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THE POWER OF NAMING, OR THE CONSTRUCTION OF ETHNIC AND NATIONAL IDENTITIES IN PERU: MYTH, HISTORY AND THE IQUICHANOS*

We . . . tend to forget that we usually speak to an audience with whom we share more or less the same assumptions, the same codes, and the same anxieties and perplexities, an audience capable of attributing meaning to the points of silence in our text. But when we move from one country to another, we have to do much more than translate words: we have to translate our experience.¹

In 1987, while teaching at the Universidad Nacional de San Cristóbal de Huamanga (Ayacucho), in the south-central Andes of Peru, I began investigating the 1826–8 rebellion that a group of muleteers, landowners, priests and peasants of Huanta province launched, in alliance with a group of Spanish soldiers, officers and merchants, against the recently established republic of Peru. Acting in the name of King Ferdinand VII, the rebels called for the restoration of Spanish rule. They did not achieve their goal, yet they managed to destabilize for three and a half years the already feeble equilibrium of the nascent republic. The main local leaders were never captured, and many of the ‘fiscal reforms’ they had established in the region remained in force for many more years. Most importantly, these once-monarchist guerrilla leaders ended up adapting to the republican system by actively incorporating themselves into the armies of the new *caudillista*

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¹ Emilia Viotti da Costa, *The Brazilian Empire: Myths and Histories* (Chicago, 1988), xv.

state,² and, later on, by becoming petty officials: in particular, their main leader, the semi-literate muleteer Antonio Huachaca, became a justice of the peace.

The reasons for this uprising, known as 'the Iquichano Rebellion', and for the ensuing process of assimilation of the Huanta populations into the state, have been dealt with in their many layers in a study I have recently concluded.³ My purpose in this essay is to clarify some points concerning the history and identity of the peoples who formed the bulk of the 'restorationist' army, the so-called 'Iquichanos'. It is a subject that transcends the historian's interest. For, in addition to their continual presence on the national political scene during the nineteenth century, this peasantry has also played a crucial role in Peru's contemporary politics. The *punas*⁴ of Huanta province in Ayacucho are located within the area where the Shining Path (*Sendero Luminoso*) began its terrorist attacks in 1980, thereby initiating a war that soon took hold of Peru. One tragic incident, which occurred in an early stage of this war, brought the 'Iquichanos' to national attention: the murder, in January 1983, of eight Peruvian journalists in the *punas* of Huanta. These journalists had set out from Lima to Huaychao, a peasant community in the highlands of Huanta, to investigate the murder of a group of alleged *Senderistas*, which they attributed to the military. The journalists never arrived at their destination. Not long after their departure, the press reported the discovery of their lifeless bodies in the vicinity of Uchuraccay, another peasant community in Huanta. Their corpses, which were found buried, carried the signs of a horrifying death. The case passed into history as the 'massacre of Uchuraccay', and remains unsolved in spite of the trials that

² From *caudillo* ('boss, military leader'). The '*caudillista* state' refers to the republican state established immediately after independence, which was run by the military *caudillos* who had fought those battles; it usually alludes to the period between 1824 and the mid-1850s.

³ Sonia Cecilia Méndez-Gastelumendi, 'Rebellion without Resistance: Huanta's Monarchist Peasants in the Making of the Peruvian State: Ayacucho, 1825-1850' (State Univ. of New York at Stony Brook, Ph.D. thesis, 1996).

⁴ *Puna* is an ecological niche that denotes the highest habitable lands in the Andes cordillera, usually between 3,800 and 5,000 metres above sea level (classifications may vary according to regions). *Puna* is commonly translated as 'high Andean plateau', but this definition is incorrect, for, in certain regions (as is the case with Huanta), *punas* are characterized by a markedly broken topography.

followed; it is an unhealed wound in the memory of many Peruvians.⁵

The case became politically charged as some of the media, especially on the left, accused the military of the journalists' murder.⁶ Controversy grew, moreover, because the massacre, and perhaps more forcefully the ensuing trial of the Uchuraccay *comuneros* (community peasants), excited debates around the (unresolved) nature of Peruvian identity, with not a few commentators evoking images of the Spanish conquest. The Lima trial of the Uchuraccay *comuneros*, in fact, confronted monolingual (or barely bilingual) Quechua-speaking peasants with Spanish-speaking magistrates, and required the presence of interpreters. More than any truth regarding the death of the journalists, the hearings of Uchuraccay laid bare another truth: the problems of communication and the cultural divides that separated some Peruvians from others at the very moment when social analysts were envisaging a new era of modernity and democratization.⁷ The commission appointed by the then President Fernando Belaúnde to investigate the Uchuraccay events, presided over by the novelist Mario Vargas Llosa, arrived at the conclusion that the *comuneros* of Uchuraccay killed the journalists because they mistook them for Shining Path guerrillas — and that they did so following the military's own advice that they should defend themselves against the *terroristas*. This hypothesis was unanimously endorsed by the *comuneros* themselves,⁸ and its credibility lay in the fact that Uchuraccay did have a history of confrontations with *Sendero*.

⁵ Hundreds of people had already died by then as part of the war launched by the Shining Path in 1980, yet none of these killings was as widely publicized as the Uchuraccay case. While in the previous cases low-ranking policemen (*guardias civiles*) and peasants, mostly Quechua-speaking and illiterate, were the victims, on this occasion it was men of letters. Painful as it is to admit, adversity had to touch this sector directly for the media and the government to pay more attention to a war that had already severely hit the rural populations of the south-central highlands of Peru.

⁶ This was a hypothesis endorsed by newspapers such as *La República* and *El Diario*.

⁷ In fact, for most Peruvians, Sendero appeared 'like lightning out of a clear sky', as historian Flores Galindo put it. Sendero's war began precisely when most of the left had decided to choose the electoral path and when sociologists and economists were describing Peru as a modern country, one with a growing proletariat and a peasantry in the process of extinction. Alberto Flores Galindo, *Buscando un Inca: identidad y utopía en los Andes* (Lima, 1987), 325. Throughout this article, all translations from the Spanish are my own.

⁸ Unpublished transcripts of recordings of Mario Vargas Llosa's interrogation of the *comuneros* in Uchuraccay, 14 Mar. 1983. I thank Philip Bennett for providing me with a transcript, and Delia Martínez for her help with the translation from Quechua.

Still, the general tendency was to exonerate the peasants from responsibility by appealing to the classic stereotype of peasant *naiïveté*, in consonance with the image the peasants themselves chose to present. Few could accept (without falling into the other stereotypes which associate peasants with savagery and brutality) the idea that the peasants, if indeed they killed the journalists, might have had their own reasons, ones which they chose not to reveal.⁹

The ensuing hearings found certain military chiefs indirectly responsible, but they never faced trial. Three Uchuraccayan villagers were found guilty of the massacre and condemned to various prison sentences; they never disclosed any further evidence and one of them eventually died of tuberculosis in jail. The press went on with its own speculations and, in the end, each Peruvian was left with his or her own version of the events. One important document, however — the report, the *Informe de la Comisión Investigadora de los Sucesos de Uchuraccay*, produced by the government-appointed commission which investigated the events — is still pertinent for discussion, not because it necessarily unveils the truth of the massacre, but rather because it shows the limitations of the intellectual framework of the ‘specialists’ who were called upon to find out that truth.¹⁰ The paternalistic attitude of the government is also evident. For, as María Isabel Remy has rightly pointed out, although the case entailed criminal investigation, not a single detective was commissioned. Instead, anthropologists were entrusted with the task of uncovering the ‘cultural’ elements of a killing that was thought to have ‘magical-religious’ underpinnings.¹¹

In terms of my own project on the monarchist uprising of 1826–8, the *Informe* was an extremely pertinent document, for it provided the ‘state of the art’ of all that was known, or rather *supposed* (as I can say now) about the Uchuraccay peasants, whom the *Informe* identified as ‘Iquichanos’. It sought to provide not

⁹ For further discussion and thorough bibliographical reference on the Uchuraccay case (newspaper, journal and magazine articles), see Enrique Mayer, ‘Peru in Deep Trouble: Mario Vargas Llosa’s “Inquest in the Andes” Reexamined’, in George E. Marcus (ed.), *Rereading Cultural Anthropology* (Durham, NC, 1992).

¹⁰ Mario Vargas Llosa et al., *Informe de la Comisión Investigadora de los Sucesos de Uchuraccay* (Lima, 1983).

¹¹ María Isabel Remy, ‘Los Discursos sobre la violencia en los Andes, algunas reflexiones a propósito del Chiaraje’, in Enrique Urbano (ed.), *Poder y violencia en los Andes* (Cuzco, 1991).

only the cultural but also the historical reasons behind the massacre. I should like to discuss briefly the main report of the *Informe*, signed by Vargas Llosa, Mario Castro Arenas and Abraham Guzmán (henceforth ‘the Vargas Llosa text’), and the anthropological report, signed by anthropologists Juan M. Ossio and Fernando Fuenzalida, and placed as appendix 1 to the *Informe*.¹²

The first thing that attracts attention in the Vargas Llosa text is the commission’s seeming conviction that there was something particularly old, culturally ‘archaic’ and deeply ‘primitive’ about these peasants. Added to this was the ‘isolation’ in which, the commissioners claimed, the ‘Iquichanos’ had lived for centuries, and the commissioners’ certainty that the way the villagers live now was the way they have *always* lived: ‘they [the peasants] *have lived isolated and forgotten from pre-Hispanic times*’ (my italics). It seems as though the authors believed not only that the peasants of Uchuraccay preserved the past, but that they embodied it: ‘the Iquichanos have managed to preserve a culture, perhaps archaic, but rich and deep, and which is related to all our pre-Hispanic past’.¹³ Still more references abound in relation to their ‘primitivism’, ‘atavistic conduct’ and their practices dating back from ‘times immemorial’.¹⁴ All this in spite of the fact that the anthropological report acknowledged that these peasants had not only established commerce with neighbouring areas — and even worked as labourers in the coca slopes which lay east and north of their towns, into the area known as the ‘ceja de selva’ (‘the jungle’s mountain ridge’)¹⁵ — but also participated especially actively in nineteenth-century national politics. This acknowledgement notwithstanding, the very same anthropological report could not avoid falling into the same stereotyped construct presented in the Vargas Llosa text, with one ingredient added: the effort to portray the Uchuraccay peasant community as part and

¹² There are four other appendices to the report, written, respectively, by another anthropologist, a linguist, a psychoanalyst and a lawyer, but I cannot discuss all these texts in depth here.

¹³ Vargas Llosa et al., *Informe*, 36.

