family in 1973 in Bienes Nacionales (The National Trust) and the Municipality of Lima. Apparently, copies of the map disappeared from the National Trust. Fortunately, some association members and the municipality had a copy of the map on file that could be used for adjudication purposes. I was told in the municipality that this map forms the basis of all claims in the Rinconada. It is being used as a base survey to determine what belongs to whom. These lots and their extensions have been at the centre of the struggle in the area. Local landowners say that the dispute is over who gets the profits from the remnant area. Others told how some members of the association usurped the association, introducing more socios to guarantee their position. It is alleged that they erased the name of some members and took possession of others' lots. Needless to say, the zone is mired in positions like these. What would become Zona A is the area east of the road in the upper part of the map. Zona B corresponds roughly to the area on the west side of the road, and Zona C is the lower area, or the most westerly lots on this map.

owners. Everyone that is on private property has a civil case still pending with no statute of limitations.

When I commented on such information to my collaborators in the squatter group, some felt that they had been duped by Robles and other lawyers, while others boldly declared that ten thousand families against a hand full of property owners would eventually carry the day because the landowners were few compared

to the squatters. Some told me that Dr. Robles had been sincere, but that technical deficits in his case resulted in it being dismissed, which does seem plausible. Others alleged that the property owners had bought their justice. For every claim made by the squatters, there was a counterclaim being made by the property owners.

While I sympathized with the squatters, I could not help but recognize what might be interpreted as opportunism on the part of some lawyers and some *dirigentes*. More recently, a lawsuit based on the argument that property in the Nueva Rinconada is superimposed with property from the adjacent district of Surco was dismissed, based once again on the fact that the disputed property sale was registered in National Assets. Many of my collaborators explained that such cases were ways of extracting money and hope from people for the benefit of a handful of people that promote these law suits.

Authorities from the Municipality and representatives of the utility companies, have publicly declared that the land in the area is mostly private property and that they cannot intervene until the squatters and landowners resolve their differences. Local *dirigentes* at the time of this investigation still used the abandonment claim to support their possession of land here and evoked the hope of state expropriation, despite the first case being dismissed and the recognition that state expropriation could not occur in instances where squatters had charges pending or where land had been illegally occupied. Given the ever-changing system of tort law in Peru, it is easy to see where confusion can arise, or where hopes come from that legislation may be modified to favour the squatters.

It is noteworthy that the abandonment claim was part of the original reason why people invaded private property in the Nueva Rinconada. This abandonment claim, the social cost of evicting squatters (possible deaths on both sides), as well as the political benefit in not removing people provided the hope that many squatters would cling to in the initial years of the invasion.

Adolfo Ocampo was mayor during this time period, and, of course, had access to land ownership documents and knowledge of who paid land taxes in the municipality. He could have clarified many of the contentious points surrounding the invasion. Doña Maria, however, makes specific mention of a visit to his home and his explicit approval of the invasion. It is impossible to know what his intentions may have been at the time.

During his 2010 campaign I witnessed the common practice of inviting closer members of his campaign to his home. Other collaborators told me that it was understood that the mayor was behind the invasion and had given his implicit support to earn votes. Many of the original *dirigentes* in a front associated with President Fujimori found their way into top administrative positions in his present government. It is doubtful that one will get evidence more reliable than a participant who states the invasion had a nod of approval from the incumbent mayor; but the theory that Ocampo condoned the invasion becomes more plausible because in 2010 Ocampo won the municipal elections thanks in large part to the support he gave to finding a solution to the problem in the Nueva Rinconada.



Another *dirigente*, Miguel (early sixties), in referring to the time period after the invasion, remarked that people from his community were brought like “rabbits” to political rallies in Fujimori’s 2000 election bid –a practice that I saw repeated with the recent APRA government with a rally for peace in November of 2009. He told me that a person from La Molina, one of the most affluent neighbourhoods in Lima, showed up to organize people. Miguel continued to tell me that everyone was aware of the game they were playing, but it was the result that they were after. A collaborator of mine, when pushed for an explanation as to why she was mobilizing people from her sector and others that participated in a government workfare project for an APRA rally for peace, explained that it was a way of showing her gratitude and acted as an assurance of continued assistance. Conveniently enough, a bus was provided to mobilize mostly people who were participating in a Construyendo Perú project in her sector. It is important to note here that the poor are not clients out of ignorance, but more out of necessity –either you play the game, or state officials pass you by. Being an obedient client has awards that go beyond the immediate moment. In a context dominated by patronage, *dirigentes* also accrue political capital with such gestures, which can be redeemed in their sector and used to trampoline them into the municipal and national political scene. Such practices start from the top and work their way down. For many *dirigentes* playing this game is a necessary evil if they want to make improvements in their sectors or get assistance for more vulnerable members of their communities.

Initially, the largest conglomeration of sectors adopted the name “Perú 2000” in an attempt to court Fujimoristas. To their dismay, the famous Vladivideos, which

captured Fujimori and Montesinos bribing politicians, tv personalities and businessmen, were leaked, leading to the eventual frustration of Fujimori's third unconstitutional term in power.

Oscar, one of the *dirigentes* who approached Federico Salas for help explained that the Prime Minister<sup>30</sup> assured him that he was going to speak to Fujimori about their situation and that a solution would be found on a Tuesday. Martha Moyano, sister of the famed activist and community leader María Elena Moyano, was scheduled to visit the Nueva Rinconada that week on Sunday. In the interim, the famous Vladivideos were leaked, effectively closing this negotiation route for good. Oscar recalled that he and others had to explain to the community how their investment in the paperwork to meet the Prime Minister had been in vain. Such disappointments would become a consistent pattern for the *dirigentes* of the Nueva Rinconada, slowly eroding their credibility.

Miguel argued that the incumbent mayor had nothing to do with the invasion, which is possible, but given that numerous *dirigentes* and squatters are not shy about signalling the involvement of the incumbent authorities at the time, it is hard to know what to believe. We have already discussed the political spectacle and propaganda opportunity that invasions like the Nueva Rinconada provided for the Fujimori regime and their political opponents.

While the police did intervene in both cases, mainly because they have to attempt to dislodge invaders to protect the constitutional rights of property owners,

---

<sup>30</sup> Salas was Prime Minister between July 28, 2000 and November 21, 2000.

the efforts in San Juan de Miraflores failed. Landowner and squatter versions concur that these efforts failed because the landowners were humble folk from the provinces, whereas in a controversial case in Villa El Salvador where the owners were of a prominent Peruvian family, the Bustamantes, a political solution was found as we saw in Chapter 5. The latter effort resulted in the death of 5 invaders. Nelly Moscoso, a local landowner, in the same article alleges that a local councillor, Fabio Menacho Barrientos, was behind the invasion of her property. In his own defense, the councillor states that he was not in Lima when the said invasion took place. He claimed that the municipality had sent the police to the area once they were alerted that the invasion had taken place. He goes on to state that “the municipality has always supported the president of the Association of Agriculture Owners of the Rinconada, Ciudad de Díos, in judicial statements, the levelling of earth, among other things (Aylas 2000c:11).”

The municipality had been so helpful that the president at the time of the invasion would eventually muster up the courage, once Fujimori was out of power, to publicly accuse Mr. Ocampo in an open letter dated March 5, 2002, which ran in the local popular press of having “by order of his bosses, promoted and supported the invasion of properties (Montalvo 2002:n/a).” Mario Montalvo Espinoza is much more adamant in his accusations reiterating in various forms the relationship between Mr. Ocampo and the mafia-like populist and authoritarian practices of Fujimori and his entourage. He goes on to question how Mr. Ocampo managed to escape unscathed despite video evidence of him accepting bribes.

In spite of all the testimony to the contrary, Miguel and others commented how Mr. Ocampo had always helped the poor. Nonetheless, there are groups that openly accuse the mayor of acts of corruption. Local priests and nuns also told me that Fujimori backed the invasion and that the municipality in the area was run by a mafia. Anecdotes of ex-workers who witnessed daily acts of corruption abound locally. A slim 20% of people in the municipality pay their taxes, compared to other more transparent municipalities, like Chorrillos, where up to 80% pay their taxes (Adolfo Ocampo, oral communication in public discourse in Nueva Rinconada on February 5, 2011).

At the very least, the mayor was aware that the invasion would take place and took no action to prevent the event, whereas other mayors, particularly Mr. Pumar of Villa El Salvador, did act upon such information, albeit to little or no avail. Mr. Ocampo later stood to gain political capital from the certificates of possession (which were a costly 45 soles at first) that he would emit to the squatters in 2002. Workers in the municipality were involved directly in the orchestration of the invasion and in succeeding events that would unfold in which local leaders stood to gain from having one foot in the invasion and one foot in the municipality. It is safe to say that anyone who squats on private property is in for an almost impossible legal battle to wrestle that property away from the original owners, especially in an aggressively neoliberal political climate. But, the Fujimori government may have generated some hope with legislative changes it made just prior to the early 2000 invasions. As many household and community leaders would comment, many people make a living off of the suffering of people in the Nueva Rinconada. This, for

many, is really the criminal and reprehensible part of local politics —using the needs and aspirations of the poor for personal gain.

Only through tremendous persistence did I get to speak to Adolfo Ocampo, Dr. Robles and some of the other original *dirigentes*. When I did, they were by no means willing to provide any written evidence for the claims that they made, for example, there were no charges against the community, the landowners had abandoned their lands and had no claim to the lands, or that landowners were unscrupulous and set unreasonable prices for the sale of their lands, to name but a few claims that were discredited with written documentation that landowners were able to furnish and confessions of squatters and *dirigentes* that had grown tired of the opportunism of their peers, professionals and politicians.

When I did get to speak to Mr. Ocampo (November 28, 2010) he described the occupation of the Nueva Rinconada as a natural process in the city that occurs every 5 to 10 years when youth look for a place of their own. He explained that in 2000 about 100,000 families took over free spaces in Lima South. Here, we note a parallel with the version told by Mr. Robles, namely that the event was spontaneous and part of a natural process of urban growth.

The response from private property owners was almost immediate. In Villa El Salvador, many of the families were relocated to Ventanilla to an area that would become known as Ciudad Pachacútec. The explanation that I was given for the abandonment of people in the Nueva Rinconada was that:

In making this transfer of people to Ventanilla, the people of the Nueva Rinconada were not included because they were in a pocket, in a little hole, in a hole of sorts, and their presence was not noticed practically.

(Adolfo Ocampo, Interview recorded on November 28, 2010)

So, somehow, the local coordinators who pushed invasions across different districts and had links with Fujimori's party had no knowledge of people who remained hidden in a little hole. Somehow, roughly 10,000 households who drew the attention of the media from the beginning were barely noticed. When it became clear that these people were there to stay, after unsuccessful attempts to fend them off and oust them, Mr. Ocampo decided to help them out to "avoid misfortunes." He granted certificates of possession to establish that people were living on the land in the Nueva Rinconada and attest to the time people had been occupying the land for future negotiations with the landowners.

The most popular mayor in the short history of San Juan de Miraflores has been a public figure unafraid of standing shoulder to shoulder with the poor in his municipality. This grassroots approach to politics has allowed him to garner much support. In 2002, Mr. Ocampo marched in solidarity with the people of the Nueva Rinconada to extend government recognition of land invasions to 2004. In recent protests for the extension of the *Agua para Todos* (Water for Everyone) program of the APRA government in February of 2011, Mr. Ocampo marched with those without water in his municipality.

Mr. Ocampo revealed later in the interview that he studied law and repeatedly stated that the state has a vested interest in protecting private property for both

national and international reasons. That the hand of Fujimoristas was behind the land invasions and that the timing was so close to his illegal re-election is highly conspicuous. Right after the invasion, Fujimoristas were in the settlement looking for favours, that as anyone here knows, must be repaid in kind. When discussing the present predicament of the Nueva Rinconada, Mr. Ocampo was quick to blame unscrupulous lawyers who worked with *dirigentes* to pull the wool over the eyes of locals. He distanced himself from Fujimori also, saying that he had only affiliated to access funding for his district.

Now, Mr. Ocampo recognizes that the only solution is to reconcile with property owners, involving state institutions like COFOPRI and religious organizations like PEBAL, to ensure that people in the Nueva Rinconada pay a fair price for the land that some have occupied in vain for over ten years. Their continued occupation and the improvements that the municipality and state in conjunction with locals have made in the form of roads and infrastructure has appreciated the value of properties since the invasion, meaning that property owners stand to gain from the sacrifices of squatters and the collaborative efforts of local governments and the state. If one starts to think about who stood to gain, it is hard not to recognize that everyone becomes suspect.

In this interview Mr. Ocampo made an effort to generate an impression of himself as a man of integrity among wolves. He painted himself as an ex-seminary student, become professor, become union leader, who with the support of locals eventually won a position as mayor. For joining with Fujimori, for practical reasons,

i.e., getting a larger budget for the district, he has become persona non grata for local unions and various groups that tend to share a sincere interest for the improvement of living conditions in the southern part of Lima. Unions in general were repressed under the ten years of Fujimori, with various union leaders being killed. That one can go from being a union leader to a supporter of a mafia that made populism, extortion, bribes, embezzlement and terror into everyday practices certainly raises doubts about the integrity of Mr. Ocampo. Nevertheless, he still enjoys popular support for his grassroots approach to local politics, being remembered by many for his public appearances in Pamplona.

Having studied law and having prior experience in these matters, Mr. Ocampo should have been the first to mobilize a preventative response, unless due to the political and legal climate of the time he felt that the squatters would carry the day. That he had no knowledge of the invasion is unlikely given that adjacent districts were tipped off in advance of this particular wave and that organizers who publicly promoted the invasion have stated that they had his implicit approval and that people from the municipality participated in and provided intelligence to the organizers of the invasion. It is no wonder that cynicism has become the predominant view of most Peruvians when it comes to politics. Let us take a look at how the invasion took place.



## Chapter 7 —Fighting for a Place to Call Home



Figure 10 Source: Donayre and Cumpa 2010 The map above is a detailed diagnostic map of the legal status of the Nueva Rinconada. For our purposes, we can see the location of Minas 2000 and the sectors that split away from it jutting out to the west. Perú 2000, eventually Nuevo

Pamplona, consisted of sectors that were south of Minas for the most part in the lower parts of the Nueva Rinconada. The Frente was an alliance of groups that were mostly in the northern half of the Nueva Rinconada. Villa San Juan is located on the western slopes of the hill that separates Zona C and Zona B on state lands, above the shaded outline, which represents the updated perimeter of the Nueva Rinconada.

The history of Nueva Rinconada is really multiple histories of different conglomerates of people that formed different groupings within this space. It is also the individual histories of people from Pamplona Alta and the rest of the country that were brought here by fortuitous news that an invasion was to take place. At the same time, political, economic, social and cultural forces come together here to make this history both like and unlike contemporaneous and prior invasions. What makes this land taking so distinct is that the invasion occurred on what was disputably private land.

As we will see, not all groups were certain that their invasion was occurring on state-owned land. Some might argue that squatters had to be aware of what they were doing, but as I have previously shown, the months and time around the invasion were times that were full of disinformation, hopes, and political currents that inexorably pushed the situation to a head.

As it turns out, the invasion was really multiple invasions that in the end resulted in squatters getting a foothold in the area. We start this section with the experiences of Chico, the first Secretary General of what would become Minas 2000. As we will see, Minas 2000 was one of the fronts that formed after the initial invasion. In the next chapter we will discuss how some emblematic communities of

the Nueva Rinconada came together. For now, let us turn to the details of how the invasion occurred.

Chico described the conditions under which he came to the Nueva Rinconada (Chico (mid-forties), Interview recorded on November 1, 2010). He remembered that a friend told him that people were invading in the Rinconada. People planned on invading lands that were empty, that were not being used, he told me. At that time, what is now Minas 2000 was empty. There was nothing there, and, if it was private property, nobody knew. Not only was the land empty, but Chico did not want to conform (*conformarse*) to a life of sharing a home with his mother-in-law. The negative assessment of being complacent points to a strong social prescription to accumulate wealth in Lima. Chico's admission illustrates the pressures to overcome one's situation and progress in the city and the work needed to push the horizontal and vertical growth of Lima.

This version is inconsistent with other versions that I received from other founders, like Sonja, who stated that she had seen plans indicating that Minas 2000 was on state land. It could reflect a cautious attitude or perhaps Chico was not part of the inner circle that was promoting the invasion. Minas 2000, in the beginning, was mostly state land. This fact lends credibility to what both Chico and Sonja said (Figure 10 above illustrates this fact). Founders of the state-owned portions of what was Minas 2000 told me that they were banished from the group to what was called "the hill." It could be that many were in the dark at the beginning and that if there

were maps they may have been misread or people may not have known where to draw the line that separated state from non-state land on the ground.

When squatters first moved into the Nueva Rinconada, they decided to occupy a prominent flat sandy tongue on Minas hill. Many of the original squatters told me how the property owners had only occupied the lower parts of the Nueva Rinconada where the main road was. Before this took place, Chico told me how many in the area were unaware that the first attempt took place shortly after Christmas in 2009. By the 31<sup>st</sup> of December, he recalled, he was back at his mother-in-law's home. Sonja, another participant in the original attempts to gain entrance into the Association lands, told me that on the 31<sup>st</sup> the police and landowners succeeded in repelling the invaders. Sonja recalled how property owners were armed on this occasion. Dates did not coincide exactly, but an unsuccessful attempt occurred on the 30<sup>th</sup> or 31<sup>st</sup>; landowners and the police managed to remove those who entered first because they were simply not numerous enough to put up a good fight. The reason for choosing this date was simple. Many of the police would not be on duty or less likely to respond to dislodge invaders.

The next attempt that was made by Chico and others was on the eve of January 5<sup>th</sup>. Two groups of around 100–150 tried to take the sandy hill on what is now Minas 2000. One group broke through a gate around the bend from Valle 2000, while another group came in from behind,<sup>31</sup> a tactic that would be used once again the following evening, however with approximately double the numbers of the first

---

<sup>31</sup> I do not have a map that provides the topographic detail of the area overlaid with the sectors in what is the Nueva Rinconada now. The details here will make more sense to readers who live in the area and to those who contributed to the reconstruction of these events.

attempt. The first group met resistance from property owners above who fired rocks with slingshots and *huaracas*<sup>32</sup>. In the morning, a contingent of riot police arrived to remove this first group.

Not to be deterred, the squatters began to amass forces once again in the football field of Nazareno, an adjacent sector, which served as a staging ground due to its proximity to the Association lands. Jenny, a collaborator in her mid-forties, recalls the unexpectedness of that night. She and a group of her friends were playing volleyball in the street near her parents' home in Ollantay, a sector in Pamplona Alta, when her neighbour came to tell her that they were invading in the Rinconada and that they needed more people. Jenny recalled how she and seven other friends quickly got ready to go and participate, grabbing their clothing and any other provisions that they felt they would need. Other single friends also decided to participate, to support their friends. Not only did single childless people go, but also married men and single mothers. Men were usually sent in to confront the police, however, there were also women and adolescents present. Jenny confessed that at that point she was not even certain where the *Chanchería* was.<sup>33</sup>

Jenny described the atmosphere and the emotions of that night in the soccer pitch. Many knew that there would be a fight, so some people were drinking in the build-up to the invasion. At eight, Jenny recalled, her neighbours knocked on the

---

<sup>32</sup> A sling-like weapon that is loaded with a rock and swung around one's head before the rock is released. Such weapons appear in the Spanish chronicles of their incursion into the Inca empire and are still in use today.

<sup>33</sup> The *chanchería* is a local name used to refer to the association land because of the presence of mainly.

door to see if she would go with them. She agreed. She described the scene at the pitch as follows:

We arrived there and everyone was sitting down, and, there were not thirty people, there were 150, 200 people. It was like that, a lot [of people]. And after a man, at about eleven at night came. We were sitting around and we were drinking, supposedly to give us courage because we didn't know what we would face, people said, drink, drink, people said that and everyone, everyone had drink, not a person was not drinking, everyone was mustering up courage.

(Jenny (mid-forties), Interview recorded on October 30, 2011)

While people waited they drank and told jokes. The air, despite what would come, was one of levity for most. Those that had responded to the local call for reinforcements were not in-the-know. It appeared to Jenny that:

All of Nazareno, the sector Nazareno, yes, knew, because they had entered the first time. They already knew, they already knew who the chancheros were, they knew against whom they were going to fight, everything, and, I, at least, knew nothing.

(Jenny (mid-forties), Interview recorded on October 30, 2011)

So, among those gathered, there was a group of older men and women who were organizing people and that had a plan. However, Jenny noted that nobody said their name at this point. From the interviews I conducted, it did not appear that Nazareno had any more representation than other sectors in Pamplona Alta. It seemed to me that the majority of people and leaders came from different sectors in Pamplona Alta. This code of silence or of using nicknames would become common practice in the Nueva Rinconada, mainly to protect community leaders from acts of retribution by property owners, squatters and land traffickers. The measure also protected leaders from police harassment and alleged state espionage. Without a

real name, many leaders avoided being charged for armed robbery, usurpation and other charges that were levelled against other leaders of the invasion.

At this point youth like Diego, in his early twenties at the time, joined the original group that failed to enter the night of the 4<sup>th</sup> (Diego (mid-thirties), Interview recorded on November 7, 2010). At around 11p.m. another attempt was made. Diego recalls how he was part of a group, one that came from behind, from San Gabriel through what is now Cumbres and met resistance from a group of property owners in Torres, at the entrance of what is now Minas 2000. Sonja, as well, was part of the group comprised of women and adults mainly that came from the hill. She described how she came with her sister and children. One of her daughters was gestating at the time. From below, Chico, with a group of men, recalled how they broke through a group of property owners who were defending the entrance below. Eventually, these two groups would meet up and rout the property owners who had set up a defensive position around what is now Torres. Diego recalled how there was another struggle below after the confrontation at the entrance to what is now Minas 2000.

Jenny, in the same group as Sonja, remembers the entrance of the group that circled from behind differently. According to her, property owners, around the area mentioned set up defensive positions around fires above the small valley that is above the current access road to Minas. From these positions, they lobbed flaming tires and fired rocks at the groups as they tried to enter the sandy plain at the foot of Minas hill.

Landowners remember the confrontation at Torres in a similar way. They claim that they were overwhelmed by a numerically superior group who came from above. Contrary to the versions of the squatters, they claim that they did not hurl flaming tires, but that this tactic was later used against landowners to set fire to makeshift shacks that they had constructed on their properties, properties that were often located below the positions of the squatters.

Sonja remembered how her group, that of the women, lit large firecrackers, known locally as *ratas blancas*, to simulate firearms. So, with rocks whizzing by the size of baseballs, and men swinging any blunt object they could find, the battle ensued. Many alleged that property owners had hired local delinquents to bolster their numbers. At the time, the association had over 500 members, so it is just as likely that if at least some members and some family members got together to defend their land they would easily make up a force of a few hundred without having to resort to contracting delinquents.

The charge that landowners hired delinquents could be a counter-accusation to the claim landowners make that squatters are nothing but delinquents. There were documented instances where landowners did hire goons to protect their lands. Villa El Salvador is a case in point. It is hard to say really. Nevertheless, once one talks to enough people, one realizes that of the people with a need for a land who entered the Nueva Rinconada there were elements that for multiple reasons made a living at times from anti-social behaviour. If we define a criminal act more broadly as behaviour inimical to the social group, we could include politicians, landowners,



squatters, lawyers, doctors, police officers, practically everyone, at some point in their life, under the term delinquent. From this vantage point the use of the term to denote a superior moral position between two groups, therefore, leads both sides to qualify the other as being delinquents or criminal in some respect or another.

Both Diego and Sonja emphasized in their interviews how there was an attitude of staunch solemnity among squatters that night. Diego summed up his mindset, “either I die, or they kill me.” Sonja, in her story of how she ended up in the invasion, recounted how she had just been evicted from a place in Miraflores and had reached a point of desperation where “she decided to risk her life,” and that of her children, I might add. The decision to invade was not taken lightly. People were aware that they might be killed or seriously injured. Those who did participate and clash were youth, men mostly; however, we see how women and adolescents also got involved. Diego estimated that 40–60% were young single adults.

That some of these youth were gangbangers, or people of ill-repute, is well-known locally. In a way, people that were seasoned fighters were needed because it would come to blows. That some of these people were gangsters, no doubt gave some comfort to those who had little to no experience in hand-to-hand combat. Then, they, like their neighbours, were looking for a place to call their own, reminding us that the label delinquent is often a dehumanizing reduction.

To rationalize this bold move from a middle class perspective makes no sense. After listening to the testimonies of many different squatters, it becomes clear that

many of these people had been on the move throughout their lives or lived in crowded living spaces with in-laws, siblings and their children. As children of people who had fought for their land and endured countless hardships and humiliations in Lima, this was the continuation of a fight for personal dignity. Dignity here is strongly connected to having a piece of land and a home for one's family, not to mention an opportunity to improve the chances of their children in overcoming their relative material poverty. People told me about how they lived in even more harrowing conditions in rural areas of Peru. The Nueva Rinconada was a normal rite of passage for many people, if not an improvement for many. Not only did one find the meek, but there were also land traffickers and others who saw opportunity in the confusion and naivety of many of the youngsters that decided to invade. As the saying goes: "In muddy waters, one catches many fish." It was not just about taking a piece of land from private property owners, then. In the context of successive land invasions, this event is a people's struggle to have something of their own in a city that is running out of space to provide everyone this opportunity, in a city that if one has nothing one is at the whim of someone who makes a profit at your expense. It is either you or them, and if it is not you, then it will be someone else. So, people were left with a tough choice and the implicit approval of the mayor and the central government if they managed to gain a foothold.

Once the flat plain on Minas 2000 was taken, squatters quickly marked-off the space for their homes in an improvised manner, using rocks and whatever they had handy to mark the limits of their lots. Some marked off larger spaces than others. It

was a free-for-all, according to Chico and others. The savviest people took corner lots and properties near the main thoroughfares, a collaborator observed.

No sooner had they taken possession of the hill, than the press arrived. Jenny recalled, much to her amazement, how a reporter in high-heels followed her group, dodging flaming tires and taking refuge in pigsties with her and her cohorts. Around 4 or 5 a.m. on the sixth, when it became apparent that the police were amassing below to attempt to dislodge the squatters, the press retreated hastily. We should not assume that the press were there merely for their daily quota of human misery. Compassion has an unusual way of opening spaces for expression. Sonja told me how she used some airtime on this evening to announce the news of the invasion and to rally the support of more people from Pamplona Alta. This is what she remembered saying to the reporter:

I felt so much courage and pain because police were beating us and I didn't have anywhere to live and it came from my heart when I said: "Listen everyone," because I knew that they were listening to me on television, on the radio, I said, "Listen people of Pamplona. Come and fight, here! Help us because we are the sons and daughters of Pamplona Alta. We want land and we don't have a place to live. Mothers, fathers, if you are listening, come. Help us fight and let's fight because the police are mistreating us. There is a war here."

(Sonja (mid-fifties), Interview recorded on November 14, 2010)

Helicopters carried in police officers, according to Sonja. Diego recalled armoured troop carriers and mounted police. The police were decked out with typical riot gear —helmets, fibreglass shields, armour and batons. This was not going to be pleasant for anyone. They made their way up to what is presently Alto

Progreso. Another collaborator, Chico, remembered how women filled blankets with rocks, like they do in *faenas*<sup>34</sup>, to be transported to defensive positions that the squatters had taken up on Minas. Jenny recalled how police chased down some of the invaders, beating them. When the police began lobbing tear gas, fate would intervene, as it does in many battles, in favour of the squatters. That day, like many days in the Nueva Rinconada, a strong wind blew across Minas 2000 toward Alto Progreso, effectively returning the tear gas back toward the police. While many were ready with water soaked rags, the gas ended up blowing back in the face of the local police. Squatters —led by people like Chico, Sonja, Diego, and Jenny— quickly recognized this advantage and took the hills above the police, showering them with the rocky debris that littered the face of the hill that overlooked the police.

The police retreated to regroup near where the present market is. Apparently, they had run out of tear gas. Chico and others, recognizing that they would most likely try again, collected themselves for one final push, and miraculously the police were routed. People were wounded on both sides, and some of the invaders were captured by the police. Many of my collaborators did not glorify the violence of this day. Nobody talked about the force they used or the wounds that they suffered on this day. More important in the recountings was the struggle of invaders to enter the Nueva Rinconada and their eventual triumph, a triumph that would be short-lived before a new reality would set in.

---

<sup>34</sup> Community work projects.

What must be noted in the recounting of events, no matter the perspective, is the tendency to emphasize the violence or counter-violence of the opposing group, while downplaying or omitting the violence of one's own group. We will see this pattern time and again. What is extraordinary about the instances of physical violence in the Nueva Rinconada is the naturalness with which they occurred. Violence in many ways became an accepted means for both the squatters and landowners.

