

**Schooling a Body Politic:**  
*Professional Education and the Palimpsest of Conflict in Peru*

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## **Abstract:**

*Images reveal layers of meaning in holes left by silence and institutionalized memories. In this thesis, I combine forms of oral and visual ethnography to understand more subtle legacies of Peru's internal armed conflict in the city of Tarapoto, in Peru's Upper Amazonian region.*

*From roughly 1980 to 2000, a violent conflict raged throughout Peru, pitting the State against rebel groups, most notably the Shining Path. I analyze these decades of conflict in terms of their impact on institutions of tertiary education, where a substantial amount of rebel organizing took place. As Peru experiences a relative decline in its national university system, I connect this to an oppressive State response to the presence of rebel groups in campuses of the national university, and subsequent neoliberal educational reforms that slashed funding for public universities, most notably programs in the social sciences and humanities. In contrast to the situation of public universities, I highlight the emergence of numerous private, and often for-profit, universities and technical institutes in Tarapoto, as elsewhere in Peru. The proliferation of private tertiary schools must be considered in light of the role that the national universities played as sites of Shining Path organizing. In tertiary education, I argue, conflict leaves its mark through restrictions on spaces of higher education associated with dissenting rebel movements, concurrent with a promulgation of private and corporatized higher education emphasizing professional and technical courses of study. This speaks to a strategy of reconciling conflict favoring a modernizing, neoliberal development agenda seen by the State as a means of addressing the staggering structural inequalities that congealed into a series of violent conflicts and rebel movements. Analyzing both visual and oral data, I examine how these threads of conflict and State actions are woven into the contemporary educational experience among tertiary students in Tarapoto. I conclude with a discussion of how history is institutionalized in educational spaces, producing and reproducing particular understandings of the past and visualizations of the future.*

## Acknowledgements

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## Introduction: Stratum

Each time I return to Tarapoto I am confronted, as if for the first time, with the oppressiveness of heat. It now only takes me a day or so to adjust, but in those first few moments I can feel the denim jacket I wear on the air-conditioned commuter plane wilt in the overwhelming humidity, once-rigid cotton fibers sagging under the burden of the Amazonian sun. As a popular *chicha* song goes, *en la selva amazonica no hay primavera* (in the Amazon jungle there is no spring); the *selva* cooks with a humid intensity all year round. Yet the many *tarapotinos* that I have come to know since beginning fieldwork seem undaunted by the high temperatures and humidity. Rather, one of the first things that struck me was people's ability to look cool and composed behind the array of polyester uniforms worn by nearly all of the hotel employees, travel agents, office clerks, bank tellers, and students. While I withered in nothing more than a tank top and cotton shorts, endless urbanites passed by in their semi-professional dress; for the ladies, normally a vest and skirt or slacks combo in monotone polyester, and for the men, a standard short-sleeved white shirt, slacks, and polished shoes. While this did not seem so out of place in a bank, the importance of a uniform in other contexts was as conspicuous to me as the sweltering heat.

The first time I met Angela<sup>1</sup>, we were headed opposite directions on a busy street. She stopped to say hello to my colleague, an old friend of hers, and we were introduced, thus beginning one of my most important friendships. But of course at that time, I had no

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<sup>1</sup> Not her real name; names of all informants have been changed for confidentiality.

idea that we would grow to be friends, and I was more taken aback by her outfit, a navy-blue polyester skirt, white collared blouse and fitted red polyester vest, accented with a blue tie. She looked like an airline stewardess, but it turned out that she was just on her way to school. Angela, like over 3000 other young adult *tarapotinos*, attended school at an *instituto superior tecnologico* (IST), part of the growing system of nationally-accredited, non-university tertiary schools that offer 2-3 year degree programs in trades such as computer information systems and bank administration. For those, like Angela, who attended one of Tarapoto's eight private ISTs, wearing a uniform was mandatory. The mission of the ISTs was not only to train students in technological and professional skills, but also to build a professional image. In Peru, where conflict arises frequently from staggering class, gender, and ethnic stratification and inequalities, such an image has appeal for multiple parties. For the individual, uniformed professionalism is a means of surmounting oppressive social stereotypes of class, ethnicity, and gender. For the body politic, uniformed professionals are the key to technocratic modernization and development, and an antidote to the violent social movements that strove to wrest power from the ruling class in recent decades. The Foucauldian concept of bio-power, the broad array of tactics and techniques used to subjugate individuals and control of populations" (Foucault 1978:140) guides the forthcoming analysis of professional education in Peru, a manifestation of the State's neoliberal development agenda that emerged from a climate of staggering structural inequalities, congealing into a series of violent conflicts and rebel movements that sought to topple the existing power structure.

### **i. Conflict, Neoliberalism, and Higher Education**

The neoliberal education reforms of recent decades are occurring among a global movement towards neo-liberal economic philosophy and its governance (Hill and Kumar 2009; Puiggrós 1999). In Peru these reforms are distinct in that they are inextricably tied to recent period of violent conflict. From roughly 1980 to 2000, a violent conflict raged throughout Peru, pitting the State against rebel groups, most notably the Shining Path.<sup>2</sup> These decades of conflict had an impact on institutions of tertiary education, where a substantial amount of rebel organizing took place. In tertiary education, conflict leaves its mark through restrictions on spaces of higher education associated with dissenting rebel movements, concurrent with a promulgation of private and corporatized higher education emphasizing professional and technical courses of study. This speaks to a strategy of reconciling conflict favoring a modernizing, neoliberal development agenda seen by the State as a means of addressing the staggering structural inequalities that congealed into a violent 20-year struggle with the Shining Path and other rebel groups. National universities, and particularly departments in the humanities and social sciences, were linked with the Shining Path rebel movement, which was founded among university faculty and students at the Universidad Nacional San Cristobal de Huamanga, in Ayacucho. In the following pages, I argue that this association plays an important role in understanding how current tactics of neoliberal governmentality form subjects in contemporary Peru. Indeed, even amidst Peru's two decade long internal armed conflict,

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<sup>2</sup> The group's full name, Partido Comunista del Peru – Shining Path (PCP-SL), was taken from a quote by José Carlos Mariátegui, "El Marxismo-Leninismo abrirá el sendero luminoso hacia la revolución" ("Marxism–Leninism will open the shining path to revolution").

neoliberal populism was heralded as an antidote to the violent revisionism of the rebel groups (De Soto 1986). In the campuses of the Peru's National University, where the Shining Path movement got its start, Marxist, Leninist, and Maoist theory framed the Peruvian State as a hierarchical and exploitive technology of oppression that needed to be destroyed. The State's antidote was bipartite: employ tactics of violence and oppression to stop the spread of the rebel movement, and employ strategies of neoliberal populism to 'modernize' the nation, boost the failing economy, and make part of the national project the marginalized peoples to whom Shining Path was apt to appeal.

Changes in policy and rhetoric that occurred during and in response to Peru's internal armed conflict play a role in shaping contemporary situation in education. In the case of Peru's tertiary education system, both the university and its counterpart, the IST, are illustrative of how changes in policy and rhetoric become institutionalized. Sendero Luminoso built its initial ranks in and around the campus of a national university<sup>3</sup>. Since its inception, the party used campuses of the national university as sites of organizing and indoctrinating. As the CVR concludes, "the PCP-SL's proselytizing could have a fleeting acceptance, because of the incapacity of the State and the country's elites to respond to the educational demands of youth frustrated in their efforts toward social mobility and aspirations for advancement" (CVR 2003: 318). The relationship between the State and the education system is fundamental to the origins of the internal armed conflict. An examination of the contemporary relationship between the State and higher education produces insights on consequences and legacies of these two decades of violence.

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<sup>3</sup> La Universidad Nacional San Cristobal de Huamanga, in Ayacucho, were leader Abimael Guzman Reinoso was once a professor of Philosophy

While traditional economic liberalism is characterized largely about the retreat of the state and the advance of the free market, neoliberal ideology holds that the state must be strong in order to enforce market interests (Harvey 2005). The state plays a crucial role in producing regulatory technologies to encourage the market, simultaneously checking any other sort of agency or institution that would impede it. As Waquant so succinctly states it, neoliberalism is “an articulation of state, market, and citizenship that harnesses the first to impose the stamp of the second onto the third” (2012: 66). In the case of education, the State must make assessment of the particular levels of education in which investment will yield a ‘profit’. In the line of reasoning favored by the World Bank (Leher 2009), this is primary education. In these terms, investment in education should be concentrated where it will produce the highest returns: producing a base population that can be prepared to enter a professional workforce, thus supporting a capitalist development project that can sustain the needs of the market. Higher education, then, is handed over to the private sector, where industries such as science and technology can pour their funding into the educational institutes that can prepare for them a skilled and competent workforce. During the height of Peru’s armed conflict, campuses of the National University, especially departments of Social Science and Education, became targets of State surveillance and violent intervention in student affairs. In contrast, concurrent neoliberal education reforms encouraged higher education to mold itself in accordance with market logic: in 1996 Peru became the first Latin American nation to offer a for-profit, corporate status to institutes of higher education (van Lutsenburg Maas 2001). As the number of private universities and technical institutes continues to grow, per-pupil State spending in the National Universities continues to

decline (Lynch 2005). In contrast to the situation of public universities, numerous private, and often for-profit, universities and technical institutes have emerged in Tarapoto, as elsewhere in Peru. The expansion of private universities and ISTs has shaped the character of higher education with an emphasis on technical and professional courses of study. In tertiary education, threads of conflict and reactionary State actions are woven into the contemporary educational experience.

Tertiary schools take up education where the State-mandated educational requirements (which in Peru ends after the 5<sup>th</sup> year of secondary school) leave off. In the following pages, I discuss a time of relative decline in Peru's national university system due to State response to the presence of rebel groups in campuses of the national university, and subsequent neoliberal educational reforms that slashed funding for public universities, most notably programs in the social sciences in humanities. In contrast to the situation of public universities, I highlight the emergence of numerous private, and often for-profit, universities and technical institutes (ISTs). I consider the proliferation of private tertiary schools in light of the role that the national universities played as sites of Shining Path organizing. In tertiary education, I argue, conflict leaves its mark through restrictions on spaces of higher education associated with dissenting rebel movements concurrent with a promulgation of private and corporatized higher education that emphasizes professional and technical courses of study. This speaks to a strategy of reconciling conflict that favors a modernizing, neoliberal development agenda as a means of addressing the staggering structural inequalities that congealed into a series of violent conflicts and rebel movements that nearly succeeded in toppling the Peruvian State.