¹⁴ For example: ‘It is unquestionable that this atavistic attitude explains, in part as well, the Iquichan decision to combat the Shining Path, and to do so with *rude and fierce methods, which are the only ones they have at their disposal since times immemorial*’. *Ibid.*, 39 (my emphasis).

¹⁵ *Ceja de selva*, also referred to as *montaña*, or *monte*, is a warm, humid, and mountainous ecological niche, transitional between the high cordilleras and the jungle (*selva*) to the east, which is well suited to the cultivation of coca, tobacco and coffee.

centre of an 'ethnic group', comprising some twenty communities, who are endowed with a strong sense of 'ethnic, tribal' identity, have 'maintain[ed] close links of solidarity since pre-Hispanic times', and 'live in a universe of traditional beliefs'.¹⁶ 'The precise number and identity of the peasant communities of the Iquichano group', the argument continues, 'is still to be determined, as is much of what concerns the *surviving pre-Hispanic structures of rural Peru*'.¹⁷ The 'Iquichanos', the *Informe* tells us, are direct descendants of the 'old tribe of Iquicha', part of the Pokras 'kingdom' which, in turn, was part of the 'Chanka Confederation'¹⁸ — an untamed nation of warriors who resisted the Inca imperialist expansion prior to the arrival of the Spaniards. The 'Iquichanos', this story continues, have supported their regional autonomy ever since, even though they engaged in dealings and negotiations with the republican government throughout the past century.

I

NOT-FINDING AS A FINDING

Driven by these seemingly convincing postulates, some of which drew on sources as prestigious as José María Arguedas, I myself subscribed to the idea of the 'Iquichanos' as being a hereditary 'ethnic group' of the 'Chanka Confederation', and I attempted to trace, if not the pre-Hispanic, then at least the colonial antecedents that would help me (so I expected) to explain their pro-royalist militancy in the 1826–8 rebellion.¹⁹ What I encountered, in archive after archive, on trip after trip, and year after year, was a disconcerting, at times frustrating, lack of evidence.

As a student of my John Murra-inspired professors at the Universidad Católica in Lima,²⁰ I had learnt that a good way of tracing pre-Columbian 'ethnic groups' was through colonial

¹⁶ Vargas Llosa et al., *Informe*, 74, 73.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 44 (my emphasis).

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 46, 74.

¹⁹ See, for example, my first essay on the 'Iquichano' uprising: Cecilia Méndez, 'Los Campesinos, la independencia y la iniciación de la república: el caso de los Iquichanos Realistas, Ayacucho, 1825–1828', in Urbano (ed), *Poder y violencia*, 165–8.

²⁰ John Murra is an influential ethnologist in Andean scholarship who for many years taught at Cornell University. See his *La Organización económica del estado Inca*, trans. Daniel R. Wagner (Mexico City, 1978), and *Formaciones económicas y políticas del mundo andino* (Lima, 1975).

sources such as *visitas*,²¹ sixteenth-century chronicles, tributary rolls, and the *Relaciones geográficas*. I tried those and much more. I searched in the diaries of missionaries who travelled the region in the late eighteenth century, and I studied their maps, and the absence was still striking.²² Yet I persisted, on account of the fact that royalist native people did appear in every other region, such as Puno, Arequipa, Oruro and Cuzco. Law cases of *curacas* (the Andean native lords, chiefs of what Murra called 'ethnic groups' and the Spaniards designated as 'nations' or 'kingdoms') who traced their loyalty to the crown back to the sixteenth century, in suits that could last centuries, had been documented by other researchers, and were not hard to find in the archives. These legal proceedings were not an uncommon practice in the Andes. *Curacas'* outward proof of fidelity to the king was a necessary requirement to legitimize their own status and privileges as 'noble Indians', which the crown protected because *curacas* were instrumental in recruiting a labour force and collecting tribute from the 'nations' they represented. Lawsuits featuring royalist *curacas* became especially frequent in the late eighteenth century when, in order to counter the effects of the Túpac Amaru uprising (1780–1), the crown began offering juicy rewards for *curacas* who were able to prove their loyalty in that struggle. My dream was to find precisely such a trial featuring 'Iquichano' *curacas*. But it was to no avail. The lengthy records of land disputes kept in the section 'Derecho Indígena' of the Archivo General de La Nación in Lima, which had led other researchers to reconstruct 'ethnic' and peasant community histories, reflected a similar absence. Toponymic research did not help, either. There was no trace of a place called 'Iquicha' in the relations of early Indian settlements (*reducciones*) established by the Spaniards in the sixteenth

²¹ *Visitas* were a combination of census and narrative chorographic survey carried out by an emissary of the crown (the *visitador*) throughout the colonial period, whose main objective was to provide the crown with the information needed for taxation (and Christianization) purposes.

²² These maps, and their attached diaries, were prepared mainly by Franciscan missionaries. Many of them are kept in the Archivo General de Indias, Seville. For a published example, see Dionisio Ortiz, *Las Montañas del Apurímac, Mantaro y Ene*, 2 vols. (Lima, 1975), i, 144–5. I have also had access to the very exhaustive map produced by Demetrio O'Higgins on the basis of his *visitas* to the Intendencia of Huamanga between 1802 and 1804 — the most complete nineteenth-century map of Huamanga I have seen: Archivo General de Indias, Seville, MP, Peru–Chile, 158, 'Mapa original de la Intendencia de Guamanga del Perú'. I am grateful to Jaime Urrutia for providing me with a copy of this map, the original of which I was able to see later in Spain.

century.²³ Not a clue on the 'Iquichanos' appeared anywhere, and I was about to give up — until I realized that this absence of clues was the clue.

What led me to this conclusion, in Lima, around 1993, was the analysis, settlement by settlement, of all the existing tributary records for Huanta province (covering the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries) kept in the Archivo General de la Nación, which corroborated the non-existence of 'Iquicha' as an officially demarcated settlement or geographical area (let alone group of peoples), and, parallel to this, the re-reading in my sources of the language with which contemporaries of the monarchist uprising designated the inhabitants of the Huanta highlands and the region itself, as well as the language with which the rebels designated themselves, their headquarters and home towns. I also contrasted these discourses with analogous evidence for the period prior to the uprising. Only then did I realize that the first time the term 'Iquichano' appeared in written documents was in the very context of the monarchist rebellion of 1826–8. It was used by the rebels to designate their armies, but more profusely by the authorities to designate the rebels. The allusions to 'Iquicha' were, however, far more imprecise; the term seemed to stand sometimes for the whole area under rebel control.

It is indeed paradoxical that the place that was to lend its name to the rebellion and to the rebels should be so elusive in the hundreds of documents produced by the insurgents during the course of the war. I have been able to find among them only one reference to the 'Headquarters at Iquicha'.²⁴ Later documentation

²³ Luis E. Cavero states that, 'When the viceroy of Peru, Don Francisco de Toledo, made his visit to the city of Guamanga in 1571 . . . he found there the *encomienda* [Indians granted to a conquistador] in Iquicha': Luis E. Cavero, *Monografía de la Provincia de Huanta*, 2 vols. (Lima and Huancayo, 1953–7), i, 178. However, there is no evidence that the Spaniards ever recorded a place by the name of Iquicha in the sixteenth century. Maria Rostworowski, citing Garcilaso's *Comentarios reales de los Incas* (1607), maintains that Iquicha was one of the *ayllus* (extended kinship units) composing the Chanka group: Maria Rostworowski, *La Historia del Tawantinsuyu* (Lima, 1988), 56. However, I have found no mention of Iquicha in Garcilaso's chronicle, even in the most elaborate of the editions: for example, Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, *Comentarios reales de los Incas*, ed. Angel Rosenblat (Buenos Aires, 1943). I suspect that the roots of these misunderstandings lie in the work of Victor Navarro del Aguila: see below, pp. 158–9.

²⁴ On 8 February 1827 in Ayahuanco, Antonio Huachaca, the supreme *caudillo* of the uprising, issued an order to bring 'detractors' (*detractores*) 'to the Iquicha headquarters'. Archivo Departamental de Ayacucho, Ayacucho, Peru, Juzgado de Primera Instancia, Causas Criminales, legajo 27, cuaderno 521 (hereafter ADAY, JPI, CC, leg., cuad.), 'Cuaderno cuarto del juicio a Soregui y otros', fo. 49^r.

clarified that it was merely another name to designate the Luis Pampa barracks in Uchuraccay, then a hacienda and the main headquarters of the rebellion. Indeed, while references to the 'Iquichanos' are omnipresent in the authorities' documents and rather scant in those of the rebels themselves, mention of 'Iquicha' as a town or community is non-existent in both.²⁵

From the plentiful evidence to this effect, let me cite but one example. When commander Gabriel Quintanilla reported to the prefect of Ayacucho his final and triumphant attack on the Luis Pampa barracks in Uchuraccay in March 1828, he did so without mentioning 'Iquicha' in his description of what was, supposedly, the heartland of the uprising.²⁶ And although, according to Quintanilla's report to the prefect, five of the twenty-two men and women who were taken prisoner in this raid 'came from Iquicha' — with the remaining seventeen reportedly originating in five other different locations — the declarations made by the prisoners themselves in the trial that ensued suggest other possible interpretations. Revealingly, none of the five prisoners who were listed in the report as 'coming from Iquicha' testified in the trial. The only prisoner who presented himself in trial as originating in 'Iquicha' was Sebastián Cahuana, a sixty-year-old peasant. His declarations were transcribed thus: 'that he is a native of Challhuamayó located in the *punas* of Iquicha'.²⁷ Whereas one cannot discard the possibility that this reference to 'Iquicha' was added by the trial's interpreter or secretary (especially since Cahuana, just like most of the individuals who were caught up

²⁵ References to a 'town of Iquicha' appear clearly only after the monarchist uprising. For example, on 6 March 1834, Huachaca, Mendes and Choque, the Huanta leaders of the monarchist rebellion (who in the end gained their freedom and took part in another uprising), signed a document in the 'Uchuraccay Headquarters, jurisdiction of the town of Iquicha and *doctrina* of Carhuaurán' ('Cuartel General de Uchuraccay, comprehencion del pueblo de Yquicha y Doctrina de Carhuaurán'). Archivo General de la Nación, Lima (hereafter AGN), PL, 15-437, 1835, fo 17^r. In what follows, the same document refers again to the 'town of Iquicha', along with other 'towns of the *Punas*', denoting this time its status as a settlement and not just an 'area'. Still, government documents contemporaneous with this citation refer to Iquicha as an *estancia* (cattle ranch) rather than as a town.