That violence can be so banal, so accepted, is telling. However, it must be remembered that the ordinary lives of the squatters are fraught with daily acts of violence and aggression. Being a labourer, or working for someone much of one's life, or being of modest origins in Lima is anything but a warm experience —men and women are exposed to verbal attacks in the form of insults, injustices in the workplace, and a general lack of respect on the streets of Lima. To a lesser degree, those in more privileged positions also receive their share of daily aggressions, yet they are on a lower scale and less frequent. The pains of the privileged are different: they long for achievement, suffer from work related stress, cope with a competitive work environment, become isolated due to work taking over different areas of their social life, etc. The pains of the privileged are the pains of the so-called modern world.

The Nueva Rinconada, in some ways, mimicks the discursive interaction that occurs between people here and their wealthier peers. On one side, one has the haves, some good and some not so good, cultured, refined, disciplined, scrupulous,

and individualistic; on the other side, one has the have-nots, uncultured, uncouth, impulsive, dirty, lascivious, hedonistic, down-to-earth, garish and vulgar. It seems to restate the civil/barbaric binary that marked colonial endeavours throughout the world. This narrative surges through the discourse of different collaborators on both sides of the dispute. This binary is constantly being restated and challenged, sometimes it is even reversed, thus challenging the simple binaries that even I employ here to mark a contrast in groupings. For the moment, we need to bear this trend in mind, to see how it plays out throughout this text.

Not only do binaries shift or switch, discourses can be dropped at times or called into question; but that does not ignore that the discourse, as a part of its social environment is omnipresent and enduring in its enunciation. It becomes us, or we become it. Discourse between haves and have-nots is complemented in the behaviour of people. Discursive postures, then, reflect real world postures in most cases, permitting certain behaviours, condemning others as out of place, making certain behaviours visible and invisible. However, the options of non-action, or different action always exist. Yet, as all who have witnessed the woodenness of class or racial stereotyping, the dissonances that begin to appear in lived realities result in people recognizing the make-shiftness of social roles. The discourse of the civil versus the uncivil persists because as Raymond Williams observed, hegemony is a project, a “sense of reality” and as such it never rests on its haunches (Williams 1977:110).

I started the story of the Nueva Rinconada with the version of the landowners very deliberately because I wanted to emphasize that they were, and could have easily been, many of those who invaded the Association lands. From listening to the accounts of the squatters we get the impression that violence against this group—those who made it in the city— was justifiable because they were behaving in ways that were antisocial, or harmful, toward the greater needs of the masses.

A grounded theoretical consciousness, channelled into localized politically motivated action materializes in the invasion. The possible relationship of this event to the populist gestures of Fujimori's government is suggestive of how the indignation of underprivileged groups can be directed against others to support larger ideological projects that go against their interests. So, while an opening of sorts was generated for such an event, the event in its larger frame works against the interest of squatters in that their actions enable a group of legislators, economists, financiers, and politicians to reinforce a larger project that further incorporates these squatters into a system where they are still at the bottom of the pile. Nevertheless, the squatters do satisfy their desire to have a relative share of a progress that is meaningful to them.

At this point, I would like to highlight that the relationship between those who do not have and those who have is charged with a constant tension that plays out in the everyday lives of people—from the lack of respect shown to maids, trade workers, and service workers throughout Lima (even what were once *barriadas*) to discrimination shown toward the children and grandchildren of migrants to Lima in

the more exclusive leisure areas of Lima. The daily acts of disrespect and the disparities that people perceive in their lives are the fuel of violent outbursts like the taking of the Nueva Rinconada and its popular support. They are playing out the struggle of the masses, assuming roles in this particular event: invaders vs. property owners. This dynamic quickly slides into a more general binary of privileged decent people vs. the people, the barrio.

I never got the police versions of this day. However, what is known is that most police are reluctant to participate in such evictions because of the inherent danger to them as well. Either way, the police come out looking like goons. As the local police Major explained to me, what really comes to bear is the social cost of such evictions. If the cost is high, if there is going to be human loss, the police will usually retreat. Personal calculation is involved as well. How many police officers, most with family members of their own who have invaded at one time or another, are going to risk their life against people that could easily be children of their neighbours or friends of their families? Because a crime was being committed, the police had to be there, whether they liked it or not. Given the do-or-die attitude of the squatters, a less-than-easy terrain to negotiate, and a loss of momentum from the start, it is reasonable to assume that the police decided that it was simply not worth it that day.

The squatters felt that the only reason that the police appeared to evict people was because the landowners had paid them to be there. Otherwise, why would the police respond? This reflects two popular perceptions of law enforcement in Peru:



the general attitude that justice almost always has a price on it and the lack of presence of police when they are really needed. If the police appeared, they were there to defend the interests of the wealthy –in this case, the association of landowners. The squatters in the Nueva Rinconada, as we will see, often took responsibility for policing their communities. If police presence was required, many collaborators told me how they often had to pay for the gasoline, often highly inflated, so that the police would come. A combination of corruption and lack of financial support for law enforcement are at work. Law enforcement, like health care, public administration and education, suffers from a chronic lack of funding. The result, not surprisingly, is that public workers “charge” the public to supplement their incomes or compensate for the lack of funding to perform their jobs. This results in a cynical attitude toward public sector workers. This cynical attitude, in turn, leads to a general lack of cooperation and suspicion of those in almost any advantageous position. Such an attitude is generalized and has many inimical consequences, as we will see.

After the trouncing of the police on the morning of the 6<sup>th</sup> of January, the sluices were opened and thousands rushed into the Nueva Rinconada to occupy available open spaces. Chico estimated that there were easily 20,000 people there within the next two days. At present, the population is just shy of 28,000 (Oral communication, Daniel Corzo, Municipality of Lima, October 22, 2011). It must be borne in mind here that the hills have been terraced and new areas settled on hill faces since the beginning. According to many accounts it was cramped living, at first.

The next step after managing to fend off the police's attempt to dislodge the squatters occurred at different moments throughout the area without any overarching attempts to organize all the squatters. What emerges is a space where multiple nuclei form, some attempting to incorporate other smaller nuclei and other nuclei opting to maintain their distance from the two large fronts, as we will see.

## Chapter 8 —Founding of the Fronts and Creation of Communities

In this chapter we will see what happened when people began to arrive in large numbers after the squatters pushed back police. We will look at the experiences of two larger fronts and one outlying sector in their initial moments to capture the overall panorama of the area. The first front is Minas 2000 and the Defense Front. They ostensibly formed in response to the pretensions and initial abuses of another front, Perú 2000. Perú 2000 sought the patronage of Alberto Fujimori's government shortly after the invasion. Our third outlying sector is Villa San Juan, which was located on private poverty and maintained its distance from both of these larger fronts.

The tensions between the two fronts produces an account of the conflicts that arise when patronage networks reach into local communities. They also point to the excesses that can be committed by clients of patrons when a network is in a position of political ascendancy. The authoritarian rule of Fujimori was one of fear, and intimidation. It was a time when vigilante justice was condoned. We see how unchecked undemocratic rule leads to excesses at even the community level in the case under consideration here. The behaviour of many leaders and the fronts, especially Perú 2000, must be placed into this context.

In this section the reader should note behaviour that could be part of an individualism particular to Perú but is consistent with that implicit in self-help: a rugged individualism with a no-holds barred desire to improve one's status within the city. Many households here, no matter which front they belonged to in the beginning, seemed to endure a fierce struggle of positioning within the area to earn a lot in whatever sector they were. It was not uncommon to move multiple times before finding a home. This competitiveness is not without its socially divisive accompanying force of distrust. From the account given here it appears that trust is in short supply.

Although we can note a strong element of individualism within these communities, we cannot ignore an intense satisfaction among people when they talk of their collective successes as a community. Community work projects are social moments, with much camaraderie at a leisurely work pace. The improvement of their homes, the construction of roads, stairs, soccer pitches, and community centres are all proudly remembered as moments when people worked together, helping one another. This cooperation, as the reader will recall, was fondly remembered in Don Malvinas's story as well as the work of Janine Anderson (2002). What is significant here is that we see that the seeds of individualism were present at the time that unity was most strongly promoted as a solution to common problems. So long as there were common shared goals, people worked together, indicating that being a community is a practice, a habit, something that people are because they do something together. Community leaders often complained that people were becoming too comfortable, even though most communities did not have

sewage, running water, and individual connections to a power grid. That minimal level of confort, or what is needed to feel that one has made an improvement in their circumstances is highly complex and relates to individual histories and philosophies about life.

For each of the fronts I provide a history of how these communities came together initially, relying on both leaders and representative households to describe the character of the development that occurred. Minas 2000 receives the most detailed attention because that is the area where I had most of my contacts. After studying its formation I realized that the pattern of administration in Minas 2000 was not different from that found elsewhere in the area.

As communities formed, people were counted, plans drawn and statutes drafted by lawyers. In this sense, communities adhere to a degree to prevailing laws that apply to all citizens. The extent to which these laws reflect a hegemonic vision of how people ought to behave is open for debate. We do note, though, behaviours conducive to the well being of families, especially the normative nuclear family. Non-compliance with established rules that admonished people to cooperate in the building of infrastructure in community work projects called *faenas*<sup>35</sup>, participate in community assemblies and adhere to behavioural codes was grounds for being

---

<sup>35</sup> Faenas are mandatory community work projects. The hills of the Nueva Rinconada are alive with work groups on Sunday mornings. This is how much of the community infrastructure is built. Through constant toil households build their own communities, with some occasional outside aid. Each household typically sends a representative, however there is a lot of flexibility in the application of this mandate. People often opt to pay fines instead of doing their *faena* on Sundays. Others grudgingly carry about their duty. And, then there are others that make the most of the moment, joking, ribbing, and enjoying the work. Needless to say, such community work projects do a lot to promote community morale and interaction. These work projects and rites of passage, birth, baptism, marriage, and death are occasions where community interaction is intense.

purged<sup>36</sup> from the community. Therefore, there was a strong moral element to the type of community that emerged in the area. Although it does not come out in this chapter strongly, there was also a progressive element to the communities. They welcomed outside interventions from NGOs, state institutions, church organizations, philanthropists and non-affiliated volunteers. Formal aid is contingent upon each sector submitting a register of inhabitants and having their community council approved by the local municipality.<sup>37</sup> Leadership styles vary depending on the personality and experience of the Secretary Generals of sectors. In many ways, community councils worked to ensure the collective good of their communities, utilizing available resources and disciplining populations toward achieving what original leaders thought to be an ideal community. The character of this community, free of illicit drugs, adulterers, etc. seems to be an ideal based on Christian values and practical experience (many sending communities were experiencing a problem with drug use at the time among local youth).

Juliet Erazo explored the complex negotiations that occurred between community leaders in the Napo region of Ecuador among Kichwa groups, noting that leaders often embraced modernization projects as a means of protecting their communities. They adopted new notions of community that went beyond more localized kinship groups as a survival tactic, absorbing elements of state

---

<sup>36</sup> I use the word “purge” as a translation for the Spanish *depurar*. The sense of purging as removing undesirable elements from a political group, or a cleansing of impurities, seems appropriate to the referent behaviour we see here.

<sup>37</sup> Observers from the municipality are requested to ensure that the election of the electoral committee and the council is fair and free. Attendance, however, is voluntary, and as cases suggest, intimidation can be used to dissuade households from voting. Election results may be boycotted if incumbent community council does not hand over incorporation papers (*libro de actas*). This is also a requirement for the registration of a community council in the municipality.

governmental practice to pragmatically ensure the continuity of their communities (Erazo 2010). Given the historical context of self-help already discussed, there appears to be no explicit accommodation being made for traditional livelihood practices of individuals of multiple descent by the community councils that I studied. The difference with these community councils is that they are not attempting to protect a livelihood or a deeper existential connection to the land that they are occupying. People are here because they have more or less (with some tensions, of course) accepted notions of individual progress.

In the beginning, the formation of fronts was useful to achieve certain ends, but the fronts eventually fell apart with each sector choosing to pursue its own path. Fronts may not have formed without the expansionistic tendencies of Perú 2000 and its self-designation as the central committee. People were generally distrustful of this autocratic tendency. An analysis of Minas 2000 and the Defense Front and the tension between councils and households suggest that rejection of overarching governance strategies was not unique to Perú 2000. The larger groups, despite the advantage of allowing larger movements of people to make collective demands, lost momentum due to a loss of credibility. Smaller sectors were under the impression that they could work more effectively without the need for having larger governing bodies that required financial support, demanded labour, and added another layer of bureaucracy. It appears that generalized sentiments of distrust, envy, and *viveza* worked in many ways to generate these attitudes.

Even at the level of individual sectors there is a degree of distrust toward community councils. This distrust is not isolated to the exercise of power within communities, but seems to be external to communities, generalized throughout Lima. The enterprising subject who seeks its own advancement in a complex urban field appears to be undermining practical recognition of the value of communities working toward common goals. The Nueva Rinconada suggests that the indifference that seems to affect older communities in Pamplona where basic amenities and infrastructure have been built seems to be present at all stages of growth. Let us look at the formation of communities throughout the Nueva Rinconada to get a better sense of these relationships and patterns.

## Minas 2000

The history of Minas 2000, if it were a book or movie rendition, could start with the history of a particular man, a charismatic man, a respected man by local testimonies. While women certainly did exercise roles as community leaders, the beginnings of the Nueva Rinconada saw men assume key leadership roles initially. Women were frequently cast in supporting roles as social assistants and press and assembly secretaries. This made sense to many because the realm of women often pertains to the household or the well-being of the family and community. Men, on the contrary, are charged with building things, exercising authority, and disciplining—the typical roles of a patriarch. If a woman does assume a primary leadership role in the community she is often expected to be heavy-handed, or risk being perceived as indecisive, or worse, weak. That said, a surprising range of personality types



complicates this characterization, and group leadership often depends on the constituency and particular history of each sector. At present, now that things have become more settled, it is not uncommon to see women as the leaders of sectors of over 200 households. But, in the beginning, when violent confrontations or the threat thereof between squatters and property owners were commonplace, men were at the forefront of the leadership of the zone. Let us get back to one of the men that moved people in the beginning in the Nueva Rinconada. We have already been acquainted with him in the previous chapter. What we see here is his trajectory to becoming one of the most instrumental leaders in the history of the Nueva Rinconada.

Why start the history of the sector with a particular man? That particular man happened to speak up at the right time and, as we will see, take the right actions. His story, is not unlike that of many who would move to the Nueva Rinconada and find something there for which to fight, to find something to which they could belong to and see grow, like a plant becoming stronger and more and more resilient with passing days. What is interesting about this case is the humility of this man. What makes him a leader, as he states, as many state, is the ability to speak for others, to detect what is on their minds and not be afraid to state it with confidence, and perhaps with some stage play. But being a leader is not based on gumption alone. It requires an ability to organize, to dialogue with authorities, to navigate the corrupt minefield of relations between one's community and professionals and politicians, to quell disputes, to control dissident elements within one's community, and to possess the wisdom to deal with every case of misconduct imaginable within

one's community. In short, it is much more than just speaking up at the right moment.

Chico Villanueva was born into a family of seven children (Chico (mid-forties), Interview recorded on November 1, 2010). His parents, like those of many I have met, are not from Lima –his mother is from Apurimac and his father is from Puno. He was the youngest and only boy among the children. In the early hours of the morning, he recalled, he used to accompany his mother to the slaughterhouse to buy chicken intestines, which they would sell in the local market. While in elementary school and high school he worked in the mornings plucking and cleaning chickens. He would eventually sell chicken after a brief stint in the military, while he was stationed to active duty in Lima.

After finishing his military service, when Chico had his first child, he decided that he needed more steady employment and the possibility of having a better life. So, he started to hang around carpenters, slowly picking up the trade by helping one master or another. Before he knew it, he was taking on his own jobs. His home, with sturdy, well-crafted wooden windows, hinted at his dexterity in shaping wood. A week prior to my interview with Chico, I came looking for Chico to see if I could interview him. I came across him and a group of men building a swimming pool on his balcony. It must have been the first swimming pool in the Nueva Rinconada. It boasts an excellent view of Lima's sand coated rocky coast, from a promontory that looks out onto beautiful pink and orange sunsets on clear days in Lima. Possibilities

like this make building one's home much more attractive than living in a government modular apartment complexes.

Chico told me that as a secondary school student he began to take an interest in leading people. In the last year of secondary school he played an instrumental role in many of the fundraising events for their graduation trip. Chico thrived off of challenges then and seems to have carried through with this tendency over the years, gaining experience along the way. For Chico, leading people, "Is something that comes naturally. Being a *dirigente* is something that you carry inside, it is something that drives you maybe, so that in a certain moment you act." As he talked, I noticed a glint in his dark eyes and a broad smile on his face, as if reminiscing of some inspired speech he may have given in a public assembly. While others may have ideas, *dirigentes* are people who stand up and speak their voice without fear. It should be pointed out that there are *dirigentes* who started out timid but that over time they gained confidence in themselves and found the courage to say what is on the tip of everyone's tongue. I saw him speak in one of the sector meetings. He was very efficient, patient and stern when he needed to get things in order and maintain a steady momentum in the meeting. When I was around he was asked to lead sector meetings to help the community organize paperwork for a water project currently being proposed for the Nueva Rinconada.

Chico remembered how he spent three days alone after the police retreated. His sisters and wife would eventually find him. It was common at this point for spouses, relatives, or parents to bring food and provisions for those who had to stay

and keep watch over their holding. He explained that it was necessary to have a constant presence at first or face forfeiting one's lot. A number of my collaborators told me how they started selling food or other goods so that they could have an income while keeping a vigilant eye on their lot. In the midst of this general instability, it occurred to him that what ought to be done was to enumerate the people that were present and to draw up some kind of a plan of those already there.

Chico recalled how he and others began to organize Minas 2000, which initially had about 1600 people. Others place this number as high as 1700. Some groups gave their group a letter, while others opted for names like the 7<sup>th</sup> of January, the 4<sup>th</sup> of January, or Villa María. A typical group numbered around thirty to forty lots, with each lot belonging to a household. At first, it was necessary to organize quickly because the more organized and bigger association, Peru 2000, was gobbling up smaller independent groups.

Chico was elected the coordinator of his group. A General Secretary was elected after thirty days; however, he proved ineffectual, so it was agreed that another election be held with most coordinators agreeing to support Chico instead of another more radical candidate.<sup>38</sup> It is important to note that Chico was never acting alone and that he, like many of the leaders, was being advised by older people, professionals or people with previous experience as *dirigentes*. Leading a sector is very much a tradition that has emerged here in Lima, a tradition that is the product of a particular relationship between the Peruvian state and its multiplicity

---

<sup>38</sup> I have said thirty days here because according to Ethel, the current Secretary General of a reduced Minas 2000, there was a provisional *directiva*, or council, elected to draft up the statute of the group during the first thirty days.

of peoples that have met here in Lima in search of progress. This tradition works as a counter to hegemonic processes in Lima in that it allows communities to organize and make demands of the municipal and central government. However, as Jaime Joseph notes, this fragmentation of social demands into sectorial demands upon municipal and central government bodies is, in reality, a dispersion of the effective power of barrio institutions to generate a collective sense of identity and challenge to the neoliberal project in Peru. He shows that consumption spaces, like malls, theatres, and shopping areas, have come to replace the type of political demands that were being made in public spaces in the 70s, 80s, and 90s (Joseph 2005). As we move into our analysis of the history of the Nueva Rinconada we will see how collective forces retracted into competing sectorial demands. Moreover, such a process of land development has resulted in the emergence of a public sector and professional corps who feed off the uncertainty, lack of knowledge, trust and hopes of the poor, generating a vicious cycle of distrust, hopelessness and further social fragmentation.

Oscar, one of the coordinators who initially came to support his sister, told how things were in those first days. He remembered that things were a practical chaos. However, thankfully, he had some idea of how one might proceed due to his experience in student politics in the university. He and other students had done important things in Villa El Salvador, so he had some understanding of how to

organize an *asentamiento humano*<sup>39</sup> and how an assembly ought to work. He explained that when he spoke, people listened to him.

Eventually, he was elected coordinator for his *manzana*<sup>40</sup>. In the first general assemblies he claimed that it was his mission to form a neighbourhood organization and to try to articulate with other invasions that had occurred in Lima South. In the first general elections he and Chico had to decide who would lead Minas 2000. He stepped down because he was both afraid and had no idea how he would manage the roughly 1700-2000 people that had come to live in Minas 2000.

During the first month, a lawyer helped to draft up the founding act and statute of Minas 2000. The statute of an *asentamiento humano* details everything from the political processes of the community, to the rights and responsibilities of both *dirigentes* and squatters. Grounds for evicting squatters are also outlined. Common grounds for punishment, censure, or eviction are chronic violation of statute responsibilities and duties, trafficking lots, embezzlement, seditious acts against elected bodies (creating divisions within the sector), assaulting other squatters and committee members, antisocial conduct (consumption of illicit drugs, rape, criminal activity, etc.). For now, the reader should bear in mind that there are legal grounds for warning, fining, censure and expulsion or relocation and that the duties and responsibilities of squatters has a tremendous influence on the character of growth of communities in the area.

---

<sup>39</sup> Literally, a human settlement. This is the current legal designation for lands that have been squatted upon. There are also associations, which have a different administrative organization and different legal benefits when dealing with the state.

<sup>40</sup> Block. Manzana is a block in a sector, group, or association. They are usually given a letter and sometimes a number.

Minas 2000 was organized into different *manzanas*, or blocks of roughly 20-40 squatters. Each *manzana* had, and still has, a coordinator, but *manzana* social assistants, auditors<sup>41</sup> and spokespeople may be elected depending on the circumstances<sup>42</sup>. While other sectors or conglomerations opted for a surfeit of organization for groups of 20-40 squatters, Minas opted for a minimal number of *dirigentes* for these smaller groups, according to Chico. The *asentamiento humano* had the standard Secretary General, Sub-Secretary General, Secretary of Acts, Secretary of Organization, Social Assistant, Secretary of Press and Propaganda, Secretary of Economy, Secretary of Culture and Sports, Secretary of Defense and Communal Works, Auditor(s) and Vocal(s). The idea here is that representatives of the *manzanas* would meet regularly with the General Secretary and more specialized *dirigentes*. For larger marches or projects, like zoning changes for the whole area, representatives for the larger *asentamiento humanos* are often elected to preside on commissions, which must report back to the group in General Assemblies or coordinator meetings depending on the sensitivity of the issue.

The maximum power in the sector was and still is the General Assembly of households, although in practice the power of the assembly depends tremendously on the willingness and ability of the community leaders to transmit information to the community and include them in the decision making process. The problem here is one faced by democratic governments on a larger scale in Peru and elsewhere.

---

<sup>41</sup> The term used is *fiscal* in Spanish. The duty of a *fiscal* is to supervise community work projects ensuring that people participate, be present for when donations are received and distributed, witness evictions, investigate cases of corruption in the community, etc.

<sup>42</sup> This person is called a *vocal* in Spanish. Their duty, according to a typical statute, is to preside over commissions formed in committee meetings, acts as substitutes for absent Secretaries, or represent the *asentamiento humano* in public and private gatherings.

Collaborators commented that the problem in the area is that everyone wanted to be a *dirigente* and that, as in national politics, personality politics had become all too common. When speaking of infrastructure in the community, *dirigentes* often proclaimed: “I did x, or I brought x group, etc.”, lending some weight to this assessment. In community work projects, people worked begrudgingly, at times, under the surveillance of their leaders and designated auditors. *Dirigentes* confessed that they wanted to be like benevolent caudillos and often spoke in terms of “their” people.

The idea of community is not like that described in analyses of community organization in Ecuador (Erazo 2010, Colloredo-Mansfeld 2009) where there is a process of imagining of the kind described by Benedict Anderson (1983). The notion that Spaniards brought corruption to Peru, that things were different before colonial contact, is certainly widespread. However, the articulation of these sectorial organizations to a larger political organization that has a counter-vision for development or the nation is absent in the Nueva Rinconada. We will see how sectorial organizations do not coincide and that they often link-up with different political parties depending on the political sympathies of their directive body. The presence of governmental strategies to enumerate populations and the disciplining of households does seem to be present and mainly accords with dominant notions of how one ought to behave in a city, but due to the presence of many migrants or descents of migrants from the Andes, values placed on diligence, community, and honesty prevail.



Being a *dirigente*, because of the time involved in following papers and arranging deals with shady bureaucrats, is not immune from the general culture of patronage. (Dis)information trafficking is common. For example, particular *dirigentes* (a minority it should be noted) generate confusion in the area by charging the population to obtain copies of sections of legal cases that they claim to be the magic bullet to the legal problems between landowners and squatters. The entire context of the case is excluded or information is selectively photocopied so that clauses that contradict the pages copied are excluded. The credibility of these opportunists is beginning to wane though. The abusive and dishonest behaviour of some community leaders has generated distrust among common folk.

Usually, there is some flexibility in posts, with special commissions being formed for certain tasks. Since the purpose of the *asentamiento humano* is to work toward consolidating a community, commissions are often formed to get surveys done, approach companies for water and electricity, get titles of possession or ownership, work on special infrastructure projects, etc. The process of gaining title to land and enjoying amenities is very much a do-it-yourself project with local *dirigentes* having to administer every step of the process. If that is not enough, *asentamientos humanos* are often responsible for maintaining order in their communities, as well.

From the beginning it was prohibited to call *dirigentes* by their full names. The preference was for people to use first names or nicknames. Chico, as a further measure of protection, kept the minutes of group meetings with him at all times.

Chico confessed that nobody knew where he worked and that when he had to slip away to work he took a different route every time. It was rumoured that he was a giant man. He chuckled as he recalled this rumour. When other *dirigentes* from below finally met him they were surprised that he only measured about 160cm. The only people who were aware of the identity of leaders were community members. However, even people in the community may have been confused because leaders were often accompanied by bodyguards or entourages. There was an effective code of silence when it came to dealing with inquiring outsiders for two reasons: to avoid being charged by property owners, and to avoid being classified as a subversive element by state spies.

Chico and others described the community in the beginning as being comprised of all sorts of people —people who had families and worked, single young men and women, career criminals, land traffickers, party animals, drug addicts, etc. These categories often overlapped. While many had come from Pamplona Alta, there were other families from other adjacent districts and as far away as the province of Callao. There were single adults of different ages, but the overwhelming majority were young adults. There were people from the different jungle departments of Peru. There were people from the North, South, and people from the various departments in the Andes. There were 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> generation migrants to Lima. The Nueva Rinconada was a mosaic from the beginning, and many of the approximately 140 groups of people in the Nueva Rinconada at present reflect this diversity. If people were in need of a home for themselves, or for their children, they came. From the descriptions given of the community in the

beginning, it is evident that from the beginning those who had families were concerned about making this a place for their children.

While the community organized, people had to set about attending to more practical needs. Many of the founders that I spoke to told me how they slept those first months under a piece of reed matting folded in a u-shape. Locals referred to these improvised shelters as *tortuguitas*, or little tortoises. Many of my collaborators, who were founders, told me what it was like at first with their children. At night, they slept in the sand with little to no protection from the elements. When the light rains began in May or June it became necessary to erect walls and use a tarp as a roof. There were mites that caused scabies in children and adults and fleas that incessantly bit people in their sleep. Many founders told me stories about sand fleas, which burrow into one's skin to lay their eggs and have been known to cause gangrene in severe cases. There was no water or nearby markets for those who lived in the hills. Electricity was a luxury that many would do without for the first years in the area. There were no roads for transportation in the hills. The only road was the principal road that led into the invasion below. Public latrines were built in the surrounding hills or designated areas within communities.

Needless to say, much needed to be done and because much of the Nueva Rinconada was on contested land, the state and municipal government had to be careful about the support they gave to the communities that were forming for fear of a legal backlash. *Dirigentes* would make valiant efforts under trying circumstances

to bring people together to organize the area, despite the occasional excesses committed in the first years.

The social worker of Minas 2000 in the beginning, and present General Secretary, told me that a study conducted by the National Institute of Nutrition in 2000-2001 of the nutrition of the children of the Nueva Rinconada found that 75% of children were malnourished. The area gained a lot of media attention for the wretched conditions under which people lived. Locals in the area recalled how PEBAL under Father Escribá sent donations of food to the malnourished people in the area. Many complained that the Jesuit institution stopped giving such direct support to the communities here, however, as conditions changed, the efforts of the organization turned more toward projects that would help the community improve the quality of life in the area. For instance, PEBAL took over administration of the soup kitchens, offered night classes and vocational training for adults, encouraged environmental projects (environmentally friendly latrines, water capture projects, tree planting on slopes, etc.), cistern truck monitoring to ensure that water was potable for human consumption, provided training and educational programs for local leaders, generated awareness of social problems like violence against women and children, offered medical and orthodontic attention at modest rates, and acted as a bridgehead channelling volunteers and donations into the community. It would be difficult to say that PEBAL is strictly dedicated to creating modern consumers, or self-regulating subjects. Their activities are both practical and at times geared toward creating historically conscious leaders who are informed how the state operates and what options are available for bringing about local change.