## **ii. Palimpsest and Memory**

It is important to look for the presence of conflict's legacy in the everyday as memory, in Peru, is contested. Speaking of the decades of conflict is a tender subject, especially as continued violence coupled with the periodic reemergence of the Shining Path imply that the conflict has never really ended. Some memory has become institutionalized, most notably through Peru's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (la Comisión de Verdad y Reconciliación, or CVR), which evaluated the sources and victims of violence, and published an official document in 2003. As Wendy Coxshall, an anthropologist who worked on the CVR posits, many Peruvians declined to come forward to protest injustices at the hands of State because such testimony risked stigmatization of rebel involvement (2005). Memories of the 'illegitimate' violence committed by Sendero, then, became easier to incorporate into official memory. Thus, in a present understanding of the legacies of conflict, it is crucial to acknowledge these silences, as well as the technologies that produced them. Where 'legitimized' State actions worked to squash and silence dissent, the presence of conflict may also be understood in how new technologies of governance were produced in response to these threats. State responses to these violent social movements did not only take the form of direct political violence. It also worked its way into institutional reforms enacted by what political scientist Jo Marie Burt calls a "political use of fear" (2006) mobilized to manufacture compliance with the desires of the State. Recognizing that a contemporary analysis of the presence of conflict includes both official memories and silences, I draw on the concept of palimpsest to frame the following analysis of how conflict makes its presence in contemporary tertiary education.

Palimpsest is a model most utilized in archaeology, but also employed across a number of academic disciplines. It guided both my process of analysis and the conclusions that I drew from my research. Etymologically, palimpsest originates from the Greek word *palimpsestos*, which means to scratch off; referring to the process of using a writing material such as a parchment or tablet one or more times after earlier writing has been erased. In archaeology, a palimpsest describes the records, in markings, architecture, artwork, and landscape alteration that build up in layers as successive groups occupy and utilize a particular site. As such, palimpsests include both accumulated and transformed information, as remnants and traces are often appropriated in new contexts, to create new images with new meanings (Bailey 2007). Applied in cultural theory, the concept of palimpsest is often used to describe the interplay of indigenous cultures, historical practices, and modernity (Cooper Alarcón 1997; Jones and Shaw 2006). It is a concept that acknowledges the relationship between memory and forgetting, removal and inscription, as stratum blend together to create meta-images with complex meanings that speak of the present while referencing the past. I apply the concept of palimpsest to an examination of Peru's internal armed conflict in my field site: the rapidly expanding city of Tarapoto in Peru's upper Amazonian department of San Martín. As I examine the contemporary picture of tertiary education following a period of neoliberal reforms in Peru, I argue that this is also telling of the presence of conflict. Contextualizing neoliberal education reforms in Tarapoto, as elsewhere in Peru, summons a consideration of the decades of violent social conflict often situated in Peru's national universities. I began to understand the images of uniformed bodies en route to institutions of professional education as a palimpsest, the order of the uniform and the technical nature

of educational inquiry formed from the elements of violent social upheaval that characterized previous decades. A palimpsest is an image that is formed when the present is overlaid over the traces of the past. Scratching away at the more defined top layer, the buildup of history peeks through, the ordered veneer of professional education painting over more chaotic and violent images. I am reminded of an image that appeared in the popular news magazine *Caretas* in the late 1980s, of a janitor painting over Shining Path graffiti on university walls. Flipping through a newspaper today, contemporary educational advertisements encourage students to ‘be a successful professional!’ and picture uniformed students excitedly clustered behind a computer. One image gives way to another, but the past makes its presence through an absence: not what is but what is not, critique of State replaced by praise of corporations, a splash of graffiti replaced by a neat digital logo, manufactured by an ordered body in a polyester uniform.

Research on the longer-term implications of Peru’s internal armed conflict is distinct from work on direct memory. Memory can be individual, collective, and even State-sanctioned; sometimes it persists more as an interplay: traces of memory and acts of forgetting (Ricoeur 2004). What memory cannot be, however, is the only legacy of conflict. Conflict should be not understood only in terms of direct violence or social divisions, but in responses or actions intended to suppress future conflicts, or dissenting opinions. State responses to conflict situations include the creation and mobilization of technologies of governance used to suppress conflictive forces, and stymie the development of dissent. When these techniques of governance become imbedded in institutions such as a school, they become a way to understand how conflicts are worked into peacetime experience.

## I. Methods

Schools are vital sites to study the changing rationales of governance. Their structures are often reflective of top-down, large-scale State-policy aimed at the formation of particular subjects that personify the ideal image projected by the nation-state (Foucault 1984; Luykx 1999). Student bodies respond with both acts of confirmation and acts of resistance. Student movements protesting the State demonstrate how technologies of governance have failed to formulate disciplined subjects (unless, of course, the aim of government is to create a culture of dialogue and protest, which it rarely is). Other times, students embody elements of a national culture including an official language, uniform or style of dress, and articulation of study and career goals. In a pluricultural and multilingual country such as Peru, schools are often hard at work creating some semblance of cultural hegemony that can unify diverse ethnicities among the population, including the institutionalization of multiculturalism (García 2005). Higher education in particular is often heralded as a necessity for developing nations intent on modernization and economic progress. In all levels, schooling is tied to the proliferation of a modern nation-state. Through an analysis of tertiary school culture in Peru, I argue that they can also teach us about the way that States respond to conflict.

I return to the concept of palimpsest to explain why I employ participatory photography as a means of data collection for this project. Photo elicitation in interviews has been described by visual sociologist Douglas Harper as “a postmodern dialogue based on the authority of the subject rather than the researcher” (2002:15). Photo

elicitation, which involves the use of visual images in the interview process, invokes different interpretations than verbal interviews. In understanding the subtle, long-term, and trans-generational impacts of violence and conflict, metaphor and image were crucial to augmenting my qualitative analysis of data. In addition to the standard ethnographic methods of participant observation and semi-structured interviews, this form of participatory photo-elicitation (Photovoice) opened up dialogues with young adults, a often hesitant demographic to interview, but who advocates of visual methodologies cite as particularly receptive to the creative and dialogic nature of this method (Newman and Kanjanawong 2005; Schensul, et al. 2010; Strack, et al. 2004; Wang and Burris 1997; Wang 1999). A mixed methodology that included participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and Photovoice developed a more nuanced understanding of the culturally constructed realities of my informants, from their captioning of photos, to our discussions of the data. Images inspired descriptions of order and professionalism, and clued me in to the fact that professional education, for the majority of my informants, was less about the particular career or skill that they were learning, and more about an overall professional identity. Professional identity, in turn, was a means of surmounting gender, ethnic, and class-based prejudices frequently leveled at young adults from Amazonia, the sorts of inequalities that have characterized the history of Peru.

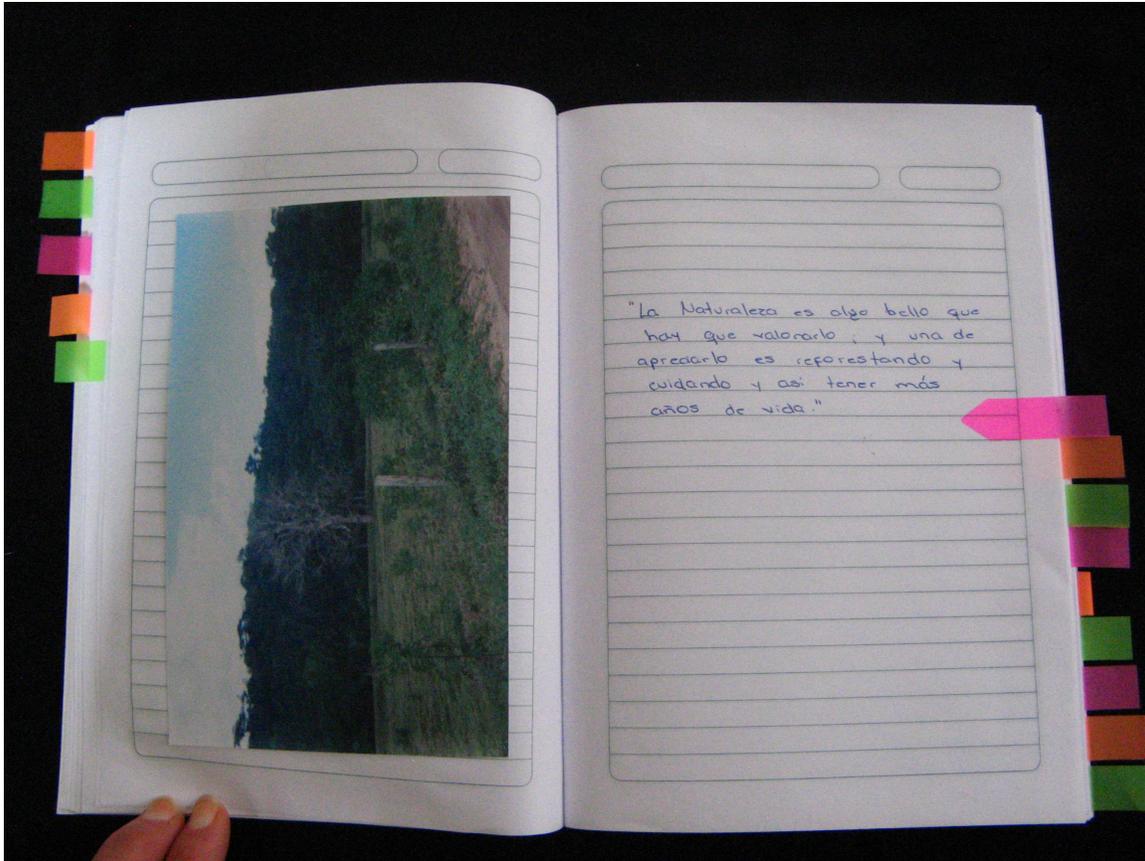


Figure 1: Photo Book used in Photo-Elicitation Interview

Photo-elicitation provided insight on the proliferation of uniforms that were so striking to me during my first visit to Tarapoto. When I asked participants to explain how they felt about the uniforms, responses were somewhat flat: not much more than “it looks nice.” When I asked informants to photograph things they desired for their future, however, the uniform emerged as an important trope in professional identity. In subsequent discussions using photo-elicitation, informants elaborated on the importance of the cultivation of a professional self, and the importance of their *instituto* for this development. Over the course of my research, I handed out no fewer than 15 disposable cameras to informants, all of whom attended tertiary schools in Tarapoto. I asked them to use the cameras to respond to a series of prompts centered around the theme of change

– what changes had participants recently experienced, what changes were going on around them, what changes did they hope for in the future. I developed the film, and returned the pictures to their creators. In both individual and group interview sessions, I asked participants to discuss the images they took, why they took them, and what they meant. Dialogues around these images to help pick out threads of meaning and intention. Subjects of the photographs were built on layers of intention and meaning, as a palimpsest image contains traces of the past in the visible façade.