²⁶ Thus, Quintanilla wrote: 'The Great Palace of General Huachaca, the fort of Luis Pampa, all of Ninaquiuro and all the rebels' homes — all have caught fire'. ADAY, JPI, CC, leg. 30, cuad. 566, fo 1^v. The document was signed at the 'Military Headquarters in Tambo', 20 Mar. 1828.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 'Cuaderno segundo del juicio a Leandro', fo. 7^v. The places of origin (*países*) of the remaining seventeen prisoners are given as follows: five each from Ninaquiuro, Huanta and Chacabamba, one each from Tambo and Luricocha. *Ibid.*, fos. 1^v-2^r.

in the Uchuraccay raid, made his utterances in Quechua, which naturally increased the margin of distortion they were subject to), his testimony deserves attention. First, because in Quintanilla's report the same man appears as originating in Ninaqui, another village, that is, higher than Challhuamayo and closer to Uchuraccay. No mention of 'Iquicha' is made in that instance. While this piece of information may simply suggest that peoples' forms of identification were variable rather than attached to a single village, Cahuana's testimony strikes us for a yet more compelling reason: for its description of Challhuamayo as being located 'in the *punas*'.²⁸ For, while *puna* designates the highest inhabitable niches of the Andes cordillera, Challhuamayo is a lower and temperate town, located midway between the Huanta *punas* and Ayacucho's eastern jungles — eight hours from Uchuraccay and four hours from present-day Iquicha, at an outsider's pace (and half that time at a villager's pace). These apparent inconsistencies reveal how political a term supposedly designating a given geographical landscape could be; and they also suggest the very malleability of the scope of 'Iquicha'.

Collating this reference with most other contemporary allusions to Iquicha, one is left with the impression of the latter as being a rather loosely defined territory in the highlands of Huanta, one which encompassed several villages and haciendas and various ecological niches, and which is, at times, hardly distinguishable from the district (*doctrina*) of Ccarhuahurán.²⁹ Unlike Iquicha, however, a town of Ccarhuahurán does appear registered in the tributary records of the late eighteenth century, summing up

²⁸ The term *puna*, as it appears in the documents relating to the monarchist uprising, hardly designates a specific ecological niche. Studying a more recent epoch and another region (the province of Chumbivilcas, in Cuzco), the anthropologist Deborah Poole finds that *puna* is usually associated with the idea of 'empty spaces' and portrayed as being aloof from the state, ideas which she convincingly demonstrates did not correspond to reality. See Deborah Poole, 'Qorilazos, abigeos y comunidades campesinas en la provincia de Chumbivilcas (Cusco)', in Alberto Flores Galindo (ed.), *Comunidades campesinas: cambios y permanencias*, 2nd edn (Chiclayo, 1988). One could make similarly forceful arguments regarding the *punas* of Iquicha, on the basis of even more recent evidence.

²⁹ Several sources from the 1820s and 1830s suggest, indeed, that Iquicha was another name to designate the towns comprised by the '*doctrina* [ecclesiastical district] of Ccarhuahurán', also referred to as '*punas* of Ccarhuahurán': for example, ADAY, JPI, CC, leg. 55, cuad. 1, dossier by Tomás López Geri (tithe-collector for Huanta), fo. 13. Later sources bluntly present them as synonymous. A treasury official reported in 1838: 'Antonio Huachaca has become justice of the peace in the district of Ccarhuaurán or of the area [*cas comarcas*] known as Yquicha'. ADAY, JPI, Causas Criminales, leg. 44, cuad. 847, 1838, fo. 2. Another source states: 'From the year

fifty-seven tribute-paying Indians by 1801, and the same is true for the two 'home towns' of the witness Cahuana, Ninaquiroy and Challhuamayo, the sparse population of the latter notwithstanding. Challhuamayo is listed as a 'cattle ranch' (*estancia*) with a total of thirteen tribute-payers, while Ninaquiroy appears as a town with ninety tribute-payers by 1801 (we should suppose one family per tribute-payer); Iquicha is non-existent.³⁰

Just as intriguing as the above, given the how profusely the name 'Iquichano' appears after 1826, is how difficult it is to find the name in the testimonies from the independence struggles that make reference to the region and its inhabitants. When, months before and after the battle of Ayacucho (9 December 1824), patriotic officials reported their harassment by the people from the highlands of Huanta, they referred to the 'Indians of Huanta' rather than to 'Iquichanos'. The same thing occurred in 1814 and 1815, when the people of this very region mobilized to contain the rebel troops of the Angulo brothers, who were nearing Huamanga from Cuzco.³¹ In short, it would seem that until 1825 no one had heard of either 'Iquicha' or the 'Iquichanos'.

It was only in the course of the rebellion of 1826–8, and as a result of the dissemination of the first monarchist proclamations, written principally by the Spanish *capitulados*,³² that the inhabitants of the communities situated in the *punas* and valleys of

(*n. 29 cont.*)

1825, if my memory does not betray me, the dwellers of the district of Carhua uran [*sic*] also known by the name of Iquicha, have refused to pay the *contribución* [the republican form of Indian tribute]. AGN, PL 21–164, 1841, Juan F. Arias, sub-prefect of Huanta, to the prefect of Ayacucho, Huanta, 2 Nov. 1840, fo. 1^r.

³⁰ Ninaquiroy also appears as 'Cano y Ninaquiroy' and was registered as a town, with a *varayoc* (Indian mayor), in the tributary rolls from 1786; its population in that year included seventy tribute-payers. My information on tributary records comes from AGN, Tributos, Huanta, leg. 3, cuad. 49, year 1782; leg. 3, cuad. 67, year 1786; leg. 4, cuad. 105, year 1796; leg. 5, cuad. 9, year 1801. No detailed tributary records exist for Huanta (called 'Zángaro' or 'Azángaro' during the early colonial period) before 1782 or after 1801. The insignificance of Iquicha as a town or *estancia* is noted in Cavero, *Monografía*, i, 69.

³¹ On the harassment of patriots by the peasants of Huanta and Huando during the independence campaigns, see: *Colección documental de la Independencia del Perú* (Lima, 1970–6), tom. v, vol. 6, pp. 102, 132, 268, 533–4; AGN, *Colección Santa María*, 00611; John Miller, *Memorias del General Miller al servicio de la República del Perú*, trans. José María Torrijos, 3 vols. (Santiago de Chile, 1912), iii, 11–12. For the same matters in 1814–15, see: *Colección documental de la Independencia del Perú*, tom. iii, vol. 7, pp. 583–5; tom. xxvi, vol. 4, p. 72; *ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 335, 452, 453.

³² Literally, 'the surrendered': soldiers and officers belonging to the royalist army defeated in the battle of Ayacucho, which sealed Peruvian and Spanish South American independence.

Huanta began to be called 'Iquichanos' indiscriminately. One of these proclamations, intended to be disseminated in Huancavelica, bore the signature 'The Iquichano Lover of the King'. Brought to trial, a former officer of the royal army, the Spaniard Francisco Garay, confessed that he was the author of this piece and some others.³³

The sudden importance that the term 'Iquichano' acquired, as contrasted with the insignificance, or elusiveness, of 'Iquicha', remains unclear. Nonetheless, and so long as there appears no new evidence to contradict my findings (or rather, what I have not found), I propose the following explanation. Why 'Iquichanos', and not 'Ccarhuauranenses', 'Ucchuraccayinos', or 'Ninaquirenses'? Perhaps precisely because, while Ninaquiro, Ccarhuaurán and Uchuraccay, to take a few examples, were officially demarcated entities (whether towns or haciendas), Iquicha was not; and precisely because it was not, it could be created. The ambiguity of the term 'Iquichano', its possible multivalency, is too blatant to be merely coincidental. 'Iquichanos' were the inhabitants of no town until 1825, yet all the peasants who embraced the restorationist cause thereafter became 'Iquichanos'. Ironically, it was the monarchist Spaniards themselves who contributed, through their pamphlets and proclamations signed by anonymous 'Iquichanos', to the creation of an image of resistance and rebellion that would thereafter be attributed to the peasants of Huanta, and that was to have a lasting impact in the region.

Understandably, the peasants themselves denied their identification as 'Iquichanos'. This was, in all likelihood, a new denomination and, after all, perhaps improper for those who had felt more of an identification with Ccarhuaurán, Ninaquiro, Ayahuanco, Secce, Tircos, or whatever their community of origin. And since 'Iquichano' soon began to be an adjective associated with the quality of being a rebel, a 'traitor to the *patria*' and even a 'barbarian', it is obvious why the peasants should refuse to be identified as such. All the same, this association was to be reversed as a result of the new relation that the Huanta peasants established with the republican state years later. No other source expresses

³³ ADAY, JPI, CC, leg. 31, cuad. 585, 'Cuaderno tercero del juicio a Soregui', fo. 18. There is another proclamation written by Garay in the same file (fo. 19) — the very one which Garay claimed to have copied from another in the possession of the Spaniard Antonio García (although in the latter Iquicha is not mentioned). For details on the authorship of leaflets and proclamations see Méndez, 'Rebellion without Resistance', ch. 5.

this evolution as clearly as the petitions regarding tributary exemptions that the Huanta communities addressed to the government authorities during the 1830s and 1840s.

II

SEDUCED BY THE IQUICHANOS?

When in 1831 the Indian mayors³⁴ of nine communities of Huanta (Ccarhuaurán, Secce, Aranhuay, Ayahuanco, Mayhuavilca, Chaca, Huarcatán, Pampacoris and Marcaraccay) addressed their respective pleas to the prefect requesting exemption from that year's tribute, they declared themselves victims of the war promoted by 'the leaders of the Iquichano party', by whom they claimed to have been seduced. So said the mayor of Ccarhuaurán:

Being victims of seduction by the leaders [*corifeos*] of the Iquichano party which had expanded in those places, we have suffered the damages resulting from a destructive war. The pastures of those barren lands are not insulted [*sic*] by any domestic livestock, since the soldiers, be they friends or enemies, did away with all of it. The farmed lands [*chacras*] have become forests, for we had recently taken up agriculture. On the other hand, we had no other choice for our subsistence than to raise some livestock or other, and to cultivate the lands of said town, which, as they are situated in the *punas*, yield no more than barley, potatoes, beans and *quinoa*, provisions which are not at all desirable.³⁵

The petitioners were correct in referring to the poverty of their resources, and that all the soldiers, 'be they friends or enemies', had 'suffered the damages resulting from a destructive war'. Yet this very phrase, meant to convey atonement, revealed that the petitioners had, in fact, taken sides. For it was precisely for having supported the monarchist insurrection (their friends) that these towns had taken the brunt of the beating during the government's (their enemy's) campaigns of repression.

But if these communities had been implicated in the monarchist insurrection to so great an extent, if the authorities were already referring to them as 'Iquichanos', what logic lay behind their self-exculpatory claims? Who were those 'leaders of the Iquichano

³⁴ '*Alcaldes indígenas*', a legal category by which the petitioners identified themselves in most of these pleas. The *alcaldes indígenas* (or *varayoqs*: 'staff-holders') represented their communities in all of its legal transactions and claims and were responsible for rectifying irregularities or abuses which might affect the community according to laws established by the Spanish, but which were still in force during the early decades of the republic and even into the twentieth century.