And if scarce state support and public health issues were not enough, there was the constant threat of being evicted by the landowners. Diego recalled very clearly how those in Minas 2000 organized night watches. Each *manzana* had to designate three people for three two-hour watches that began at midnight. Even though such watches were mandatory, some paid young adults to do their watch for them, something that often occurs with *faenas*. Other collaborators told me how they used to drink on night watch or how many a romance started on these nights. Many things happened in the evenings. Collaborators often told me stories of encounters they had with spirits, who they believed were real people. Others told me that *duendes* or elves came in the evenings and played with children, sometimes absconding with them to local caves. Still others told me how *jinetes* or men on horseback wandered the area. There were stories of the *Llorona*, a virgin in white, who was spotted frequently. There were also stories of the *Viuda Negra*, a woman garbed in a black dress, who brought misfortune to those with whom she came into contact, particularly men. While some swore that they had paranormal encounters, others scoffed at such tales. I will write more of the paranormal later.

Aside from the obvious lack of infrastructure in the area, there was the serious problem of overcrowding. The truth of the matter is that families were living on 3m by 3m plots of land near the beginning. Having lots this small is not legal. The minimal required size for a lot at the time was, and still is 90m<sup>2</sup>. Because much of the planning has been done on an empirical basis, or with the help of inexperienced or careless professionals on occasion, minimal legal requirements for lot plans are

not met to this day. As one can imagine, the movement necessary so that a crowded area meets spatial requirements means that some people have to be relocated.

Another part of frontier living were *faenas*, or community work projects. Chico explained that for the first two years, almost every Sunday, Minas 2000 had *faenas*. The main road that leads into the community was built by people bringing in stone by hand. On a typical Sunday morning the area was alive with household members working: people chiselling and prying at the rocky hillside, chains of people passing rocks along to be deposited in piles, people raking rocks and separating sand, and people digging latrines. If that was not enough, Sonja and Diego recalled how almost every day people were convened to discuss advances and plans for the community. It was exhausting and stressful. Most people in the Nueva Rinconada work six days a week, usually working a half-day on Saturday. Whatever free time people had was being consumed fixing up their lot, participating in *faenas*, and participating in night watches. People effectively worked seven days a week for the first two years. No matter how hardy a person one was, this was tough going and it certainly took a heavy toll on these pioneers.

Oscar, one of Chico's coordinators, was charged with investigating the legality of the invasion. He went to National Assets and found out that much of the area had clear title. Many detractors emerged at this point, people with experience in invasions; yet he persisted saying that the land had been abandoned. He consulted many lawyers. Here is what he had to say about his search for a lawyer.

The first thing I did was to begin to look for lawyers that would advise me. Unfortunately, there are lawyers and there are lawyers. There are lawyers who like to live [the life] and others that like to say the truth. Many lawyers told me that, no, here, the only way out was a commercial transaction. The only thing to do was to buy and sell. But, sometimes, one, because of (unintelligible), that does things, seeing the desire of, if people do not have enough money to eat, to buy, [thinks] that there must be a solution. So, we looked for a lawyer and sadly, sometimes, when one is a new *dirigente*, one likes to listen to the siren. "Yes, one can, this is state land." [referring to lawyers that said it could be done]. So we started working there.

(Oscar, Interview recorded on November 21, 2010)

Oscar, though, recognizing the necessity of people at the time, felt that if people had no money to eat, then they surely had no money to buy the property they were living on. The claim that many were unable to buy their lots in the area was the most controversial claim in the past and continues to be. Many of my collaborators told me that this was the case for some; however, most could buy their lots if the payments were not too onerous. The problem is receiving credit and having zoning changes in place so that banks will lend money to people to build homes.

Oscar went on to tell how they went on to hire a series of lawyers; however, he was careful not to mention who brought the lawyers, who the lawyers were, or why they were so frequently changed. By choosing to take a path against the advice of most lawyers, i.e., to buy the land from the landowners, the community would expose itself to all types of hucksters that promised the solution to their woes. Time after time, the same would occur, not only with lawyers, but with surveyors, politicians, engineers and other advisors to the communities here.

To complicate matters further, some *dirigentes* will bribe professionals or act as their skills, sometimes unknowingly, making it extremely difficult for squatters to know who or what to believe. That said, most *dirigentes* and households ask around when they undertake any project in their community, so it is always possible to discover graft. What does not seem to disappear, though, is a general air of suspicion, or distrust. What seemed like a chance at getting ahead, rent free, would turn into an expense in ways that were not only monetary.

Oscar did know that if they were to have any chance at all they would have to try to form an *asentamiento humano* to receive state support. Politicians told representatives from all groupings this much. From the beginning, it was recognized that if there was to be a solution, it would be a political solution. As already mentioned, leaders approached Federico Salas, Prime Minister for Mr. Fujimori's government at the time of the invasion, who promised to resolve their problem and said that he would talk to the President about the matter. Martha Moyano was programmed on a Tuesday to visit the Nueva Rinconada on the same Sunday; however between Tuesday and Sunday the first vladivideo —filmed footage of the President and his security advisor Vladimiro Montesinos bribing media figures, business owners and executives and politicians— was leaked. The meeting never occurred. This incident would presage a series of interventions that would bear no fruit, despite ostensible intentions to find a solution to the land conflict. I will discuss a number of successful and unsuccessful attempts to capture political attention, later.



To be an *asentamiento humano*, it was crucial to get roads built so that water trucks could bring water into the different areas of the hills where access roads were absent. Although Mr. Ocampo sent machinery to help build roads, he did not send engineers, according to local collaborators. Many of the plans that were originally drawn up, were drawings made by members of the community who claimed that they knew what they were doing. The improvised nature of much of the area has had far reaching consequences, as we will discuss later.

It was also imperative to begin work on defining public infrastructure like parks, recreational areas, daycares, meeting halls (which often served for welfare services like soup kitchens), and to begin to think about how the area would grow to accommodate people that would have to be purged to make way for public infrastructure. Due to the improvised nature of the area, there are innumerable cul-de-sacs, narrow passages, roads that are too narrow and homes built in places that are precarious. Growth of the communities in the area has been a process of constant organization and reorganization.

The routine and initial conditions were gruelling. If one can imagine waking up everyday during the week at 5 or 6 in the morning to go to work, and then not getting home until 8 or 9 in the evening. In the evening, you may have had to audit your group, attend meetings until the early morning, or perform guard duty, depriving you of needed rest. The trip to work is often made in cramped buses that can take as long as two hours in some cases. If you are lucky, you work locally. It is

no wonder that people in Lima always seemed so fatigued to me at first, or that I would always see people dozing during the day.

Let us imagine the basic amenities, in the beginning. The water that you do have is not fit for consumption, unless it is boiled, and the little water that you do have is stored in plastic containers that you have to lug up the hill from a central distribution point below. Many collaborators brought water from a family home in the mini-buses and medium-sized buses that entered the invasion. If you were not lucky enough to be present when water was being distributed, you were out of luck for the day. Having access to water was and still is a luxury. Having a water truck pass by one's shack, at present, is a dream compared to the initial conditions when water trucks could not enter the hills. Any food that you have on hand is lugged up a sandy slope. Nowadays, at least there are stores where you can buy basic provisions on the days that you cannot make it to a larger market. If you need to use the bathroom you have to walk a distance and often share it with others. From not eating properly, children die of lung infections. Adults and children who were weakened by harsh living conditions became more susceptible to tuberculosis. Conditions were tough, and still are to some degree. This was not like living in a rural area with a water source nearby or a constant supply of fresh food from fields and livestock, and it was not like living in one's parent's home below where people had access to basic amenities. People made sacrifices like this for a future, to have a home of their own. It no wonder that progress has such a poignant meaning for some people. These sacrifices are what gives the term its saliency.

If this was not enough, those enforcing the statute were merciless when it came to infractions. Diego and Sonja told me how if you had three faults you were removed from the sector, no questions asked. At night, auditors were charged with knocking on people's door to see if someone was sleeping in their shelter. If you did not show up for a meeting, or did not participate in a *faena*, auditors took note. The main thing, as Rodriguez, another *manzana* coordinator, explained was that someone had to be present in one's lot and fulfil the duties and responsibilities of the household. Failure to do so resulted in one being purged. Obviously, families had a certain advantage because it was much easier for someone to be present or represent the lot.

Needless to say, those that hung on had a strong commitment to the community. There was an effort to eliminate people who were there to possess lots that could easily be sold. Just imagine how one with a family having to endure disease and privation felt about opportunists who felt they could appear once in a while or slip away once in a while to sleep in a place with amenities, eat in a comfortable place or enjoy easy access to transportation and bear no obligation to participate in the community. On paper, land trafficking in many sectors was grounds for being purged. In practice, as we will see, things were different. Measures were tough, many *dirigentes* argued, because they wanted people who lived in the community and who were committed to building a community. Others, particularly those who were not *dirigentes*, claimed that *dirigentes* did not live by the rules that they set and that the rules often served as a pretext to relocate people

so that their lots could be sold. The lazy, the meek and the weak-at-heart quickly disappeared, or were forced to less accommodating lots.

The suspicion was always there that *dirigentes* were abusing their authority, but people did not speak openly about such things for fear that they could be purged if they opposed *dirigentes*. Sonja elaborates more on this sentiment:

...there were auditors, there were coordinators, there were treasurers, everything, but there was also a great theft of money, as all *dirigentes* have that custom. But, sometimes, not all *dirigentes* are the same, but most, they say, yes. But me, it never interested me whether they stole or not because I said what I wanted was to live here. Nothing more. Let them leave me alone [I said], and, I started living here.

(Sonja, Interview recorded on November 14, 2010)

While most felt that they were at the mercy of the wiles of *dirigentes*, necessity seemed to prevail. I suspect, that as Sonja stated, most just wanted to be left in peace and have a place to live.

In the beginning, because there was a negative element in the community, i.e. drug users and drug traffickers, thieves, gangsters, etc., the rules were tough. Otherwise people would become unruly, many of the original *dirigentes* explained. Discipline, especially with the threat of evictions at any moment, had to be maintained. Another concern was to demonstrate that people in the area were law-abiding citizens who were there because they needed a home for their family. External aid is dependent on one's ability to convince aid organizations that a community is cohesive. Evidence to the contrary could be harmful for the desire to

have the government and non-government organizations intervene in the area. To some extent, cohesion was an external disciplinary measure, but it was also attractive for leaders who wanted to ensure that the momentum of the initial spirit of the invasion was maintained due to the amount of work that needed to be done. As many would say, “En la unión está la fuerza.”<sup>43</sup>

Alcohol was even banned for the first years because on the weekends people were getting into brawls and people were being hurt. Local police told Chico that he had to establish order in his community, otherwise they would have to be present more in the area. The families in the area demanded some repression of what he referred to as “antisocial” elements in the community.

Chico told me that he and other men in the community waited in the evenings for those who smoked drugs to light up in the hills, then followed them back to where they lived. Eventually, through careful investigation they discovered people in the community that were dealing drugs. Chico was threatened for removing these elements. He and other *dirigentes* were frequently reported to the local police and on more than one occasion he was charged and had to hire legal counsel to defend himself. People did not go easily. Fortunately, he recalled, nobody knew where he worked, or where he lived, and nobody ever successfully carried through with their threats.

After the first year, the central committee began to draw up lots and decide where more permanent roads would go. The preference for those who would stay

---

<sup>43</sup> In unity there is strength.

was given to squatters who had families and those who had made regular contributions to the community. Those who were single, conflictual, or those who had a number of warnings were pushed to the frontiers of Minas 2000, being forced to occupy rocky hills, requiring more work to clear lots, build retaining walls and build access roads.



Two men breaking up rock that has been pried and sledge-hammered out of the hill. Usually, a retaining wall is built first, then rock is tumbled out from beside the wall to form the base of a road. Many of the access roads have been built in this fashion. Men often do the heavier work like that shown above. Excess rock is being broken up to be taken away in dump trucks. Photo: author

In my walks through the Nueva Rinconada, I got to know people in quite divisive communities. The explanation given to me for one case by a municipal authority with much experience in the area was that the community had a strong element which had been purged from other communities. In many other cases, there was a power struggle between newer squatters—who had bought lots from people who had grown tired of the sacrifices demanded, or been relocated to expanding zones of communities—and older groups of squatters. Practically every *asentamiento humano* of the 140 here has a story to tell.



Women here work passing stone the size of a football along a chain to a collection point where a tractor will load the rock into a truck. Women place smaller stone in empty rice bags to carry to different points where fill is needed. While men may join in chains like those shown, they tend to prefer heavier tasks. Areas rich in stone like that shown above give stone to sandy areas so that they can build retaining walls or put stone down on their roads so that vehicles do not sink into sandy and fine sediment that becomes muddy in rainy months of the year.

Diego was one of the single young men who became a pioneer of an offshoot of Minas 2000 that would later become Gardenias. Having seen maps of the proposed growth of Minas, he knew where future roads would go and also the important fact that this was state land. At first, he recalled, they were still considered a *manzana* of Minas 2000, and therefore had to participate in *faenas* for Minas 2000. Many of the youth in the budding community became disgruntled because they noticed that those from the more established areas of Minas 2000 were refusing to help them open a connecting road that would eventually wrap around to connect to San Gabriel (an adjacent sector in a neighbouring municipality).

When they finally made the decision to try to secede from Minas 2000, squatters from Minas 2000 came to evict them. Not to be intimidated easily, a handful of young men and women stood ready to fight with a numerically superior group from Minas 2000. When the confrontation came to blows, the two sides stood down not wanting anyone to be severely hurt or killed.

This scene was repeated below in Quebrada when a group of about 100 people invaded lands that Minas 2000 had set aside for its own growth. Diego recalled how a large group of roughly 500 descended on those that had taken possession of land earmarked by Minas 2000. The two sides clashed; however the leaders quickly called off the dispute, fearing that someone would be killed and they would be held responsible for the death of one of the invaders. Elvira, one of the members of this original group in Quebrada, recalled the situation.



...when Minas 2000 saw a few people, Minas 2000 came wanting to boot us off the land, saying that they were founders and that they had the option to occupy the land and that we didn't. And, we started to fight amongst us for the land, until the courageous...and we fought here. We fought. They got a hold of us with sticks, with their hands, and, like that the boldest (*más vivos*) started to take command as *dirigentes*, to manipulate us, the novices that knew nothing, and they sent us to fight...

(Elvira (mid-fifties), Interview recorded on November 25, 2010)

Elvira goes on to relate instances where her group had to confront the police again in yet another attempted eviction that occurred in August of 2001. She is also making reference to the constant *depuraciones*, or purges, that occurred in the first years of the area where people were often removed if they did not, or could not be present constantly. She was a social worker for the first ten years of the Nueva Rinconada, so she had the sensitivity and position to know what was happening to her people. Her job was to know who was around and what kind of social problems existed in the area. She listened to people and she felt their pain. Elvira, from my experience with her, was never one to bow down before anyone and openly spoke her mind. She embodied the sentiment of a collaborator who when speaking of the importance of being frank commented: *Más vale una colorada que vivir toda la vida amarilla* (A redfaced person is worth more than living life yellow). She was a tough woman who held her own against whomever.

According to the local police major and collaborators from other sectors that were offshoots or formed by people occupying lands beyond current settlements, this is a common occurrence. Many communities view adjacent lands as theirs by right. Such land may be sold to people who want to enter the group to cover

administrative costs, or in some cases for suspected personal benefit of *dirigentes*, although the later is usually stipulated as grounds for removal from the community.

Another common ground for staking claim to adjacent land is to meet state requirements for green spaces in an urban space. Just how rocky hillsides will be considered useful green space remains a mystery, but from what I could surmise it seemed like a widespread practice. Reserving land this way has the additional advantage of limiting the size of the community, thus reducing the necessity to engage in community work projects to cut roads into hillsides, or build concrete stairs for an ever-expanding sector. There is a practical limit to the sacrifices that households are willing to make for others.

In talking to *dirigentes* in Pamplona Alta, I came across similar cases where squatters had invaded lands marked for the growth of certain sectors, lands destined for the children of squatters. A certain tension emerges between those who have established themselves and newcomers who seek the same standard of living: access to basic services, roads, sidewalks, stairs, multi-storied concrete homes, to name a few of the common features most sought after. One person's prosperity is often perceived to jeopardize the advancement of another person. This dynamic would play out on a larger scale during the first years of the area.

## Minas 2000 and Nuevo Pamplona

As Minas 2000 grew, so too did another group in the lower parts of the Nueva Rinconada, Peru 2000, later Nuevo Pamplona. It quickly became clear to the

coordinators of the different *manzanas* of Minas 2000 that groups below, groups that they argued moved in after their bold engagements with landowners and the police, were organizing independently without so much as a concern to consult them. Chico remembered that they found out that the group below, Peru 2000, had called elections, excluding different groups that had not affiliated with them, like Minas 2000. In a general assembly, a president was elected to represent the Nueva Rinconada, to represent Minas 2000.

Shortly after receiving the news, Chico and the 24-odd coordinators of Minas 2000 and their auditors descended to talk to those who were organizing this new group. Peru 2000 proposed that Minas 2000 incorporate with this group, a proposal that was refused by Chico on the grounds that his group had 1600 households and that it was unfair and preposterous to suggest that his group have the same representation as groups that numbered 20 or 40 households.

Chico noticed that they had many older *dirigentes* who were helping to organize younger people. One man said that everyone had to buy the lots because most of the area was private property. Chico and his coordinators decided that they would boycott Peru 2000 and formed the Nueva Rinconada. Chico and his Vice General Secretary, Oscar, began to note that Peru 2000 was using coercion to force smaller groups to join them. Oscar explained that in March of 2000 the Frente de Defensa de la Nueva Rinconada, hereafter the Defense Front, or Front, which at one time had up to 35 affiliated *asentamientos humanos*, emerged as a response to the abuses of Peru 2000.

That Peru 2000 governed with a tight fist is evident in the press at the time. In a march on Congress to demand state intervention in the Nueva Rinconada from the Fujimori government, the interaction between protestors and a journalist for the newspaper *República* is telling (Anonymous, 2000b:27). One of the protestors confessed anonymously, for fear of reprisals, that they were obliged to participate in the protest or they would lose their land. When one of the protestors told the journalist that Oscar Mendelius —one of the public notaries for the Fujimori government— had done the paperwork for their association he was quickly silenced by others. The result of this protest was a meeting with representatives of COFOPRI, who, according to landowners interviewed by *El Comercio* (Anonymous, 2000d:a8), promptly informed them that the land legally belonged to the Association. Despite this unambiguous information, curiously, the legal struggle for the area was just beginning, and would persist for years to come.

It should be mentioned at this point that sanctions are frequently levelled against households that do not send a representative to public protests. The fines at the time I did my research could reach as high as 200 soles. Most people with a family are easily able to send someone. Most of the marches have women and children, which, as many point out, has been an appreciable deterrent to violence and a strong reason for leaders to ensure that they have permission to march.

Many collaborators lamented the taming of marches. In the past, many recalled, they blocked traffic and defied police orders. This made for a powerful

point in their opinion. The purpose of a march, according to many collaborators, is a last ditch effort to gain state concessions or state attention.

This fact is frequently avoided in mainstream press coverage of protests. The general reaction of the press is to criticize the government for not using repressive measures against the protests, or for not using enough dialogue, depending on the political position. The reality in Peru, like many developing countries with natural resources and a majority of the urban population living in less than dignified conditions, is that protests have become a common feature of daily life. Negotiations with the state have particular histories that are further complicated by political parties seeking to incite problems for incumbent governments. From the ground, at times it looks like political parties are constantly looking for ways to gain the votes of the general populace, even if this means using people's necessities to get into or remain in power.

Another noteworthy feature of protests is that most citizens have a vague idea why they are marching and are frequently unsure who called the march. Much of the organization of marches comes from the top of an organizational pyramid that is closed to all but the most senior leaders of popular organizations and political movements. In general, incumbent political parties rely on grassroots *dirigentes* to mobilize the masses with alliances being anything but predictable and transparent. The nexus between political parties and marches is often blurry, leading many to speculate about who is behind the frequent marches.

In the marches above and in the context of invasions that took place in Lima South in the early months of 2000, many suspected the Fujimori government of organizing the marches to generate a pre-election spectacle that would generate political capital for the incumbent government reluctant to relinquish the reigns of power. During the Toledo government (2001-2006) Toledistas suspected that Apristas were mobilizing people from asentamientos to agitate the social situation. Due to the top down command structure of popular organizations, one is always looking for someone behind the masses. However, as we will see, this does not mean that people do not have valid reasons to mobilize. These are instances where collective needs/desires tend to coincide with political projects.

What is evident on the ground is that many sectors decide whether they will participate in the marches, with some refusing if they do not see the point of the march, or they do not see that police permission is granted. The possibilities to resist the injunction to mobilize one's people was much more difficult in larger groupings like Nuevo Pamplona because they can and did resort to strong arm tactics against non-compliant groups. In hindsight, many collaborators, after not achieving the result they expected, griped about being used by politicians to push laws through congress, because marches are one way of demonstrating to Congress that an issue is public and therefore in need of attention.

When it comes to marches and protests, *dirigentes* of different persuasions can agree on certain issues, mobilizing their people for a collective good. That said, many can refuse to participate if they see obvious political manipulations from

above to mobilize people for partisan reasons. Needless to say, figuring out what is occurring in any march or protest necessitates an insider knowledge of those convoking the march and their less than clear relationships with Peru's political parties, which are incessantly vying for more representation in municipal, regional and national governments. Let us return to the explanation for how the Defense Front emerged.

A defining local political incident occurred around March of 2000. In Villa La Paz, one of the *asentamiento humanos* in the lower part of the Nueva Rinconada, a high school friend of Oscar's approached him for help. She explained that the coordinator in her group was threatening to remove her, burning her shelter. He also learned that the central committee of Peru 2000 was charging quotas of 3, 5 and up to 10 soles a week. Others said that this amount was less however, there was a general consensus that excessive quotas were being charged and that the money was not being put to effective use. People saw little progress in their material circumstances for the money that they were paying and there was a strong suspicion that *dirigentes* were embezzling funds, although this could not be proven. Reports of a mob that numbered as many as 500, others said 200 to 300, of people in balaclavas that went around at night burning people's shelters were circulating, as well. That this was a common practice with Nuevo Pamplona (formerly Peru 2000 as one will recall) is reflected in their assembly minutes where reference is made to the use of balaclavas and medical supplies for the eviction of landholders, although the usual numbers were probably far more modest and organized than the incident mentioned here.

Chico, Oscar, and the other coordinators agreed to intervene on the behalf of those who were being bullied by the central committee of Peru 2000. When the mob of masked vigilantes appeared to burn huts in the friend's community, word was sent to Minas 2000. Quickly, each coordinator rallied 5 people to aid those below. Diego stated that a group of about a hundred faced a numerically superior group of 200–300. Oscar stated that 1000 confronted a numerically inferior group of 500. The conflict apparently ended with the group from Minas telling Mr. Flores, the Secretary General of Peru 2000, to stay away from people who were not part of his association and to stop trying to force those that were not part of the association to join.

The anecdote, despite the discrepancy in details, is still pivotal in shifting attitudes toward Perú 2000's draconian tactics. Oral historian Alessandro Portelli argues that such discrepancies are due more to the narrative that collaborators seek to establish and that we should not fixate on exact dates or numbers (Portelli 1991). In this case collaborators are emphasizing the abuses that were occurring under Peru 2000 in the beginning and the need to intervene. The incident provided the *raison d'être* for the formation of another grouping of *asentamientos humanos* that would form the basis of a rivalry that would endure throughout the first four to five years, after which time, we will see, both alliances collapsed due to a general loss of credibility of the *dirigentes* of these larger fronts in the area. To some degree, these same lines exist, with charismatic figures of Peru 2000 enjoying a preferential position with the repeat mayor Mr. Ocampo, who is a member of a Fujimori splinter group, Cambio Radical.



After this incident, it was agreed that Oscar would continue to be the Vice General Secretary of Minas 2000 under Chico, however he would also go below and to other *asentamientos humanos* to form a buffer alliance against the expansionistic Peru 2000. Oscar would eventually be elected as the Secretary General of the Defense Front, a position he would maintain until 2004. Oscar recalled that he had the support of a number of excellent *dirigentes* during the years he led the front, some of whom would go on to careers in labour unions or national politics.

It is worth remarking here that municipal politics often is a springboard to a career in politics. This, in part, explains the contradictory nature of many *dirigentes* who claim their interest as vocation and at the same time aspire to something more, sometimes losing sight of their social obligations to their community.

It is likely that many begin innocently enough, but over time, when they see new possibilities, start to wander from a path that may at one time have been a calling rooted in the betterment of a particular community. As the old adage goes: knowledge is power. We need not view such ambitions so negatively. After learning about how community politics works, many no doubt feel that they can represent the demands of other communities on a broader level. Negative talk about leaders who have greater ambitions might be yet another example of envy.

When I tried to press many *dirigentes* for reasons people become corrupt, many responded that things are that way here. No matter how innocent one is, the political culture here leads one to adopt immoral practices like influence trafficking, bribing, embezzlement, raquetearing, etc. I began to wonder if all democratic

governments function in this way and if the insight I had here was due to both the privilege that being a white man in Peru afforded me and the relative impunity for acts of corruption in Peru which allow these acts to become more flagrant.

Regardless of personal ambitions and the abuses of some of his coordinators, much progress was made during the existence of the Defense Front. Like the organization of Minas 2000, the sectors that would become part of the Front were represented in a central committee. If there were excesses, something that Oscar does not deny, it was out of his hands. If people were evicted, auditors, coordinators, and others were present, and everything was done publicly according to the internal rules of each sector.

Similar to Minas 2000, the sectors in the Front controlled the hours that people could drink in an attempt to discipline the population. People were evicted if they were active delinquents, if they refused to pay fees (I will discuss what these fees entailed briefly), if they were of “doubtful origin,” if they did not live in their shacks, or if they refused to participate in *faenas*. Oscar told me that if one missed three *faenas* —every Sunday in the beginning— they were removed.

While measures sound drastic, many of my collaborators told me how they were purged numerous times. Others told me that this often occurred because *dirigentes* were trafficking their lots, although it seemed to me that in many cases they were making room in what were, at first, crowded conditions. If I asked *dirigentes* what happened, they would tell me that they acted according to the rules of their sector and that the money they charged for newcomers was used to cover

expenses that households were not willing to cover, like paying architects for plans. To complicate matters further, around 40–50% by local estimates —higher in sectors that are in less accessible areas— of the population has sold off lots. It is not hard to recognize incredibly complex patterns of movement within the area. This makes it hard to really pin down who is a trafficker and who is not. Many sectors tried to remove people who were not living in their homes because there are people who supplement their income renovating lots to sell, moving around constantly. As one can imagine, many were suspects from the beginning.

The preference in many sectors was for people from the provinces of Peru. People from the provinces are often viewed as possessing more integrity and being willing to make the sacrifices necessary in settlements that are built with the labour and financial contributions of households. The difference with many of the people from the provinces, from what I could glean, was that they had lived in worse conditions and were prepared to work all day, every day, to see an improvement in their situation. Rural living is not like urban living where one expects breaks, holidays, and adjusts their rhythm to that of the urban labour market. People who come from a rural background are perceived as being willing to cooperate and knowing how to work —values which seem Andean in character.

City dwellers, as many collaborators who are *dirigentes* would complain, are conformists; they do not want to do anything, they expect everything to come to them, and they expect it to be free. This attitude often came from urbanized 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> generation migrants, suggesting that social progress is conceived as a cross-

generational project. Years of populist practices have had a clearly negative impact on communities, but I suspect that the individualism and a sense of entitlement that are so strongly promoted in contemporary cities are just as responsible for the unwillingness of many to work with others for the betterment of their community. From the perspective of those who live in a sector with their family, making sacrifices to see that things improve, the last thing one wants is to have people who show up to make money from selling a lot, or who complain about having to do things that are for the benefit of all. It is downright maddening and frustrating for many to have selfish people like this in a community. The injunction is to work together. Due to the circumstances of the invasion, working as a community could be just as much the continuity of a self-help ethic as it could be an Andean ethic. The two likely converge.

Fortunately, up until 2003–2004, there was cohesive leadership and the desire to work together to improve conditions in the Nueva Rinconada and make ground on the legal problems the squatters faced. Oscar remembered how people from below helped to build the road that now connects the lower part to sectors in the farthest corner of the area.