Visual data included information on not only the lived experience, but of the imaginary, both collective and individual. I asked participants to take pictures of things they wanted for the future, and what they envisioned as hoped-for changes to community, family, and intimate life. These photographs were instructional in understanding how participants imagined their futures, and thus the intention of their current educational choices. In education research, this recalls Nussbaum's principal of narrative imagination, "the ability to think what it might be like to be in the shoes of a person different from oneself, to be an intelligent reader of that person's story, and to understand the emotions and wishes and desires that someone so placed might have" (2006: 390-391). Nussbaum understands the cultivation of (narrative) imagination to be of dire importance in the formation of citizens in a democracy, and especially in a pluricultural society. To understand, to empathize, and to imagine is to simultaneously develop a capacity for critical thinking, and understanding of political choices outside of their rhetoric and connected to their effects on diverse and variegated populations. She thus calls for a revalorization of the arts and humanities in education, stressing that it is through the imaginative process of learning and performing arts and literature that we

may strengthen our capacities for empathetic imagination, Socratic self-examination, and critical thinking. The empathy-breeding potential of narrative imagination is important in stratified societies, where privileged classes must learn to understand how their privilege is both produced and reproduced, thinking critically about their role in the democratic process that fosters continued stratification and inequality

Imagination is critically important to the development of a visionary and empathetic self. It is a vital process through which both individuals and groups envision identities and new modes of being. Arjun Appadurai posits imagination as “a form of negotiation between sites of agency (“individuals”) and globally defined fields of possibility” (1990: 5). Interviews that used participatory photo elicitation opened, for me, new fields of understanding as to how my informants envisioned themselves as both creative individuals and members of a community and nation. Images taken by my informants instructed me on how participants imagined themselves in both the present and the future. Responding to my prompt, informants photographed what they imagined their futures to look like, their life and career goals, and the changes they envisioned for their communities. When we developed, and subsequently discussed, the roles of film, not only the images, but participants’ descriptions, interpretations, reactions, and analyses of them allowed me to build a more complex understanding of the narrative imagination of my informants.

My informants were, for the most part, students at the ISTs of Tarapoto. So, then, it is not surprising that images of order, technology, and professionalism emerged when participants pictured the future. They were, after all, studying technological professions. But only one of my informants professed an interest in computer technology; for the rest

of them, professional and technologically modern identity was more important than actual skills. According to Valeria, a young student of Information Systems (*Información Systemática*), “I want young people to change; I want them to be professionals and avoid harmful vices that can ruin their lives...in a life of success that I see in my future, I want my own business, where I can administer it personally”. Raquel, who was Valeria’s classmate in Information Systems, had additional aspirations to be a police officer. She took a photograph of a police vehicle, noting in her discussion of the image, “I want to become a police officer because they have a strong character, and that is needed to put this city in order, and make people follow the rules”. However, images and their explanations revealed that skills were secondary to the image of uniformed orderliness that was so promoted by the *instituto*. Some described their choice to study at the *instituto* and wear a uniform as a means of modeling orderliness and technological proficiency for others in the community. A uniform was a marker of respect, a demand that one be treated well. For the young women in my sample, this was an assertion of their professional goals and desires for independence. In discussing the future, they emphasized a desire for control and agency in the workplace. Rather than subverting traditional biases with violent revolution, these young people looked towards professional power to transcend a position of historical subordination, similar to recent political discourse that promised a new Peru founded on “*honradez, tecnología y trabajo*” (former-president Alberto Fujimori’s campaign platform).

Focusing on themes of opportunity, professionalism, and technology, I began to trace the history of the *instituto* in Tarapoto. From my earlier research on the conflict in Peru, I had garnered that technology and progress had emerged as an antidote to the

violent, revisionist agenda proposed by rebel groups such as the Shining Path. In terms of education, could a technocratic emphasis also be a response to conflict? This seemed particularly cogent given the relationship between humanities and social science departments of Peru's national university and rebel movements. As it were, all of Tarapoto's private *institutos* had arrived at the time of Fujimori's neoliberal reforms. Tarapoto's first private *instituto superior tecnico* (IST), Corporación Blaise Pascal, was established in 1991, and was accredited the following year. In the two decades since Blaise's opening, seven additional accredited ISTs have opened in the growing city (MINEDU 2012). Since Fujimori's term in office, three private universities have also opened campuses in Tarapoto; all are campuses of a private universities that were first established in larger cities like Lima or Trujillo (Velázquez Castro 2010).

I began fieldwork by working with the Tarapoto campus of the National University, la Universidad Nacional de San Martín, Tarapoto, or UNSM. This was a good way to meet people and also become involved in the area where I would presumably be working for the next decade. I also figured this might help me meet potential interviewees. My work ended up being more with faculty and administration. So, I began talking to young people – friends of friends, people who worked in hotels, restaurants, stationary stores, to establish contacts for my return trip, where I planned to conduct more structured research. Most of the young people I talked to – working people especially – were also in school. Tarapoto boasts a fairly impressive 47% matriculation rate from secondary to tertiary school, which includes universities and *institutos superiores*, both *tecnicos* (ISTs) and *pedagógicos* (teacher training institutes). Despite my initial hopes of finding local student collaborators in my projects with the university, it

was rare for me to come across a UNSM student; nearly everyone that I talked to was studying at an IST. I decided to investigate further, and see what significance, if any, these *institutos* had to my study of conflict and its legacies. I began more focused fieldwork by interviewing administration and faculty at two of Tarapoto's most popular ISTs, and used contacts that I had established to gather a sample of students of the *instituto* for participation in both semi-structured interviews and photo-elicitation interviews.

Tarapoto is a growing, bustling metropolitan area, with a rapidly expanding migrant population seeking to stake claim to the region's fertile lands, and the opportunities for education and employment. In growing Amazonian cities like Tarapoto, urban expansion often takes the form of "land invasions," or human settlements (*asentimientos humanos*), as migrants from rural areas and riverine communities seek their place in the urban(izing) jungle (Dean and Silverstein 2011). According to the most recent published census (INEI 2007), Tarapoto's population is estimated at 68,000; 100,000 including the suburbs of La Banda del Shilcayo and Morales that flank its northern and southern ends. During the two years that spanned my fieldwork, there was a proliferation of new businesses in Tarapoto including: a gourmet chocolate store, numerous upscale, tourist restaurants, well-equipped gymnasiums, numerous Internet cafés, and, recently, a franchise of Radio Shack. Money has poured into this relatively poor area from a growth in tourism, the cultivation of cash crops such as papaya, coffee, and cacao, and the more conspicuous earnings of those involved in the underground economies, most notably the drug trade. Despite this convergence of cultures and economies, the region remains poorly studied by social scientists. Further, there is dearth

of social science in the department; none of the four universities in the region have departments of anthropology or sociology, and a lone ethnohistorian remains on the faculty of languages at the national university. Despite San Martín's rich cultural and linguistic diversity, aspiring local scholars of the region's cultural history are given few formal outlets for reflection. Friends would often marvel at my opportunity to study Kechwa in faraway *gringolandia*; programs in indigenous languages were unavailable after the bilingual teacher training academy in nearby Lamas was closed in 2004, and even when it was open, training in Kechwa was only available to those studying to become teachers. In this manner I acknowledge my privilege as a student of social sciences, with conversational abilities in Kechwa, in conducting an ethnographic analysis of conflict's legacy in Tarapoto; I will suggest that part of this legacy creates the void of local social scientists who are able to critically examine issues of conflict with support from their educational institutions. As such, this thesis will contribute to growing bodies of literature on both neoliberal reforms in higher education and the consequences of Peru's internal armed conflict by exploring how conflict remains present through an ethnographic analysis of tertiary school culture in the city of Tarapoto.

## II. Shadowed Markings & The Manufacture of Silence

In 2003 the Peruvian Truth and Reconciliation Commission (la Comisión de Verdad y Reconciliación, or CVR) published its official report. With its publication began the long and arduous process of officially reconciling two decades of intense violence, from 1980-2000, and the deep-seeded structural inequalities that precipitated them. A substantial literature body of literature has examined the particular nature of this internal armed conflict between State forces and rebel<sup>4</sup> groups Sendero Luminoso (Partido Comunista del Perú – Sendero Luminoso, or PCP-SL) and the MRTA (Movimiento Revolucionario Tupac Amará) (Degregori 1989; Manrique 1989; Stern 1998), as well as the local defense squads (*rondas campesinas*) that formed in response to this (Starn 1999). Anthropologists, both Peruvian and international, conducted a substantial portion of the research compiled by the CVR, soliciting the testimonies of those with direct memories of violence in communities where violence between the State, rebel groups, and the *rondas* occurred. Those who did not experience direct violence also suffered during these tense decades marked by fear, suspicion, and a series of economic crises.

More recent ethnographic studies have addressed the complex process of memory making and reconciliation that emerged as the conflict wound down (González 2011; Kernaghan 2009; Strocka 2008; Theidon 2004). These accounts are consistent in acknowledging that the residues—and at times direct presence—of internal conflicts

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<sup>4</sup> Although they have been called, alternately, terrorists, revolutionaries, insurgents, guerrillas, and rebels, just have their actions have been called acts of terror, revolution, or armed struggle (*lucha armada*), it is challenging to categorize the groups Shining Path and MRTA without predisposing a political bias. I use the term “rebel” because, for me, it is the most accurate description of the actions of these groups: rebellion against the Peruvian State.

remain in present-day lived experience. For many, the culture of fear that accompanied those decades of conflict did not come to an end with the capture of Shining Path leader Abimael Guzman Reinoso and MRTA leader Victor Polay Campos, both of whom were apprehended in 1992. Nor did it end with the resignation of authoritarian president Alberto Fujimori in 2000, the event that prompted the formation of a Truth Commission to address the murders, disappearances, and human rights violations that characterized the two prior decades.

Fear did not have a decisive end, and public recollections of conflict were shaped by how violence was experienced. Some communities suffered more at the hands of the Shining Path, while others experienced greater fear and oppression at the hands of State forces. The latter case bears an additional complication in the process of public acknowledgement and reconciliation. In its violent attempts to squash and silence rebel groups, the Peruvian State, established through democratic elections, exercised its right to 'legitimate' violence. In Peru's history, organizations apart from the State have exercised greater governance than State forces in particular regions. Missionaries who established the first schools in Amazonia (Greene 2009a), a then-illegitimate APRA political party that helped dismantle a State-backed elite ruling class in Chachapoyas (Nugent 2004), and the Shining Path control of swaths of the Huallaga Valley (Kernaghan 2009) all provide examples of governance apart from the official Peruvian State. Following Weberian understanding, however, it was only the Peruvian State could claim 'legitimate' use of force (1946). Organs of the state such as the National Intelligence Service (SIN) and Armed Forces (Fuerzas Armadas) were sent forth to seek out to identify and eliminate elements of the social body deemed toxic to the current version of

democracy, or technocracy. While aimed at rebel groups, this at times included anyone who questioned or challenged the social order.

Peru's internal armed conflict emerged from a long history of colonialism, structural inequalities, and social movements that make up the nation's history (Flores Galindo 1988; Klarén 2000). Throughout Latin America, the decades of the 1980s and 1990s were characterized by social movements aimed at wrenching power from the ruling class, and restoring dignity and power to indigenous and peasant populations (Chasteen 2001). The armed conflict in Peru, however, was distinct from these other struggles in that the violence towards civilians came almost equally from both State and rebel factions. The final report of the CVR estimates that 54% of the deaths and disappearances can be attributed to Sendero Luminoso, in contrast with 45% attributed to State forces, and the remaining 1% to the MRTA and *Rondas Campesinas* (CVR 2004). In countries such as Guatemala, El Salvador, and Argentina, that also experienced intense political violence during these decades, an overwhelming amount of deaths and disappearances are attributed to the State alone. The violently dogmatic Shining Path more closely resembled the Khmer Rouge than the FMLN.