³⁵ AGN, PL, 11-82, 1831, fo. 2^o.

party', of whom they declared themselves the victims? They were surely the principal *caudillos* of the monarchist uprising, including Spanish officers. Whether or not they had indeed been seduced, the peasants employed this argument, in all likelihood aware that it was consonant with the view harboured by the state. Inheritor of the paternalist colonial mentality, the republican government considered that the Andean peasants — then designated as *indígenas*, or Indians — were naive creatures, easily manipulated and seduced. When the peasants had to be judged for their participation in the monarchist rebellion, the political authorities advised the judges to avoid 'possible misfortunes for the *indígenas* taken prisoner', recommending penalties like enlistment in the army, whose end was instruction rather than punishment; 'but not so for those who ganged up, nor for the other *caudillos*, all of whom must be judged and sentenced in accordance with the law as an example to all who seek to emulate them'.³⁶ With the same logic prefect Domingo Tristán had sought the intercession of the priest Manuel Navarro 'to use shrewdness to rid the headmen of these errant *indígenas* of the delusion from which they suffer and so that they see the cautious way of thinking and turn over the foreign *caudillos* who seduced them in the devil's stead'.³⁷

The claim used by the mayor of Ccarhuaurán, of having been 'victims of seduction', thus proved compatible with the logic and rhetoric of the government itself. Without making too great a leap in time or interpretation, I believe that this was the same attitude that the peasants of Uchuraccay adopted when summoned by Vargas Llosa to reveal the details regarding the journalists' murder in 1983: they reiterated their incapacity to understand and consistently claimed, 'we do not know any more', 'we are ignorant'.³⁸

In the course of the 1830s, however, the very petitioners who in 1831 had so forcefully denied their association with the term 'Iquichano' would shift their strategy. This came as a result of

³⁶ ADAY, JPI, CC, leg. 30, cuad. 596, fo. 37^v, Francisco Javier Mariátegui, minister of government, to the prefect of Ayacucho, 27 Nov. 1827.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, prefect Domingo Tristán to Manuel Navarro, Huanta, 26 Dec. 1827.

³⁸ Unpublished transcripts of recordings of Vargas Llosa's interrogation of the *comuneros* in Uchuraccay in 1983. In a similar way, Russian peasants claimed devotion to the tsar, and conveyed *naïveté* before the authorities while trying to obtain further benefits from the laws regarding the abolition of servitude in mid-nineteenth-century Russia. See Daniel Field, *Rebels in the Name of the Tsar* (Boston, 1976).

their involvement in the wars waged among the different political factions governing and aspiring to govern Peru during that decade. The successful military support they offered, first to President Orbegoso (1833–4), and then to General Santa Cruz, chief of the Peruvian–Bolivian Confederation (1836–9), made them worthy of recognition and praise from these governments, which, interestingly, happened to embrace liberal programmes.³⁹ These governments, and their generals, engulfed in constant battles against the ever-conspiring General Agustín Gamarra, had actively campaigned in Ayacucho to persuade the once scorned Huanta peasants and their guerrilla leaders to take their side. Having succeeded, the generals publicly decorated the peasants, referring to them as ‘brave Iquichanos’; they also granted them tributary exemptions. Henceforth, and borrowing the very language that the government used to address them, the peasants would claim that they had ‘served the *patria*’ and ‘defended the nation’, just as the patriotic peasants had done during the independence wars. As a result of this new situation, they would not only come to identify themselves as ‘Iquichanos’, but also gain a certain pride concerning the name they had once utterly rejected.⁴⁰

In sum, if at first the inhabitants of these nine villages aimed at conveying the image of ‘poor deceived *indigenas*’ in the hope of minimizing possible penal sanctions and, especially, to avoid paying tribute, with time they would learn to profit from the fear which the population felt towards them after the 1826–8 rebellion, as well as from their new prestige as courageous fighters. They would also exploit this fear to protect themselves from the misfortunes brought about by the *caudillista* wars, which

³⁹ When I say that Orbegoso and Santa Cruz embraced liberal programmes I mean that they supported a policy of free trade, rather than protectionism, for Peru and, at the social level, they were more inclined than their opponents (Cuzco-born Agustín Gamarra, and Lima-born Felipe Salaverry) to establish effective alliances with popular sectors. For background on the economic aspects behind the 1830s political struggles, see Paul Gootenberg, *Tejidos, harinas, corazones y mentes: el imperialismo de libre comercio en el Perú* (Lima, 1989). For an analysis of the Peruvian–Bolivian Confederation and its historical significance, see Cecilia Méndez G., ‘*Incas sí, Indios no*: Notes on Peruvian Creole Nationalism and its Contemporary Crisis’, *Jl Latin Amer. Studies*, xxviii (1996).

⁴⁰ For a detailed presentation and analysis of these episodes, see Cecilia Méndez G., ‘*Pactos sin tributo: caudillos y campesinos en el nacimiento de la República, Ayacucho, 1828–1850*’, in Rossana Barragán, Dora Cajías and Seemin Qayum (eds.), *El Siglo XIX, Bolivia y América Latina* (La Paz, 1997), esp. 538–9.

intensified in the region after the defeat of the Peruvian–Bolivian Confederation that they had supported. These considerations inform my observation of the evolution that one of the nine villages of this story, Secce, underwent during the years that followed the fall of the Confederation.

III

THE BIRTH OF IQUICHA

The inhabitants of Secce had been paying the tribute, although irregularly, until 1839, the year in which the Confederation was defeated, when they stopped doing so:

there are [in Secce] very few people because they almost finished with it in the revolution [the Confederation War] and there are no more than four or five people, and more than fifteen men are dead, and moreover the wretched people [*gentalla*] of this place are entirely ruined and some are about to leave for other lands because they are very poor.⁴¹

With these words the Indian mayor of Secce, Francisco Quispe, replied to the sub-prefect of Huanta in September 1841, when summoned to explain why the villagers of his hamlet refused to pay the tribute. The following year, commissioned by the sub-prefect in Secce, Anselmo Cordero and Juan Maldonado Alvarado, respectively governor and priest of Tambo, could corroborate the facts described by Quispe. Upon their arrival in the town, they found only the new mayor, Bernardo Lapa,

who, apprised of the interrogation to which he was being subjected, replied that the rest of the Indians were not in this hamlet [*estancia*] but in Pante, Marayniyoc and other places, and that even now they are gathering at the mayor's urging, and making their homes, that they are not paying their tributes because they are still recovering from their past losses, that they previously belonged to this district [Tambo], and that due to the recent revolutions, the *headmen* [*mandones*] of that time had added them to Yquicha . . . and that so long as those of Yquicha begin to pay, so will they.⁴²

What these eloquent testimonies seem to be unveiling is nothing less than the emergence of the would-be district of Iquicha. Those who fled from Secce (and eventually other towns) went on to colonize what was, until then, a most inconspicuous area, and,

⁴¹ AGN, PL 27–51, 1847, fo. 10^r, Francisco Quispe, mayor of Secce, to Juan Francisco Arias, sub-prefect of Huanta, 20 Sept. 1841.

⁴² *Ibid.*, fo. 4, Anselmo Cordero, governor of Tambo, and Juan Maldonado y Alvarado, to Juan Francisco Arias, sub-prefect of Huanta, Tambo, 23 Feb. 1842 (my emphasis).

sheltered by a new denomination — ‘Iquichanos’ — sought to protect themselves from the demands made by the *caudillo* wars, the local priests and the burdens of the tribute which they were supposed to pay in Tambo. They refused to comply with both civilian and religious authorities in Tambo, and instead:

the dwellers of that hamlet [Secce] called themselves Yquichanos, and with this excuse they refrained from paying this district [Tambo], and even ceased to come to mass as indeed they have done . . . For I say those of Secca [sic] never come to hear mass, nor do they pay the obligations which they owe for their unctions, marriages and funerals, and I do not know where they take them to but I assume that it is to Yquicha.⁴³

The authorities were aware of the repercussions which could result from the movements undertaken by the villagers of Secce, as well as of the refusal of this and other villages to register themselves in their original districts. In April 1842, the sub-prefect of Huanta claimed that in order to get them to pay the tribute, ‘it was first necessary to reconquer, by reason or force, the *estancia* of Secce, as those of Yquicha have extended their conquest that far’.⁴⁴ The reality, however, was probably the reverse of this. I suspect that it was the inhabitants of the various villages and hamlets of the Huanta highlands who, through progressive displacements undertaken during the upheavals of the *caudillo* wars, began to ‘conquer’ a spot hitherto omitted from the maps, until they transformed it into the village and district of Iquicha.⁴⁵

Whatever the name ‘Iquicha’ stood for before those events (and, generally, prior to the republican era), or whether it even existed, we can only speculate. Was it an itinerant community

⁴³ *Ibid.*, fo. 8, Anselmo Cordero, governor of Tambo, to Juan Francisco Arias, sub-prefect of Huanta, Tambo, 16 Aug. 1841 (my emphasis).

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, fo. 12^r, Anselmo Cordero, governor of Tambo, to Juan Francisco Arias, sub-prefect of Huanta, Tambo, 12 Apr. 1841.

⁴⁵ I render as ‘town’ or ‘village’ what appears in the sources as *pueblo*, and as ‘hamlet’ what the sources name *aldea*, *caserío* or *estancia* — although, according to the context, I may translate *estancia* or *caserío* as ‘cattle ranch’. I am, however, aware that settlement categorization in the Andes was quite complex at this time; the same Spanish word could stand for quite different things, and usage varied by region. Although geographers and state officials sought to homogenize the nomenclature of settlements, they never found a Spanish equivalent for Quechua terms such as *ayllu* (which was normally left untranslated). *Ayllu* reflected a form of political organization and kinship peculiar to the Andes, and could hardly be reduced to the idea of a nucleated settlement (a village in the European sense). Also, a *pueblo* could be created by decree, regardless of its actual demographic standing or size. For a particularly enlightening source on these issues, see Mariano Felipe Paz Soldán, *Diccionario geográfico y estadístico del Perú* (Lima, 1877), esp. introduction.

(*ayllu*) of peasant herders which managed to escape written records? The name for a hillside? A pasture area, a rivulet? Did it stem from the Aymara word *iki*, as some suggest? All this is likely — especially since Aymara was spoken prior to Quechua, and alongside it, in many areas of the southern Andes (particularly in the highest elevations) before the Spanish invasion.⁴⁶ The fact is that after two decades of eventful republican rule, this name had come to signify something greater and more visible than anything it could thus far have been: a core settlement around which groups of peoples, hitherto unrelated to this name or place, would establish and seek to identify themselves.