He told me how at one time, prior to what seems like a general loss in interest in the Fronts in 2004–2005, there was a general plan of how to proceed with resolving the problems in the area, a roadmap of sorts, which disappeared after 2003. After that, he noted, there was a “lack of leadership,” and a “lack of commitment”. From what I could piece together, the results of a study done by

COFOPRI in 2002-2003, a legal finding in favour of the landowners in 2003, land trafficking, very public cases of embezzlement in Nuevo Pamplona, abuses of authority, exhaustion, successes in changing legislation and political cynicism all worked to undermine the unity that existed at the beginning. Oscar lamented that nowadays *dirigentes* “do not want to commit” and that “everyone wants to do things their way.” He went on to tell me that he “underestimated the bureaucratic obstacles, personal appetites, and that political appetites would be so small-minded (*mezquino*) as to leave people in a state of abandonment.” For now, I will say that Oscar’s views are typical. There is a sense of frustration among local leaders when it comes to working together.

Oscar claimed that the Front sent their papers to COFOPRI when the study was done to reconcile with the landowners. The problem for them was that the landowners had revalued their property following the presence of people in the area. Most squatters felt this was unfair and that landowners sought to benefit from their misery. For landowners, the squatters had received their just druthers for the suffering they had caused them. The issue was complicated further by the fact that some had larger families, or were single mothers, who could not pay. Many had the false expectation that the land would not cost anything, a view that is not difficult to imagine given the fact that land has since the 1940s in Lima been given away “freely” to squatters. People were left disillusioned. Some groups did manage to reconcile with the landowners though. Others resisted for reasons that one can only speculate about.

Locals suspect that many professionals, politicians and community leaders make a living off the continued problems of people in harrowing living conditions. One cannot also help but notice that landowners too, who are legally entitled to receive current market values for their properties, stand to gain from any delays. Speculations about who gains and why are abundant, needless to say.

At this point I would like to bring to bear the testimony of a couple that lived in one of the sectors in the front. This is the case of only one sector, but it gives a sense of what happened in even the Front. One will notice that the impression of people here is not so different from Minas 2000 and that it only differs in degree from the excesses that were being committed by Peru 2000/Nuevo Pamplona.

Collaborators from Quebrada 2000, one of the sectors that would opt to become part of the Defense Front, described their very particular experience of being in a sector which belonged to the Front. Johnny and Maria are a couple in their mid-thirties with three children who came and planted their flag one day “because they are Peruvians and they needed a place to live.” Johnny makes minimum wage as a labourer for a jeweller, while his wife is a recycler. This is how they describe their experience with *dirigentes*:

J: There are also a lot of people that take advantage of the situation...

M: They take a lot of money from the people.

J: They take advantage of the situation, they take advantage of those people. They know how to organize something more or less, get groups together and they have a bit of leadership. Those people take advantage of the situation a little more. They organize themselves, and on account of that they work also. They make the asentamiento advance through solidarity (*asociación*).

(Johnny and María, Interview recorded on May 30, 2010)

One should not be too hasty to categorize *dirigentes* as being completely corrupt. Even those who did engage in dubious practices managed to bring some material, social and political benefit to their community, as Johnny surmises. This excerpt really hits home on a particular truth about grassroots leadership in Lima: those who possess know-how take advantage of their knowledge to organize people for multiple ends. Taking people's money and leaving, trafficking land, pretending to have lawyers, etc., are considered acts of *viveza*. This does not stop them from happening though. Most leaders, however, do the best they can given their circumstances. Notions of corruption seem overstated, and, as I already stated, more likely part of a generalized emotional economy that has taken root in conditions of uneven development.

Using privileged knowledge for personal gain, and the magnification of its pervasiveness, is common throughout Lima. Collaborators who migrated from the provinces of Peru often use a metaphor of contagion to describe how one becomes infected with Creole behavioural patterns. My hunch is that this behavioural contrast is a commentary on the shift to a possessive and socially mobile individual with its attendant socially reprehensible behaviours –envy, egoism, dishonesty, etc. Its naming certainly has very interesting implications. It is as if a part of people, what I have linked to Gramsci's theoretical understanding, is rejecting practices to put one ahead of others to gain some relative degree of progress at the expense of others however, it is not finding an outlet in the community to become normative.

The personalism —modelled on the behaviour of Peru’s larger political parties according to my collaborators— noted by *dirigentes* to be the impediment to collaborative action is what prevents this collective will from becoming a reality. When collaborators talk of their acceptance of this behaviour just as long as they are being left alone, they seem to be resigning themselves to an inescapable reality. There is nevertheless a rejection (look again at what Sonja and Johnny and Maria had to say).

Despite being a normalized practice, it receives widespread condemnation and repudiation. Governments throughout the past thirty years or so and popular insurrections like that of Sendero Luminoso and MRTA have been fueled by a sense of indignation that arises from the impotence people feel in almost everyday interactions. I will have more to say on this matter later.

Johnny and María continued to tell me about their experience. I paraphrase here, their words becoming my words. They explained that once everything had been organized these *dirigentes* then began to ask for money for various things. They told them that they had to fight, but they did not fight. They asked for money for lawyers, and, as it turned out, they did not have lawyers. They took advantage of people, grabbing, 3, 4 lots, then they sold these lots. Apparently, they had given money for lawyers, plans, and other administrative processes, only to find out no progress had been made. “Wherever one is, there are land traffickers,” explained Johnny. It is hard not to hear the frustration in people’s voices and the disappointment in their eyes in moments like this. But the only option people like



Johnny and María have is —like the refrain in superficial talk shows, media spectacles and bourgeois charity drives implores: *seguir adelante* or to continue forward. It is hard not to become cynical in such circumstances.

Similar to testimonies in Minas 2000, Johnny and María and others in their sector told me how evictions were quite common at first. One really had to make sacrifices if they wanted to hold on to their lots. The two tell me that the majority of people in their sector, including the Secretary General, have sold their lots. Not many of the original founders are left. Faced with having to purchase their lots or face eviction by the adjacent association, Johnny regrets not having sold his lot earlier. At least this way he would have received some money for his efforts here. Now, he has to pay the association.

As I did in the case of Minas 2000, in the case of Quebrada, I went to the ex-association president, Herman, to ask what had happened with Quebrada 2000. He explained that Quebrada and another sector that joined with the Defense Front in the beginning had agreed with his sector to buy the land from the Association. When I asked him why they chose this route, he told me that in his experience as a *dirigente* before he had contact with a lawyer in the Barrantes government in the mid-80s in Lima. When he found out that his workers had invaded in the Nueva Rinconada, he decided to accompany them and try to help people out, recognizing that there were many hucksters, charlatans and political *dirigentes* that had moved into the area. As a general contractor, he had intimate knowledge about how a city is built and what type of logistical and administrative tasks are involved, which he

felt he could share with his workers and their families. His friend, a lawyer, gave him unambiguous advice. Due to the constitutional changes of 1993 during the Fujimori government, state expropriation of land for social interests was no longer a reality. The reality was that the newly defined public interest that the state defended gave equal consideration to property owners and their rights as it did to people who decided to squat on their lands. His friend advised him to save his money and buy the land immediately.<sup>44</sup>

What I discovered is that Quebrada and Nueva Esperanza reneged on their end of the bargain, choosing to go the route of state reversion of private property based on the abandonment argument being proposed by a number of lawyers. Herman explained that these lawyers probably miscalculated their case because they were unable to find the original plans of 1973 in National Assets. Landowners alleged that the document had been stolen with the intent of destroying the only evidence that the land had clear title. This hypothesis, however, does not coincide with what Oscar and others discovered in their investigations and the advice that many voices seemed to be proclaiming from the beginning, including Herman himself, that people had no option but to buy the property because it had clear title.

Herman told me that Oscar had sent people to invade the lands that his association had purchased from the Association. He also recounted the story of how Mr. Flores and a group of masked men had shown up in his sector to threaten him in

---

<sup>44</sup> This legal advice seems peculiar given the changes that Fujimori made to legislation before his 2000 election campaign. However, there may be a recognition of Herman's lawyer that neoliberalism would never put special interests or community interests above private property and large investment interests.

the beginning. The assembly minutes of Nuevo Pamplona verify that Herman was considered an enemy of the invasion and believed to be in cahoots with the landowners. Time has redeemed Herman though, revealing that his intentions were in line with the laws that govern the country, at least. Whatever lots he may possess in his sector have been bought and his current activities in the construction of a market are transparent. While some talkers in his sector complain about *faenas*, which is a feature in all sectors, the efficiency and solidarity of his sector is materially manifest and sets this sector apart from all others in the Nueva Rinconada. Due to their decision to buy their property from the landowners, they have qualified for state support in infrastructure and social programs.

Transparent leadership and tangible results for the money that people have contributed has led to a degree of trust in the association, something not seen in other sectors where different groups compete for control of sectors. For this reason, Herman has gained both the respect and the hatred of the leadership in the area. Many of my collaborators commended his realism. A few others were very critical of him, but mostly, as I came to realize, because he was aware of their excesses and misdeeds in the area. A number of people with whom I spoke told me that Hermann had evicted people who could not pay the fees that the association was asking. The aim here in defaming Herman was to generate confusion about the veracity of his statements, statements which undermined the credibility of many of my collaborators and which he could substantiate with documentation, a reputation which spoke for itself and actions.

At this point, I turn to the general history of Perú 2000, or at least, as in previous cases, what I could manage to piece together. While I managed to interview many people for the history of this sector, there were gaps in what people remember and a marked diversity in how they recalled certain events. I will attempt, therefore, to bring in other voices to give another perspective on these events.

## Perú 2000

The best place to start with Perú 2000 is probably with the first president's version. Mr. Flores, due to the negative impression that many of the people had generated about him in the area, was keen to set the record straight. Mr. Flores recalled how he and his brother were watching the news and they saw a television report in the evening, around 7, on channel 2, that showed footage of people invading in the Rinconada. He saw this was on 3<sup>rd</sup> of January. He and his wife and two children were living in their mother's home in Pamplona. His brother, who I assume was close in age, was also living with his mother. The images of the television and the desire to get out of their parent's home and have a home of their own spurred the two brothers into action. The two quickly came to an agreement to go and invade.

From what collaborators from Minas 2000 had to say, the report of people invading would have occurred early on the 6<sup>th</sup> of January, and not the third. When I mentioned to other collaborators that Mr. Flores had claimed that he arrived on the third, many of the other collaborators laughed and said that he was confused. His

group, they claimed, appeared after others had fought against the police. They were mere *marcadores* who showed up after the hard work had been done. Returning to Portelli's notion of narrative intentionality, Mr. Flores, in arguing for his presence in the beginning, may have been trying to say that he always stood with people in the Nueva Rinconada. While Mr. Flores may not have been present in the initial group that fought with the landowners, his presence was instrumental in Peru 2000 from the beginning.

Mr. Flores recalled that he and others leading people at the time started to make a list of people in front of the soccer pitch in the sector Nazareno in Pamplona from where other collaborators told me that the invasion was staged. This space would accommodate 10 lots at present of the standard 90m<sup>2</sup>. There were, according to his calculations, 240 people in their u-shaped reed huts. Photographs from the local press show that these shelters were covered with tarp in some cases; however in the summer months of January and February this measure would not have been necessary. It would be necessary in the following months though.

On the following day, when they managed to get people organized, Mr. Flores was elected the coordinator of his sector. After he was elected, he and the other coordinators, either that day or the next, called a secret meeting in the parking lot for the P1, a local bus line in Pamplona. The meeting was secret because they did not want any problems with the landowners. An election committee was formed by a man who had entered the invasion with "political intentions" from below. Someone, he could not recall who, nominated him as one of the candidates for the

Secretary General of the association that they were planning on forming. He had been a *dirigente* in a particular club, winning the debating competition four times. On account of his oratory skills, he was elected to lead the newly formed group and was willing to learn as he went, recognizing that he was a neophyte when it came to organizing invasions. In the same meeting, the rest of the representatives were elected.

At this point, the group was not so large, mainly incorporating groups around the soccer pitch of Nazareno. When the group numbered around 1800, he and his *dirigentes* agreed that they would collect 1 sol to begin the paperwork process. He asked for this amount because he did not know very much about the paperwork and the costs that they would incur. Shortly, he realized that he would have to go to the local police station to ask for support. He said the following about this relationship: “I met some police, it is not possible to say their names, because I always contributed some money to them so that they supported us with any problem.” (Interview with Mr. Flores, recorded on December 1, 2010)

Eventually, to register people with Perú 2000 they charged 2 soles for each person of a population that reached about 3,800. Doing the math, Mr. Alaya figured that his administration had only managed to collect 12,000 soles. Here, there are glaring discrepancies in the general narrative of the zone. Many collaborators told me that the group was charging 5, 10 soles from the beginning to register and that payments were frequent. I would like to draw my reader’s attention to how this group nominated itself the central committee of the zone. After listening to the

history of other sectors, it becomes clear that no one sector, or groups of sectors, should have had the right to declare itself the central grouping. Many of my collaborators maintained that Perú 2000 had ambitions to control the whole zone from the beginning. The interview with Mr. Flores is clear that the group projected itself from the beginning as the representative body of zone “A” of the invasion. From the histories of both Minas 2000 and the Defense Front, we can see a generalized resistance to the pretensions of Perú 2000.

The Constitution for the group was written up by the Public Notary Medelius—the notary of the Fujimori government as the reader will recall— on February 9, 2000 and the final document was emitted on February 14. The name on the Constitution was “The Central Association of Settlers Peru 2000”. The consensus among many of the people that I interviewed from this grouping was that the decision to appeal to the Fujimori government in choosing this name and in sending people to Fujimori rallies was to receive the support of his government. Gestures like this are commonplace because squatters have recognized that if they want government support they have to play along. Key figures from Perú 2000, like Mr. Flores, continue to maintain loyalties to Mr. Ocampo at present.

Those who are not part of this group are quick to point out the relationship between the past and incumbent mayor and *dirigentes* from this front. The municipality, it was pointed out to me, has been in the hands of the same group of people since Mr. Ocampo entered with Fujimori. The string of recent mayors between his administration in 1999 to the present have been ex-functionaries in his

municipality, or those of his predecessors. The same political group, openly accused of acts of corruption, keeps a hold on the municipality due to the fragmentation of local elections. Populist tactics involve keeping a stable core of *dirigentes* and their clients in place.

Public infrastructure projects, which always bear the name or mark of the incumbent mayor (blue and yellow), are given as evidence that recent governments are more effective. Inaugurations of retaining walls, sidewalks, stairs, soup kitchens, public giveaways and medical campaigns give people the sense that populist tactics are reflective of larger positive changes. Nonetheless, very few people recognize that increased spending since the 1990s has been an outcome of the recovery of the Peruvian economy and the increase in the government budgets and access to international loans since then, thanks in large part to neoliberal restructuring.

The actual operation of the sectors in Perú 2000 was not so different from that of Minas 2000, the Defense Front and Villa San Juan (another important large sector in the beginning). As Juliana, a *dirigente* from one of the sectors in the grouping explained to me, the statute of each group was designed to get rid of those people who had no intention of living in the area and who hoped to traffic their lots (Juliana (mid-forties), Interview conducted on August 30, 2010). She and others in her sector told me how many people left because of the proximity of the parents' place below. Those who were not living there permanently were removed.

Within Perú 2000 there was a group that went around at night looking for people in their homes. If nobody answered the door they would enter to see if there



were signs that people were living in their shacks. Many people were removed or relocated at this time. I talked to two members of this group who told me that the first years were gruelling because of duties like this. Imagine having to work the next day after knocking on doors and having to evict people after you worked. These were tense times, indeed. One sometimes sees family members and extended family members occupying different lots. If one could live up to the obligations that each sector demanded, mainly a constant presence and involvement in *faenas*, problems would not arise.

One of the differences with Peru 2000, which had many sectors in the lower parts of zone “A”, was the constant threats they faced from the police and landowners. Although numbers vary depending on who one speaks to, they received the brunt of charges levelled at the invasion. Somehow, landowners infiltrated the organization and managed to get the names of many of the *dirigentes*.

Many people told me that the police constantly harassed them. A number of collaborators claimed that the police often entered without eviction notices and lobbed tear gas into different sectors. These low level annoyances kept people alert throughout the first years. Alvin, a food vendor and shopkeeper in one of the sectors of Perú 2000, told me that in the first months he and his wife and children barely slept. People were constantly worried about being evicted. One gets the sense that common people like Alvin were caught between abusive *dirigentes* and property owners keen to regain their property or make conditions so uncomfortable

that people would want to leave. Herman remarked that relocations<sup>45</sup> were often veiled attempts to remove passive elements from sectors. Lots were then sold to newcomers, or those who were cast out were forced to inhabit the hills or enter other sectors.

One such occasion marks the narratives of people from Peru 2000. Juliana and others told me how she was detained in one such intervention that occurred. Juliana maintained that she returned one Sunday and saw 30 riot police in one of the sectors that belonged to Perú 2000. Police had been called in because neighbours were trying to purge one of the squatters, according to other witnesses. Curious to see what was happening, she got closer and noticed a female police officer who had been wounded. Concerned for the welfare of the officer she and another friend accompanied the police officer in a minibus to see a doctor. The female police officer pulled her gun and brought her in to the police station. She was charged with aggravated robbery and resisting arrest among other charges. She claimed that 5 landowners were behind the charges. One member of the group was released almost immediately. In the end, she and another man were held for seven months while collections were made to hire lawyers to get them out of jail. The judge released them.

---

<sup>45</sup> *Reubicaciones* in Spanish. Because people initially settled in a rough manner and on smaller plots, people had to shuffled around and reordered when a surveyor was hired. Room had to made for roads, or lots enlarged. A selection process was involved here where families and those who were more prominent in the community tended to be favoured over single people and more problematic elements within the community. Herman is making allegations that the practice involved some victimization. I tried to get access to police files of statements that people who were unjustly removed would have made to the police, however I was denied access to this documentation. I have relied on testimonies of squatters. When I talked to people from all areas of the Nueva Rinconada, there seemed to be a consensus that there was abuse everywhere in the beginning. But, moreso in Perú 2000.

A neighbour of Juliana's explained that the aforementioned group of police had been repelled and that they had left a female officer behind. Juliana, according to him, helped the police officer, placing a tourniquet on the officer's leg. Everyone agreed to bring her to the nearest medical post. Once the officer was free of the tumult of people and on her way to the medical post, she got up and assaulted Juliana, giving the opportunity for the other man to escape. Her neighbour told me that she was picked up by police in the evening. The police gave her a beating and accusing her of being a terrorist.

When I asked others outside of Peru 2000 about what happened that day, I was told that three police officers came to investigate an eviction that day. At this time, Perú 2000 did not allow police into the area. This goes against versions that police were constantly harassing squatters. When these police officers came, they were kidnapped under orders of Juliana and the others that were picked up. A conflagration broke out when a group of riot police returned to rescue their missing comrades.

From the versions given above, one can see that there are many multiple narratives. While Juliana claims that she was held at gunpoint, her neighbour claims she was picked up. She claims that the police officer was left behind, while others not in Perú 2000 told me that they had kidnapped some officers from the first group of officers sent to investigate. Like much of the history of this area, versions vary. Each narrative undoubtedly has motives which guide it, however when an outsider, or even someone within the area is confronted with multiple versions of events,

nobody knows which version to favour. The alliance to narrative versions, then, seem to reflect political alliances in the area: alliances whose history people may not fully understand.

My attempts to get documentation from the local police department about evictions, investigations, and incidents like that involving Juliana were denied by Captain Luna. I did however get a number of documents that attested to the fact that eviction notices were being processed as early as March of 2000. Other property owners showed me their eviction notices. It is plausible that any attempts to carry out these notices had been misconstrued by *dirigentes* on private property who were keen on maintaining the story that landowners had abandoned the land and that they did not have clear title. The commonly held belief that landowners were bribing the police, believable due to the common practice of accepting and requesting bribes in the police force, gives some weight to the idea that leaders were withholding information about the legal reality that undergirded the charges against leaders of the squatter group and the eviction orders that were being served.

According to Alvin, a sense of “desperation and fear” pervaded his sector. This excerpt from Alvin and his wife Marisa gives a concise and eloquent vignette of what life was like for him, his wife and his two daughters in the beginning. This section is representative of the sentiments among squatters, especially those in Perú 2000.

A: One couldn't sleep because at any moment the police were going to come to evict us. Sometimes neighbours came. Sometimes there were conflicts between neighbours. One couldn't rest because one was afraid because at any time they could beset you with sticks and stones.

After a few months, though, Alvin told me, things settled down, “nothing happened”. He confirmed that people did not always go quietly. But, usually those who did not come to sleep or maintain their shacks were those that were purged. What they did was to dismantle their shacks and remove them from their lots.

He exclaimed, “What things hasn’t one seen here?” Sometimes, he told me, “another neighbour grabbed all the money and disappeared with all the money and sometimes with all the money that neighbours had given them, other neighbours picked up their things and went to other lots.” “There was no lack of *gente viva* (bold people),” in those times. “We have suffered a lot,” Alvin told me, his eyes intense, and his voice, now, strong and poised.

If that was not enough, the landowners sometimes blocked the cistern trucks that brought water into the area. Alvin and his wife have always prepared food for people in the Nueva Rinconada, so they were very sensitive to the sporadic shortages of water. When this happened, he told me, they were forced to go below, to the entrance, or to their family’s homes to bring water in plastic gasoline containers. Others told similar stories about not having water.

Alvin’s description of the initial conditions was not limited to material deficiencies, but also tended to trace out social problems. Some of the youth that used to be gangsters are not anymore, he explained. They are married now. They have their partners. “It seems that youth are changing,” he opined, a sense of hope in his voice. “Before it was terrible,” he told me, “when you came walking from Arguedas (the market at the entrance to the area), by the entrance to Lomas (above

in Minas 2000), there they got a hold of you and they stripped you of your shoes, they stole your money, and on top of that they beat you and they left you like that. Those youth were bad (*de mal vivir*), gangsters. Now, there is none of that.”

Talk about crime was always hard to get straight. Most agreed that things were much better than the beginning. Yet, the danger of muggings, especially at night in the narrow passageways and dark streets of the area, was still very possible. Many warned me not to walk by certain areas at night because youth loitered around these areas and robbed locals. There were a number of hotspots. The market still remained a hotspot, according to the local police station. One thing that always creates an environment for thefts is commerce. The busy areas of Pamplona are always the most dangerous. Most thefts that I heard of were muggings and pick-pocketing. Like most cities, there are always areas where drugs are sold, as well. Armed assaults on markets or cars was another common occurrence. A lot of friends complained of break-ins, some of them being armed break-ins. I think it would be hard to find a person who has not been assaulted, robbed or conned. It is part of daily life here, and another reason that distrust is so pronounced in Lima. In Lima many claim that the law of the jungle rules. This goes a long way in explaining why neoliberalism relied more heavily on a tough on crime and societal degradation discourse in Peru coupled with an implicit approval of vigilante justice.

Alvin remembered that living conditions were terrible. People did not have cisterns. People went to the bathroom where they could and there was no water. Flies that were already present because the pig excrement migrated to human

excrement. The intense sun and arid winds kicked up dried excrement, mixing it with the dust and sand that settle on practically everything in the area. People burned their garbage in the best cases; however in many cases, and this is still true, garbage is left at pick up points. Dogs often feed off of this garbage strewing it about. The smell of excrement, urea, and garbage mixed with the smoke from burnt tires that pig owners used to heat pig slop. Carpets of flies ravenously looked for their next meal. I remind the reader that people had to eat with these carpets of flies. Thankfully, though, things have improved. Now, there are fewer flies. Like many of my collaborators, he told me how children suffered from smallpox, bronchial infections, stomach infections, insect bites and fungal infections.

Most people have cisterns, indeed. But these fill up over time and there really have been no provisions to ensure that human waste does not infiltrate the soil and rock out of which these cisterns are carved. Most fixes here are short-term, spur of the moment. What becomes more and more apparent from descriptions like this is the extremes to which people were willing to go to have a home of their own. Add to these conditions the stress of possibly losing your space.

Marisa told me at this point, "Sometimes, we thought to ourselves, we would think, we are crazy to tolerate this." "So, why did you?" I asked, keen to understand. Alvin answered this question.

A: Before we lived in my parent-in-law's place. There, my in-laws made life impossible for us. They came from Huancayo sometimes. Because of that we wanted to move out, to avoid problems. Because one has to look for something that belongs to them. If you going to be there and [the house] does not belong to you, one person comes, another, the family comes, the in-law, the

brother and they cause problems. So, to avoid that you look for your own house. This way everyone has rights in the house.

I tried to get the two back on to the subject of what things were like in the beginning. This time around, Alvin is much more unambiguous in his condemnation of the behaviour of his neighbours.

B: Did you suffer when you got to the invasion?

A: Yes, of course, the dust, the darkness, the fright, the violence, the fear of confrontations between neighbours, because sometimes the group moved from here to there. Because of this they used to fight for lots, for money from lots. They waited for the night to take people out of their shacks. Sometimes, because people did not return home to sleep, they kicked them out of their shacks, burned their reeds. They used to divide amongst them the stuff from inside the shacks. People are abusive.

B: What did people do to avoid this problem?

A: We watched. What could we do against so many people. If you did something they kicked you out. Therefore, the way to hold on was to always be here.

B: The people that did not stay, was it because they had houses in other places, or because they had family [elsewhere]?

A: In the majority of cases it is because they are accustomed to living in their father's, their mother's, their mother-in-law's place. They do not want to suffer, so they said: It is better that I go. And others worked far away and they did not arrive at the start of the assemblies two or three times and they kick them out.

B: So it was not possible to raise one's voice against neighbours when they were evicting people?

A: You couldn't say anything because if you did they would kick you out too, all of them.

B: So, you had to get along?

A: After, we withdrew from the group [referring to Nuevo Pamplona]. We are independent. We aren't with anyone because, in the first place, the land had owners and it was not acceptable that they mistreated us that way when we had to pay for the land. It was not state land. If one wants to buy and the



contributions, everything that one gave was for the benefit of the council, because the land is going to cost one, it is not like state land. It doesn't cost anything. You don't have to pay any additional fees. But, us, we have to buy our land if we want to be an owner, to build. We bought 4 years ago, and, if we didn't do it before it was because we were led astray by bad advice. But, after talking among ourselves, we found out who the true owner was and we bought from him because we wouldn't like it one day if people came and another came and wanted to take possession of everything without buying it.

Alvin told me that they purchased 100m<sup>2</sup> of property. Some of the other neighbours have not bought their property because "they think that land will revert to state land and the land will be free." Alvin feels that they made the right decision in purchasing their lot, saying this about the expectation that the state intervene: "it is not like that, how many years have already gone by and nothing?"

For those who claim that people cannot pay, that landowners are unwilling to negotiate terms of payment and the like, Alvin's case demonstrates that people with a little store, who sell food to neighbours, can afford to buy their lots on terms that are sensitive to their economic situation. The same is true for most people here.

Alvin wraps up our conversation on this note.

They are in the air practically. They don't have any document, but we do, yes. We paid \$40 per square metre, with special accommodations, not in cash, we pay monthly. We don't like to lie, less before God.

(Alvin and Marisa (mid-fifties), Interview conducted on November 25, 2010)

This last part is probably the most devastating for many of the *dirigentes*, politicians, lawyers, charities and others who lived off the needs of people here. However, we should not be too quick to romanticize the innocence of the

downtrodden. The anti-values that poverty generates, out of the desperation, out of the frustration, out of the indignation, out of the anger, out of the sadness, out of the neglect that proliferates here has turned neighbours against one another and the landowners. Not only these sentiments, but a peculiar mixture of traits present for many since the Spaniards came to Peru: dishonesty, opportunism, ruthlessness, entitlement, disdain, distrust and indifference make for a powerful cocktail, with spiritually devastating consequences.

I want the reader to dwell on one of the last things Alvin says about buying the land because one day they would not want someone to come and take over what they have without buying it. That is what has happened here. Those migrants who came to Lima and managed to progress, or had a generous patron, came across this land. It does not get more complicated. Then, along came a government that saw an opportunity in supporting people in what in 2000 was a common practice spanning decades. The only problem was that abundant state land was now so far away from the city cores that settlers set their eyes on private land. Once it became a *fait accompli*, the area became mired in internal disputes. The complexity of the circumstances here bring out the best and worst of people simultaneously.

Against all the odds, amidst all the injustice, the area has steadily improved. I think that there is a mixture of hope and reality in this sentiment; yet things certainly have changed and will continue to change. If people have not built homes, a younger woman in her sector explained to me one day, it is because people here do not have land deeds yet. If it were not for this, many people below would be

building homes like in the exemplary association Alto Progreso. What has kept people from advancing is the legal deadlock here.