By the mid-1980s, rebel activity had spread into the Upper Amazon. Between the years 1980 and 2000 approximately 18% of the 70,000<sup>5</sup> deaths and disappearances attributed to the armed conflict occurred in the upper Amazon region (CVR 2004: 78). Documented in the CVR as Tarapoto's particular experience of violence included the attack of a police patrol in 1990 and the murder of leaders of the federal Agrarian

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<sup>5</sup> This number is highly contested, and in all likelihood does not accurately reflect the total number of losses in the conflict in light of the fact that the violence has continued since CVR ceased collecting data in 2000.

Federation (Federación Agraria) in 1990 (CVR 2003: 382-383). More notable were the violent clashes between Sendero Luminoso and MRTA factions elsewhere in the Department of San Martín, which had become a sort of borderlands between the rebel groups. Although no longer considered the threat to the state that they once were, rebel presence remains an ominous threat in many localities. A perusal of regional newspapers evidences this: reports of a flag in the nearby cities of Tocache or graffiti in Uchiza were reminders of continued Shining Path presence in the region. The continued threat of rebels was overlaid with that of drug traffickers, or *narcotraficantes*, with whom they were rumored to have allied.

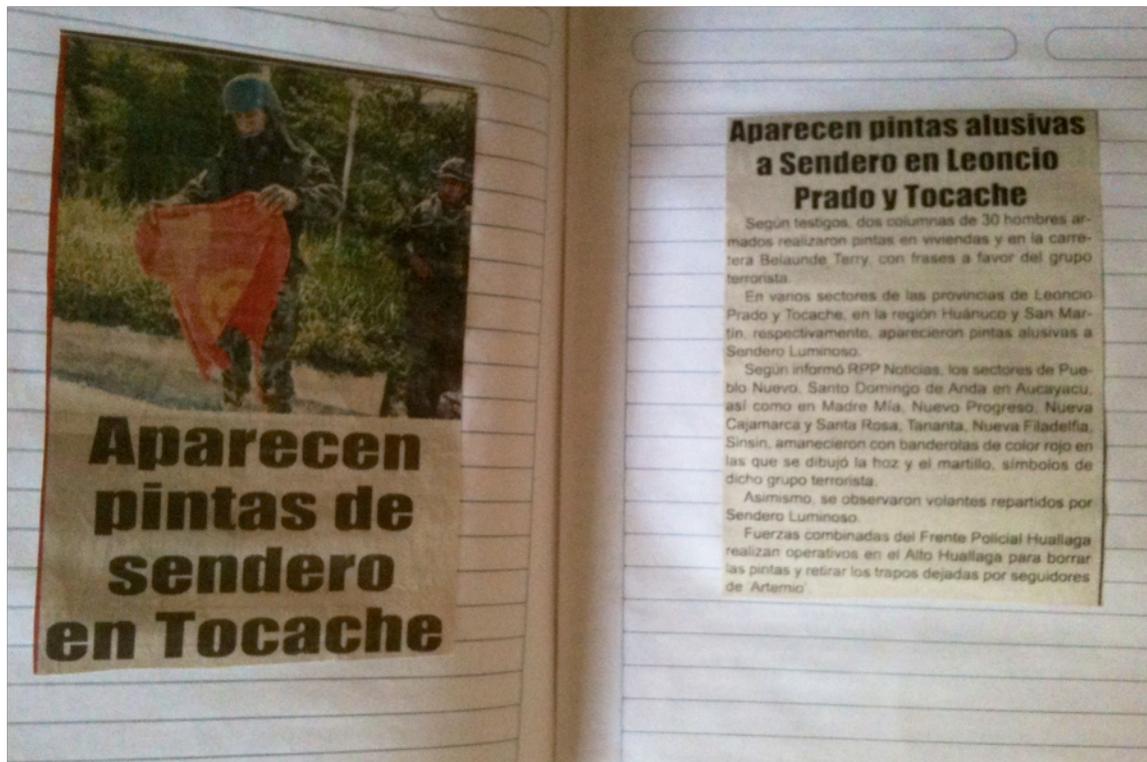


Figure 2: Newspaper clipping from my fieldwork tells of a Sendero Luminoso flag found in nearby Tocache

Despite the initial claims of some early ‘senderologists,’ Shining Path was not an indigenous movement. Further, unlike contemporary social movements elsewhere in

Latin America, there was no unity among rebels and Leftist organizers and intellectuals. Sendero, in particular, did not accept ideologies different from their official dogma. The “revisionist” approach of the Left stood in the way of their State-toppling project (Basombrío 1998; Burt 1998). One of the most well remembered Shining Path atrocities was the murder of activist and community organizer Maria Elena Moyano, in the urban district of Villa El Salvador in 1992. Moyano was targeted for her organizing; her non-militant stance did not recognize the gravity of the bloody struggle that Sendero deemed necessary for the establishment of a new order. Her murder was a warning to Peru’s United Left (*Izquierda Unida*): the only path to revolution or social change was that of Sendero.

The trauma of conflict was augmented by the concurrent human rights abuses of former president Alberto Fujimori. Fujimori ruled the country from 1990 until 2000, when he resigned abruptly amidst charges of widespread corruption and violations of human rights. He is currently serving time in prison after being extradited from Chile to Peru for trial in 2007. This was the first time a democratically elected president had been extradited to his or her home country and subsequently convicted of human rights abuses (Burt 2009). Despite his conviction, Fujimori remains a controversial figure, loved by many who credit him with ending the armed conflict. Many others opposed his totalitarian form of governance, marked by violence, endemic corruption, and unjust persecution of suspected Sendero sympathizers. In early 2011 my friends in Lima marched against presidential candidate Keiko Fujimori, protesting murders and forced disappearances of civilians, forced sterilizations of women, bribery, corruption, and a series of other systemic abuses credited to her father’s decade in office. Meanwhile, in

Tarapoto, my friend Berenice expressed a contrasting memory of Fujimori's tenure. Wringing out her laundry over a neon plastic basin, she expressed her hopes that Alberto Fujimori would be freed from prison if his daughter Keiko won the election. Berenice, an ardent *fujimorista*, was threatened and robbed repeatedly by a Sendero column based near her *chacra* during the 1990s. For Berenice, Fujimori's criminal acts were not important in light of his success in suppressing Sendero presence in her community. When it came to memories of violence, multiple versions were emergent. Some Peruvians legitimized State violence as a necessary measure to combat terror, while others understood violence at the hands of the State to be a form of terror itself.

Early in its establishment, Sendero Luminoso built its ranks at the Universidad Nacional San Cristóbal de Huamanga, in the department of Ayacucho, where Shining Path leader Abimael Guzmán Reinoso was once a professor of philosophy. Expansion of the public education system in Peru had begun a few decades earlier, and between 1950 and 1960, secondary school enrollments had increased fivefold (CVR 2003: 605). As secondary education expanded, new universities were built to meet the demands of an increasingly educated citizen body. In 1960, there were nine universities in the nation (eight public and one private). By 1980 that number had increased to 35 (CVR 2003: 606). In mid-1970s, enrollments in campuses of the national universities had swelled after reforms by the Velasco Alvarado military government that opened up educational opportunities to a wider and poorer swath of the population (Klarén 2000; Lynch 1990). When there were not jobs to meet the needs of the increasing numbers of college graduates, many felt out of place returning to an agricultural lifestyle. Sendero grew in popularity in part due to the incapacity of the State and the country's elites to respond to

the educational demands of youth frustrated in their efforts toward social mobility by staggering structural inequalities and endemic racism. This was one cause of the relatively high level, in the organizing stages, of Shining Path members recruited from the provincial university in Huamanga. A linkage was thus created between institutes of higher education and suspicions of terrorism. Since the inception of the Shining Path, universities were spaces targeted by the State for surveillance and apprehension of suspected rebels.

As Sendero expanded, so did their presence in the university system, most notably in Lima, where the movement shifted its focus in the second half of the 1980s. Departments (*facultades*) of education and social sciences were home to a particularly strong presence of Sendero militants (Degregori and Sandoval 2009). When Alberto Fujimori took office in 1990, he pledged to wipe out the growing threat of Sendero that increasingly choked the city of Lima. Noting the presence of Sendero in Lima's public universities, he created new technologies of governance for surveillance and constraint of rebel presence. Students and professors suspected of rebel sympathies quickly became targets for State-sponsored death squads. On July 18, 1992, nine students and a professor from La Universidad Nacional de Educación Enrique Guzmán y Valle, or, as it is commonly known, La Cantuta University, were kidnapped by the Fujimori-affiliated Grupo Colima death squad due to unjust suspicion of affiliation with a recent Shining Path orchestrated bombing in Lima. The remains of some of the students were found months later, showing extensive signs of torture. While a military court convicted members of the Colima group for the crimes, they were absolved and freed by Amnesty Laws passed by the Fujimori regime in 1995. This was by no means the only act of

violence perpetrated against university students. According to the CVR's official report, in the provincial Universidad del Centro, in Huancayo, no fewer than 109 (with 39 additional cases still under investigation) murders and disappearances attributed to Shining Path affiliation occurred between 1980-2000 (CVR 2003: 629). Fujimori's measures to control and constrain the national universities were consistent with his theory of governance, which emphasized an authoritarian agenda aimed at both eliminating rebel movements and enacting a series of neoliberal reforms aimed at 'modernizing' the impoverished and conflict-ridden nation.

On April 5, 1992, after continued frustration with an uncooperative congress and the mounting threat of rebel violence, Alberto Fujimori dissolved congress, suspended the 1979 constitution and disabled key mechanisms of the judicial branch of government in a notorious *auto-golpe*, or self-coup. While gaining office by democratic election nearly two years earlier, Fujimori quickly assumed a dictator-like authority, disabling the mechanisms of democracy that could check his power. He maintained the support of the Armed Forces by appointing members of his inner circle in positions of high command, and retained this support by granting the Armed Forces extended powers in their counterinsurgency campaigns in both Lima and the countryside (Obando 1998). As part of the coup, the Peruvian National Police began to receive direction from the National Intelligence Service and were subordinated to military authority. This further consolidated power under Fujimori and the head of Intelligence, the notoriously corrupt Vladimiro Montesinos, who is now serving time in prison under convictions of bribery and corruption. Under the banner of fighting terror, the police and Armed Forces were given license to round up and arrest suspected rebels, and try them in a closed military

court without the rights of normal citizens. With the Armed Forces concentrated in their struggles with Shining Path, Fujimori took advantage of his unchecked power to restructure and liberalize the economy, privatizing key industries such as petroleum, communications, and mining, revising the Velasco-era land reforms, and invigorating the interests of foreign capital in Peru's natural resources (Carrion 2006; Dean 2002; Manrique 1996).

A social climate of fear was produced and reproduced by actions on behalf of both the State and the groups that opposed it. While political violence at both the hands of the Peruvian State and rebel groups destroyed lives and splintered the social body, technologies of government worked to manufacture an atmosphere of intimidation and silence. Fujimori used a politics of fear that equated critics of his governance with likely terrorists. He harnessed fear to silence his opponents and manipulated the constitution to extend his rule. Legal mandates such as Fujimori's Decree Law 25475 implicated even those suspected of being sympathizers or collaborators with rebel groups as "terrorists" and subjected them to draconian prison sentences (Burt 2007). To wit, statements made in favor of terrorism by teachers or professors were also criminalized under Decree Law No. 25880, "with a view to preventing them from influencing their students" (Davis 2002). In this manner, the very democratic action of criticizing one's government became a crime. These were the technologies used to absolve the murderers of La Cantuta, and countless other violations of human rights. Further, the mechanisms for organizing and participating in social movements were hindered under the threat of terrorist accusations.