The identity of Iquicha (and the Iquichanos) remained variable, however. As other witnesses went on declaring, with great eloquence, of the villagers of Secce: ‘that sometimes they call themselves Yquichanos, and some other times [they say] that they belong to the town of Huamanguilla, where they go to name their authorities, and present their offerings, for they say that they eat in the lands of Huamanguilla’.⁴⁷ But this variability — and herein lies the richness of this testimony — seems to have been more than just a manipulative strategy to rid themselves of fiscal burdens; it seems as well to have been an expression of actual, very mobile, patterns of settlement, access to resources and forms of local government among the various communities in Huanta. For those of Secce may, in fact, have ‘eaten’ (that is, farmed or owned lands) and performed ritual activity in Huamanguilla (situated in the southernmost corner of the province of Huanta, on the outskirts of the city Ayacucho), as the witness states.⁴⁸ But this did not prevent them from establishing other, more or less permanent settlements in the less accessible north-eastern slopes of the

⁴⁶ Bruce Mannheim, *The Language of the Inka since the European Invasion* (Austin, 1991), ch. 2.

⁴⁷ AGN, PL, 27–51, 1847, fo. 24^v, declarations of José Manuel Cárdenas, farmer [*labrador*] from Vicos, Tambo, 12 May 1843.

⁴⁸ The expression ‘present their offerings in Huamanguilla’ (‘llevando sus obsequios’) may simply be alluding to the rituals that usually accompanied and accompany agricultural life in the Andes, but it could more audaciously be interpreted as referring to practices that were meant to delimit territorial boundaries. Insofar as Andean communities’ patterns of settlement followed a ‘non-contiguous’ territorial logic, it is understandable that boundaries should need to be constantly ‘re-enacted’. As Deborah Poole puts it: ‘[in the Andes] territory is an actively constructed concept, whose boundaries must be constantly recreated through daily exchanges of offerings and formalized salutation between neighbors’. Deborah Poole, ‘Landscapes of Power in a Cattle-Rustling Culture of Southern Andean Peru’, *Dialectical Anthropology*, xii (1988), 384.

'jungle's mountain-ridge', an area which — they would (sometimes) claim — formed part of 'Iquicha', and where by the early 1840s they would start building a chapel. 'Those of Secc-secc', claimed the farmer José Manuel Cárdenas, 'are building themselves a chapel in Pantecc [located in the 'jungle's mountain-ridge'] so that the priest of Yquicha can go in due time for their festivities, and for this reason they no longer come to this town [Tambo]'.⁴⁹

Hence, along with the itinerancy that characterized the Secce villagers' *modus vivendi* — and which so exasperated the government officials trying to confine them to a single place — lay 'sedentary aspects', so to speak. In the places where they moved the villagers built chapels; and chapels are, by far, the most enduring of architectural structures in Andean villages, around which an important part of the life of a community took place. Moreover, chapels and churches were precisely what differentiated a village from other lesser types of settlement, according to the nineteenth-century geographer Mariano Felipe Paz Soldán. They were the most distinctive feature of a *pueblo*: 'In Peru one calls *pueblo* any union of houses, as long as they are close to a chapel or church, however miserable it be, and where [people] gather on Sundays for religious festivities'.⁵⁰ A church, that is, could make a 'village' of the most inconspicuous settlement. And it is precisely in this sense that the Secce villagers' migration to the rim of the forest to comply with the Catholic liturgy and build a chapel, while also claiming to belong to 'Iquicha', is significant. It means that their refusal to comply with the state's dictates at the fiscal level cannot be interpreted as an attitude of blunt confrontation with the state or the church.⁵¹ It may, moreover, mean that when they claimed to 'belong to Iquicha', the

⁴⁹ AGN, PL, 27–51, 1847, fo. 24^v, declarations of José Manuel Cárdenas, Tambo.

⁵⁰ Paz Soldán, *Diccionario geográfico y estadístico*, xv. In the early twentieth century, geographers' categorization of places was less sensitive to nuances, and was imbued with markedly fixed hierarchies in which the variable 'race' intervened (i.e. 'lesser' places were defined as 'dwellings of Indians'); see, for example, Germán Stiglich, *Diccionario geográfico del Perú* (Lima, 1922), v.

⁵¹ Although I have not been able to determine when the church of the current village of Iquicha was built, it stands in stark contrast to those of the neighbouring villages, both in style and size. It is much taller than the churches of Huaychao and Uchuraccay, which until recently formed part of haciendas, and it looks disproportionate to the small population (perhaps a sign of Iquicha's major importance in another era). It is made of stone, using construction techniques that resemble those of the Wari era (sixth to eleventh centuries of our era), but which could well have been employed a few decades ago. It differs, too, from the church of Secc, which can

Secce villagers were not necessarily deceiving the government officials. Instead, they were expressing how forceful and effective a name could be in reshaping the ties that they had established with other communities at the level of everyday practice. By claiming 'Iquicha', that is, the peasants were redefining patterns of periodic migration, and remoulding the political and administrative landscape in the highlands of Huanta. Thus, a name which rose to prominence as a result of these communities' play of confrontation and alliance with the state, ended up creating a place whose boundaries were to be continually recreated. Furthermore, given that, in the Andes, the concept of community has not necessarily been tied to the idea of a contiguous territory, but rather has coexisted with notions of non-contiguous territoriality and ever-flexible boundaries, the history of Iquicha could be but one among many untold histories of Andean 'villages' or districts which came into existence as a result of similar processes throughout the nineteenth century, and perhaps even later.⁵²

In response to this situation, the government took pains to 'reconquer' these territories. Firstly, because Secce — with its villagers constantly moving to other areas and, especially, to that which came to be known as 'Iquicha' — refused to pay tribute for many more years, setting a precedent for other towns to follow, as the prefect Francisco del Barco reported in 1848: the villagers of Palomayoc refused to pay tribute 'on the pretext of

(n. 51 cont.)

easily be identified as Spanish-style, a typical church of a late eighteenth-century *reducción*. A great part of the church of Iquicha has been burnt (as has that at Uchuraccay) as a consequence of the recent war. Archaeological work in this area could be invaluable in shedding light to complement my findings (and non-findings).

⁵² Andean 'non-contiguous' patterns of territoriality were first studied by John Murra in the 1960s and 1970s, on the basis of Spanish sources of the sixteenth century, mainly *visitas*. Subsequently, other anthropologists and historians have either confirmed or expanded Murra's models on the basis of archival evidence and fieldwork. The survival of such patterns of settlement is apparent in many regions of the Andes throughout the centuries, but few investigators have traced their evolution with reference to the expansion of the state during the republican period. On how pre-Hispanic notions of territoriality and community survived and/or adapted to Spanish institutions, see: Karen Spalding, *Huarochari: An Andean Society under Inca and Spanish Rule* (Stanford, 1984); Carlos Sempat Assadourian, *Transiciones hacia el sistema colonial andino* (Lima, 1994); Luis Miguel Glave, 'Sociedad, poder y organización andinas: el sur peruano hacia el siglo XVII', in Flores Galindo (ed.), *Comunidades campesinas*. The notion of community as moulded by the community's interaction with the state is discussed by Deborah Poole, 'Qorilazos, abigeos y comunidades', *ibid.*; Alejandro Diez Hurtado, *Comunes y haciendas: comunalización en la sierra de Piura (siglos XVIII al XX)* (Cuzco, 1998).

it [Palomayoc] being in the district of Yquicha'.⁵³ But secondly, and most importantly, because it was the government itself that acknowledged the villagers' 'conquests'. This time, however, it was not by means of symbols, ritual decorations, or promises of tributary exemptions, but rather through more worldly and permanent measures: the delimitation of the new political boundaries.

In the 1830s the authorities referred to the 'district of Iquicha', even though it did not officially exist. 'Iquicha' was then, as already mentioned, another name to designate the towns constituting the district of Ccarhuahurán. In 1849, a guidebook lists the towns of Ccarhuauarán and Ayahuanco as 'capitals of the famous district of Iquicha', showing the predominance that the name had acquired by then as a regional denomination.⁵⁴ Sounder evidence of the existence of both a village and a district called 'Iquicha' is, however, found only from the second half of the nineteenth century, coinciding, significantly, with a period of consolidation of state institutions in Peru. In 1853, a parish census for Ayacucho lists Iquicha as one of the six *doctrinas* (ecclesiastical districts) making up the Huanta province.⁵⁵ By the mid-1850s a court of the peace was firmly established in the 'district of Iquicha', and in 1877 the historian and geographer Mariano Felipe Paz Soldán estimated a population of 3,112 inhabitants for the same district, 308 of them corresponding to the *pueblo* of Iquicha, capital of the district.⁵⁶ A number of 'verbal hearings' (*juicios verbales*) decided in the 'court of the peace of Iquicha' from 1855 to 1915, whose records are still kept in Huanta, attest to the fact that these administrative units were in operation. Written documentary evidence blends well with the substance of local traditions in suggesting that the legendary muleteer and guerrilla, the self-proclaimed 'General-in-chief of the Royal Armies of Peru', Antonio Navala Huachaca, might well have ended his days

⁵³ Centro de Estudios Histórico Militares del Perú, Lima, Archivo Histórico Militar, leg. 8, doc. 27, 1848, prefect of Ayacucho to the ministry of government, 5 Aug. 1848.

⁵⁴ *Guía Política, Eclesiástica y Militar del Perú de 1849*, cited in Cavero, *Monografía*, i, 70.

⁵⁵ *El Comercio*, 12 July 1853. The census shows the following information: 'Born: 89 men, 101 women. Married: 30. Died: 60 men, and 87 women'.

⁵⁶ Paz Soldán, *Diccionario geográfico*, 465. Cavero states that the district of Iquicha was created by a law of 2 Jan. 1857 and subsisted in this capacity in the political demarcations of 1867: Cavero, *Monografía*, i, 178. The first map in which I have located a place called 'Iquicha' appears in Mariano Felipe Paz Soldán, *Atlas geográfico del Perú* (Paris, 1865).

occupying the office of justice of the peace in Iquicha, one of the most coveted positions in local politics in any region.⁵⁷

In the second decade of the twentieth century one loses track of the 'district of Iquicha', as the whole area had fallen under a different administration by 1915.⁵⁸ It seems that the only Iquichano entity that survived the subsequent political demarcations was village-based, although it would take specific research into Iquicha through the twentieth century to prove this assertion. Whatever the case, the name 'Iquichano' had acquired such a powerful resonance among local writers, travellers and authorities since the end of the monarchist uprising in the late 1820s that the reach of the 'Iquichano' identity (and the boundaries of 'Iquichano territory') would not cease to be exaggerated in written accounts. In 1838, a government official referred to the territory controlled by Antonio Huachaca as the '*republiqueta* ['statelet', derogatorily diminutive for 'republic'] of Iquicha'.⁵⁹ In the early 1850s, upon his arrival in Ayacucho, the English traveller Clements R. Markham expressed great curiosity 'to see the Iquichano Indians'. His description of the area which lay 'to the eastward [of the village of Huanta]' as 'the wild country of the Iquichanos' is highly telling of the reputation that the area and its people had by then attained.⁶⁰ Such allusions would, in turn, powerfully affect the peasants' self-perception.