Near the end of 2001 some of the members of Mr. Flores's inner circle began to have moral misgivings about the things they were seeing. Mr. Romero, a friend of Mr. Flores, claimed the final straw for him occurred when after a march, he and a group of other *dirigentes* went out to eat and drink with the money of the squatters.

Against the wishes of many who did not want to tarnish the reputation of the leadership in the area, a commission was formed to investigate Mr. Flores and his administration. In his defense, as one would expect, Mr. Flores discredited the commission saying that the landowners were behind the commission, that he naively paid more for certain expenses and that for bribes that he had to pay he obviously was not given a receipt. I talked to a number of the members of the commission who all separately, without consultation, repeated the same story. They had tracked down many of the receipts that Mr. Flores had provided and found that he was overcharging for services rendered, receipts were forged or there were no receipts for money that had been spent. In the end, there was a difference of anywhere between 20,000–30,000 soles that could not be accounted for.

The abuses that many squatters spoke of —namely being forcefully removed for not paying fees or breaking settlement rules then having one's shack either burned or dismantled— were verified by people within and outside of the group. It appears that things reached a breaking point when in October of 2001, Mr. Flores resigned. Marco, one of the more active coordinators in Nuevo Pamplona told me

that the problem with the original *dirigentes* was that they were not traffickers so much as they wished to be *caciques*, or chiefs. Their attitude was: “If you do not pay, I kick you out, if you do not go, I burn your hut.” This was the general impression of the leadership of Perú 2000 throughout the area.

After the scandal, the decision was made to change the name of the association to Nuevo Pamplona, and following the advice of the government authorities, change the association to an *asentamiento humano* so that the group could access government programs and infrastructure funding.

Despite the scandals that occurred, and this is remarkable, Mr. Flores and his brother continued to have a presence in the government of Nuevo Pamplona. Mr. Flores in his interview was very frank about the lawyers and *dirigentes*, that despite being told that the land had clear title in 2003, they continued to argue that there was a statute of limitations that would come into effect, that the land was abandoned, that the state would expropriate the land, that the state would give landowners land in another area of the country to compensate them, etc. When asked why they continued to push these arguments he responded:

Because the love for politics always makes one deceive people, saying: “No! There will be a statute of limitations on the case against us! No! Land will revert to the state!” Therefore, the love for politics of those people that simply looked... they talk, talk, even bring documents, to lie to people.

(Interview conducted on December 1, 2010 with Mr. Flores)

What is interesting about the minutes for Nuevo Pamplona is that Mr. Flores is a constant critic of those who want to continue that legal process. He stated on a

number of occasions that the only solution for those on private property is to reconcile. One does not know what to think. Motives become murky for most people trying to make sense of these different voices.

When this appears to be recognized, Nuevo Pamplona falls apart. They attempt to reform in 2005 to begin to meet with representatives of the landowners to reconcile their differences, however nothing comes of it. Landowners have showed me letters where they were approached by squatters. Some people managed to reconcile with the property owners at this point; however a significant number still have a dispute with the landowners. The number with unresolved cases does not allow the area to formalize and receive state and outside intervention. Because those groups mired in legal disputes below cannot resolve those disputes, basic infrastructure that must pass through the lower area cannot be completed, meaning that those above cannot get these essential services either. In 2007, Nuevo Pamplona reformed again, yet, once again, the organization fizzled out. Each side accused the other of not wanting to negotiate. It appears that Mr. Flores may have been telling the truth. Some of the collaborators whom I felt were being sincere told me that things did not change in the Nueva Rinconada because nobody wanted them to change.

I thought a lot about this opinion. Everyone gains as long as the problem persists, everyone, except those who have to live here with their families. Property prices will continue to rise, *dirigentes* continue to charge fees for paperwork and legal cases, lawyers continue making their promises (to both sides), politicians keep

promising to bring about change in the area, NGOs keep helping people improve their lives with the same information being recycled, unscrupulous professionals charge naïve *dirigentes* for plans that are not properly done, campaign after campaign descends on people in the area bringing in temporary aid for votes (everyone here understands who sent the aid) and government programs to build infrastructure are incessant. The longer people stay like this, the more dependent they are, the better it is for everyone except them. If things were to change, it would be the beginning of something new and unfamiliar, a lot of people who benefit would lose their source of income.

Before finishing this section on the history of the Nueva Rinconada, I would like to add the view from one of the sectors that was almost entirely on state land from the beginning. It tends to reinforce much of what Herman from the sector that decided to buy their land in the beginning had to say about groups below on private property.

## The View from Above, the View from Villa San Juan

The story of Villa San Juan, could start with Don Ramón (Don Ramón (mid-fifties), Interview conducted on October 23, 2011). He told me how he, as the eldest among his siblings, was encouraged by his parents to look for land for his family. In many ways, looking for land and upgrading that land has become a rite of passage for many people in Lima. There is a sense of shame if one stays at home. Nothing speaks more resoundingly about having achieved something than a home of one's own. Don Ramón confessed that his brother and his partner first came to look for

land in the Nueva Rinconada. When asked about who promoted the invasion, Don Ramón is not hesitant about saying that Mr. Ocampo, the incumbent mayor, was responsible.

What really led to him, his brother and a group of young men who played on his soccer team ending up in what is now Villa San Juan, was a bit of chance. At first, they tried to join with people below in Tres Reyes. Unfortunately, there was not much space, so people told them to move on to an empty space. Don Ramón told me that they were aware that the lower part was private property. The decision, then, to go to higher ground was motivated by their desire to avoid the problems that one would face on private property.

When they got up into the rocky hills, there was a tarp and maybe 1, 2, 3 people. On a Saturday, which would have been January 8, 2000, they began digging. Don Ramón was a mason, so he had a good idea about how to lay out lots and what kind of work was necessary in clearing a lot and building a home. This made him a person with valuable knowledge at first and a desirable leader.

On Sunday, they had a meeting. At this time, there were five people in total, including his brother. I am assuming that he was counting the number of lots and their representatives here because he does not mention his brother's wife.

At about the same time, land traffickers nearby called people asking for ten soles to join their group. They claimed that COFOPRI was going to help them, a rumour that was prevalent in other invasions at the time, as one will recall. Don

Ramón was surprised by this information, as they had only been there a few days and already this group was claiming that they had support.

On Monday, Don Ramón came home from work and found that his reed hut had been moved farther above. When his brother returned from work, he, his brother and a helper called the neighbours together. He told others that he had a soccer team that could help out. He started to question the authority of this group that had taken it upon themselves to charge others and organize the area. He asked who had elected them, if they had a statute, etc., and it turned out that they had nothing.

By Monday, in the evening, there were 22 people. That night they bought candles and nobody slept. They stayed up all night making a plan, a drawing of how they would organize, no doubt, but something that was informed by Don Ramón's experience as a mason. The next day they decided to go to the municipality with their plan in hand. The other group, a group of bus drivers, was good at organizing, but they had no idea about how to draw up plans or what might be involved in such manners. They knew how to organize and how to manage themselves because they were land traffickers, he surmised.

It was not long before Don Ramón suspicions were confirmed. Monday in the evening, most likely sensing some resistance on the part of Don Ramón, a father and his four sons came to look for Don Ramón. Despite the help of his brother, they split his head open. They had to respond quickly, or lose the initiative. A group of Don Ramón's then went at 10 in the morning when the family was sleeping and relocated



the group below. They told them that they knew they were traffickers because they looked to extort payments out of people. Don Ramón and his group, in contrast, were willing to do things without charging money because they needed a place to live.

By Thursday, there were about seventy lots. At this time, January 13, 2000, Mr. Flores called his first assembly below. His group openly questioned who had elected Mr. Flores. Because they were on state land, they managed to have a good reason to avoid being a part of Perú 2000. The advice of another *dirigente*, who had made a career out of going from invasion to invasion, also helped. This neighbour told Don Ramón to avoid signing anything with Perú 2000 and to refuse to give any payments to the group.

Don Ramón told me how Perú 2000, later Nuevo Pamplona, abused their authority. They removed people and moved new people into areas on land that did not belong to them. In other words, they were forcing people off land and most likely receiving payment to place people on the lots where other people had been forcefully removed. What is more, they charged protection fees and told people that the land would revert to the state. "People opened their eyes," Don Ramón told me when asked why the fronts fell into disarray.

The picture that emerges as we move around the area is that there were multiple nuclei of people trying to form small sectors. From the perspective of Don Ramón we get an idea that many of those who were organizing were not always doing so with the intention of consulting their neighbours. There must have been

quite a mixture of people, and not always people who wanted to work in a transparent and inclusive manner. Some of these sectors then opted to, or were forced to join one of the bigger fronts. Some sectors, which numbered more than 200 lots on state land, like the case of Villa San Juan and Valle Hermosa, managed to avoid being incorporated into the larger fronts in the beginning.

Something that was pointed out to me by more scrupulous collaborators is that many of the original *dirigentes* of the big fronts at the beginning either moved out of the Nueva Rinconada, or many of them moved into newer sectors in the hills. The newer sectors in the hills were on state land, therefore there was no need to buy the property. The skills and knowledge that many of these now seasoned *dirigentes* had acquired could be used to organize these new sectors and in some cases provide a livelihood. Many of my collaborators decried this practice. Some of the leaders moved to state land, though, to focus on their jobs and families and avoid problems with their previous sectors. Being a *dirigente* consumed the lives of many of the original leaders. Many, especially after it became clear that their fight was in vain tired and moved on.

Trying to provide a balanced account of the first two years in the Nueva Rinconada is a difficult task. The preceding account is based mainly on the perceptions of locals and less on my interpretations of events. I have attempted to provide an account that privileges the families that put the safety and well-being of their families at stake. By doing so this account has had to ask hard questions about the behaviour of all people here at the beginning. *Dirigentes* had a privileged

position when it came to setting the tone for the initial environment that emerged. There were without doubt excesses and abuses of authority.

This account does not judge the behaviour of people in positions of authority as much as it tries to ask if all this was really necessary. There were sectors that did decide to buy the property from the beginning, thus avoiding many of the purges and relocations that occurred in other areas. We cannot say what should have been done, but we can note the effects that a harsh stance had on the vast majority of people in the area who were enduring privations and less than ideal living conditions because they needed a place to live.

I have been critical of Mr. Ocampo because he could have worked to avoid the stand-off that existed in the beginning. He may have had some hand in promoting and condoning the invasion at the beginning. At the very least there is enough here to cast doubt on his assertion that this was a natural part of urban growth. The legal and political climate created by Fujimori and his government may have emboldened people to risk the invasion in the first place and created a hope that a political intervention on the part of Fujimori would have led to a quick solution. We will never know whether this would have occurred. What we do know is that people were left to fend for themselves for the most part. This is the dark side of self-help and the lack of a housing policy that recognizes the need for accessible housing for each new family in Lima. I wonder if politicians and leaders who were not living in this area would have been willing to take their children and expose them to the trials and tribulations that many of those had to face in this area. Most of the

evidence that I provide here is based on testimonies and circumstantial evidence. My hope is that the experiences of people here will serve to support the need for the Peruvian government to address the housing issue in Lima and the country as a whole. By continuing to condone self-help housing the national and local governments are implicitly enabling the abuses of authority and improvised nature of settlements like the Nueva Rinconada. Surely there must be a more peaceful way to accommodate the growing number of people who cannot buy a home formally. People deserve to live with dignity. They should not have to wait for handouts that make political clients out of them.

As much as I urge state intervention in this case, we must recognize that the Nueva Rinconada is a result of an implicit state policy and a particular type of intervention. People choose to live in places like the Nueva Rinconada and build their homes for a multiplicity of reasons. This self-reliance, even in forms of governance, is a response to larger governance practices of municipalities and the state when it comes to providing housing options to the working class in Peru. In the previous narratives a lot of the darker side to the first years of the history of Nueva Rinconada was revealed. The next chapter will talk more of the high points, those moments where differences were put aside.

## Chapter 9 —Working Together Toward a Common Cause

Despite the evident antagonism between Peru 2000 and the Defense Front, there was still a desire to work together toward common goals. Both groupings and at least 4 other larger groupings, Zona “C,” Minas 2000, Valle Hermosa and Villa San Juan had decided that they would opt for a political solution to the land dispute in the lower part of Zone “A,” Zone “B,” and Zone “C”. Although sectors like Valle Hermosa and Villa San Juan were predominantly located on state land they had a common interest in seeing the land dispute below resolved because public services and infrastructure below would benefit them, as well. Here, the unifying thread was material need, more specifically a land title and access to basic amenities. It was not a larger Pan-indigenous imaginary of the sort seen in the neighbouring countries of Bolivia and Ecuador. This lack of a visionary project beyond that proposed by the mass media is what distinguishes demands on the state made by these new sectors in Lima.

Just as sectors worked together to achieve common political goals, which invariably dealt with material aspects of the development of their communities, they cooperated on security in the area. In this chapter we will look at two different ways in which communities secured themselves. The first were the *rondas*<sup>46</sup> that the community organized in the evenings to guard against land evictions in the area. The *rondas* served to maintain community unity against landowners who at the

---

<sup>46</sup> Literally rounds that people make at night usually to ensure the safety of their community.

beginning had intentions of legally evicting squatters. The result of numerous failed eviction attempts was to embolden squatters and further cement ties between sectors. The second way that communities secured their place was to police themselves. While such self-policing may be due to a lack of funding for adequate professional policing, it does not on its own serve as a spectacle to capture public attention to make appeals about inclusion as has been suggested in Cochabamba, Bolivia (Goldstein 2005). In the context that we consider people started policing themselves because of legitimate concerns for their safety, a need to have squatter settlements regarded as progressive and orderly places, and finally as a means of legitimating the existence of community based councils and the development that they promoted.

Oscar recalled how he and others worked together to form a commission for the formalization of *asentamientos humanos* in Lima South, which had representatives from the adjacent districts of Villa Maria and Villa El Salvador. Their first march on Congress occurred on February 19, 2001. The press referred to the march as the “*Pamplonazo*” —a play on the word Pamplona. The superlative in this case refers to the apparent inability of the police to manage the protestors, making the situation into an intractable problem, that was once again associated with the place name Pamplona where most of the protestors originated. It is also a reference to the land invasion in Pamplona that resulted in the death of a local and the relocation of settlers to Villa El Salvador in 1971.

Around four in the morning protestors began to concentrate around Atacongo bridge, a bridge that crosses the Panamerican highway and marks the entrance into San Juan de Miraflores and adjacent districts. Police riot squads were dispatched to break up a blockade that formed at this point with a number of protestors being apprehended. Instead of discouraging the march, people walked from here to the main Expressway in the commercial core of Lima, Javier Prado. After blocking traffic here, they continued toward congress where a representative delivered a letter to Valentín Paniagua's advisor<sup>47</sup>, demanding the delimitation and legalization of their properties and the eradication of pigs in the zone. The demands suggest that those from the Nueva Rinconada had a strong presence.

In an article that appeared in the local paper *Ojo*, the headline read: March finishes in looting, fights, and carnival. The picture is a contrast to the headline because to a sympathetic eye what it shows is a group of people having a water fight after an exhausting march in the final month of a Limeño summer. Onlookers smile at the group that is soaking one another. The result of this march, as Oscar recalls, was a meeting with a representative of Congress who advised them to form an *asentamiento humano* as this would give them access to government programs. This strategy worked fine for sectors in the area that were on state land, however those sectors that were on private property could not receive support due to the legal backlash that might occur. The state does not have a mandate to develop land that is private and it cannot provide state services on private property. Other

---

<sup>47</sup> Paniagua was the interim president after Fujimori fled the country in November of 2000. He stayed in power until Alejandro Toledo took office on the July 28, 2001.

organizations equally saw the aid they could offer in contested sectors, although the more practical solution has been to offer services and programs in sectors, or parts of sectors that are on state land.

The following day, COFOPRI made public statements to the effect that the property to which they were demanding title had legal owners. A curious position, if one recalls the executive order that outlined the conditions for reversion and the statute of limitations in favour of land invasions passed by Fujimori. From this meeting they realized that the fight for the land in the Nueva Rinconada would have to be a political struggle. At the time the invasions that occurred in places like the Nueva Rinconada could not be recognized by the state. Lands could only be formalized that had been invaded until December 31, 1996. Protestors, on this occasion, evoked article 968, no. 4, of the Civil Code, which states that land reverts to the state when property has been abandoned for more than twenty years. The hope here was that the state would intervene, awarding the land to the squatters based on the assertion that the Association had abandoned much of the land in the area. With the invasions in Villa El Salvador we saw how squatters claimed the property of landowners there was abandoned too. Both of these incidents together suggest that squatters and their leaders were aware of the legal possibility of making an argument for reversion based on abandonment. The only problem is that most property was not abandoned and many parts had been in use when the invasions occurred.



After various marches on Congress and probably other related government ministries, the commission managed to pressure the government into passing law 28391, which approved the formalization of markets and properties invaded until December of 2001, on November 11, 2004. This was a resounding victory for the fronts and one that almost all spoke of proudly. It was the crowning achievement for Oscar, who claimed an instrumental role in the process to change legislation. Interestingly enough, his counterpart in Nuevo Pamplona, Mr. Flores, claims that it was he who was responsible for getting the area involved in initiatives to see the government push forward the date for legal recognition of land invasions. To the dismay of many, though, while the law opened the possibility for titling new invasions and outlined the provisioning of basic services, the legal system and politicians seemed reluctant to violate the rights of the landowners.

On March 15, 2006 the Toledo government would make another gesture to recent land invasions, pushing back the date for formal recognition until December 31, 2004, enacting a law, 28687, which further clarified the procedures for the legal recognition and delivery of basic services to invasions. Whether the land was state land or land that the state would have to expropriate at market value, sectors were required to register all lot owners, hand over surveys of the community (the state would do surveys if communities had not done so), and meet the requirements for urban residential/small business or workshop zoning if they wanted land titles. Under this law municipalities were forbidden from offering service to sectors where land had another designated use. As such, the municipality of San Juan de Miraflores was bound in the aid it could provide to the Nueva Rinconada. In fact, it

would not be until later 2011 that the area's main road was cleaned up by the municipality after a long period where the municipality, particularly under Edilberto Quispe (2007–2010) kept a low profile in the Nueva Rinconada.

This article on state expropriations entered the spotlight during the government of Alan García in February of 2009. With law 29320 the government described the conditions under which state expropriation could occur, who could initiate the process, what kind of prices would be paid for the land expropriated, etc. Despite all the media hype, expropriation has been a feature in legislation since the original Ley de Barriadas discussed previously. The Nueva Rinconada and other settlements mobilized during this time period to put pressure on the Congress to pass the law thinking that it would benefit them. Debate was intense in the press. Opponents to the law argued that it would send false signals to those in need of land, or that it would encourage land traffickers to invade private property. Proponents argued that it would help to end a legal deadlock in many areas where private property had been invaded.

In the end, the law of expropriation was not the compassionate gesture it was expected to be. Owners were entitled to a 5% damages fee and could demand fair market value for their properties, something that was seen as being unfair by many who had invested their time and energy in upgrading private properties and increasing the value of their property with their presence. Landowners who did not want to sell found the law to be unfair, as well. The law proved too general for cases like the Nueva Rinconada. Seen from the perspective of those in need of land, it

meant that they would have to pay fair market value plus damages for any property that they decided to invade.

Marches were not limited to pushing through legislation that would legally recognize new *asentamiento humanos*. During the last months of the García government a massive march was organized to extend the *Agua para Todos*, Water for Everyone, program initiated by the García government. With the new municipal laws and land formalization laws passed by Toledo, it was not necessary to have a title deed to have access to basic services. The only thing needed was a certificate of possession emitted by a municipality. Lands, however, that were mired in legal disputes, like the Nueva Rinconada, were not likely candidates for such a proposal. Nonetheless, the possibility that a solution would be found, along with a desire to work in solidarity with others that lacked this basic service led many from the Nueva Rinconada to participate in a march that could have possible future benefits for their community.

The cooperation of the fronts was not limited to the political sphere. They worked together to defend the area on a number of occasions from attempted evictions. After an attempt to evict people after three months, a number of collaborators told me how they made a brigade to combat eviction attempts, assigning particular duties to different sectors in the area. Minas 2000, for instance was charged with blocking the main road into the area once police contingents were detected. Family members that had contacts in the police force or courts provided



Protestors converge on the Peruvian congress around noon on May 20, 2010 to ask the government to guarantee that the Agua para Todos program is continued in the next government. A tentative agreement was signed by politicians, agreeing to continue the program. Marches like this are one way that people make their needs felt by politicians. Photo: author

information regarding the progress of eviction orders. Some collaborators told me that they bribed local police to relay information, at times.

In August of 2001 a contingent of about 500 police brazenly moved into the area to evict tens of thousands of squatters. It is uncertain whose bravado may have sent them on this errand. Needless to say, the effort was easily repelled, but marked the narratives of households in the area. Many told me how tear gas bombs were fired haphazardly among people's shacks. Mothers often told me how their children had inhaled tear gas and nearly choked to death. Other mothers told me how they defiantly blocked the main entrance with their children when police tried to force

their way into the settlement. For many, this was further evidence that landowners had paid off the police to intervene on their behalf. One cannot help but notice that these interpretations work to occlude the fact that eviction attempts were the culmination of legal processes where landowners had beseeched the state to enforce the law and their inalienable right to property. Despite legislation that seemed to favour the squatters in some ways, landowners were able to find legal sympathy for their cause as well, especially after Toledo set straight tort laws so that they would not put private property at risk, or punish landowners in disputes with others for possession of their land. Judges also favoured private property owners.

Another event that marked the narratives of squatters was the eviction attempt of landowner Oscar Rivera. Zaida Zumudio, a reporter for *La República*, wrote that Oscar, with the backing of two hundred hired thugs set about carrying out the eviction order himself when local police and public prosecutors refused to carry out the judicial order (Zumudio 2001). Oscar contended that his force was really much smaller. Locals tell me that they responded, defending people who were being forcefully evicted from their homes. According to the local police station captain, property owners frequently take justice into their own hands because the police are reluctant to get involved due to the “social cost”. It is not uncommon for police officers, squatters, property owners and others to die in such confrontations. For people who are in possession of land in the Nueva Rinconada this incident is frequently recalled to support the view that property owners have abused the rights of locals, resorting to the use of force to back their claims. What is omitted from squatter versions of this event is that the Rivera brothers were bound, tortured and

forced to repent publicly for their actions. This has only led to a marked resentment and contempt on the part of the Rivera family.

Attempts to forcefully evict squatters mark the narratives of locals reinforcing claims that they are the victims of unscrupulous landowners who seek nothing but to profit from their suffering and sacrifices. These main events punctuate low intensity violence like: insulting one another, bragging that one side is going to carry the day, stone throwing, vandalism, death threats, anonymous phone calls, legal injunctions, etc. Both sides sling counter accusations that the other hired gangsters to terrorize them. Both landowners and squatters in various areas have been granted legal restraining orders against each other.

The result of various attempts to evict the squatters has been a tenuous peace between the police and the squatters. Oscar (the community leader) told me how a certain police commissioner told them that the police would stay out of the area if they managed to control the violence in the area. By violence, the commissioner was referring to the drunken brawls that broke out on the weekends in the first year or two of the invasion. This was the reason why many sectors adopted strict rules on the consumption of alcohol, infidelity, theft and any other imaginable type of anti-social behaviour. The idea was to create a safe environment for families and create the impression that the area was populated by law-abiding citizens who were there because they had a legitimate need for their families. Nonetheless, these efforts speak just as much about the social prejudice that those who live in areas that were invaded lack values and morals as they do the need, if one is seeking

political solutions, to counter such views that are dominant in the overwhelming majority of local press coverage and viewpoints of more privileged citizens in Lima.

Just as squatters were united against external threats, they became united against internal threats. Peaceful occupation, incidentally, is a requirement for legal statutes of limitations on land invasions. The need to counter prejudices and legal motives aside, these efforts brought about a modicum of peace for some time, suggesting that views that some forms of violence can be reduced by community policing are correct. However, the character of this peace is worthy of more scrutiny. Here, once again we see the state delegating something that should be its responsibility to the public. As people take over the responsibility for policing their own communities, people work to ensure that certain behaviours are curbed. Excessive drinking, drug trafficking, domestic disputes, unruly children are often disciplined by locals in ways that make sense to their communities.

Local patrols, called *rondas vecinales*,<sup>48</sup> have been instituted in the area since around August of 2003 as part of a state-sponsored initiative to increase policing in communities without having to allocate more money to state policing. While they might serve as a deterrent for local crime, they do little to deal with the root causes of delinquency. A typical patrol consists of anywhere from 20 to 30 volunteers who accompany, in reality, run amuck ahead of the officer, harassing local gangs of local

---

<sup>48</sup> A *ronda vecinal* is a program initiated by the national police to recruit community members into the police force. Joint patrols are done on the weekend to help prevent crime by having a presence in the community. The program bears vestiges of the *ronda campesina* of the dirty war, save now people are being mobilized against the evils of society.

youth and down-on-their-luck drug addicts and homeless people. What is worse is that some of the volunteers are given bludgeons to mete out on the spot justice.

After accompanying people on a routine patrol I tried to talk to participants about what happened the night before. My argument was that repressive acts did little to address the issue of substance abuse or gang formation among local youth. The response I received was that these people deserved what they got because they were robbing people who came home late at night from work. For many, the only thing that addicts understand is a good beating. What becomes clear from this stiff stance is that legal impunity coupled with a reality where muggings, break-ins, pick-pocketing, assaults (armed and unarmed) are the norm has led locals to take the law into their own hands, often with the complicit approval of law enforcement officers.

My collaborators told me of incidents where they managed to capture thieves in the sector. Punishments range from severe beatings to being buried to one's neck in sand, beaten and having one's hair shaved off. Usually, culprits are given a stern warning never to show their face again, or the consequences will be worse the next time around.

What should be noted here is that community justice is a practice that has been state sanctioned since the founding of most sectors. It is a social institution that is part of the statutes of the sectors that emerged in the Nueva Rinconada. It would be worth investigating if this self-policing has been condoned since the Peruvian state decided to permit informal land settlements as a development model. The majority of the mainstream press capitalize, in a literal and figurative sense, on



incidents where community justice gets out of hand to represent less-privileged social members as brutish, uncivilized, lawless, unruly, and therefore, in need of instruction and guidance. These stories along with stories that relate the excesses of jealous spouses, merciless criminals, daring assaults, etc. provide the justification for non-state and state interventions in the area. The stories also work to divert public attention away from the social, economic, and political causes of such illegal or immoral incidents and the violence used to curtail certain behaviours.

Justice as meted out by local communities tends to bear resemblances to observations of community justice in Otavalo, Ecuador. Anthropologist Rudi Colloredo-Mansfeld noted the tendency of community councils to exact their own justice before handing criminals over to state authorities (Colloredo-Mansfeld 2010). Such acts of justice combine moral reprobation and beatings, reflecting long held Andean values and practices for dealing with moral transgressions. Indigenous communities in Andean Ecuador respond to traditional Inca values like those contained in the expression: *Ama kulla, ama llula, ama shua* (Don't be lazy, don't lie, don't steal). Inasmuch as acts of justice work to legitimate community values and hierarchies and reinforce the limits of communities, these acts of justice also highlight social tensions that have arise due to the uneven development of rural Ecuador. Afterall, not everyone is being punished and those often doing the punishing are aware that social inequality is at the core of many crimes committed against individual property.

Similarly, communities in the Nueva Rinconada enact their own form of justice. This is not the anti-systemic practice that some local analysts would make it out to be. While it may take on indigenous cultural components, the role assumed by sectors to judge criminals and to dissuade such acts is consistent with the governance strategies available to community councils. Many are acting within the statute of their communities. Their justice, therefore, is one that is common practice. The police tend to leave these cases in the hands of communities, however they will intervene if witnesses come forward looking for justice. In practice, as police explained to me, many are reluctant to testify against thieves, drug traffickers, etc. because of not wanting to become the target of revenge or unwanted attention. Acting as a community to exact justice is a safer option for many because no individual bears responsibility for punishment and the punishment itself is seen as an impersonal transgression of social norms.

The range of issues selected for community intervention is extensive. Community members or social workers can talk to partners in cases of infidelity, urging a peaceful and diplomatic solution. Social workers in the community can suggest cases where the state ought to extract children from abusive situations. In the case of local delinquency, sectors can threaten problematic households with eviction. Thieves who are caught can be captured and punished by communities. Over time, though, the application of harsh moral punishments has relaxed. Seeing people purged is a rarity. Those who disturb the community are more likely to be spoken to by sector authorities. In some instances, families may be evicted if they are a known negative element in communities. This recent relaxation of strict

enforcement of sector rules is a result of the convergence of Andean values with urban working class value systems. In time, in fact, if the trend continues locals will petition to have a local police station built in the Nueva Rinconada. So, unlike rural Ecuador, there is a desire to have communities policed by trained state law enforcement officers. Delegating these tasks to local communities seems like a temporary fix, one that is due to a lack of funding of local law enforcement.