These oppressive means of governance, imposed under the banner of democracy, promoted a particular descriptive discourse in making sense of the violence Peru was experiencing. The armed conflict was to be understood and remembered not as a war, but as the “*Manchay Tiempo*,” or a time of fear, to borrow Manrique’s (1989) Quechua-Spanish hybrid terminology. Terror was framed in an official discourse that posited *terrorism* as the action of rebel groups and the State violence the only means of stopping it. *Fear* was produced by State violence, but terror was, in official discourse, a label reserved for the rebels. Anti-terrorist laws put in place after the 1992 *auto-golpe* gave loose definitions for “terrorist” activity that overlapped with community organizing among civil society (Burt 2006:50-51). Fifteen years after the armed conflict, the same rhetoric still held up. Early in my fieldwork, I tried to bring up the armed conflict with César, a young man who was my neighbor during the month I lived in Lima. He immediately assumed that my mention of “war” was in reference to the ongoing border skirmishes with Ecuador. “No,” I explained, “the *war* that went on for 20 years, in this very community!” “Oh,” he replied, “You mean the time of terrorism (*la época del terrorismo*)”? This experience was not unique. When I attempted, in my more privileged relationships, to draw out stories and understandings of the armed conflict, I learned to bring up the subject using the language of terror in order to engage with my subjects. My conversation with César was an important turning point in my research, as it forced me to engage with the power of a discourse that was creating an ‘official’ understanding of conflict that pitted the State against ‘terrorists,’ a moniker that grew to include many people who were not directly involved in political violence.

Superimposed on the landscape of conflict were the concurrent neoliberal reforms created to lure foreign capital, and ostensibly aimed at ‘modernizing’ the impoverished nation. Peru’s Amazonian regions figured decisively into the aims of these elite-backed reforms. Fujimori looked towards the vast tracts of Amazonian lands to attract potential investors, offering tax incentives and generous concessions to multinational firms interested in resource extraction (Dean 2002:211-212). Like other populists, he extensively toured the country, including visits to provincial cities and villages in the Amazon, a region often ignored by past presidents. In Amazonia he gave gifts like school uniforms and bread, promising inclusion in his modernizing project through actions such as the building of new primary schools in marginalized, rural areas and urban peripheries (Oliart 2007). This greatly strengthened Fujimori’s appeal, and created fierce loyalties that persisted long after he resigned from the presidency (Barr 2003). While there was opposition and resistance to his dictator-like rule, many embraced Fujimori’s populist governance. One informant responded to my critiques of the authoritarian leader by reminding me of the new elementary school Fujimori built in her district, and the repairs he made to existing ones, including furnishing her and her classmates with new uniforms. Explaining her choice to vote Keiko in the upcoming election, she told me, ‘when it comes to the election, we have to think, and think well. In terms of education, Fujimori has done the most. He was the only one that paid any attention to us’.

My conversations with numerous *tarapotinos* recalled David Nugent’s (1997) cogent analysis of the nation-building project in the neighboring province of Amazonas, where local peoples welcomed the rituals and rhetoric of nation as a means of subverting colonial, aristocratic hierarchies. Referring to nineteenth- and early twentieth-century

Peru, Nugent situates his argument before the recent wave of global economic restructuring to support a neoliberal model more in line with the desires of global market forces. However, key elements of Nugent's argument apply to twenty-first century Tarapoto. The nation-building project in Peru has long favored Amazonian natural resources over its people in development projects. As recently as 2007, in an editorial in a prominent Lima newspaper, then-president Alan García referred to Amazonian peoples as “backyard dogs” (*perro del hortelano*) who stood in the way of the development of their lands (García Pérez 2007). From a history of social discrimination, many Amazonians welcomed the emergent rhetoric of “technology, honor, and work” that accompanied Fujimori's populist leadership. Marginalized both politically and geographically from the center of power in Lima, Tarapoto and its surrounding regions had a diminished State presence until recent years (Zárate Ardelá 2003). In his ethnography of the Huallaga Valley, the coca-growing region that spans the southern half of San Martín, Richard Kernaghan (2009) argues that it was this very absence of State presence that permitted the Shining Path to essentially rule the region. The absence of the State created space for alternate forms of power and governance, to where the order and discipline imposed by the rebel group was at times even welcomed. This history of marginalization strengthened Fujimori's populist appeal in the region, creating loyal subjects out of a substantial portion of the regional population.

The armed conflict and the subsequent neoliberal reforms of the Fujimori, carried through by the successive governments of Alejandro Toledo and Alan García<sup>6</sup> worked to

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<sup>6</sup> I am referring, here, to Alan García's first presidency, from 1985-2000. During his second term, his attitude was drastically different, and he did much to lure in US capital,

create a specific form of citizen-subject that would be able to reproduce the particular power relations that benefitted the neoliberal agenda of the State. Under successive neoliberal governments, Peru's State agenda has been active in the formation of particular subjects through promotion and restriction of forms of knowledge and disciplinary technologies, including numerous legal decrees, surveillance, and a restructured education system that undercut the social sciences. Rationales of government generate technologies that strive to form subjects primed to act in accordance with the former (Agrawal 2005; Inda 2005).

Beginning with Fujimori regime, the threat of terror was used a rationale for its authoritarian measures towards both combating rebel groups and instituting neoliberal reforms. Subsequent governments, less preoccupied with the threat of a rebel takeover, continued to promote a neoliberal agenda intent on attracting foreign investment in Peru. This has not been without its own set of problems. Perhaps most significantly, the 2009 Free Trade Agreement enacted by president Alan García set off a wave of protests in the Amazon that culminated in the notorious massacre near a stretch of highway called the "Devil's Curve" in the Department of Amazonas (Greene 2009b; Renique 2009). Conflict was never singular, and violence was repeated along a continuum of State action and popular reaction. However, I emphasize Fujimori's decade in power more than the subsequent neoliberal administrations because of the particular educational reforms enacted under the Fujimori regime began a shift, in higher education, towards a corporate model emphasizing technical and professional education. This, I argue, was a direct

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including the signing of a Free Trade Agreement in 2006, a move that was largely responsible for the bloody land clash in the city of Bagua, in June 2009.

response to a time of heightened conflict, where the universities became a space for rebel organizing. The educational reforms passed under Fujimori promoted a new, neoliberal model of education that stood in contrast with the departments of the National University that were once a bastion for critical thought and political organizing.

### III. Schooling the Body Politic

The concept of a body politic describes how states use available power—‘official’ force, laws, decrees—to control, constrain and regulate the social body, and discipline individual bodies to be appropriate citizen-subjects (Foucault 1978; Scheper-Hughes and Lock 1987). In the case of Peru, a Fujimori State agenda established a dual vision of the elimination of rebels and neoliberal market reforms. This worked its way into governmental techniques aimed at disciplining the bodies social and individual. As discussed in the previous section, the attempted silencing of dissenting voices in the universities addressed the first part of this agenda. But technologies of governance are not only about constraint; they also act to encourage subjects to reproduce ideologies. This speaks to the second part of this agenda: preparing subjects to embody new, neoliberal economic reforms.

*Tarapotinos*, like residents of other provincial cities in Peru, value education as a means of transcending the economic boundaries and structural racism characterize the nation (García 2005; Leinaweaver 2008). Schooling is one of the fundamental methods for social mobility, as levels of education can often be used as a class marker (Bourdieu 1984). In a multilingual, pluricultural nation such as Peru, education has long been exclusionary, creating a particular understanding of ‘educated’ that marginalizes those for whom Spanish is a learned language (Dean 1999; Greene 2009a). Access to increased educational opportunities is the goal of many regional migrants in Peru, and new, provincial schools are heralded as victories for marginalized communities. As a part of the neoliberal educational reforms enacted by his administration, Alberto Fujimori increased the number of primary schools at the expense of teacher salaries and budget

allocations for secondary schools and public universities. This was following development advice of the World Bank, who argued that it was at the primary school level that a broader swathe of the population could be reached, especially those in the most poor and remote rural areas of the country (Domenech and Mora-Ninci 2009; Oliart 2007; Puiggrós 1999). Instilling basic skills was crucial not only to the development of a labor force, but of an early intervention against subversive ideologies. Assuring children the basic right to education would decrease the potential of dissenting parents. The World Bank, not originally formed as an institute for educational intervention, became interested in education when concerns shifted, during the latter half of the cold war, towards poverty and security (Leher 2009). Financing for higher education, if any, should be focused on technical and vocational education, with the assumption that an able labor pool would help further the Bank's model of economic development, and that worthy research that could occur in a university setting was not likely to come from developing nations. While a line of reasoning that favored the development of the youngest and most vulnerable members of the school-going population was hard to contest, the consequences for the secondary and postsecondary schools were severe.

The published findings of the Peruvian Truth and Reconciliation Commission dedicated a 47-page report to the relationship between the conflict and universities in Peru (CVR 2003:603-650 "Las Universidades"). In addition to this section were four reports specific to the universities that were the most prominent sites of conflict: La Universidad Nacional de San Cristóbal de Huamanga, La Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, La Cantuta, y La Universidad del Centro, all of which campuses of the National University system. This should not imply that all leftist intellectuals took up

arms with Sendero Luminoso; in fact this was quite the contrary. Students and professors alike organized to protest Sendero violence and presence in the universities (CVR 2003: 629). For a State intent on defeating Sendero, however, the wide-ranging political spectrum of students and professors were reduced to a hegemonic category of potential rebel-sympathizers who merited police surveillance.

Throughout the internal armed conflict, and especially when the violence spread to Lima, public universities were targeted by anti-terrorist death squads who viewed them as prime spots for the elimination of radicals (Wilson 1999). One of the most famous cases of blatant human rights violations in the name of the anti-insurgent campaign was the Cantuta massacre of 1992.<sup>7</sup> Cases such as the Cantuta massacre established that the university could be a space for terror and death. Suspicion of radical organizing, or even politics, could be grounds enough for imprisonment or murder. Public universities had, after all, been sights of radical leftist thought since their expansion in the 1960s (Lynch 1990). The inclusion of core courses in Marxist thought and historical materialism provided methods of understanding and analyzing the reproduction of the staggering historical patterns of social inequality in Peru. With the expansion of the universities in

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<sup>7</sup> On July 18, nine students and a professor from La Universidad Nacional de Educación Enrique Guzmán y Valle, or, as it is commonly known, La Cantuta University, were kidnapped by the Fujimori-affiliated Grupo Colima death squad due to unjust suspicion of affiliation with a recent Shining Path orchestrated bombing in Lima. The remains of some of the students were found months later, showing extensive signs of torture. While a military court convicted members of the Colima group for the crimes, they were absolved and freed by Amnesty Laws passed by the Fujimori regime in 1995. This was by no means the only act of violence perpetrated against university students. According to the CVR's official report, in the provincial Universidad del Centro, in Huancayo, no fewer than 109 (with 39 additional cases still under investigation) murders and disappearances attributed to Shining Path affiliation occurred between 1980-2000 (CVR 2003: 629).

both Lima and the provinces, a radicalized and more diverse student body challenged the power of the elite ruling class that once dominated university classrooms.