Today, there is no district of Iquicha in the province of Huanta.

⁵⁷ The verbal hearing records relating to Iquicha are in the manuscript collection of Leoncio Cárdenas in Huanta, and remain unclassified. I thank Mr Cárdenas for allowing me access to these sources, and Ponciano del Pino for telling me about them. The evidence that Huachaca was named 'justice of the peace' in 1837 comes from a document dated that same year: ADAY, JPI, CC, leg. 44, cuad. 874, 1838, leg., fo. 1^v. Although according to the same source Huachaca was 'removed from office' shortly after, other evidence furnished in the same dossier suggests that he continued to exercise that position, allegedly 'illegitimately'. That Huachaca died as a justice of the peace cannot be confirmed but is strongly suggested by oral tradition, and by other indirect evidence.

⁵⁸ Uchuraccay is said to belong to the 'district of Cercado' in the 'Querrela por Robo de ganado en campo a Abierto', Huanta, 1915: Notaría Cárdenas, Huanta, unclassified. In 1922 Germán Stiglich lists Iquiche (*sic*) as a settlement ('*Pobl.*' — i.e., presumably, *poblado*) in the province of Huanta, with 422 inhabitants, but mentions no district with such a name: Stiglich, *Diccionario geográfico*, 563.

⁵⁹ ADAY, JPI, CC, leg. 44, cuad. 874, 1838, fo. 2^v. 'Proceso criminal que se sigue de oficio contra el Juez de Paz del Distrito de Carhuahurán don Antonio Abad Huachaca [*sic*] por los excesos [*sic*] y abusos que comete con los pobladores'.

⁶⁰ *Markham in Peru: The Travels of Clements R. Markham, 1852–1853*, ed. Peter Blanchard (Austin, 1991), 70. I thank Natalia Majluf for calling my attention to this source.

And the district of (San José de) Secce, located within the area that the authorities of the nineteenth century referred to as 'Iquicha', is now called (San José de) Santillana: a Quechua name having been (significantly) replaced by a Spanish one. Ccarhuahurán and Iquicha are, in turn, two clearly differentiated villages, and share no apparent boundaries. While the administrative units of Huanta remain in constant flux, and the presence of the government is more visible than ever since the defeat of the Shining Path in 1992, the tendency in the most recent political demarcations is, clearly, towards fragmentation and even overlapping local authority. As of today, however, a self-acknowledged 'Iquichano identity' remains elusive (if it exists at all) anywhere beyond the level of the village of Iquicha. The inhabitants of this hamlet achieved recognition as a 'peasant community' as late as 1991, in the midst, and apropos, of the civil war that was then devastating Peru.⁶¹ At that point, Uchuraccay was still struggling for this recognition.

IV

UCHURACCAY REVISITED

Iquichanos? Yes, then we joined with them.⁶²

If the members of the Uchuraccay commission were to go back to Uchuraccay now, they would probably leave with a very different impression. The substance of any report they would write would probably be just as different. The town has been relocated to a steep incline high above the remains of the old town or *casa hacienda* where the journalists' murder is said to have occurred. Official government slogans have replaced the graffiti of the Shining Path on the rugged mountains that surround the town; billboards announcing government projects are posted on the roads that lead to it. White houses of cement and brick with tile roofs have replaced the old huts of stones and clay with roofs of *ichu*.⁶³ Unlike the old houses, dispersed over the landscape, the modern ones are concentrated — mimicking urban patterns of settlement — around a central square where, every morning, the

⁶¹ *Directorio de comunidades campesinas* (Lima, 1991), 195: resolution no. 019-91-GRLW/SRAS-DRT, 13 June 1991.

⁶² President of the peasant community of Uchuraccay, in conversation with the author, Mar. 1997.

⁶³ A dry plant that grows in the *puna*; it is a good cattle food and has a variety of domestic uses besides roof-making.

Peruvian flag is raised while the villagers in columns honour the country's foremost national symbol. A 'highway' (or *carretera afirmada*, as one calls roads in Peru) now extends to the town by way of Tambo. Until three days before my arrival in the town, on the afternoon of 23 March 1997, a military garrison was still quartered in Uchuraccay to prevent attacks by the Shining Path which, though much weakened, was still a threat.⁶⁴ Thus, at least two of the pleas that the Uchuraccay *comuneros* made to the Vargas Llosa Commission in 1983 have, seemingly, been acknowledged. 'We want a highway', they had said then; 'we need arms'; 'let the *sinchis* [soldiers] come each week'; 'we want schools'.⁶⁵

Only a few years ago, however, not a soul could be seen either in Uchuraccay or many of the surrounding *puna* communities. In the 1980s the villagers had fled en masse to the cities or lower villages after having experienced the worst of the war, leaving behind burnt houses and churches, and crosses to mark the place of the dead. In 1991, some were living in Lima and working as farmers and brickmakers in the area of Huachipa. If you asked them about their towns they would reply, 'no one is there . . . it's all desert'.⁶⁶ But the capture in 1992 of Abimael Guzmán, the main leader of the Shining Path, and the consequent nationwide dismantling of the terrorist movement, brought about hopes for these displaced populations ('*los desplazados*'). Around 1993 they began to go home in a process not yet concluded.⁶⁷

They do so with the support of the government. They are also backed by a growing number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and by students and professors from the Universidad de

⁶⁴ I thank the four people from the Instituto para el Desarrollo y la Paz en Ayacucho (IPAZ) and the Universidad Nacional de San Cristóbal de Huamanga who accompanied me to Uchuraccay, and the three *ronderos* of Cunya who escorted us on our way from Cunya to Uchuraccay. I am grateful to José Coronel and Jeffrey Gamarra, who facilitated my contact with the *comuneros* during my successive trips to Huanta and to René Palomino for being my guide and interpreter in the *punas* in 1998.

⁶⁵ Unpublished transcripts of recordings of Vargas Llosa's interrogation of the *comuneros* in Uchuraccay in 1983.

⁶⁶ 'Está todo desierto'. Author's conversations with *comuneros* of Iquicha living as 'war refugees' in Huachipa, c.1992. I thank Jaime Antezana for introducing me to them.

⁶⁷ For an analysis of this process, see Carlos Iván Degregori et al., *Las rondas campesinas y la derrota de Sendero Luminoso* (Lima, 1996); Jeffrey Gamarra, 'Lo Público y lo privado en tres comunidades desplazadas', *Afanes, búsqueda desde Huamanga*, i (1996); Ponciano del Pino, 'Ayacucho de los Noventa: cambios culturales y nuevos actores', *ibid.* For a recent source in English, see Steve Stern (ed.), *Shining and Other Paths: War and Society in Peru, 1980-1995* (Durham, NC, 1998).

San Cristóbal de Huamanga, in the form of projects that range from facilitating credit for animals and seeds to promoting and restoring the infrastructure of the towns. Many villagers bring back urban ways and dress, new expectations, and even new religions (as the evangelical churches take over the spiritual terrain abandoned by Catholicism). The war experience has engendered, as well, new forms of communal organization. Among other things, it is now a civic duty and a source of pride to be armed: the peasants are organized in *rondas* (patrols, or 'self-defence committees'), with which they expect to repel further attacks on their towns. In this regard, the communities that fled have learnt from those that remained and defeated the Shining Path (with no little loss of life) precisely by means of these organizations. Agriculture is in full swing again. In Cunya, a 'returning' community bordering Uchuraccay, seventeen varieties of potato are cultivated in what can be considered some of the harshest agricultural land on earth, 3,800 metres above sea level; the land lay abandoned just three years earlier.⁶⁸

In the early 1990s it would have seemed more sensible — given those *punas* sown with crosses and burnt houses — to predict the end of the countryside. Yet rather than waning, the number of peasant communities is increasing. Former hamlets (*pagos*, or *anexos*) are now peasant communities in search of official recognition, challenging all theories that predicted the end of the peasantry and stubbornly reversing the allegedly 'inevitable' trends of history. The internal war uprooted more than half a million people, of whom 16 per cent had returned to their towns by mid-1997.⁶⁹ The process of return shows increasing numbers by the year.⁷⁰

Where are the 'Iquichanos' in all this? In Ayacucho city they will tell you that the Iquichanos are 'in the *punas* of Huanta'. But

⁶⁸ Author's conversations with residents of Cunya, 24 Mar. 1997.

⁶⁹ *El Domingo*, Sunday supplement of *La República* (Lima), 24 Aug. 1997, editorial.

⁷⁰ According to the government-sponsored agency Programa de Apoyo al Repoblamiento (PAR), 1,596 families returned to their homes in 1995; according to IPAZ, by August 1995 the number had exceeded 2,000, which involves some 10,000 people and 65 communities, to consider only four districts of the province of Huanta. José Coronel, 'Violencia política y respuestas campesinas en Huanta', in Degregori et al., *Las rondas campesinas*, 108. A more recent source states that 15,612 Peruvians uprooted by the war had returned to their towns in the departments of Ayacucho, Junín, Huancavelica and Apurímac since 1994, as part of PAR-sponsored programmes. *La República*, 28 Apr. 1999, statements by Luisa María Cuculiza, ministry of promotion of women and human development.

in Huanta you will find no Iquichanos, except for those who are resettling the hamlet of Iquicha, two hours' walking distance (at a villager's pace; four hours' at my own) from Uchuraccay. When, during my March 1997 visit to Uchuraccay, I told the people bits of their nineteenth-century history, parts of which I have summed up in this essay, and mentioned the name 'Iquichanos', the president of the community, alluding to more contemporary events, replied: 'Yes, then we joined with *them*' — his finger pointing up the road that leads to the hamlet of Iquicha. It is clear to me that these communities, while sharing very similar ways, dresses, physiognomy, and speaking the same variety of Quechua, do not necessarily identify with the label of 'Iquichanos' that anthropologists, authorities and intellectuals have persistently attributed to them. Today, as in the past, they may use it sometimes. For instance, the name 'Iquichanos' regained resonance a few years after the 1983 Uchuraccay massacre, when the government started channelling benefits to what it called (perhaps borrowing the language of the *Comisión Investigadora*) 'Iquichano towns'. Then communities such as Callampa, Parccora, Ccarasencca and Orccohuasi, whose inhabitants were living in Lima and other places as war refugees, called themselves 'Iquichanos',⁷¹ just as had happened some 160 years before with a number of other communities. But now that the government's benefits are seemingly directed community by community, they have returned to calling themselves by their community name alone, as they usually do and have most often done. This should not be surprising. There is no reason to expect people in the Huanta highlands to define themselves according to *one* identity when nobody else does. It is understandable that, in the context of extreme material hardship and limited choices such as exists in the Huanta *pumas*, people should resort to using as many of the resources at their disposal as possible, including the adoption of an ambiguous or shifting language, in order to widen the scope of their choices.⁷² No identity problem or immanent contradiction is necessarily posed here, save for an observer who has a set notion of what

⁷¹ I owe this information to Jaime Antezana: telephone conversation with author, Jan. 1997.