At this point it should be clear that people who forge out onto the frontier of the city are highly organized, are generally principled and seek to improve their situation in the city, sacrificing their well-being to live in areas without basic amenities. What I would say at this point, in response to many critics who fixate on what they deem to be anti-social behaviour of popular sectors, is that adherence to rules or to upper middle class principles is not possible for someone who lives in these areas. This does not constitute an inversion in morals, or a lack thereof, as many commonly argue, but, rather a different set of social prescriptions for how one ought to behave in an environment that has emerged over the decades in Lima.

While this may constitute a habitus of sorts (Bourdieu 1984), it is one that is constantly being reconstituted with the interactions that occur between people in the Nueva Rinconada and outsiders of all sorts: missionaries, state workers, and NGOs. Interactions really go beyond physical space for many here, with the mass media playing a significant role in the development of certain imaginaries. We must not forget the everyday interactions of people who live in the Nueva Rinconada and work in more privileged areas of the city. Creating a community, then, is not just

about making sure that plans are drawn up, public amenities brought in, etc. It is in reality a totalizing project, a complete realignment of people's energies and practices. Instead of the state assuming responsibility for this process, citizens are being asked to act on themselves, disciplining themselves. The logic of self-help has been extended to the realm of community security, in other words.

If we consider the history of Pamplona and that of the Nueva Rinconada as a larger history perhaps solidarity is not the correct term to use at all. There seems to be an injunction to work together on one hand, but on the other hand people compete to improve their economic and social standing. The landowners were for the most part of the same extraction as the squatters. We need to ask what made it possible for people to view those who had managed to have more land as an object of community retribution. How was it that their rights, having played by the same rules as others, became the object of an organized movement to usurp the land that they possessed?

This question makes me think of a joke that I was told numerous times when I commented on the divisiveness of locals. The joke goes something along these lines. One day a man went to buy fish from the dock. He noticed that there were two pails of crabs, one with a lid and the other without a lid. Intrigued, he asked the fishmonger why one had a lid and the other did not have a lid. The fishmonger explained that the pail without the lid contained Peruvian crabs, while the pail without the lid contained Chilean crabs. The punchline of the joke was not apparent to me, so I asked for an explanation. I was told that the pail with Peruvian crabs did

not require a lid because when one of the crabs reached for freedom, the other crabs pulled the crab back into the pail. The Chilean crabs, in contrast, had to be contained because they were likely to work together to free themselves of their container. This joke is also a commentary on the social tensions that emerge when some people manage to improve their economic situation. It goes without saying that some elements in communities work against more progressive elements in their communities. The discursive practices of envy, gossip, viveza reflect a rich discussion on inter and intra community tensions stirred up by new opportunities for social advancement in the city.

In the context of the Nueva Rinconada those who had managed to get more, to get ahead, were being pulled back down by those who sought to get a home of their own. This analogy echoes De Soto's claim that the Peruvian state has been plagued by redistributive policies. The Nueva Rinconada provides us with a case study of what seems to be a tension that plays out at various levels in Peruvian society and that we can see reflected even in state policy, if one recalls the intent of much legislation to simultaneously appease the general desire for progress and simultaneously protect the rights of those who manage to gain an advantageous position.

Now, I would like to turn to an exploration of what kind of a discursive world emerged to complement the physical intractability of the situation in the Nueva Rinconada. We will look at the different narratives and mythology of squatters and the narratives of landowners to understand what kept the two sides apart.

## Chapter 10 —Maintaining Narratives of Good and Evil

Like most stories, the story of how people came to the Nueva Rinconada comes to involve the casting of figures in particular roles. As we will see, there is a particular representation about the place that existed before people entered into the area on January 6, 2000 and afterward for some time. Simultaneously, there is an equally adamant version of events espoused by the squatters. In many ways, these narratives work as a justification for acts that I am certain go against the beliefs of almost everyone in the area. But, before we get to the household version of events that gradually came together, I would like to start with the story of the landowners.

As one goes over the details of the landowner version of events, one comes to realize that the two versions have been in constant dialogue with one another, each codetermining the other. These narratives tended to work against the resolution of the conflict in the Nueva Rinconada because in adhering to a morally exclusive narrative each side forecloses the possibility for a more complete consideration of the events that have occurred in the area and their meaning. This chapter is an effort to determine what keeps both sides from seeing each other as equals and what keeps people divided in what appears to be only a localized conflict. Many of my collaborators and acquaintances from outside the Nueva Rinconada told me that what I was seeing and hearing was more than the story of some small corner of Lima; it was Peru in a nutshell.

In this section I focus on the narrative that has formed around the position of the property owners in the Nueva Rinconada. The one striking feature of their

narratives is that their histories are not unlike those of the squatters. Many share the same modest origins, although their success in the city is one that others have not shared. The tension between those who have improved their economic situation is similar to that observed by Rudi Colloredo-Mansfeld with his work in the Ecuadorian Andes during the present neoliberal era (1999, 2009). Perhaps the tensions here reflect a belief that wealth ought to be more equitably distributed to others, who if they have not been the owners of property or business have contributed to the accumulation of wealth of the owners. The desire to have a home of their own is understood by the majority of property owners. The obvious bone of contention is that squatters had to take property that the landowners had worked hard to obtain to fulfil their desires for home ownership and social progress. The progress of landowners had come to be viewed as an inefficient obstacle to the progress of squatters, who could put the land of landowners to more productive and socially beneficial use.

Many of the property owners felt that the squatters were prolonging the standoff because many of the property owners were elderly and that the hope of the squatters rested in the belief that the property owners would tire and give in to the demands of the squatters. This was something that was unacceptable to many, although some because of their understanding of the difficulties faced by many had decided to sell to squatters with realistic payment options. Due to the violence of the original incursion, though, many vowed to fight to the bitter end, claiming that it was their right to dispose of their property as they wished.

What the discourse around the conflict seems to suggest is that the gains of some become the grounds for others to seek out retribution. The insistence that the property here was gained fairly reflects a belief common among those who have gained an advantageous foothold throughout their years of hard work and sacrifice. Such a view, however, denies that most people worked the same long hours that these property owners had, as well.

At times property owners referred to the leaders of the squatters as common delinquents that had spurred on naïve people in need of a home for their own personal gains. Others suggested that the political parties, Perú 2000 and APRA, had encouraged squatters as a means of gaining political capital. Other owners suggested an alliance had been struck between the incumbent mayor at the time and the president of the Association of the time. Other property owners suggested that still other property owners had conspired to usurp the presidency of the Association after the invasion to expropriate the lots of other owners. The intrigues between property owners further complicated the scenario. Let us turn to the narratives of some of the property owners to get a sense of their position.

Like most places, the Nueva Rinconada has a previous life, one of *provincianos*<sup>49</sup> raising pigs in the verdant valley of what was the Agricultural Association of Ciudad de Díos. Time passed and Pamplona grew. What started off

---

<sup>49</sup> To be a *provinciano* is to hail from the different departments of Peru. People in *barriadas* are more likely to self identify as *provincianos*, as opposed to being a Limeño. This is not clear-cut though and the identification is often downplayed when in the presence of people that no longer look nostalgically upon provincial life. Second and third generations are even less likely to say that they are from the provinces. There is an implied foil that falls something along the lines of the Creole/Cholo dichotomy. Behaviourally speaking, there is great overlap between groups that are provincial and urbane in their self- identifications.



as a distant enclave, clinging to an old lifestyle would finish at the centre of an ongoing claim for living space. The landowners have a story to tell, just as much as the squatters do. Their story is one in which they worked hard to acquire property in the area. Theirs is often a story of toil and sacrifice, two things with which all landholders and people in Pamplona are familiar. For those who raised livestock, this was a land that they only partially occupied because they did not have money to develop the area more. Nevertheless, some families poured money into the building of infrastructure for their enterprises and invested time and money into researching agriculture products that would flourish in the damp wind blown hills of Pamplona.

Before the invasion, explained Omar Riveras, a local landowner, people raised pigs in the Nueva Rinconada before the 1960s in a very informal manner. When the government decided to auction the land that these pig farmers had been using, the association of these farmers and some independent buyers bought up the lands in July of 1968. In 1973, a plan was drawn up to urbanize the zone by one of the prominent families in the area, however in 1987 a Municipal Resolution by the Municipality of Lima froze all zoning changes in Lima.

Despite the best efforts of lawyers and *dirigentes*, various legal suits initiated by squatters over the past ten years have been dismissed by various courts and judges based on one fact alone –the land has clear title. From the perspective of landowners, their position is a legally embattled one, but one that has stood the trials of various attempts to dispossess them of what they feel is theirs.

Omar, recalling his impression of the area as a youth commented: “the area around the hills was virgin, and with the light rain that there was, everything became very green.” He told me about how one could spot owls and how the area was completely open. He and his brother, he recalled triumphantly, split the hill behind their property, clearing much debris and building a number of complexes. These complexes would be partially destroyed during a conflict that ensued when he and his family, unsuccessfully, with the backing of an eviction notice, attempted to remove squatters from the land on January 16, 2001 (see Chapter 9 for squatter version of event). For his efforts to recover his family’s patrimony Omar brandishes a scar across his forehead and slurs his words occasionally through partials that replace teeth that were knocked out from multiple blows to the head during his failed eviction attempt.

A number of my collaborators, those who were not property owners, also recalled how they or their family members came to feed pigs in the Nueva Rinconada during their youth. The area was in use, but mainly to raise pigs. People, for the most part, lived below in areas where water trucks and services would eventually be provided. Eventually infrastructure and surveillance would be placed in the zone to prevent theft and to make the task of raising animals easier. If people did not use all of their land or did not fence it all, it was because they lacked the capital to do, many explained.

Mrs. Maria Torres and her family, like many families, came to Lima in search of a better life. Her father, a livestock dealer, felt housebound in Lima and jumped at

the opportunity to have a piece of land in Lima where he could raise livestock.

Maria remembered that her father was one of the first in the area before the *Asociación Agropecuaria* existed. She remembered how her father organized



A photograph of some contemporary (2011) pig stys in the Nueva Rinconada. Note the smoke emanating from stall in the background. People live amid the noxious fumes of tires used to heat pig slop. Photo: Sandy Simon Torres

other livestock raisers to build a provisional road. While her father was clearing land, she recalled, he was bitten by a poisonous snake. She assured me that she had the medical record to prove it. Her father's property is now two contiguous sectors. The remnants of one of the buildings on her property is now the soup kitchen for this sector.

At around the time of the invasion, her family had planted 1500 cactuses that they hoped to infest with cochinita worms. The family had built concrete walls around the plants and had paid a security guard to watch over the plants. People who occupied her lands threatened the security guard, saying that they would harm his family if he did anything. Maria gave me a police statement that reported that there were 900 plants that were on her property at the time of the invasion. Now, there is barely a trace of what was there before. In order to support their initial argument that the land in the Nueva Rinconada was abandoned, many of the previous structures were demolished and buried, or taken over by squatters. Videos taken by Mrs. Torres document this gradual transformation of her property.

Another property owner, Mrs. Olga Contreras, told me how her stalls were overtaken and her pigs killed. Her family was unsuccessful in stopping people from overtaking her lands. Accounts of pigs being killed were common among my neighbours while living in the Nueva Rinconada. It was part of the conflict at the beginning. As we will see, the property owners unsuccessfully attempted to repel the groups of squatters that amassed near the end of 1999 to take over their properties. It did not matter that the land had belonged to them because from the beginning the initial *dirigentes* worked to vilify the attempts of the property owners to legally regain their property and generate a general narrative that legitimated the original invasion on grounds of social need and unproductive use of the Association land.

Many squatters told me how the landowners contracted local gangs and the police to harass them. There must have been some truth to these claims because watches were organized to protect sectors against attempts to dislodge squatters. As early as March of 2000 requests were being made to investigate and evict squatters on Association lands. The constant threat of property owners and the fear



Some pig farmers managed to stave off people looking for land. Local landholders will rent out some of these stalls to raise their own pigs, which they then sell to local markets for wholesale prices.  
Photo: Sandy Simon Torres

that would ensue became a part of local discourse and practice. The original double bureaucracy of the original fronts created a grey area where shady dealings could occur (selling lots, extracting protection money, harassing local people and sectors). The reason that the fronts and sector councils could abuse people was through the

use of terror, a morally righteous terror that masked contradictions in its enactment.

Demonizing the property owners also helped to justify, to what to many, presents a certain contradiction in their own value system. While it is unacceptable to steal from a neighbour, it is acceptable to steal from a property owner because they seek to exploit the poor, benefiting from their misery. From this vantage point, it becomes acceptable to punish the rich as an act of retribution. The property owner from this vantage point is stripped of their history, of their humanity and becomes posited as one of many who benefits and profits from the labour of workers in the larger urban economy. As we will see, the situation was often more complex than politicians, lawyers and *dirigentes* divulged, or realized, exposing a moral component of this discourse that deserves closer scrutiny.

What is noteworthy in the accounts of the property owners is that they were able to supplement their claims with original legal documentation, photos, statements of property damage, newspaper clippings that put the invasion into a larger political context (there were similar attempts around the same period nationwide, just about the time Fujimori was preparing for his third unconstitutional reelection), and a very eager attitude to impart their perspective. What I got from the squatters were narratives and obvious physical privations to reinforce their position. Both sides made claims based on information that was deemed sufficient for the cases that they made. That landowners resorted to legal documents and written papers is indicative of the belief held among them that one “speaks with

papers,” and not according to hearsay by implication. As I read through notes from public assemblies, which had been surreptitiously provided to me by *ex-dirigentes*, it became clear that leaders of the squatters had received judicial sentences and summaries of disfavoured judicial rulings. This information was suppressed by *dirigentes* and lawyers and withheld from sector coordinators and community members, according to the notes. Notwithstanding this behaviour, I still do not believe that this suppression detracts from the cause of squatters or the inherent moral critique of local politics and economics that it constitutes.

From what I could gather, and this will be borne out by what follows, *dirigentes* and politicians expected a very different outcome. People expected Fujimori to stay in power in 2000. People expected landowners to back down like they did in the Rinconada when parts of the Association were invaded in 1990. Or, people expected that thousands of families would be able to pool their money together to buy justice, or extort a settlement out of the property owners. Throughout the initial years and successive years, it was hoped that a political solution could be found for a situation that would become legally intractable. Those who try to retain their land, and the squatters that have stayed their course have to be respected for their grit. Let us move on now to talk more about the gritty experience as a pioneer on the frontiers of Lima.

Personal versions of events are often public versions of events. We know this because newspapers, those that favoured Fujimori and those of the opposition from this time period, gave the perspective of the squatters. Like the narratives we have

collected, other squatters in other parts of Lima too argued, when discussing the reasons why they invaded, that the land was abandoned, lacked title, or was not being used optimally. This notion was found in Villa El Salvador, San Juan de Lurigancho, Villa Maria, and Callao. In short, we could say that it was widespread amongst a particular social group that decided to invade private property in Lima and other areas throughout Peru.

Let us consider a few quotes from the press that correspond to this time period. In a special report that appeared shortly after landowners contracted gangsters to evict squatters in a recent invasion in Villa El Salvador killing five and wounding dozens more, a journalist gathered the following deduction from squatters:

“...the property was abandoned years ago and it was used as a safe haven for drug addicts and dilenquents.”

(Settler quoted in Anonymous, 2000e:6)

Squatters from Loma de Corvina, a 10,000 square metre tract of state land sung a similar tune.

“We don’t have anywhere to live. This area is not occupied. Because of this, we have come to ask that the government give us land.”

(Settler quoted in Choy 2000:15)

What makes much of the talk about what happened intriguing is that the narrative has been, I feel, constructed bit by bit in response to the circumstances. Nonetheless, there is a core to the narratives that can be found in different places



simultaneously, especially the abandonment claim. At the same time, there are sincere impressions and general sentiments that find their way into a general narrative, like not having a place to live. Later, the narrative was solidified and transmitted among people in the zone with some possessing more detail depending on their particular interests in the case and time living in the area.

*Dirigentes* who try to turn their local support into a political career are much more inclined and adept at summarily delivering all the points of this narrative, for instance. In contrast, those that have bought a lot more recently have only a vague idea of what happened or what the story is. The difference is most likely due to the practices that those who are politically astute regularly partake in and the practices that not as politically active people regularly partake in. But, for the most part, the points expressed in the following excerpt are the touchstone for many.

While I have already made it clear that there are different voices within the area, the public discourse that resonates most is best summed up by one of collaborators, one of the most active and ambitious *dirigentes* in the area, when she said the following:

Why did we, when, how did we enter? Er, we are all, we live in Pamplona, we are the sons and daughters of Pamplona Alta, let's say. There are also communities that have formed, that have invaded state land, let's say. When we came here we thought that everything belonged to the state, because [the land] was abandoned. In this area, a number of acts were committed against public morality. That is, the law was broken. It was a hideout for delinquents, for drug addicts. When we took possession, we found in some places in the Nueva Rinconada pig stys, but with basements. That is, in Mirador, Alto Progreso, Nuevo Amanecer, no, Nueva Florida, those stys have basements, and, in those basements human corpses. That leads us to believe that there was terrorism, there were terrorists, and here, they were killed.

(Interview with Ethel, Secretary General of a sector, June 15, 2010)

It is hard not to recognize the parallels between what Ethel had to say about the reasons for invading and those given by squatters to the press in 2000. The touch points are very close, save the local details (place names, human corpses and terrorists). The elements abandonment, drug addicts and delinquents stand out in bold relief.

From what we can gather here, taking possession of state land, and even private property, continues to be recognized as a means of acquiring property for people who do not have access to credit or the ability to make regular payments to a bank based on the precariousness of most work in Lima. In many ways, taking possession of a piece of land, like many have, is a prerequisite to access to credit and the benefits of city living. That many who came were children from Pamplona, whose parents had in a very similar way invaded land, gives credibility to this assertion.

The general narrative of most people who came to the Nueva Rinconada is that they were unaware that the land they would come to possess was private property. Some, like Ethel, argue that the land was abandoned. Squatters went so far as to destroy walls and structures and bury them to support this version of events. The same tactic was attempted in Villa El Salvador before Fujimori very publicly intervened. I had the benefit of reviewing home videos of the area a few days after the invasion, so I can say that this tactic was used. This argument is very much in line with the initial argument that lawyers unsuccessfully used to challenge the

ownership of the land in the area. Curiously, it remains in circulation, even though the case has been dismissed and the leadership in the area admonished to reconcile.

This is where I started to ask what purpose this version served. This is when I began to think that in many ways, this story is the story of the struggle between good and evil. If one listens to both sides of the story one gets to understand that both sides attempt to cast the other in a morally inferior position, for a multitude of reasons, but mostly to legitimate their actions and presence or non-presence.

I think that is necessary because the situation really presents a moral dilemma for both sides. Squatters have violated the rights of what could easily be their friends and neighbours, people who earned what they had respecting social norms and laws in Peru. The landowners, for their part, but not in all cases, seek to benefit from the suffering and tribulations of the people, an act of retribution on their part, as well.

It gets more complicated as we keep refocusing on the issue from different vantage points. Those who led the initial groups claim that they knew the land that they would occupy was private land, but that because it was not in use by the owners, they could certainly stand to lose it. Others felt that it was bought for next to nothing, therefore it would not be a terrible loss to the landowners. Others felt pigs should not live better lives than humans, referring to the fact that they had land and that families in Lima did not have sufficient land were forced to pay rents they could not afford, lived in cramped spaces, or shared a conflict ridden house with

multiple families. Not all are without misgivings, as the reader will recall in the final points made by Alvin in Chapter 8.

Over time, it appears, a number of narratives began to emerge to reinforce the claim that it was unoccupied or underutilized land. The constant here is that the land was not being adequately used and that there were those who could put the land to better use. But, it does not stop here.

The history of the Nueva Rinconada quickly becomes a postmodern tale. A tale with multiple layers and vantage points, twisting its way through the hills of this settlement, picking up variants along the way. It moves from the real to the paranormal, reflecting the various sign systems at work in the Nueva Rinconada – sign systems that overlap with one another creating various simultaneous accounts of events. Elements from different places find a place here somehow. At times, it appears they are used to explain child abandonment, disease and other events that have different circumstantial or scientific explanations. Along the lines of research by Michael Taussig (1980) and Gastón Gordillo (2004), I argue that the manifestations of spirits and mythical creatures in the Nueva Rinconada are a product of unequal social relations in the area and within Lima as a whole. They reflect a fetishization of social relations and the effects that uneven development in Lima has on squatter communities.

Like every frontier, the Nueva Rinconada was inhabited by spirits, supernatural beings and, even, *Apus*, or Andean mountain spirits. Locals tell stories

of the *Llorona*<sup>50</sup>, a beautiful maiden bathed in an ethereal white light that visited people, men especially, at night. She is said to try to seduce men away from their destinations. There is also a *viuda negra*<sup>51</sup>, who stalks the hills at night, looking to ensnare local men. If one receives a visit from her she is often the harbinger of death and disease, or a seeker of semen. If one is unfortunate, they may cross paths with the *jinete*, another figure in local folklore. At night, one must keep a vigilant eye on children, for *duendes*, or elves, play with children, sometimes leading them away from their home. Local children, some claim, have been found abandoned alone in the hills. Apart from these beings there are also random spirits who one can happen upon in the dark of the night —errant spirits betwixt between the world of the living and the dead, echoes from the past.

The day is no different from the night with respect to the possible presence of supernatural beings. One day a local man lost his way while wandering the hillsides, admiring the beauty of the Manchay flower. He is said to have come upon a man after roaming the hills for some time. He offered the little old man seated on a rock a cigarette. The old man pointed him the way out of his labyrinth.

These tales seem to be mixing indigenous figures as well as Biblical figures. The *Llorona*, a figure in Mexican legend, can be found in uninhabited areas, or areas where there is darkness on the outskirts of Lima.

---

<sup>50</sup> Llorar is means to cry in Spanish. La Llorona, literally, is a woman who cries. Basil Kirtley (1960) attempted to trace the legend back to Europe, finding parallels with a German folktale about a German maiden who murders her children to be with a lover. The story of a wailing grieving maid, he notes, can be found throughout North America. As suggestive as his interpretation may be, the possibility of convergent stories based on a real tragedy involving a mother and her children is just as plausible as a diffusionist theory for stories that follow a similar pattern in other cultures.

<sup>51</sup> Black widow.

The origin of the *viuda negra* is not clear. She seems more like a female personification of death. One person told me how she came to visit her husband one night and had pressed upon him with her weight. It was not long before her husband fell ill with a fever and was hospitalized. I thought it seemed like a folk explanation for a stomach infection, no doubt prevalent when water and hygiene were wanting. Others told me how the same woman seduced men. It seemed that the *Llorona* and *viuda negra* crossed in their desires to seduce men.

Now, from a theological perspective we can begin to see some striking parallels. The character of Lilith in the Talmud is believed to lay with men and spawn demons that create strife in their immediate environ. If the *viuda negra* was based on a Judeo-Christian reference, we might conclude that some people were making sense of the gruelling conditions by bringing in figures like the *viuda negra*. Surely, there was also the recognition that science could explain the same phenomenon in terms of malnutrition or viral and bacterial infections, however most people couched their understanding of these events in terms of references to mythological figures.

Demons and creatures of the night usually inhabit unpopulated areas. The gradual disappearance of these entities seems to coincide with the consolidation of the settlement. There seemed to be a relationship between the appearance of light, the light of progress, electrical light and the disappearance of spirit spottings, according to locals. Many collaborators claimed that spirits were not as present as they were in the beginning. It appears that the populating of the area pushed

spiritual beings out of the area. But, from the narratives we hear, there was a time, near the beginning, when spirits intermingled more with the living.

The stories are doing a lot of moral work. They seem to warn of the dangers of loose women and weak wills, both of which seem to indicate that the stories are a social injunction to stay on the straight and narrow, or the path of stable monogamous relationships. The correspondence here with the moral policing by community councils is noteworthy. It could very well be what the stories mean on one level may reflect the political and social processes that were occurring in the Nueva Rinconada.

Pamela Jones (1988) analyzed different renditions of the Llorona legend among Mexican migrants to the United States. Many of the women with children she spoke with tended to regard the Llorona as a mother, who due to her circumstances, either intentionally or unintentionally murdered her children. University women tended to view the tragedy as a consequence of the woman's desire to be with a lover. Different groups of women at different stages in the life interpreted the motives of the Llorona in different ways, using the legend as a vehicle for their own anxieties.

Perhaps myth became a medium for the expression of anxieties around fidelity and the survival of one and one's family at the beginning of the invasion. Because of the demand that all staunchly endure such privations, people began to channel their anxieties about their wellbeing to mythical creatures. This would explain the existence of the stories. There may also have been an extent to which such stories,

like those of the ghosts of insurgents in the area, worked to reaffirm the assertions being made by squatters that terrorists inhabited the area before it was populated. As conditions improved the stories lost their practical reference. With conditions much improved, these stories remain as a memory, a reference to the conditions that initially existed.

If I stretch these stories too far I will give the reader the impression that these stories are a common trait among all my collaborators. I do not believe this to be the case. Not all subscribe to these explanations. Omar, a local *dirigente*, when I recounted such tales was unconvinced. He said that people were “exaggerating,” and that nowadays it is necessary to act “in a civilized world where myth no longer has a place.” Others laughed when I told them what some people had told me, telling me that they did not believe in such things. So, as we can see, not everyone need subscribe to what they hear. There are multiple ways to cope with psychological stress, indeed. These sentiments reflect the different people that have come to inhabit the Nueva Rinconada and the different ways that they have of seeing the world and acting upon it. Many disbelievers in these mythological figures made sense of the conditions in scientific terms; if these beings could not be seen or stand the scrutiny of objective analysis, they could not be real.

Omar told me a story to illustrate his point. He said that once he was in the dark on the outskirts of Lima. He heard a rustling sound and began to run away from what appeared to be a whitish object. In the morning he returned to the site of his fright and discovered that it had just been an old plastic bag attached to a stick.



He had run all around the stick in different directions, believing that the object was a ghost pursuing him. Omar felt that stories of spirits had similar rational explanations. People like Omar might attribute contemporary myth to explain the same conditions at the beginning, yet in no less fetishized terms. When these explanations are seen alongside Andean and American myths our talk of malnutrition, disease, greed, and ambition seem like another way of fetishizing unequal social relations and the causes of the suffering of others. Moderns are no more capable of openly stating such relationships.

The belief in the supernatural reflects a number of things: that there are people that still believe in spirits and supernatural beings, that such beliefs (whether we call them traditional or modern) work as a commentary on social relations and social conditions, and that such beliefs are reinforcing claims that the land here was unsettled. There is a coexistence of modernist worldviews and traditional worldviews in communities here, perhaps reflecting the cultural differences between residents with complex individual histories. Let us consider how contemporary stories of historical events work to reinforce landowner and squatter versions of the Nueva Rinconada.

The tales turn toward real events and the marks they have left on the collective conscious of the area. People tell stories of terrorists who hid out here during the years of the dirty war in the 80s and 90s. While clearing their lots, many locals tell of how they unearthed human remains in unmarked graves. Some locals tell of coca maceration pits in some of the pig stys. A group of dead bodies was

found in a local cave. Squatters believe the bodies belonged to Senderistas. Some landowners deny these claims, arguing that the military had a base nearby and regularly patrolled the area during the dirty war. Other landowners claim to have witnessed summary executions of insurgent groups in the hills of the Association, reinforcing claims made by the squatters.

The argument for squatters goes along the lines of, well, if there were terrorists in the area, then obviously the landowners were not present. There were terrorists in the entire city, not just in the Nueva Rinconada, though. Once again, the debate gets bogged down in arguments that no longer make sense, unless one finds the dialogic partner of the narrative. Like raising a flag, condemning terrorists is an effective way of distancing oneself from these insurgent acts and establishing that one is an upright citizen in search of their betterment and the betterment of the nation, as well.

The narrative of being a good citizen is upheld with talk about delinquents who used the Association lands as a refuge prior to the invasion. Gangs would bring young women here and rape them. After robbing people, delinquents would retreat here to split their bounty. Not only was the area charmed for some time, but it was also a cesspool. Settlement would then bring in civilization, banishing the inequities of this abandoned and forsaken place. The presence of terrorists before, like the presence of delinquents that operated unchecked, indicates that no good came of this place before and that now, with the presence of the homeowners, things are safer and more controlled. What I want to emphasize here is that squatters and

their councils have demonstrated that they have come to establish order. Despite being represented as disorderly and as a social menace to more privileged areas of Lima, what we see here is that households in the Nueva Rinconada are just as determined in their desire to establish peace and order.