During his decade in power, Fujimori heightened surveillance and decreased funding in the National Universities. This worked to accomplish his dual agenda of defeating Sendero (but controlling and constraining one of their key organizing spaces) and instituting neoliberal reforms (by cutting funding to the National Universities and allowing private universities to become for-profit corporations). Fujimori, however, was not the first Head of State to try such a formula. The surveillance, constraint, and curtailing of funding to the National Universities recalls Pinochet-era Chile, where the education reforms of 1981 lessened the role of the State in higher education, encouraging private sector investment and the creation of both private universities and non-university tertiary schools, largely technological institutes. During the budget cuts and reforms of the State universities, social science departments, with the exception of economics, were among the first to go. This not only promoted Pinochet's neoliberal economic agenda, but reduced the potential for political activism, as the now-struggling public universities were important sites of leftist political organizing and social movements (Bernasconi 2005). In Peru, the social science programs in the National Universities have also suffered. Degregori and Sandoval (2009) devote a recent publication to an analysis of the fate of the social sciences beneath recent neoliberal reforms, arguing that academic programs in the social sciences have only expanded among Peru's private universities.

Public expenditure per student in Peru's national universities was reduced from approximately \$4000 in 1960 to \$1300 in 2003. (Lynch 2005:9). As funding decreased, private capital moved in to fill the gaps left by a weakened public higher education

system. Tertiary schools became examples of neoliberal reforms that emphasized privatization and the rules of the free market. In 1996, Peru became the first Latin American nation to pass a law allowing educational institutions to assume the legal structure of a for-profit corporation. For the first time, educational institutions could become for-profit corporations with the blessings of the State. That same year, the Universidad Peruana de Ciencias Aplicadas (or UPC), with the support of a corporate subsidiary (Cibertec Institute, SA), became Peru's first for-profit university (van Lutsenburg Maas 2001). This began a new trend of higher education under a corporate, for-profit model that emphasized courses of study in technology, and business. Contrasting this to the *facultades* of Education and Social Science in campuses of the National University, that had become both sites of Sendero organizing and State surveillance, we may understand how neoliberalism, reacting to conflict, shapes the nature of higher education in Peru.

Year	ISTs ( <i>Institutos Superiores Tecnicos</i> )		Universities	
	Public	Private	Public	Private
1975	1	0	1	0
1992	1	1	1	0
2010	1	8	1	3 <sup>8</sup>

Figure 3: Tertiary Education in Tarapoto metropolitan area (including La Banda del Shilcayo and Morales).

For the Fujimori regime that campaigned on promises of technology and progress, an educated workforce was essential for stimulating the country's economic growth, expanding the middle class, and attracting foreign investment. This was consistent with

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<sup>8</sup> All three private universities in Tarapoto are campuses of larger private universities based out of Lima – La Universidad César Vallejo (UCV, with 7 campuses), Universidad Alas Peruanas (UAP, with 28 campuses), and La Universidad Peruana Unión

the educational advice coming from the World Bank, who had begun to stress intervention in issues of poverty and security through early education (Domenech and Mora-Ninci 2009; Leher 2009). With the public university as a potential site for rebel organizing, however, new spaces for the production of politically neutral yet technologically competent citizens needed to be found. A body of experts (Foucault 2000) suited to promulgating the desires of the neoliberal State needed an alternative space for their training. Enter the private *instituto*, education-corporation *par excellence*.

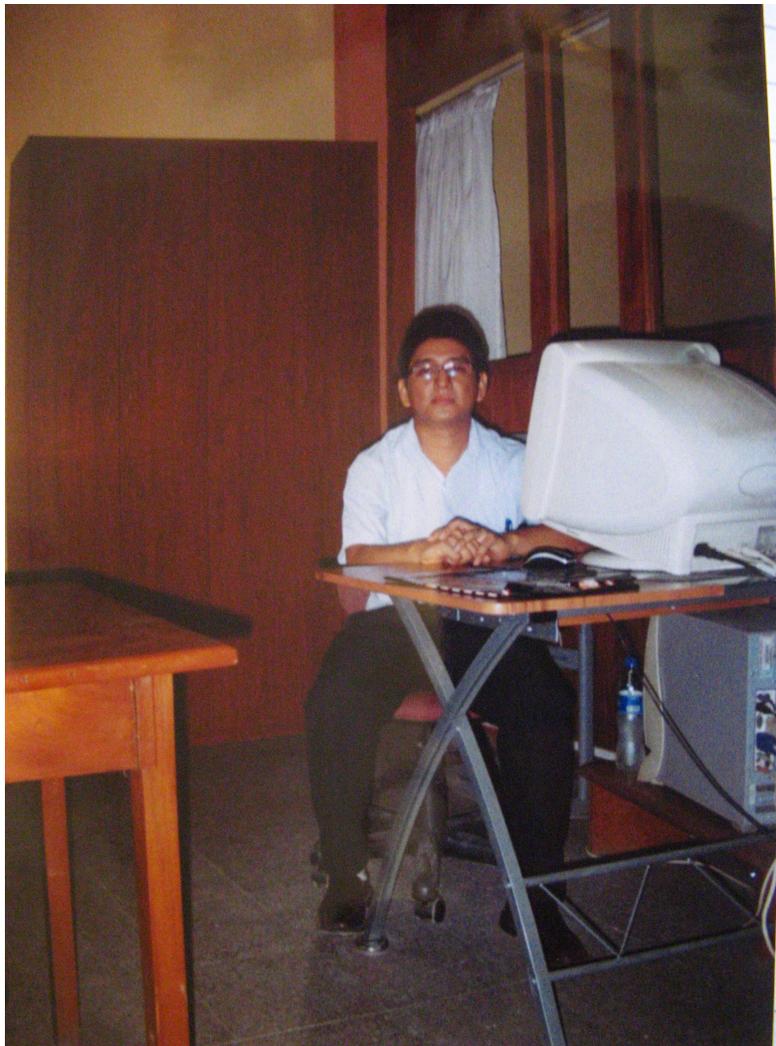


Figure 4: CBP Student at a Computer: photo by Valeria

The past two decades of changes in education in Peru have been characterized by a declining quality of public institutions of higher education, and the emergence of a tremendous number of private, accredited universities and institutes with an emphasis on finance and technology-based majors. While there are now 40 branches of the public, National University spread throughout the nation, the number of private ones has exploded to 132 (Velázquez Castro 2010). In addition to private universities, non-university tertiary schools, or *institutos*, have sprung up in both provincial and urban locales. Some, like the NIIT Institute,<sup>9</sup> are part of transnational, corporate conglomerates. Others are nationally based corporations, often with several regional campuses in addition to one in Lima, and some are independent. Corporación Blaise Pascal, Tarapoto's first private *instituto tecnico*, was one such corporate school. The inclusion of "*corporación*" in the schools official title added the allure of a professional environment. The *instituto*, with its requirements of technological literacy and work uniforms, promotes and image of order and employability. This is especially appealing in regions such as the jungle and highlands, where a professional job becomes a tool for transcending class and ethnic-based discrimination. In San Martín, the percentage of students enrolling in higher education has jumped from 15.1% in 2001 to 47.9% in 2010. This is greater increase, in percentage, from the nation as a whole, which jumped from 37.8% enrollments in 2001 to 57.1% in 2010 (MINEDU 2010b). For poor and

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<sup>9</sup> NIIT Enterprise Learning Solutions is an India-based corporation that sets up educational institutes to train potential corporate workforces in Information Technology and related fields. Established in 1981, NIIT, which describes itself as a "talent development company," was designed, "to help the nascent IT industry overcome its human resource challenges" ([www.niit.com](http://www.niit.com)). While NIIT institutes are most common in India, they have institutes in 44 countries worldwide, including Peru.

indigenous populations, valuable technical skills in fields such as web design and computer programming make traditional barriers to employment such as social class and ethnicity less of an obstacle. Class and racial markers such as skin color, surname, or regional accent lose importance for jobs that hire based on technological literacy. For young women, this is particularly salient, as the domestic and service jobs normally available to them often exacerbate class distinctions, as Gill notes in her study of La Paz, Bolivia (1994). As Jessica Leinaweaver discusses, in Peru, the status of professional “is explicitly opposed to peasants” (2008: 118). Thus, the for-profit *instituto* became a viable option for youth looking to push past obstacles of ethnicity and class, as governing rhetoric encouraged apolitical education and the necessity of professionalization and technological proficiency among Peru’s citizenry. One afternoon, I sat with a group of students from CBP discussing their educational goals. One student, Rieder, spoke up, “the goal of every young person is to assert themselves by finding their own place in the economy”. His classmate, Irene, chimed in, “my goal is to have my own business, and keep everything in order. I want to have my own office where everything can be arranged neatly”. Rather than job-specific skills, the *instituto* is a space to form a professional and socially mobile identity.

The *instituto* nourishes a form of what Nussbaum identified as a crucial pillar of democratic education: the narrative imagination (2002; 2006). It does so, however, in a different sort of way than she intended the concept to be applied in an educational setting. Nussbaum calls for a revalorization of the arts and humanities in education, stressing that it is through the imaginative process of learning and performing arts and literature that we may strengthen our capacities for empathetic imagination, Socratic self-examination, and

critical thinking. The empathy-breeding potential of narrative imagination is important in stratified societies, where privileged classes must learn to understand how their privilege is both produced and reproduced, thinking critically about their role in the democratic process that fosters continued stratification and inequality. But what, then, of the role of imagination and narrative imaginations for more marginalized populations? In the *institutos* of Tarapoto, students learn to imagine themselves as modern, technologically-literate professionals, who speak English, are consumers of global e-culture, and, in their uniformed bodies, can pass through layers of gendered, classed, and racialized discrimination and imagine themselves as socially permeable bodies empowered by their uniform appearance and technological literacy.



Figure 5: *Instituto* Classroom: photo by Gianela

#### **IV. Gendered Uniformities**

Amidst larger social flux wrought from conflict, schools produce particular citizen-subjects that reflect and embody larger social changes. Schools in particular do work to shape the body politic, transforming ideals and desires into tangible forms of social practice and embodied subjects. Through the support, regulation, or restriction of State policies, school agendas are transformed to reflect larger structural changes such as the move towards neoliberalism experienced by Peru during the latter half of the internal armed conflict, during Fujimori's decade in power (1990-2000). In the words of Aurolyn Luyck (1999), schools are the "citizen factories" that shape collective imaginaries of national identity.