⁷² The portrait of Bahian people in Brazil, as described by Leni M. Silverstein in 'The Celebration of Our Lord of the Good End: Changing State, Church and Afro-Brazilian Relations in Bahia', in David J. Hess and Roberto A. Damatta (eds.), *The Brazilian Puzzle* (New York, 1995), esp. 138, furnishes a useful parallel for what I

the observed ought to be. However, it would not be surprising if the Huanta *comuneros* — urged to define themselves in terms of only one collective identity — chose to identify themselves as Peruvians. For twelve years of war (and seven of ‘armed peace’) have brought to these highlands more than tens of thousands of deaths; they have also brought an increasing awareness amongst these populations of having created stronger bonds with the state and with the nation, as is clear in their demands for highways, health and education (that is, for their rights as citizens), and, moreover, an increase in their willingness to demonstrate that they are entitled to this citizenship by having defeated what was then the nation’s most fearsome enemy, the Shining Path. This feat, which not even the army could boast, was the special accomplishment of peasants belonging to the communities that never fled, and that stood up to *Sendero* throughout the war. Not only did these peasant patrollers (*ronderos*) proudly parade, their rifles over their elbows, in the Independence Day celebrations that took place in the capital of the republic in 1995; they even volunteered to join the army in Peru’s conflict with Ecuador.⁷³ Troubling as they may appear, these facts clearly indicate the extent to which a section of Peruvians, for a long time racially discriminated against and marginalized as ‘Indians’, is eager to show not only that they belong to the very Peru that has so often turned its back on them, but that they are, moreover, its paramount defenders.

Their attitude cannot but evoke General José de San Martín’s famous 1821 ‘decree’ which established that all Indians should be called ‘Peruvians’.⁷⁴ The change of terminology was, in fact, effected, to judge by official documents, war communiqués and the patriotic poetry dating from that era. But, if anything, this

(n. 72 cont.)

identify here. Moreover, anthropological fieldwork, combined with archival work, by Africanist scholars sheds particularly useful light in understanding the elusiveness of so-called ‘ethnic’ identities: see, for example, Terence Ranger, ‘The Invention of Tradition in Colonial Africa’, in Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds.), *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge, 1983), esp. 247–8, 260; Eric Worby, ‘Maps, Names and Ethnic Games: The Epistemology and Iconography of Colonial Power in Northwestern Zimbabwe’, *Jl Southern African Studies*, xx (1994). After years spent trying to locate this ‘ethnic group’ in actuality and in colonial maps, Worby finds only unruly frontiers, flexible identities, and especially, the reluctance of people to respond to the names that had been attached to them by others.

⁷³ Del Pino, ‘Ayacucho de los Noventa’, 28.

⁷⁴ This ‘decree’ was actually a clause within a decree which abolished Indian tribute, and which was issued by San Martín the same year he proclaimed Peruvian

change only proved the prevalence of the exclusionist conceptions that it sought to attack. For 'Peruvian' became a substitute for 'Indian', a name given to Indians *alone*, not a name *also* given to Indians. With time, '*indigena*' proved to be a more enduring substitute for 'Indian', although both were commonly used as synonyms until comparatively recently, when they were replaced by 'peasant', in accordance with the spirit of agrarian vindication of the Velasco revolution (1968–75). As of today, 'peasant' ('*campesino*') remains the most widespread, and least derogatory, appellation for Andean rural peoples in Peru, while 'Indian' sounds increasingly anachronistic, and is unlikely to be politically redeemed, despite recent worldwide ethnically oriented political trends, and despite similarly oriented political developments in Peru's Andean neighbours. San Martín's celebrated 'decree' has probably never been so close to actual linguistic practice as it is in Peru today.

V

EPILOGUE

The concept of 'ethnic group' . . . dissolves if we define our terms exactly.⁷⁵

History is not an ancestral memory nor a collective tradition. It is what the people learned from the priests, school teachers, authors of history books, and compilers of articles, and from TV programmes.⁷⁶

Must we then conclude from all the above that what has been conceived of as a centuries-old 'ethnic identity' was rather a republican-born, variable, politically convenient and strategic way of using a name? In a certain way, yes. And by saying so, I do not mean to deny the existence of common cultural traits and bonds (old and new) among the villagers in the highlands of Huanta. Yet these cultural elements and practices did not seem

(*n.* 74 *cont.*)

Independence: 'From now on the aborigines should not be called *Indians* or *Natives*; they are children and citizens of Peru, and as Peruvians they should be known. Given in Lima, on 18 August, 1821, José de San Martín, and Juan García del Río'. *Colección documental de la Independencia del Perú*, tom. xiii, vol. 1, ed. José la Puente Candamo, 350 (emphasis as in the original).

⁷⁵ Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, trans. Ephraim Fischhoff et al., 2 vols. (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1978), i, 395.

⁷⁶ Eric Hobsbawm, lecture delivered at the Central European University, Budapest, publ in *El Viejo Topo*, no. 72, Feb. 1994, 80; retranslated from the Spanish.

to have either sustained or propelled a sense of 'group cohesiveness', as is commonly asserted. When this sense of identity did take shape, it was transiently prompted by political events, and required the intervention of non-villagers: *caudillos*, tax collectors and *hacendados* in the nineteenth century; NGOs, the government, intellectuals and other political actors in the twentieth. In other words, whenever it was self-assumed, the identity of the Huanta *comuneros* as Iquichanos, rather than acknowledging anything cultural, conveyed something political; more than anything ancestral, it expressed something immediate. This was the case in the early nineteenth century as it is in the present.

In an essay on 'ethnic groups' that remarkably anticipates much of today's deconstructionist approaches (inspired by Anderson) towards 'ethnic' and national identities, Max Weber postulated, almost a century ago, that ethnic membership was, in the main, a 'presumed identity'.⁷⁷ Weber's effort to come up with a serious definition of 'ethnic group' clashed with the realization that the political sphere played a crucial role in defining the 'ethnic group's' identity. The more he attempted to establish its usefulness, the more sceptical he grew about the analytical value of the term. 'Ethnic group' is a concept that 'dissolves if we define our terms exactly', he would conclude.⁷⁸ This is the closest a theoretical approach has come to capturing my own uneasiness with the term 'ethnic group' while attempting to render intelligible the history of the Iquichanos.

On several occasions when I presented publicly the results of my work, I encountered people who urged me (I am sure with the best of the intentions) to go on digging through sources in search of the 'true history' of the Iquichanos (possibly meaning 'their' history, their 'ethnic' history, not 'my' reading of it), in order to find that part of the tale that the people and the sources have 'hidden' from me. Admittedly, I might have overlooked a boundary, a record, a spot on the map; I might have needed to learn Quechua, to live among, and not just visit, the villagers, and to painstakingly record their oral traditions. And yet, had I done this with the utmost accuracy, could I then claim to have

⁷⁷ Weber, *Economy and Society*, i, 389. An article which particularly caught my attention for its use of Weber's insights on ethnicity, and which was a motivation in my own work, is Danielle Juteau, 'Theorising Ethnicity and Ethnic Communalisations at the Margins: From Quebec to the World System', *Nations and Nationalism*, ii (1996).

⁷⁸ Weber, *Economy and Society*, i, 395.

reconstructed, or to be able to reconstruct, the 'real' Iquichano history? Would that story be 'truer' than the one told here? Would it be more 'authentic' or 'legitimate'? The answer, obviously enough, is no. Not because I think such a task to be in vain (to date, no ethnography has been written of these peoples, something which could have been immensely helpful in my own work).⁷⁹ Yet not even the most conscientious ethnographer can claim to convey an 'insider's' perspective — especially when we clash more and more often with native people's 'oral traditions' that symptomatically resemble stories spread by a priest in the colonial era, or by a schoolteacher in the republic, and even by our own predecessors in the field.⁸⁰ Moreover, the rapidity with which written knowledge filters through predominantly oral societies can hardly be exaggerated, as I was able to confirm not only in collating nineteenth-century government and travellers' documents with those produced by the peasants' spokespersons but also, most amazingly, in relation to my own scholarly work.⁸¹ In one of my recent visits to the *punas* of Huanta, in September 1998, I engaged in a casual conversation with the mayor of the peasant community of Ccarhuaurán, who happened to be writing a history of his village; he mentioned to me a number of historical details that closely matched my own archival findings. I later learnt that, among other sources, he had access to my very first piece on the 'Iquichano rebellion', published in 1991, which a very *Huantino* colleague of mine had provided him. Inadvertently, my own interpretation of the 'Iquichano rebellion' — parts of which I no longer subscribe to — had come to form part of the Ccarhuaurán villagers' historical memory that anthropologists,

⁷⁹ Unlike the central and southern provinces of the department of Ayacucho, which have been object of detailed ethnography, the northern provinces of La Mar and Huanta have remained mostly unexamined by modern anthropologists. To date (and to my mind), the richest 'ethnographic' data on Huanta still stems from the monographs produced by local writers during the 1950s, esp. Caverio, *Monografía*, vol. ii.

⁸⁰ Recent scholarship in Peru has called attention to the fact that myths usually considered an expression of a certain 'non-Western' or 'Andean' worldview, such as the myth of Inkarrí, originated in sermons used during the Christian evangelization of the Andean peoples. See Juan Carlos Estenssoro, 'Descubriendo los poderes de la palabra', in Gabriela Ramos (ed.), *La Venida del reino: religion, evangelización y cultura en América, siglos XVI-XX* (Lima, 1994); Juan Carlos Estenssoro, 'Les Pouvoirs de la parole, la prédication au Pérou: De l'évangélisation à l'utopie', *Annales E.S.C.*, li (1996); G. Ramos, 'Política eclesiástica y extirpación de idolatría: discursos y silencios en torno al Taki Onqoy', *Revista andina*, xix (1992).