When stories refer to the desire to cleanse the area and bring about civilization, the proponents in changing the history of the area are the squatters. The real violence of squatters when and landowners tends to be occluded by these recountings of the past. As squatters talk of purifying practices, landowners talk of a pure place that preceded the presence of squatters.

Living in the Nueva Rinconada allowed my analysis to go beyond the narratives here and see what people were doing. Not really surprisingly, people, like in most areas of Lima where people have chosen to squat on land and build it up, are serious about establishing order and establishing a degree of peace in their neighbourhoods. People aspire to something more and over generations become more plugged in to a contemporary urban living style that is now global.

As civilization began to stake a place, spirits would be banished and supernatural creatures pushed back out into a new frontier. Civilization, then, is experienced as a contradictory force, as a front of sorts that expands and incorporates new elements, generating dialectical narratives, which reflect both local and national development practices. We return now to look at the future vision for the Nueva Rinconada.

## Conclusion —Tu envidia es mi progreso

The title of this chapter, Your envy is my progress, also that of this dissertation, is an expression that I got off a decal on motortaxis in Pamplona. A variant on this theme is the *Tu envidia es mi triunfo*, Your envy is my triumph, decal. The words hit me causing a discomfoting and exhilarating electric jolt to course throughout my body. I was discomfoted by the triumphalism and egoism in the phrase, but I was exhilarated because I recognized that it made reference to an emotion, *envidia*, and a cause for this emotion, *progreso* also seemingly synonymous with *triunfo*.

Up until this point I had been making note of the use of various emotions, much in the same way that Walter Benjamin did in his *Arcade's Project* (2002[1999]). In one part he collected as many citations as possible on the emotion of *ennui* at the turn of the twentieth century in Paris. What I do here is to lay out a similar eclectic list to link together different emotions in an attempt to get at the driving motor of events in both daily living and what happened in places like the Nueva Rinconada in Lima. We must not forget, the larger series of events, the *longe durée* of events that led up to the formation of the Nueva Rinconada, though. What I am looking for here is a social aura surrounding development processes, or the commentary and everyday talk that reflects ongoing processes.

The analysis of partial truths forms a mosaic of perspectives we can use to form a representation of the social interactive field of the Nueva Rinconada. This

gives us a rich description of practices to connect with the emotive economy of not only the Nueva Rinconada but Pamplona at large. We might then consider certain voices in this field to be illustrative anecdotes, or significant inflections of dominant discourses and narratives, of what is happening in this rich field. Their voices resonate and play off of other voices in the area, making what each says a unique variant on similar themes in ways that were alluded to earlier in my discussion about Bakhtin's process of the internalization of voices. I would add that these voices are often reflective of daily practices, however there need not always be a correspondence.

As much as I argue for a correspondence, I must also admit that there are contradictions between what people say and do. I choose not, however, to view this as a weakness to the type of analysis that I have been doing here. What is important is that the signs are of an epoch, a social generation, or times which can be compared as being historically definitive. Variance can be revelatory too, especially when discussing partial truths as we have seen. As we continue this exploration, relationships between emotions and the practices and hopes of people will be brought to bear on our discussion. I want to think about the different behaviours that have been rendered into a discursive form. What do these expressions make reference to and do they have anything to do with the socio-economic context in which they can be found? What I focus on here are prominent and repetitive components of daily discursive practice in Pamplona.

The collection of these citations was from different sites within the field, at different events, with different actors. The significance of these events was sought from actors, if not in a direct manner, then through careful listening and attention to the social context of the event. Where possible, further social commentary was elicited. Admittedly, such an analysis, like the one here, is suggestive at this point. More rigorous investigation would most likely reveal more complex links, and give some contours to the mapping I have attempted here. Let us consider our first piece of evidence.

On the January 27, 2011 community leaders were encouraged by the Jesuit organization PEBAL to create a development plan for the Nueva Rinconada. The initiative was funded by the Spanish savings bank Caja del Mediterráneo. There were six workshops where the aim was to develop the capabilities of community leaders, guiding them in the elaboration of a development plan for the area. Many of the *dirigentes* were present at the first and last meetings, with attendance dwindling throughout the course of the meetings, most likely due to other commitments, or perhaps work. Notwithstanding the lack of a complete turnout consistently, there was a constant representation of area *dirigentes*, or delegated representatives and a desire to work with professionals to define clear objectives in areas of infrastructure, social development and environmental protection.

The workshops demonstrated that professionals and community leaders can work together to create projects that will benefit the public. The idea behind the workshops was to have a plan that could be presented to political authorities that

sympathized with the plight of landholders in the area, providing clear and specific demands that community members had imagined. Therefore, some effort was placed on more accurately defining problems in the area and how to communicate those problems to authorities in unambiguous terms defining objectives. For something like unclean water, for example, participants were taught that what they needed to do was to define the problems that unclean water produced in their communities, defining the construction of water mains and sewers as measures that would reduce more tangible problems like chronic stomach infections and parasitic infections. The whole exercise brought experienced professionals into contact with community leaders, with professionals sharing their more abstract knowledge in communicating and organizing the demands of locals. The workshops also allowed *dirigentes* to work together toward defining common goals, leading many to realize that their objectives were shared generally, if they did not already know this.

The meetings also enabled me, an outsider, to get a sense of what people here wanted to achieve for their community over the next ten years. Most of what people had to say was obvious to anyone who has lived in the area or grown up in a pueblo jóven, however seeing it all said at once made the workshop and what was said there a succinct reiteration of what one experiences on a daily basis in places like the Nueva Rinconada. In our first workshop we were asked three questions to help participants think more about where they wanted the area to go in the upcoming years.

The first question asked participants where they saw the Nueva Rinconada in ten years. Four groups of around 20 participants each thought about this question. Combining the responses that each group presented what emerged was the picture of the Nueva Rinconada as a place with: water, electricity, brick houses, asphalt roads, public gardens, parks, schools, no pigs, community centres, soccer pitches, light posts, a water reservoir, a swimming pool, a police station, a hospital, trees, a woman's shelter, land titles, a recycling program, sidewalks and a better quality of life. The image that emerges in one's mind is not so different from more consolidated areas of the city, but as one can notice from the list there are elements that reflect the unique problems that this population seeks to address through its demands. For the most part, much of what needed to be done was more material than social. The list above collapses the desires of all four groups and is a reiteration of that political definition of development –public works=development. Nonetheless, the responses also served to highlight that education and health have become basic necessities for young families in the most harrowing conditions of the city.

People in every corner of Lima seek a better quality of life, as defined by contemporary standards. Second-rate education, poor hygienic conditions, poor infrastructure, a lack of basic services and a lack of recreational areas are not desirable. Many working class parents do not, as many would have us believe, acquiesce to having less materially and seeing their children face the same disadvantages that they may have in a highly competitive urban environment. If cynicism comes to overshadow the hopes of this population, it is more a matter of



resigning oneself to the fact that one is not able to compete at the same level due to a disadvantageous playing field. We see the recognition that quality formal education is commensurate with social mobility evinced in the demand for a “high quality of education” for one’s children. It was more likely that my collaborators’ children spoke a foreign language and not a native language, attesting to the globalization of opportunity in Peru.

Improving material conditions carries degrees of expectations. Even the conditions in the Nueva Rinconada at present are seen as an improvement for some people that have come from rural areas in Peru. For those who came from their parents’ home, the conditions are not an improvement. In the Nueva Rinconada, and Lima in general, those who seek the improvements detailed above are seen as being those who want to overcome their circumstances (*superarse*), while those who do not share the same concern, or are perceived as not sharing the same enthusiasm as community leaders, as conformists (*conformistas*). A 2007 survey conducted by the Diocese of Lurin in Lima South of 23, 847 families revealed that 37% of those surveyed migrated to Lima for economic reasons, 18% for educational and cultural reasons, 11.9% to get ahead in their field, with the remainder migrating for family reasons (17.8%), violence (4.4%), and other reasons (10.9%) (Alfaro 2007:103). The imperative here, in a shared social sense, is to seek both a material and social improvement in one’s conditions. It should be emphasized that we are seeing a complete shift in energies and practices from one generation to the next, a new orientation, if one will, with attendant social phenomena.

The next question that people were asked was where they saw themselves and their families in ten years. I copied the following collective response from the second group:

I would like to see my family calm, safe and with a good relationship with neighbours. I would like to see my children healthy, my wife content in a home where there is a lot of love. I hope to see my children studying, without vices, and having fun like children.

(Fieldnotes January 27, 2011)

No doubt this excerpt was written by a man, but it places a lot of emphasis on the wellbeing of one's family and the community, too. That children are healthy in all senses, even an emotional sense, is very important to participants in this group. I would add that what this group wrote represents an ideal for most. By expressing it as a desire, it is something that one wishes, but that is not a reality at present.

With respect to the mention of vices, this is a reference to the danger that children in the area face of becoming part of a gang or falling into the depths of substance abuse (whether it be alcohol, marijuana, pasta básica,<sup>52</sup> some other addictive substance, or a combination of all of the above). Within communities in Lima South, the Diocese of Lurin found that 29.1% of people thought that gangs were problem, 25.7% theft, 17.1% drug addiction, 6.6% alcoholism, 6.1% domestic violence and the remainder thought other problems were graver. In the daily experience of people, there is a strong connection noted between substance abuse,

---

<sup>52</sup> Pasta básica is a substance that is collected from the dregs of cocaine production. It is very inexpensive and highly addictive. For those who contend that cocaine production only harms rich nations, they need to come to Lima to see the violence that the control for the sale and consumption of this drug has produced in lower income neighbourhoods of Lima.

theft and gang behaviour. Taken together, these three, and four if we include alcoholism, seem to be pointing to larger issues like the lack of gainful employment and opportunities for youth. That said, people can turn to other practices that are less detrimental to others or their social environment. We should not, therefore, assume that no employment correlates directly with drug abuse and criminal acts against others. This line of thinking is highly suspect as it seems to be occluding the pervasiveness of behaviours that destroy communities and families, namely the transgressions of others in higher places, and the effects that an extenuating labour regime has on family and the home. Here, we are led to believe that stricter adherence to societal ideals will yield a commensurate payoff.

To shed more light on this seemingly simple excerpt, I would like to include a piece of a conversation on the dangers of Lima from the perspective of a collaborator in his mid-thirties who is a first generation migrant from Cajamarca. He sells juice in the market that faces onto the busiest intersection in the Nueva Rinconada. On a daily basis he bears witness to what happens at an intersection that is defined by local police as a hotspot of criminal activity, mostly petty thefts, but also confrontations between local youth and youth from other districts. His juice stand is frequented by locals who discuss everything from politics to religious beliefs. His opinions are expert testimony on the sociological, economic and political complexities of the reality in which he lives. Here is a segment of one of our conversations, which I began to record because I felt that he was what in anthropological literature we refer to as a key informant. What he has to say situates the brief excerpt that I cited above. On this day, we were talking about why

some children end up being criminals in the area. After listening to the life stories of a few ex-criminals, I had some ideas on the subject and wanted to see what Ramón thought. This conversation was sparked by two youths throwing rocks at one another outside the market. The incident had drawn the attention of passersby and both of us.

Ramón: When people immigrate to Lima they work mostly and they abandon their children, which means that these children grow up in an isolated way.

Everything depends on how the parents arrived, how they migrated: mothers are abandoned, they have conflicts in the home, the father hits the mother and the children see this type of violence. And, they separate. It is like this that the father forgets about paying child support for his children. So, the mother has to work and the children are left abandoned.

Abandonment is born from this situation. But, there are groups of youth that are walking in the streets, and because they are abandoned and only adolescents they don't know which group to belong to, and because they see that it is easier to be with friends, with people in their group [they join them]. Gangs, delinquency, drug addiction, in other words, laziness (*ociosidad*) derive from this situation.

This laziness is the mother of all vices because they don't work, they don't study, they don't go to school. If there is a group of two or three people that are gangsters or abandoned, they start drinking. Later it won't be three. It'll be five, seven and like this they form big groups.

B: But, to be a delinquent requires effort and time too. He has to study his victims, their respective patterns.

R: The delinquent has to have time, he has to be lax to study his victims. That is his work obviously, logically, if they are doing nothing.

B: The victims are justified, saying they are bad, they are greedy, they don't want to share, how is it?

R: Everything is born of its origin, of its roots.

People from the provinces are a little healthier, but in the city they learn *mañas*<sup>53</sup> because someone else did it to you. So, there is no trust.

---

<sup>53</sup> Anti-social skills or talents. Picking pockets, swindling, learning to evoke fear in others to extort money, etc. are special skills that are honed.

*Picardía*<sup>54</sup> can be a *maña*.

Ramón told me that when he came to Lima he was very naive. If some asked him for a favour, when he befriended someone, he might lend them his cell phone, even if one of them took his cell phone and never returned. On some occasions he lent money, suffering the same ill fortune.

R: That is a direct robbery, because first they earn your trust and later they rob you.

Some rob you in a brilliant way, in broad daylight, without yelling, without putting a knife to you, without insulting you, nothing.

This is an intelligent robbery. This way is *picardía*. This is a *maña*, theft with *maña*.

We also call people with a good sense of humour *pícaros*.

Therefore, to have *maña* is something like being *vivo*.

Ramón went on to describe other examples of *maña* finishing his explanations with a general definition.

R: One can say that people have *maña* when they say one thing instead of another and all of this arises in the city.

As much as he feels that this behaviour is part of the city, he concedes that it exists in the provincial towns of Peru, but to a lesser extent. He continues with his musings.

R: Here people are super liars. Provincial Peruvians become experts here. They learn a lot of things. Some even become delinquents and these are

---

<sup>54</sup> Something similar to cunning in English.

sometimes the children of the same people of the masses (*gente del pueblo*) that have emigrated. Write that down.

While I go on to emphasize the socio-economic factors, connecting abandonment and the lack of presence or know-how of parents in a new urban context, Ramón brings the argument back around to a discussion on the family.

R: There is a lot of hate, rancour. People start to victimize others. There is no love and money does not solve everything.

I had cousins that did not have money, but, yes, the love of their parents and the result is that all the children are professionals. Everything rests in the fact of giving love so that children do not go astray.

(Ramón, Interview recorded on November 14, 2010)

There is quite a lot in this small excerpt. We can appreciate that crime, distrust, ambition, cunning, hate, dishonesty are all connected and that the only salve for these destructive behaviours seems to be a loving and principled family. It would not be a stretch to associate envy with the sting of seeing others enjoy the success that one has sought. What we see is that the excerpt in our meeting was a loaded commentary on the social circumstance of people in the Nueva Rinconada and areas that have arisen due to self-help housing. People are acutely aware of the importance of being on good terms with one's family and their neighbours. That both excerpts come back to love is significant. Love here is seen as a *sin-qua-non* for success and social cohesion. From a loving home come socially healthy children who do not pour their hatred and pain into their neighbourhoods.

Invariably, the measure of goodness of a person is reflected in their achievements for Ramón and others. On another occasion, when I asked about overcoming one's condition (*superandose*), he told me that his father told him that one can get ahead in one of two ways: study or business.

In other excerpts from the workshop with community leaders regarding how people saw themselves and their children, people alluded a lot to social advancement in the city. One group wrote that they saw themselves with "their own business in their home and having health and education in a home constructed of brick and cement." It was important to add that they saw their children with a "profession and studying." One of the groups recognized that for crime to decrease the government would have to create more jobs. Another group saw their children being "professionals, business owners, or working in big companies."

What people imagined for their community was not so different from what any other neighbourhood in Lima would aspire to have. The overwhelming desire of locals was to see the living conditions and social possibilities for their children improved. The workshops highlighted perceived deficiencies in education and health care provided by the state, seeing more state investment as the obvious solution. An area school psychologist and social worker confirmed that this attitude was based on a real lack of funding for area state schools. The fear of many locals to go to local state hospitals, choosing, instead, to place their trust in private hospitals speaks of the lack of funding for state hospitals. Unfortunately, money does buy one education and health. For the most part, the workshops demonstrated that even the

newest areas of Lima were keen to see improvements in their circumstances –the opposite of what impressions from more affluent areas would have us believe. What this workshop and the history of Nueva Rinconada tell us is that people who have been living for generations in the ever-expanding frontiers of Lima are here to partake in what is locally referred to as progress, or what is perceived as an improvement in their condition in all senses.

In many ways, people’s commentary keeps on returning to what affects the family and how the new family unit operates in the city, in an environment that is dangerous and full of negative influences. Neglect your children and you face the danger that their anger and frustration find a voice in violence against other compatriots, who may or may not belong to your neighbourhood. Somehow, that self-reliance and interdependence that characterized rural living for many has become a detriment to the family in Lima. Leaving your children alone in the city can leave them vulnerable and likely to join up with other youths who walk alone. It is hard not to notice the concern for the future and wellbeing of one’s children, however there is another interpretation that can be made of this injunction to focus one’s energy on the home here.

In conversations with collaborators the strict frugidity of families before they migrate to Lima is often contrasted with dialogue and an open expression of affection in the home. Birth control is practiced among even the poor, with families nowadays averaging just over two children (the municipality of Lima puts the number at 2.1 between 1993 and 2007 in greater Lima). Families are to remain



stable so that children may have the emotional stability to succeed in either business or study. The married couple should have their own home. Women are to be educated just as much as men, so that they can enjoy equal opportunities. Children should not work, lest their futures be truncated. Being morally observant of these new ideals goes hand-in-hand with material progress.

A study that was conducted by psychologists from the Peruvian University of Applied Sciences (UPC) in one of the sectors of a collaborator of mine in 2009 focused specifically on the family and community. Among the problems on which their diagnosis placed special priority was that of communication in the family. The authors write:

In *Asentamiento Humano X* one can see a great lack of family communication, which is associated with the little existing trust between family members. [This lack of communication] is related to an inadequate treatment between them, lack of free time, stress, and worries that overcome the home (Montoya et al. 2009:24).

The implication here is that the problems of the families here are a result of their practices as a family. A lack of communication can occur between children and parents when parents are “impatient” in their wish to intervene in the education of their children. Television, long work hours, and commitments outside the home on weekends are listed as having another negative impact on communication in the household. Spouses experience a breakdown in their relationships due to their inability to listen to what their spouse is really saying, blaming, passing judgment, etc. The consequences of a lack of communication are a distancing between partners. As the authors state, “...they become selfish and they forget about the

needs of their partner.” Parents not listening to their children results in the alienation of their children, resulting in drug use, violent behaviour, etc. (Montoya 2009:24-25).

I would qualify the study’s statement on egoism by saying that it is prevalent outside the home and an essential ingredient in getting ahead in the city. Here, one could also differentiate another type of egoism, typical to many men in the world, an entitlement that is born of the belief that men work and women do all the rest in spite of circumstances where most women are now forced to work for the betterment of the socioeconomic conditions of one’s family. While the second, through introspection and realism, is possible to change, the first type of egoism, which is endemic in the area, has no real solution save the complete reorientation of Peruvian society and the world at large.

The study really opens up an interesting debate. Can we change society through the modification of behaviours in the home, or are behaviours in the home bound to reflect values and behaviours outside the home? Both seem to go hand in hand. Behaviours in homes have been changed because of interventions of the state and NGO groups who are promoting things like “dialogue,” safe sex, equal rights, nutrition, etc. And these initiatives are successful. I expected to see some resistance from my collaborators, however, to my surprise, I saw the exact opposite –an eager desire to be cultivated (with these novel ideas). Existing alongside these admonitions are those that encourage people here to succeed, to overcome one’s circumstances. I kept on wondering what effect such contradictory voices have on

any individual. How can people be considerate at home and with others, but, at the same time, live in a world where competition in almost every environment is anything but friendly and considerate?

My point here is not to deny that there are serious social problems in less privileged parts of the city. What I want to defamiliarize here are the new expectations that have arisen around the family and the goals that people are directing their energies toward in an environment where employment is unstable and working conditions for most grueling. The reality is that most parents are not able to be with their children as much as they would like. A lack of opportunities for youth in the area leads many to release their frustrations in diversions like substance abuse or acts directed against those who have what they lack.

We are often led by experts to believe that liberal economic and political reforms will improve this situation. And, maybe it does, but in ways that see anti-social behaviour growing in other areas like the workplace. Socially progressive professionals advocate for more spending in health and education, however the government struggles to meet the real need of the population. On the ground, it appears that those who manage to claw their way out of generalized precarious living conditions do so at the expense of their neighbours arousing their envy and distrust. This lack of trust, in turn, can be felt among those who have more and those who aspire to more. Could it be that what Ramón defined as *maña*, as that situation where one says one thing and does another, has become the motor of success? To get ahead one must hide the truth or distort it, especially in an

environment where so many are trying to achieve the same goal –the progress of their children. Seen this way, distrust, envy, crime and other socially inimical behaviours are the collateral damage of progress, or economic and social advancement.

One day I sat down to have a coffee with a retired worker who had a drink stand on one of the main thoroughfares in Pamplona. I had been visiting him regularly, asking him to explain different things to me. On this occasion I was curious about *viveza* or being a *vivo*. He told me to listen to the following song, which seems to go with our present discussion. The song was written by Ernesto Sánchez Fajardo, a native of a small town called Bamba in the department of Ancash. He migrated to Lima as a boy and later became a renowned musician, bringing the sound of Andean *huaynos* to the capital.

Verdades que amargan

Truths that embitter –Jilguero de Huascarán

Si reviviera Luis Pardo,  
el gran Alama y Atusparia,  
no habrían tantos abusos  
con la clase proletaria.

If Luis Pardo, the great Alama  
and Atusparia<sup>55</sup> were revived,  
there would not be so many abuses  
of the proletariat class.

A las palabras del pobre  
nunca le dan las razones,  
aunque la razón les sobre  
más pueden las opresiones.

What the poor say  
they never say it is true,  
even though the truth abounds,  
oppressions prevail.

Si uno aguanta es un bruto,  
Y si no aguanta es un malo.  
Dale azote. Dale palo.  
Eso es la suerte del cholo.

If one bears it he is a brute,  
And if one can't bear it he is bad.  
Give him the whip. Give him the stick.  
That is the luck of the *cholo*.

---

<sup>55</sup> From what I can piece together these were roguish figures in Andean lore who resisted abusive authorities during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

En este mundo de vivos el vivo vive del sonso, el sonso de su trabajo y el diablo de sus maldades. (2)	In this world of <i>vivos</i> , the <i>vivo</i> lives off the idiot, the idiot from his work, and the Devil from his evil deeds.
Verdades que amargan	Truths that embitter
Si reviviera Luis Pardo, el gran Alama y Atusparia, no habrían tantos abusos con la clase proletaria.	If Luis Pardo, the great Alama and Atusparia were revived, there would not be so many abuses with the proletariat class.
En que lugares no han visto el castigar con injusticias, dar libertad al culpable y al inocente la cárcel.	In what places have you not seen punishment with injustices, giving freedom to the guilty, and jail to the innocent.
El que roba cuatro reales la justicia lo estrangula, pero al que roba millones la justicia mas lo adula.	He who robs four reales justice strangles him, But he who robs millions, Justice adulates him more.
En este mundo de vivos el vivo vive del sonso, el sonso de su trabajo y el diablo de sus maldades. (2)	In this world of <i>vivos</i> , the <i>vivo</i> lives off the idiot, the idiot off of his work, and the Devil off of his evil deeds. (2)

The song gets at a lot in a very efficient manner. *Viveza* here is seen as both a necessity and a lamentful situation. Only the fool expects to make a living from an honest day's work. The world, the world of people like the singer, a migrant to Lima, is one of *vivos* who live off the honest labour of others. The truth of the people is stifled in an environment where oppression overpowers the words of truth, particularly the voice of common people. In the song there is a call to retributive justice; folk figures who fought for the proletariat class are mentioned. The singer states that things might be different if figures like this existed. The Nueva Rinconada, in many senses, feeds off the sense of indignation felt in this folk song

and brings it into a physical expression of retributive justice. It could be that many daily practices are guided by this grassroots principle of justice that decries the advancement of others at the expense of the majority. Justice here is a rhizome that keeps popping up in different places throughout Peruvian history since the violent incursion of the Spaniards.<sup>56</sup>

The connection between *viveza* and distrust is very strong within the discourse of people who I encountered in Pamplona. Ramón and I discussed the issue of trust in one of our conversations.

R: In this country trust has been lost a lot.

Distrust is born [of the fact] that nobody cares for anybody, few care for one another. If everyone cared for each other, everything would be different. Peruvian society would be different.

B: And why does distrust exist?

R: Distrust, perhaps, exists because of delinquency, above all because of bureaucratic theft that comes from the head of the government.

I tell you that you are going to be president.

What would you do?

With the condition that you would change the model, distinct from what people in the past have done, to improve society with a social market model where the people are first and after that capital.

Here it is the inverse. Capital is first and then it is the people. What does it matter if 50 or a thousand people die in my business, as long as my capital does go into decadence.

B: Do you see a relationship between *viveza* and distrust?

R: A lot, *viveza*, *viveza* (indiscernible)

(Ramón, Interview recorded on November 14, 2010)

---

<sup>56</sup> The constant revolts and civil uprisings that have marked Peruvian colonial and post-colonial history can be seen in this light as the sporadic channelings of a generalized feeling of indignation among different groups.

If the leaders of a society are seen as giving the example that it is acceptable to lie, cheat and steal, who can one trust? Ramón sees Peru as being capital driven with social concerns falling by the waist side. We get on this topic through a prompt on distrust, which he sees strongly associated with *viveza*. What is *viveza* but a strong individualistic, psychotic drive for self gain? It is psychotic because those who are the most adept practitioners are convinced that it is a necessity, that it can be no other way and that damage to all others is justifiable. In the lyrics of Ernesto we see a world where the voice of the people is silenced by the corruption of those in power. Justice is miscarried, and honesty and humility are the virtues of fools.

One might be able to attribute all of this to the rantings of a select few malcontents that I have selectively culled. The survey conducted by the Diocese of Lurin in 2007 suggests otherwise, though. When asked to define the anti-value that predominates in their community, participants chose as follows: indifference (20.4%), injustice (17.4%), lying (16.7 %), individualism (15.2%), lack of faith (10.3%), dishonesty (7.7%), other (12.4%) (Alfaro 2007:114). It is hard not to notice the relationship between the responses, and the overlap that exists with the responses that were defined by the surveyors.

What I am getting at here is that the problems of people in urban areas cannot be solved by giving them all education and health care. The problem is more complex than this. This goal may be more a part of the problem than the solution, no matter how well meaning this ideal may seem. Despite an improvement in

education and health, many of my collaborators speak of a social world that is highly divisive and shot through with a socially unhealthy dose of individualism. The contemporary notion of social inclusion, in practice, is an imposition of wills because what it promotes is an inclusion in a generalized form of competition of which most are critical. It presupposes a just, civil society that makes rules and laws for the majority. However, in reality, and this is something that comes out in what has happened in the Nueva Rinconada and what occurs in daily practice, rules are set and upheld for the powerful elites who derive disproportionate gain from a hierarchical social system that is now global in its scope.

In order for there to be true inclusion, the voices of the majority must figure in the laws and collective desires of the nation. When people talk of egoism, distrust, delinquency, etc. as being serious problems, we must seek to understand the complex causes and seek to change the social system we live in to one in which social harmony prevails. From our discussion on Fujimori's neoliberal experiment, it should be clear to the reader that the panacea to social ills, material improvements in living conditions, does little to address the social complexities of a nation like Peru. As a consequence, people do what they abhor to get ahead for what the heart would command is foolish at best. Only the fool works, indeed.

The last thing I want to do here is to paint all those who have privilege as bent on the destruction of the poor. In most cases, in fact, the exact opposite is true. There is a tremendous amount of resources and energy being directed to developing the frontiers of the Peruvian society. Most talk of social inclusion is more about



making people feel included in a system that has excluded them from the beginning. Reason would demand that there be something more than just a rewording of the phraseology of development talk for the past six decades. But, there is not.

That the potential of all individuals in contemporary Peru can be achieved is utopic. That all can be successful is utopic. That equal rights are guaranteed for all is utopic. The future that most are grasping for here, often at the expense of others, is simply not what it is purported to be at all. If we state this, if we imagine things being different, ironically, we are being utopic and idealistic. No novel invention was ever created without such creative and non-conventional thinking. Like Socrates, what I have tried to do here is to bring development, progress to a state of aporia by asking what it is.

Once again, I return to our church survey to illustrate my point. When asked to define the socioeconomic problem that most affects the country, respondents reflected statistically what the reader has seen in the practices and discourses of my collaborators. Unemployment was perceived as the most important problem with 45% of participants selecting it, in spite of a national census in 2007 that placed unemployment at 3.7%. Next, came corruption, receiving 26.8% of responses with delinquency being a distant third at 8.8%. If we view these numbers in the light of our previous discussion, the numbers are not as important as the reality that informs them.