While a technical school, complete with uniforms and corporate affiliations, is a prime example for new neoliberal models of education, it also stands as a means of transcending class, ethnic and gender-based biases through educational opportunities in telecommunications, computers, and other new technologies. In 2010, there were 3,124 students enrolled in ISTs. 53 % percent of these students were female. Secondary school enrollments reflect a slightly lower percentage of females, with 49.9% of the 13798 students enrolled registered as female (MINEDU 2010a). While only a 3% increase, it is significant to note that women are the population increasingly drawn to postsecondary, technical education. This is a difference from the National University (the Universidad Nacional de San Martín, or UNSM)'s department of systems engineering. While one of the most popular majors at the school, with an enrollment of

364, the third most popular course of study in 2011, only 56, or 15%, of those students are female. Compared to the population of studying the same thing at Tarapoto's private ISTs, this is a dramatically small percentage. The lack of entrance exams, more flexible schedule, and perhaps most notably, the stylish and orderly polyester uniform extend the appeal of the private *instituto* to young women.

Of the young women that I interviewed that were attending Tarapoto's private *institutos*, all mentioned financial hardship. Some, like Gianela, lived in land 'invasions' that were still awaiting municipal services like water and sewage. But the flexible schedule and practicum-based curriculum of the *instituto* gave them the opportunity not only to work to support themselves and their families, but also to have realistic potentials for employment should they graduate near the top of their class. In a region that has traditionally not employed women outside of the domestic, agricultural and hospitality sectors, the affordable education of the *instituto* provides a potential opportunity to gain entrance into worlds previously closed off to them by the confines of class, gender, education level and ethnicity. Gianela elaborated, "Here in the *instituto*, everyone is presented equally; no one is better dressed than another. Wearing the uniform makes me think about myself in a new way". *Instituto* culture included bodies not often seen in the National University, and the uniformed space of the IST was desirable not only for financial reasons<sup>10</sup> but for the complete image it provided.

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<sup>10</sup> As of 2011, tuition at a private, certified technical instituto in Tarapoto was less than half that of the National University, around \$40 US a semester.

Those who wish to study at the National University must first take a qualifying exam, which costs approximately US \$200, for which they will often spend up to a year studying at a *prepa* (preparatory institute for entrance exams), an additional financial burden. If the student passes the challenging entrance exam, tuition hovers at around US\$100 a semester.

Bodies are not passive subjects who unconditionally accept the molding and intentions of structural forces. As students who choose to attend a postsecondary *instituto* reflect the aims professionalizing, modernizing, and even civilizing discourses, they are also activating adult agency, and taking an active role in determining their potential life trajectories. By entering the *instituto*, and engaging in studies of technology of information systems, youth are creating options for themselves that may provide a path out of the traditional discrimination leveled at Amazonian peoples for reasons of ethnicity, class, and gender. This is especially salient for young women, who bear the weight of all three of these discriminatory and exclusionary mechanisms. New technologies, and especially computers, have increasingly become a viable option for women entering the workforce due to the flexible and autonomous nature of this form of labor (Castells 2001: 93). This body politic becomes embedded in personal comportment and image. It is from the point of the individual body that I will now talk about how proscribed conduct and individual agency and imagination come together in a both practical and symbolically loaded form: the uniform.



Figure 6: *Chicas del Instituto*: photo by Irene

Uniforms are not only a technique of discipline, but also a lexicon of particular social characteristics, values, and skills. In the developing world, they often serve to signal a more modern (read: Western), professional identity (Craik 2003; Stepputat 2004). School uniforms, which date back to sixteenth century England, were inspired by the military's use of uniform dress. They conveyed a sense of order, discipline, and collective skills among those dressed bodies. Uniforms, as such, serve as a means of producing and re-producing disciplined and ordered citizen-subjects through what Mauss calls techniques of the body (1973: 75). This was a technology implemented and utilized, in Peru, first by the military and later by the schools for creating national identities

among the emerging sovereign State (Klarén 2000; Nunn 1983; Stepputat 2004; Wilson 2001). The military, and later scholastic, origins of the uniform has made it synonymous with ideas of civil society, and the making of nationalist identities through schools and military service. In this reading, uniformed pupils signify attempts at imitating Western ideas of progress, development, and modernity through cultural homogenization and military-inspired discipline. The influence of the military serves to compound sentiments of nationalism, as training in disciplined dress and marching prepares potential soldiers, and implants the idea that youth “belong” to a nation which they are expected to serve and sacrifice for should they be called upon to defend the sovereignty of their nation. For young women, the imposition of school uniforms proved an effective technique for instilling Westernized attitudes towards gender and professional conduct. Uniform of the *instituto*, however, cannot be seen as only a coercive technology. As I will discuss in the following section, many young women that I interviewed were drawn to their particular *instituto* by the style of its uniforms, or the ‘professional’ identity that its students seemed to personify. The uniform became a device for individuals to help realized their imagined identities as powerful and skilled professionals.

Uniforms hold power as a disciplinary and citizenship technique. In the case of the students of the *institutos* of Tarapoto, this explanation misses a crucial dimension of agency and imagination (Gaonkar 2002) occurring in this localized context. Electing to wear a school uniform past the days of the required school uniform of the *colegio*, students are opting for a particular performance of adulthood that invokes the agency of their imagination in forging new identities amidst axes’ of discrimination that have, in the postcolonial setting, stratified and oppressed the life-trajectory options of young people,

and especially young women in the Peruvian Amazon. In the following section, I will illustrate, with an ethnographic example, how these new, professional, identities are formed. From the nearly 200 photographs that accompanied my semi-structured interviews and recorded group discussions (photo-self-elicitation) I have selected three images to represent the emergent themes in the data. I chose the following images after participants themselves flagged key images that they felt were most important to their projects. In each of the data books, participants were asked to flag what they felt to be their most important images, and to elaborate on their meanings with written feedback. I then selected, from their selections, images to represent the emergent themes: *salir adelante* (move forward/get ahead), technology, and professional identity. I connect this to an emergent State rhetoric promoting technology and modernity as an antidote to violent social movements that wracked the nation in recent decades. The promulgation of professionalism was promoted as the answer to Peru's deep-rooted, structural socioeconomic problems. The 'photovoice' of key informants helps to clarify how this shapes individual identities.

## V. Sketched Identities

### i. Angela

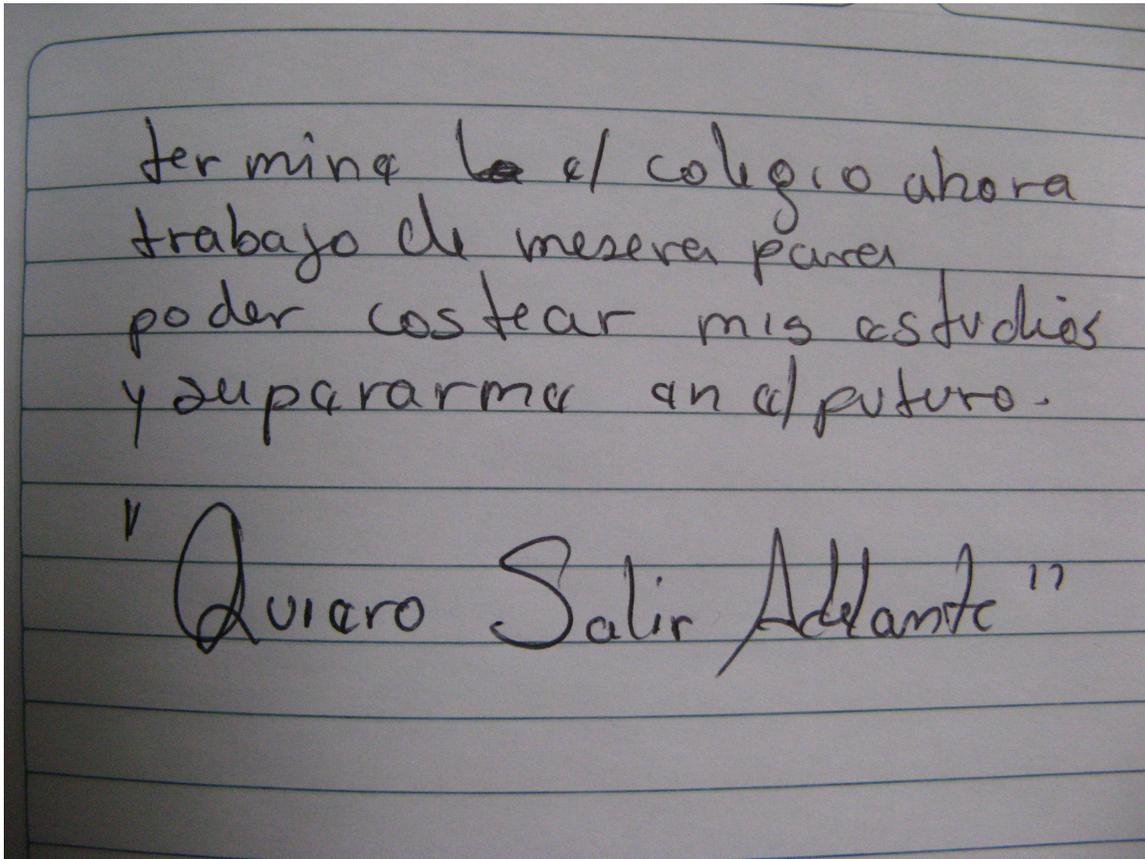


Figure 7 – “Quiero Salir Adelante”: text from Angela’s photo book

The first time I met Angela she was on break from her *instituto* and was dressed in uniform: a fitted navy blue polyester skirt and red vest, white collared shirt, red tie and pumps, her hair pulled back into a bun at the nape of her neck. I have more prominent memories of Angela: nights out dancing or taking a loop around the plaza in her motorcycle, sipping *uvachado* spitting the grape seeds onto the sidewalk as we confessed our life histories and tales of love and heartbreak. But my first impression has always

stuck with me. It is hot in Tarapoto, tropical and steamy through what the rest of the world experiences as summer or winter, and it was hard for me to imagine how she might have been suffering wrapped in all of that polyester, but it turns out her uniform was par for the course. It was my first time in the *selva alta* and there were so many images, colors, smells, sounds that stood out to me, but for some reason I could never shake the uniform, the order of it when everything else around me seemed to me wilting under the heat, Angela and her friends were soldiers in polyester, marching through the unfinished sidewalks of Tarapoto, sipping Inca colas and gossiping on the corner, or speeding by, side-saddle, on a motorcycle or in the back of one of the thousands of moto-taxis that created the never-ending stream of noise pollution that all my jungle memories are set to.

Angela, takes only night classes so that she can work during the day; the women in her household take turns working while others prepare *almuerzo*, attend to visitors, and make sure that her youngest sister gets to school. One evening, Angela invited me along with her because it was a presentation day in her arts and culture class. For the current unit, which was focusing on theater, groups were assigned to create a skit, short video, or similar presentation on a family problem. Angela, who had been rehearsing all day with her friends Magda, Doris, and Geovanny, was excited to play the therapist in their skit about a rebellious teen that had not been attending school. In a scene remarkably similar to the one described by Adrienne Pine in the opening chapter of her book *Working Hard, Drinking Hard* (2008), I sat amidst a class of mostly well-dressed young women and watched as they explained away local social problems with psychological-reductionist ideas of rebellious youth and absentee parents. Angela played the role of psychologist, who helped the family to understand the real reason why their daughter was out so much:

*they* had not been there for her. Just as youth had to learn to respect their families, it was the responsibility of the family to provide an atmosphere of support and order to encourage the progress and betterment synonymous with an education. Although Angela's course of study is "Information Systems" (*Información Systematica*) her curriculum included classes in the arts and humanities. A director at that *instituto*, "el Amazonico", explained to me that this is to ensure that graduates not only emerge with technical skills, but social ones as well. Often, there was a discussion of the social "problems" faced by youth in Tarapoto: sexual promiscuity, the mistreatment of parents, and the vague yet all-encompassing *delincuencia*. Sometimes, these supplemental courses took the form of "celebrations" of regional indigenous cultures, in which the students paint their faces, wear palm-fiber clothing, and dance folkloric dances in a pan-cultural and fictionalized interpretation of a lineage, such as Kechwa-Lamista, Shawi, or Awajún, that students are often descended from.