⁸¹ Méndez, 'Los campesinos, la independencia y la iniciación de la república'.

journalists or government agents may eventually portray as the villagers' ancestral oral traditions or 'inner' historical views!

Some time before the above conversation with the mayor of Ccarhuaurán took place, I had already resolved not to think in terms of what the sources and the people were 'hiding' from me, but rather what they revealed. And among the most significant things the sources, in particular, have revealed are silences: a silence of colonial records regarding an 'Iquichano' entity, that contrasted with an unexpectedly loquacious early republican period on the same subject. I say unexpected because, as noted at the outset, identities which, like the Iquichano, have been labelled 'ethnic' are commonly associated in the Andes with a distant period, be it Inca, pre-Inca, conquest or early colonial, and are mostly traced through colonial sources.⁸² Some paradigms are clearly not working here, and though the Iquichano case may indeed have its singularities, I think we would be wrong merely to brand it an exception.

What my study has revealed, in other words, is the significance of nineteenth-century early republican national conflicts in defining rural people's regional and political identities in Andean Peru. These identities, which surfaced alongside rural people's involvement in and perception of independence and post-independence wars, as well as early *caudillista* struggles, were to leave lasting imprints into the twentieth century. And this idea needs to be stressed insofar as even most respectable historians of nineteenth-century Peru have fallen into the clichéd assertion that peasant communities were 'naturally isolated' and remained undisturbed by the political turmoil of the *caudillo* era.⁸³

None of this is meant to deny the decisiveness of the sixteenth-century events — let alone to replace the foundational 'myth of the conquest' with a foundational 'national-period myth'. It does imply, however, that the thinking that divides the history of Peru along a sharp line between periods 'before' and 'after' the

⁸² Although this picture has been changing recently as historians (and, increasingly, anthropologists) 'rediscover' the nineteenth century, work on Andean 'ethnic groups' that incorporates this period is still rare, but in any case more abundant for other Andean countries, and notably for Bolivia. See, for example, Thierry Saignes, *Ava y Karai: ensayos sobre la Frontera Chiriguano, siglos XVI–XX* (La Paz, 1990); Thierry Saignes, *Los Andes Orientales: la historia de un olvido* (La Paz, 1985); Nathan Wachtel, *Le Retour des ancêtres: les Indiens Urus de Bolivie, XXe–XVIIe siècle: essai d'histoire régressive* (Paris, 1990).

⁸³ For example, Paul Gootenberg, 'Population and Ethnicity in Early Republican Peru: Some Revisions', *Latin Amer. Research Rev.*, xxvi (1991), 145.

European invasion has to be qualified, while new research and present events open new paths for periodization. It is not just a 'chronology' or an understanding of the past which is at stake here, but rather the way it shapes (and is shaped by) the language with which we perceive and define society and humanity in the present. For it is precisely the fixation on the European conquest as the ultimate source of historical explanations of the present that lies at the base of the binary construct which has denied historicity to Andean peoples, while conceiving of them as 'remnants', vestiges, unevolved and, ultimately, 'ethnic'.

What Vargas Llosa, undoubtedly one of the most convinced proponents of such conceptualizations, probably ignored is that his own discourse, so often self-portrayed as 'modern', rational and opposed to every form of *indigenismo* (as he defines it, a romantic view of Indians), itself constituted but a re-elaboration of the least reliable of *indigenista* interpretations of the Iquichanos, set forth by Ayacucho-born Víctor Navarro del Aguila in 1939.⁸⁴ Although the idea of the Iquichanos as the warlike heirs of the pre-Hispanic Pokras (allegedly, one of the 'tribes' that formed part of the so-called Chanka Confederation) was conceptualized earlier, during the late nineteenth century, it was Navarro who gave this idea its most elaborate form.⁸⁵

⁸⁴ For Vargas Llosa's views on *indigenismo*, see Mario Vargas Llosa, *La Utopía arcaica: José María Arguedas y las ficciones del indigenismo* (Mexico City, 1996). A widespread current of opinion that politically condemns Vargas Llosa for his anti-*indigenista* (and, I would say, anti-Indian) standpoint seems not to notice that he shares with *indigenismo* the most important of its philosophical premises: a dualistic view of society. For an example of this current of opinion, see Alberto Manguel's otherwise insightful 'The Double Man', *Times Lit. Suppl.*, 7 Aug. 1998, 7–8. For a view more akin to my own, see Marisol de la Cadena, *Indigenous Mestizos: The Politics of Race and Culture in Cuzco, Peru, 1919–1991* (Durham, NC, 2000), esp. ch. 7. Although I disagree with some of De la Cadena's broadest conceptualizations, I find her argument about the link between the *indigenistas*' and Vargas Llosa's thinking compatible with my own views.

⁸⁵ A much-quoted source is a paragraph in an essay by the Ayacuchoan physician and geographer Luis Carranza, published originally in 1883: 'All of this region was originally inhabited by the Pokras and Huamanes, tribes of the Chanka race; and perhaps the Iquichano Indians, who form a special community between Huanta and La Mar, are today's representatives of the ancient Pokras'. Luis Carranza, *La Ciencia en el Perú en el siglo XIX: selección de artículos publicados* (Lima, 1988), 267 (my emphasis). Nevertheless, what for Carranza was a possibility ('perhaps') is turned into a certainty by Navarro. Although I have found sparse allusions to 'the Pokras' in connection with the 'the Iquichanos' in a number of government reports from the 1820s, no further elaboration of their pre-Hispanic roots can be made from this period's sources. Moreover, recent research casts doubt on the very existence of 'the Pokras': see Jaime Urrutia, 'Los Pokras o el mito de los Huamanguinos', *Revista del Archivo Departamental de Ayacucho*, xiii (1984).

In terms akin to the Vargas Llosa text, Navarro described the Iquichanos as people of rude and fierce customs, and sought to prove this claim etymologically. 'Iquicha', he wrote, 'might be derived from [the Aymara] *Iky* (to behead, flay, peel, autopsy)', and he proceeded to identify the Iquichanos as 'beheaders of cadavers'⁸⁶ — an interpretation that I found, at first, revealing. Could the Spanish officers and the other *caudillos* of the 1820s Huanta rebellion, who started to popularize the name 'Iquichano', have chosen another more appropriate name if what they wished was to make themselves feared and respected? Still, in the course of broadening my research I came to rule out this hypothesis altogether, for Navarro was mistaken as to the etymology itself. Tracing his own sources, one finds that in 1877, Paz Soldán, on whom Navarro purports to rely, states: '*Iquicha*: possibly a corruption of *Iquitha*: to sleep, to fornicate; or of *Hikitha*: to root out, to husk, or to have the hiccups'.⁸⁷ The process by which Navarro turned *deshojar* ('to husk') into *degollar* ('to behead') remains a mystery, but it was surely not a question of any lapse. Writing during the peak of a boom of 'folklorist' and *indigenista* studies throughout Peru, Navarro sought, like many other intellectuals then writing on indigenous cultures, the creation of a historical discourse with which to underpin his own discourse of identity as a member of a regional elite. As with many historical discourses assessing identity, this one took the form of an epic — hence the stress on the Iquichano warlike abilities, and alleged fierce traits.⁸⁸

Political intentions aside, little else differentiated Navarro's conceptualizations of the Iquichanos from those embraced in the anthropological report which substantiated the Vargas Llosa text. Thus, the Uchuraccay *Informe* did not create myth so much as recast

⁸⁶ 'They [the Iquichanos] were then tribes of the same magnitude as the Pokras, beheaders of cadavers'. Victor Navarro del Aguila, *Las Tribus de Ankcú Wollok* (Cuzco, 1939), 63.

⁸⁷ Paz Soldán, *Diccionario geográfico*, 465. Paz Soldán's hypothesis on the roots of the word 'Iquicha' was based on Ludovico Bertonio, *Vocabulario de la lengua Aymara* ([1612]; facs. edn Cochabamba, 1984).

⁸⁸ 'Heroic Ikichas of yesterday and today still bear 80 per cent Pokra blood in their veins, and today persist in a rough, yet neither fratricidal nor barbaric, struggle: inch by inch they are conquering the jungle, whence, before long, the resurgence of the historic capital of the department of Ayacucho, that Wamanka which has so many charms as a landscape and colonial archaeological jewel, will proceed'. Navarro, *Las Tribus*, 63. On Ayacuchan intellectual thought, see Jeffrey Gamarra Carrillo, 'El Espacio regional como pretexto: historia y producción cultural en Ayacucho, 1900–1950', in Hiroyasu Tomoeda and Luis Millones (eds.), *La Tradición andina en tiempos modernos* (Osaka, 1996), esp. 141–6.

it, with the Peruvian writer's involvement in the whole case deeply affecting his own literary output and pervading his dual vision of Peruvian society. Known and acclaimed until the early 1980s as a rather urban novelist, Vargas Llosa would, following his involvement in the Uchuraccay investigation, start placing the Andes, and the 'Indians', at the centre of his novels: the former as a place apart from civilization; the latter invariably uncouth, alien to modernity, and debased.⁸⁹ As the novelist left his country a frustrated politician, following his defeat in the 1990 presidential race that gave victory to Alberto Fujimori, Peru would not take long in achieving peace; the Andes and the 'Indians' began moving in exactly the opposite direction to that of the image created in Vargas Llosa's novels — that is (as I hope to have demonstrated in this essay), becoming ever more integrated into the Peruvian state, and increasingly aware of their belonging to the Peruvian nation.

Insofar as this integration has come about at the expense of an internal war — perhaps the most violent recorded in Peruvian history — and under the auspices of a government which has been ruling with undisguised authoritarianism during the past few years, it is not something I can happily celebrate. But neither can I be blind to this reality, which has inevitably affected my investigation. It is precisely on account of this changing present that I have devoted myself to rereading a portion of Peru's history, and to rewriting it. My purpose here has not been to deny the fact that Andean peoples have an ancient history, so much as to emphasize what is most commonly forgotten (notably, outside Peru): that they have a modern one. The creation of Iquicha, the making and remaking of the 'Iquichano towns', and the whole issue of the 'Iquichano identity' — volatile, ethereal, ambiguous — cannot be comprehended apart from the creation, making and remaking of the republican state in nineteenth century. Nor can they be comprehended outside their connection with the Peruvian state today.

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⁸⁹ This trend can be said to start with *La Historia de Mayta* (Barcelona, 1984), where the protagonist, of Indian origins, is endowed with entirely negative aesthetic and political attributes; it continues with *El Hablador* (Lima, 1987), where 'Indians' appear in a more idealized vein, but always apart from ('Western') civilization; and it culminates in *Lituma en los Andes* (Barcelona, 1993), translated into English as, symptomatically, *Death in the Andes* (New York, 1996).