In these numbers we do not see the desperation and inversion of values that have taken root among many. Nor do we see the incessant disapproval and

rejection of this way of living by some at least. That delinquency places so low demonstrates that most are not swayed by the argument that people are born bad. Rather, the lack of employment and a contradictory system of values, best exemplified in a generalized form of corruption, are seen as principal impediments to the well being of the population.

I do not profess to know, nor would I be so presumptuous as to think I know, the solution to problems that are being faced by most nations at present. What I do know is that neoliberal social democracies are not the solution. This investigation has strongly suggested that modernity comes with viruses of its own that make the promises of social advancement far from being achieved. Contexts like that of Pamplona and the Nueva Rinconada indicate that liberal economics does not make beneficiaries out of all of us. Yet, people keep on pushing for more.

Can we imagine a world where the sense of community, that community that was born of adversity, like that of many on the frontiers of Lima, could persist throughout time? Is it possible under the present configuration of powers?

## Bibliography

- Adams, Norma and Norma Valdivia. 1991. *Los otros empresarios: ética de migrantes y formación de empresas en Lima*. Lima: IEP.
- Alfaro, Edwin. 2007. *Diagnóstico de la Diócesis de Lurín*. Lima: Gama Gráfica S.R.L.
- Altamirano, Teófilo. 2000. *Liderazgo y organizaciones de provincianos en Lima Metropolitana: Culturas migrantes e imaginarios sobre el desarrollo*. Lima: PUCP.
- . 1988. *Cultura andina y pobreza urbana: Aymaras en Lima Metropolitana*. Lima: PUCP.
- Altamirano, Teófilo and Lane Ryo Hirabayashi. 1997. *Migrants, Regional Identities and Latin American Cities*. AAA.
- Anderson, Benedict. 1983. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso.
- Anderson, Janine. 2002. *Leoncio Prado: Su historia, su palabra*. Lima: SINCO editors.
- Appadurai, Arjun. 1996. *Modernity at Large: Cultural dimensions of globalization*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Anonymous. 2000a. *Abran paso. El Chato*, March 23:2.
- . 2000b. *Pobladores de Asociación Perú 2000 exigen entrega de lotes que invadieron. La República*, March 21:27.
- . 2000c. *Propietarios de terrenos invadidos piden garantías: Los usurpadores han llegado al colmo de enviar cartas notariales demandando inmediata respuesta a propuestas de compra. El Comercio*, March 23:A8.
- . 2000d. *Invasores de terreno con las horas contadas. El Chato*, January 26:6.
- Anonymous. 2001a. *Joy Way compró a 4 independientes. La República*, February 21:5.
- Aylas, Carlos. 2000a. *Tres oficios confirman que alcalde de Villa El Salvador advirtió el peligro desde diciembre de 1999. Liberación*, January 30:10-11.
- Aylas, Moisés. 2000a. *Sigue acoso contra periodistas que denunciaron pago a prensa chinca. Liberación*, February 1:4.
- . 2000b. *Ruiz de Somocurcio: Profam es una solución "demagógica y electorera". Liberación*, February 21:3.

- Arellano, Rolando. 2000. *Los estilos de vida en el Perú: cómo somos y pensamos los peruanos del siglo XXI*. Lima: INDUSTRIALgráfica, S.A.
- Arellano, Rolando and David Burgos. 2004. *Ciudad de los Reyes, de los Chávez, de los Quispe...*. Lima: EPENSA.
- Arendt, Hannah. 1963. *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil*. New York: Viking Press.
- Ashplant, T.G. 1998. Anecdote as Narrative Resource in Working Class Life Stories: Parody, Dramatization and Sequence. In Mary Chamberlain and Paul Thompson, eds. Pp. 99-113, *Narrative and Genre*. New York: Routledge.
- Bakhtin, Mikhail. 2006[1981]. *The Dialogic Imagination*. Michael Holquist, ed. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, trans. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Bebbington, Anthony. *The New Extraction: Rewriting the Political Ecology of the Andes? Nacla Report on the Americas*, September/October:12–23.
- Benjamin, Walter. 2000[1999]. *The Arcades Project*. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin, trans. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press.
- Belaúnde Terry, Fernando. 1994[1959]. *La conquista del Perú por los peruanos*. Lima: Ed. Tawantinsuyu.
- . 1985[1969]. *Illuminations*. Hannah Arendt, ed. Harry Zohn trans. New York: Schocken Books.
- Berg, Ulla D. and Karsten Paerregaard. 2005. *El quinto suyo: transnacionalidad y formaciones diaspóricas en la migración peruana*. Lima: IEP.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. 1984. *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*. Richard Nice, trans. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Bourgois, Phillipe. 2003. *In Search of Respect: Selling Crack en El Barrio*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Brody, Hugh. 2000. *The Other Side of Eden*. Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre.
- Bromley, Ray. 2003. Peru 1957–1977: How time and place influenced John Turner's ideas on housing policy. *Habitat International* 27: 271–292.
- Burga, Marco and Marianella Ortiz. 2000. *Invasiones forman parte de la estrategia del candidato ilegal*. *La República*, January 27:14–15.
- Burke, Kenneth. 1941. Four Master Tropes. *The Kenyon Review* 3(4):421–438.
- Burns, Thomas. 1994. *Obras del espíritu en tiempo de colera: Reflexiones de un misionero*. Lima: CEP.

- Burt, Jo-Marie. 1997. *Political Violence and the Authoritarian State in Peru: Silencing Civil Society*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Caldeira, Teresa. 2000. *City of Walls: Crime, Segregation and Citizenship in Sao Paulo*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Calderón, Julio. 2011. Titulación de la propiedad y mercado de tierras. *EURE* 37:47–77.
- Cardoso, Fernando and Enzo Faletto. 1979. *Dependency and Development in Latin America*. Marjory Mattingly Urquidí trans. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Cerwonka, Allaine and Lisa H. Malkki. 2007. *Improvising Theory: Process and Temporality in Ethnographic Fieldwork*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Chaucer, Gregory. 1985. *The Canterbury Tales*. David Wright, trans. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Chekhov, Anton. 1960. He Understood. In *Anton Chekhov: Selected Stories*. Ann Dunnigan, trans. New American Library: New York.
- Chomsky, Noam and Edward S. Herman. 1988. *Manufacturing Consent: A Political Economy of the Mass Media*. New York: Pantheon.
- Choy, Jorge. 2000. Dos mil personas invaden parte baja de cerro “Lomo de Corvina”. *La República*, January 27:15.
- Ciurlizza et. al. 2004. *Hatun Willakuy: Versión abreviada del informe final de la comisión de la verdad y reconciliación*. Lima: Navarrete.
- Clark, A. Kim. 1998. *The Redemptive Work: Railway and Nation in Ecuador, 1895-1930*. Wilmington: Scholarly Resources.
- Collins, Jane. 1988. *Unseasonal Migrations: The Effects of Regional Labour Scarcity in Peru*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Contreras, Carlos and Marcos Cueto. 2004. *Historia del Perú contemporáneo. Desde las luchas por la independencia hasta el presente*. Lima: IEP.
- Colloredo-Mansfeld, Rudi. 2009. *Fighting Like a Community: Andean Civil Society in an Era of Indian Uprisings*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- . 1995. *The Native Leisure Class: Consumption and Cultural Creativity in the Andes*. Chicago: The University of Chicago.
- Cotler, Julio and Romeo Grompone. 2001. *El fujimorismo: Ascenso y caída de un régimen autoritario*. Lima. IEP.
- Córdova, V.A. 1958. *La vivienda en Perú: Estado actual y evaluación de las necesidades*. Lima: Comisión para la Reforma Agraria y la Vivienda.

- Corzo, Daniel and Gustavo Riofrío. 2006. Formalización de la propiedad y mejoramiento de barrios: bien legal, bien marginal. Lima: DESCO.
- Dalguerre, Angela. 2008. Diagnóstico urbano ambiental de la Asociación Nueva Rinconada de Pamplona Alta, Distrito de San Juan de Miraflores. Lima: PEBAL.
- De Certeau et al. 1998. *The Practice of Everyday Life. Volume 2: Cooking and Living*. Timothy J. Tomasik, trans. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- . 1984. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Berkeley: The University of California Press.
- Degregori, Carlos Iván. 2003. Comunidades locales y transnacionales: cinco estudios de caso en el Perú. Lima: IEP.
- . 2001[2000]. La década de la antipolítica: auge y huida de Alberto Fujimori y Vladimiro Montesinos. Lima IEP.
- Deleuze, Gilles and Felix Guattari. 1983. *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Robert Hurley, Mark Seem, and Helen R. Lane, trans. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- De Soto, Hernando. 1986. *El otro sendero: La revolución informal*. Lima: Editorial El Barranco.
- . 2000. *El misterio del capital: Why capitalism triumphs in the Occident and fails in the rest of the world*. Lima: El Comercio.
- Donayre, Rosario and Roberto Cumpa. 2010. Cartilla de saneamiento físico legal para los pobladores de la Nueva Rinconada de Pamplona Alta. Lima: Publicidad & Matiz S.A.C.
- Doughty, Paul. 1970. Behind the Back of the City: "Provincial" Life in Lima, Peru. In William Mangin, ed. *Peasants in Cities: Readings in the Anthropology of Urbanization*, Pp. 30-47. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Dostoyevsky, Fyodor. 2003[1880]. *The Brothers Karamazov*. New York: Bantam Dell.
- Driant, J.C. 1991. *Las barriadas de Lima: historia e interpretación*. Lima: IFEA, DESCO.
- Durand, Francisco. 2010. *La mano invisible en el estado: Crítica a los neoliberales criollos*. Lima: Fondo Editorial del Pedagógico San Marcos.
- Erazo, Juliet. 2010. Constructing Indigenous Subjectivities: Economic Collectivism and Identity in the Ecuadorian Amazon. *Development and Change* 41(6):1017-1039.
- Escobar, Ramiro. 2000. Dramas del arenal. *Caretas*, February:33-35.

- Fabian, Johannes. 2001. *Anthropology with an Attitude: Critical Essays*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- . 1998 *Moments of Freedom: Anthropology and Popular Culture*. Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia.
- . 1991 *Time and the Work of Anthropology: Critical Essays 1971-1991*. Chur: Harwood Academic Publishers.
- Fanon, Frantz. 1963[1952]. *The Wretched of the Earth*. Constance Farrington trans. New York: Grove Press.
- . 1967 *Black Skin, White Masks*. Charles Lam Markmann trans. New York: Grove Press.
- Ferguson, James. 1999. *Expectations of Modernity: Myths and Meanings of Urban Life on the Zambian Copperbelt*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Field, E. 2003. Entitled to Work: Urban Tenure Security and Labour Supply in Peru. *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 4(122):1561–1602.
- Fortier, Anne-Marie. 2000. *Migrant Belongings: Memory, Space, Identity*. New York: Berg.
- Foucault, Michel. 1991. Governmentality. In Graham Birchell et al., eds. *The Foucault effect: studies in governmentality*. Pp. 87–104. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- . 1982. The Subject and Power. *Critical Inquiry* 8(4):777–795.
- . 1980. *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction, Vol. 1*. New York: Vintage Books.
- . 1979. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. New York: Vintage Books.
- García, Alan. 2007. El Perro del Hortelano. *El Comercio*, October 28:n.p.
- Goffman, Erving. 1958. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh.
- Goldstein, Daniel. 2004. *The Spectacular City: Violence and Performance in Urban Bolivia*. Durham & London: Duke University Press.
- Golte, Jürgen. 2001. *Cultura, racionalidad y migración andina*. Lima: IEP.
- Golte, Jürgen and Norma Adams. 1987. *Los caballos de troya de los invasores: estrategias campesinas en la conquista de la gran Lima*. Lima: IEP.
- Gonzales, Michael J. 1985. *Plantation Agriculture and Social Control in Northern Peru, 1875-1933*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Gordillo, Gastón R. 2004. *Landscapes of Devils: Tensions of Place and Memory in the Argentine Chaco*. Durham & London: Duke University Press.

- Gramsci, Antonio. 2003[1971]. Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci. Quintin Hoare, trans. New York: International Publishers.
- Harris, Richard. 2003. A double irony: the originality and influence of John F.C. Turner. *Habitat International* 27:245–269.
- . 1998. The Silence of the Experts: “Aided Self-help Housing”, 1939–1954. *Habitat International* 22:165–189.
- Harvey, David. 2005. A Brief History of Neoliberalism. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Hebdige, Dick. 1979. Subculture: The Meaning of Style. London: Methuen.
- Heduardo. 2000a. Heduardo en su tinta. *Caretas*, February 17:17.
- . 2000b. Heduardo en su tinta. *Caretas*, February 3:13.
- Holston James. 1999. Spaces of Insurgent Citizenship. In *Cities and Citizenship*. James Holston, ed. London: Duke University Press.
- . 1991. Autoconstruction in Working-Class Brazil. *Cultural Anthropology* 6(4):447–465.
- Huber, Ludwig. 2008. Romper la mano: una interpretación cultural de la corrupción. Lima: IEP.
- Hymes, Dell. 1974. Foundations in Sociolinguistics: An Ethnographic Approach. Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Jackson, Michael. 2002. The Politics of Storytelling: Violence, Transgression and Intersubjectivity. Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum Press.
- Jones, Pamela. 1988. "There Was a Woman": La Llorona in Oregon. *Western Folklore* 47(3):195-211.
- Joseph, Jaime et al. 2005. Lima: Jardín de los senderos que se bifurcan. En Alejandro Portes et al. eds. *Ciudades latinoamericanas: Un análisis comparativo en el umbral del nuevo siglo*, Pp. 363–440. Buenos Aires: Prometeo Libros.
- Kay, Bruce H. 1996. “Fujipopulism” and the Liberal State in Peru, 1990–1995. *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 38(4):55–98.
- Kirtley, Bacil F. 1960. "La Llorona: and Related Themes. *Western Folklore* 19(1):155-168.
- Klaren, Peter. 2004. Nación y sociedad en la historia del Perú. Lima: IEP.
- . 1973. Modernization, Dislocation and Aprismo: Origins of the Peruvian Aprista Party, 1870-1932. Austin: University of Texas Press.



- Krekes, Carrie and Claudia R. Williamson. 2010. Propertyless in Peru, Even with a Government Land Title. *American Journal of Economics and Sociology* 69(3):111–124.
- Laite, Julian. 1978. Processes of Industrial and Social Change in Highland Peru. In Norman Long and Bryan Roberts, eds. *Peasant Cooperation and Capitalist Expansion in Central Peru*, Pp. 72–98. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Lewis, Oscar. 1966. The culture of poverty. *Scientific America* (October):19–25.
- . 1963[1961]. *The Children of Sanchez: Autobiography of a Mexican Family*. New York: Vintage Books.
- . 1959. *Five Families: Mexican Case Studies in the Culture of Poverty*. New York: Basic Books.
- Li, Tania Murray. 2007. *The Will to Improve: Governmentality, Development, and the Practice of Politics*. London & Durham: Duke University Press.
- Lobo, Susan. 1982. *A House of My Own: Social Organization in the Squatter Settlements of Peru*. Tucson, Ariz.: University of Arizona Press.
- Löfgren, Orvar. 2003. The Sweetness of Home: Class, Culture and Family Life in Sweden. In Setha M. Low and Denise Lawrence-Zúñiga eds. *The Anthropology of Space and Place: Locating Culture*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Long, Norman and Bryan R. Roberts. 1978. Peasant Cooperation and Capitalist Expansion in Peru. In Norman Long and Bryan Roberts, eds. *Peasant Cooperation and Capitalist Expansion in Central Peru*. Pp. 297–328. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- López, Sinesio. 2004. Desborde o incursión democratizadora? In *Desborde popular y crisis del estado: Veinte años después*, José Matos Mar, ed. Pp. 195–227. Lima: Fondo Editorial del Congreso del Perú.
- Lloyd, Peter C. 1980. *The “Young Towns” of Lima: Aspects of Urbanization in Peru*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lyons, Barry. 2006. *Remembering the Hacienda: Religion, Authority, and Social Change in Highland Ecuador*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Mangin, William, ed. 1970. *Peasants in cities: Readings in the anthropology of urbanization*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Mangin, William. 1967. Latin American Squatter Settlements: A Problem and a Solution. *Latin American Research Review* 2(3):65–98.
- . 1960. Mental health and migration to cities: A Peruvian case. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 84(17):911–917.

Manrique, Nelson. 2002. El tiempo del miedo: la violencia política en el Perú 1980-1996. Lima: Fondo Editorial del Congreso del Perú.

Marcus, George E. 2009. Notes toward an ethnographic memoir of supervising graduate research through anthropology's decades of transformation. In James D. Faubion and George E. Marcus, eds. *Fieldwork is not What It Used to Be: Learning Anthropology's Method in a Time of Transition*. Pp. 1-34. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

-. 1995. Ethnography in/of the World System: The Emergence of Multi-Sited Ethnography. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 24:95-117.

Marcus, George E. and Michael M.J. Fischer. 1986. Anthropology as Critique: An Experimental Moment in the Human Sciences. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Matos, José. 2004[1984]. Desborde popular y crisis del estado: veinte años después. Lima: Fondo Editorial del Congreso.

-. 1977. Barriadas de Lima, 1957. Lima: IEP

-. 1967. Migración y urbanización. Las barriadas limeñas: un caso de integración a la vida urbana. In Philip M. Hauser, ed. *La Urbanización en América Latina*. Buenos Aires: Solar/Hachette.

-. 1966. Las barriadas de Lima 1957. Lima: IEP.

McDowell, Linda. 2008. Thinking Through Work: Complex Inequalities, Constructions of Difference and Trans-national Migrants. *Progress in Human Geography* 32(4):491-507.

Méndez, Cecilia. 1996. Incas Sí, Indios No: Notes on Peruvian Creole Nationalism and its Contemporary Crisis. *Journal of Latin American Studies* 28(1):197-225.

Montoya, Verónica et al. 2009. Informe final del diagnóstico de las familias del AAHH "Nuevo Amanecer" y "Valle 2000" Nueva Rinconada, Pamplona Alta, San Juan de Miraflores. Lima:UPC.

More, Thomas. 1965[1516]. Utopia. Paul Turner, trans. New York: Penguin Books.

Murra, John. 1972. El control vertical de un máximo de pisos ecológicos en la economía de las sociedades andinas. En John Murra and Iñigo Ortiz de Zuñiga, eds. *Visita de la Provincia de León de Huánuco end 1562, tomo 2*, Huánuco: Universidad Nacional Hermilio Valdizán.

Nowicka, Magdalena. 2007. Mobile Locations: Construction of Home in Groups of Mobile Transnational Professionals. *Global Networks* 7(1):69-86.

Ong, A. 1996. Cultural Citizenship as Subject-making: Immigrants Negotiate Racial and Cultural Boundaries in the US. *Current Anthropology* 37:737-762.

- Ortiz, Iván and Rosario, Donayre. 2011. *La posesión informal y el saneamiento físico de asentamientos humanos*. Lima: Equis Equis S.A.
- Paerregaard, Karsten. 1997. *Linking Separate Worlds: Urban Migrants and Separate Lives in Peru*. New York: Berg.
- Paz-Soldán, C.E. 1957. *Lima y sus suburbios*. Lima: Universidad Nacional de San Marcos Instituto de Medicina Social.
- Peloso, Vincent C. 1999. *Peasants on Plantations: Subaltern Strategies of Labour and Resistance in the Pisco Valley, Peru*. Durham & London: Duke University Press.
- Pirsig, Robert M. 1974. *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance: An Inquiry in Values*. New York: William Morrow & Company.
- Poe, Edgar Allen. 1840. *Man of the Crowd*. Electronic document accessed at: <http://classicit.about.com/library/bl-etexts/eapoe/bl-eapoe-man.htm> on July 2, 2009.
- Ponce, Carlos R. 1994. *Gamarra: Formación estructura y perspectivas*. Lima: Fundación Friedrich Ebert.
- Poole, Deborah. 2000. Videos de corrupción y ocaso del fujimorismo. *Ideéle* 134:55–59.
- Portelli, Alessandro. 1997. *The Battle of Valle Giulia: Oral History and the Art of Dialogue*. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press.
- . 1991. *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories: From and Meaning in Oral History*. New York: SUNY Press.
- Portes, Alejandro. 1971. The Urban Slum in Chile: Types and Correlates. *Land Economics* 47(3):235–248.
- Portocarrero, Gonzalo and Jorge Komadina. 2001. *Modelos de identidad y sentidos de pertenencia en Perú y Bolivia*. Lima: IEP.
- Portocarrero, Gonzalo, ed. 1993. *Los nuevos limeños: sueños, fervores y caminos en el mundo popular*. Lima: SUR Casa Estudios del Socialismo.
- Priest, John F. 1985. The Dog in the Manger: In Quest of a Fable. *The Classical Journal* 81(1):49–58.
- Riofrío, Gustavo. 1991. *Producir la ciudad (popular) de los 90*. Lima: DESCO.
- Riofrío, Gustavo and J.C. Driant. 1987. *Qué vivienda han construido? Nuevos problemas en viejas barriadas*. Lima: CIDAP, IFEA, TAREA.
- Riofrío, Gustavo and Alfredo Rodríguez. 1980. *De invasores a invadidos (2): 10 años de autodesarrollo en una barriada*. Lima: DESCO.

- Roberts, Bryan. 1978. *Cities of Peasants: The Political Economy of Urbanization in the Third World*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Roseberry, William. 1994. *Anthropologies and Histories: Essays in Culture, History, and Political Economy*. London: Rutgers University Press.
- Rouleau, Brandon. 2007. *An Ethnography of Clothing in Lima, Perú*. Master's thesis, The University of Western Ontario Department of Anthropology.
- Sánchez-Jancowski, Martín. 2008. *Cracks in the Pavement: Social Change and Resilience in Poor Neighbourhoods*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Scarry, Elaine. 1985. *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Schild, Verónica. 2007. Empowering 'Consumer-Citizens' or Governing Poor Female Subjects? *Journal of Consumer Culture* 7(2):179–203.
- . 2000. Neoliberalism's New Gendered Market Citizens: The 'Civilizing' Dimension of Social Programmes in Chile. *Citizenship Studies* 4(3): 275–305.
- Scott, James C. 1998. *Seeing like a state: how certain schemes to improve the human condition have failed*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press.
- . 1990. *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press.
- . 1985. *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press.
- Seligmann, Linda. 2004. *Peruvian Street Lives : Culture, Power, and Economy among Market Women of Cuzco*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Skar, Sarah Lund. 1994. *Lives Together–Worlds Apart: Quechua Colonization in Jungle and City*. Oslo: Scandinavian University Press.
- Simmel, Georg. 2005[1903]. The Metropolis and Mental Life. In Jan Lin and Christopher Mele, eds. *The Urban Sociology Reader*, Pp. 22–31. New York: Routledge.
- Smith, Gavin. 1997. Pandora's History: Peasants and the Re-covering of the Past. In Gerald Sider and Gavin Smith, eds. *Between History and Histories: The Making of Silences and Commemoration*, Pp. 81–97. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- . 1989. *Livelihood and Resistance: Peasants and the Politics of Land in Peru*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Stewart, Kathleen C. 1996. An Occupied Place. Steven Feld and Keith H. Basso, eds. *Senses of Place*, Pp. 137–166. Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research Press.

- Striffler, Steven. 2002. *In the Shadows of State and Capital: The United Fruit Company, Popular Struggle, and Agrarian Restructuring in Ecuador, 1900–1995*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Tanaka, Martín. 2005. La estructura de oportunidad política de la corrupción en el Perú: algunas hipótesis de trabajo. In Felipe Portocarrero, ed. *El pacto infame: Estudios sobre la corrupción en el Perú*. Pp. 355–377. Lima: Red para el Desarrollo de las Ciencias Sociales en el Perú.
- Taussig, Michael. 1986. *Shamanism, Colonialism and the Wildman*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- . 1980. *The Devil and Commodity Fetishism in South America*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Thomas, William I. and Florian Znaniecki. 1918. *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Tsing, Anna. 2005. *Friction: An Ethnography of Global Connection*. Princeton: University of Princeton Press.
- Turner, John. 1978. Housing in Three Dimensions: Terms of Reference of the Housing Question Redefined. *World Development* 6(9/10):1135–1145.
- . 1968. Housing priorities, settlement patterns and urban development in modernizing countries. *Journal of the American Institute of Planners* 34(6):354–363.
- Uriarte, Beltrán. 2009. *Diagnóstico físico legal sobre la propiedad privada en La Nuerva Rinconada*. Lima: PEBAL.
- Uzzell, J. Douglass. 1980. Mixed Strategies and the Informal Sector: Three Face of Reserve Labour. *Human Organization* 39(1):40–50.
- . 1974. Cholos and Bureaus in Lima: Case History and Analysis. *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* XV (3–4):143–151.
- Webb, Richard et al. 2006. *La construcción del derecho de propiedad: El caso de los asentamientos humanos en el Perú*. Lima: Tarea Asociación Gráfica Educativa.
- Williams, Raymond. 1985[1983]. *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Williamson, John. September, 2004. *A Short History of the Washington Consensus*. Unpublished paper presented at From the Washington Consensus towards a New Global Governance Conference Barcelona, Spain.
- . 1977. *Marxism and Literature*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Zumuzudio, Zaida. 2001. Se enfrentan a unos 200 matones que irrumpieron en 3 AAHH: Pobladores evitan violento desalojo. *La República*, January 16:n.p.

B. Koulou.



### Office of Research Ethics

The University of Western Ontario  
Room 4180 Support Services Building, London, ON, Canada N6A 5C1  
Telephone: (519) 661-3036 Fax: (519) 850-2466 Email: ethics@uwo.ca  
Website: www.uwo.ca/research/ethics

### Use of Human Subjects - Ethics Approval Notice

**Principal Investigator:** Dr. R. Darnell

**Review Number:** 16070S

**Review Date:** April 03, 2009

**Review Level:** Full Board

**Protocol Title:** Understanding Trans-generational Experiences of Place Among Andean Migrants in Lima, Peru

**Department and Institution:** Anthropology, University of Western Ontario

**Sponsor:**

**Ethics Approval Date:** May 21, 2009

**Expiry Date:** August 31, 2011

**Documents Reviewed and Approved:** UWO Protocol, Letter of Information.

**Documents Received for Information:**

This is to notify you that The University of Western Ontario Research Ethics Board for Non-Medical Research Involving Human Subjects (NMREB) which is organized and operates according to the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct of Research Involving Humans and the applicable laws and regulations of Ontario has granted approval to the above named research study on the approval date noted above.

This approval shall remain valid until the expiry date noted above assuming timely and acceptable responses to the NMREB's periodic requests for surveillance and monitoring information. If you require an updated approval notice prior to that time you must request it using the UWO Updated Approval Request Form.

During the course of the research, no deviations from, or changes to, the study or consent form may be initiated without prior written approval from the NMREB except when necessary to eliminate immediate hazards to the subject or when the change(s) involve only logistical or administrative aspects of the study (e.g. change of monitor, telephone number). Expedited review of minor change(s) in ongoing studies will be considered. Subjects must receive a copy of the signed information/consent documentation.

Investigators must promptly also report to the NMREB:

- a) changes increasing the risk to the participant(s) and/or affecting significantly the conduct of the study;
- b) all adverse and unexpected experiences or events that are both serious and unexpected;
- c) new information that may adversely affect the safety of the subjects or the conduct of the study.

If these changes/adverse events require a change to the information/consent documentation, and/or recruitment advertisement, the newly revised information/consent documentation, and/or advertisement, must be submitted to this office for approval.

Members of the NMREB who are named as investigators in research studies, or declare a conflict of interest, do not participate in discussion related to, nor vote on, such studies when they are presented to the NMREB.

Chair of NMREB: Dr. Jerry Paquette

Ethics Officer to Contact for Further Information			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grace Kelly (grace.kelly@uwo.ca)	<input type="checkbox"/> Janice Sutherland (jsutheri@uwo.ca)	<input type="checkbox"/> Elizabeth Wambolt (ewambolt@uwo.ca)	<input type="checkbox"/> Denise Grafton (dgrafton@uwo.ca)

*This is an official document. Please retain the original in your files.*

cc: ORE File

# Curriculum Vitae

**Name:** Brandon Rouleau

**Post-secondary** Wilfrid Laurier University

**Education and** Waterloo, Ontario, Canada

**Degrees:** 1996–2000 B.A.

The University of Western Ontario

London, Ontario, Canada

2005–2007 M.A.

The University of Western Ontario

London, Ontario, Canada

2007–2012 Ph.D.

**Honours and** Province of Ontario Graduate Scholarship

**Awards:** 2007–2008

**Related Work** Teaching Assistant

**Experience** The University of Western Ontario

2005–2007, 2008–2009

## **Publications:**

Rouleau, Brandon E. (2007). The Fashioning of Lima: Global Fashion and Local Conundrums. *The Global Studies Journal* 1(3):131–142.