At the *instituto*, students take courses that prepare them to enter a technology-centered workforce; they learn rudimentary web design, how to operate computer programs, including ones written only in English, and some basic programming. The proliferation of *institutos* in the Tarapoto has, as I have argued earlier, coincided with State actions that allow market logic to guide the formation of private tertiary schools (van Lutsenburg Maas 2001) while at the same time gutting funding for public higher education (Lynch 2005). The uniformed body and technological skills of Angela, whose picture greets us with the confidence of a young professional, is a metonymic representation of a "civilizing project" (Dean 2009; Hvalkof 2006; Varese 2004) that sought to transform, in the parlance former-president Alan García, the 'backyard dogs' of

Amazonia into a modern and professional citizen body of a modern a neoliberal Peru. The *instituto* provides a means for Angela to customize her gender role. Her tailored uniform and sandals maintain the feminine expectations of comportment (Goffman 1979), while her training at the *instituto* will give her the credentials to access the male-dominated professional realm where her technological skills are sorely needed. The *chicas del instituto*, as they are called, customize their femininity in lines with a modernizing and professionalizing ideology that is institutionalized in their program of study.



Figure 8: *Compañera del Instituto*: photo by Angela

The metonym of Angela emerges from the fantasy that has generated the image next to it: the savages of Amazonia awaiting a Pygmalion transformation to members of the modern nation-state. During one interview, a student at CBP shared with me a photo of his classmates gathered for a dance performance that is a part of a course called “National Reality” (*Realidad Nacional*) that students studying Systems Engineering take in their second semester (*ciclo*) of coursework. This course is not unlike the Humanities class at *el Amazonico* that I sat on with Angela. The dance is a fusion of various *danzas Amazonicas* and the dancers wear costumes made from palm fronds, coconut, and feathers, as, in all likelihood, no indigenous groups in Amazonia Peruana ever wore. The intention of the costumes, however, is clear: the youth are paying heed to an imagined memory of a pan-indigenous Other that sang and danced in palm fiber costumes before Spanish contact. That at least half of the dancers in the group possess Kechwa surnames is worth noting. It is likely that these students have or had relatives that belong to one of the Alamas Kechwa indigenous groups scattered throughout San Martín and Loreto. But in this picture, indigenous is a costume, a benign nod to history, and the celebration of a fictionalized other that draws on European imaginations of native Amazonia

More than a space for learning, the *instituto* fabricates identities. Employability is important, but many of the students expressed an interest in alternate careers – Raquel planned on being a police officer, Irene a medical assistant, Gianela a nurse. Jhonny, during my last visit, claimed to want to move to Lima to find work fixing PCs, but this was a change from months prior, when he too planned training for the police. Valeria, a top student at Corporación Blaise Pascal, was the only one who espoused a genuine love for technology, taking apart computers and putting them back together, wiring together

her own creations and understanding the processes by which computers and other devices functioned. What united the group, however, in their educational goals, was the particular technology of the uniform and the training in a “professional” and technologically proficient identity, ready to enter a global workforce in a variety of capacities, but all with a cultivated and displayed appearance and knowledge of order. In a group interview, I tape-recorded Raquel, Irene, and Gianela admit that their final decision to attend CBP was because of the uniform. While the more established *institutos tecnicos* offered comparable programs of study, their students modeled different configurations of professional dress. The girls of CBP wore trousers and they cited this as being more “distinguished” than the slim-fitting polyester skirts worn by students at a rival *instituto*. Gianela elaborated on this point by noting, “with the uniform one can look both professional *and* pretty”. Uniforms were an important way for young women to reproduce existing gender codes (pretty) while embodying the modernizing and professionalizing aims of their schooling.

## ii. *La Tecnología en tus Manos*



Figure 9: Making the Most of Technology: photo by Valeria

Valeria took this image, and the caption beside it reads, “today technology has advanced, but even if you don’t have the latest (technology) we can advance ourselves and strive to have a better life”. Her point, when we discussed the image later on, was to say that even those who could not afford laptops could still harness technology to their advantage, and to move forward in life. The men in her photo can be found half a block

off of Tarapoto's main plaza, where, when it is not raining, they offer their services as typists and scribes to those who cannot write, or lack the confidence to do so. This photo was a response to my prompt: "what changes do you see happening around you?" to which Valeria responded with a series of images of *tarapotinos* working to get ahead (*salir adelante*). Included in her group were a group of disabled street musicians and a man carrying a sack of bananas returning from his *chacra* (forested food garden). She described to me that as even the poorest and most marginalized of her community were working hard to stay afloat, those who could needed to take advantage (*aprovechar*) of technology to find more stable work, or seek a professional identity (*hay personas que siendo discapacitados se esfuerzen y trabajan por su familia; y desearía que las personas sanas se dediquen a trabajar en vez de tartar de ganarse la vida en algo fácil... quiero que la juventud cambia, jóvenes que sean profesionales*).

In this photo and its accompanying caption, Valeria promotes individual agency and the capacity for social advancement through the use of available technology. Valeria, who holds a partial scholarship to her *instituto*, and earns money on the side fixing computers, is also the embodiment of these ideals. When she arrives to the *instituto* on her motor scooter with her short, layered haircut and polyester slacks, Valeria reflects confidence and control. For Valeria, an admitted technophile, her course of study is in line with her lifelong fascination with computers and systems engineering. This is also a path for entry into the burgeoning 'creative class' of Tarapoto. Valeria commutes from an outlying village where she lives with her family, who are all Jehovah's Witnesses. On a daily basis, she confronts a number of marginalizing forces: her gender, her poverty (she holds a rare, merit-based scholarship that covers a portion of her tuition),

and her religion distinguish her from the male, Catholic, middle class norm of Peru's professional sector. Yet Valeria models the success of individual agency: with her motivation, education, and homogenizing uniform, she is able to transcend traditional markers of gender and class that might suppress her professional intentions. Valeria is a poster-child for the sort of "trickle-up" economics advocated by the initial theorists of Peru's transition to a neoliberal model. It is therefore necessary to look at what Valeria's uniformed, professional success stands in contrast to.

## **VI. A Museum Outside of History**

One explanation for the generic, pan-indigenous alterity recalled by the dancers of *instituto* CBP sits, quite literally, three blocks east of the former, and one block south of the latter. It is the Regional Museum of the National University, located in the basement of the school's main administrative offices, in a building that was once a national agrarian bank. Inside is a mixture of fossilized mastodon bones, replicas of regional petroglyphs, funerary urns, requisite ceramics, and a mummy estimated to be 450 years old. The museum was founded in 1993 to showcase specimens of the regions biological and cultural history and diversity collected and donated from and by the regional community. The timing of founding of the museum in 1993, only one year after (nearly to the date) of the massacres in *La Cantuta* University in Lima, merits consideration.

Campuses of the national universities in other sites (San Cristóbal de Huamanga, in Ayacucho, La Cantuta, in Lima, Universidad del Centro, in Huancayo) had become sites of State surveillance, germination grounds for the Shining Path and the MRTA (see CVR 2003 for reports on rebel organizing in each of these universities). *Facultades* of Education and the Social Sciences especially had become politicized during the height of

the conflict, in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Classrooms were home to not only heated debate between those sympathetic with and those opposing Sendero Luminoso and the MRTA, but also secret spaces for the teaching of Sendero doctrine and *pensimientos*. *Gonzalo*, the particular dogma of the Shining Path based off of the teachings of its leader, Abimael Guzman Reinoso, known as “Gonzalo”. As a reaction to this, one of the decrees imposed by then-president Fujimori<sup>11</sup> authorized the entry of the Armed Forces and National Police to the local university at any time so long as they had the authorization of Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of the Interior or that of a politico-military command (CVR 2004: 320). This allowed for greater penetration of the Police and Armed Forces into the universities, and was the legal justification for the massacre at La Cantuta. Teachers unions and universities were prime recruiting grounds for both groups, and sites of clandestine meetings (Sandoval 2004). This is officiated in memory through the report of the CVR, which States that prisons and public universities were considered the primary ‘subversive strongholds’ (CVR 2004: 319).

Education and the Social Science students and professors in particular risked the stigma of rebel sympathy, so much that in the final report of the CVR, they dedicate the section that analyzes the relationship between the conflict and the universities to ‘transform(ing) the stereotypical view that pointed to public universities as a natural focal point of violence and students as conflictive actors of politics’ (CVR 2003: 603, my translation). Expansion of the public university system during this time of fear and surveillance did not find room for critical theory and social sciences; such was fodder for terrorists, and the opposite of the State’s neoliberal ideology of development though

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<sup>11</sup> The original decree had been modified by congress, but after his successful *auto-golpe*, Fujimori implemented Legislative Decree 726 in its intended form

technological progress (Lynch 2001). The focus, instead, was on business and technological education, more in line with the neoliberal character of Fujimori and his successors Alejandro Toledo and Alan García. While State-sponsored death squads were murdering students in Lima, and closing down departments to counter threats of Shining Path takeover, can only a museum emerge as an acceptable space for discussions of culture and history? Even though Elaine Karp, the wife of Fujimori's elected successor, Alejandro Toledo, held a MA in anthropology from Stanford and spoke Quechua, the Toledo administration continued to emphasize educational programs that favored a neoliberal agenda (Degregori and Sandoval 2009). Toledo, whose race for president was characterized by an emphasis on his indigenous, Andean roots, worked to institute multiculturalism in Peru through the creation of such institutions as CONAPA, which was disbanded in 2004, and its successor, INDEPA, institutions whose stated aim was to include the voice of Andean, Amazonian, and Afro-Peruvian actors in State politics. Scholarships and inroads were made available for students from indigenous communities to attend public universities, in a gesture of acknowledgement of the inclusion of indigenous peoples in Peru's modernizing and neoliberalizing trajectory, contingent on an educated workforce. Those students, indigenous and otherwise, who chose to study the social sciences, were met by a public university system wounded by years of conflict, violence, and surveillance. While multiculturalism became institutionalized, the public spaces intended for a critical examination of this relationship between State and cultural identities were falling into disarray.

So how then do we locate Tarapoto's anthropology museum? My most recent visit to Tarapoto, when I curated a photography exhibit documenting a recent "land

invasion,” in the nearby city of Yurimaguas (Dean and Silverstein 2011), was instructional. The December 28<sup>th</sup> opening of this photo exhibit, the first in the museum’s 18-year history, was scheduled concurrently with a re-wrapping of a mummy in collaboration with a Kechwa women’s weaving cooperative, Warmi Awakuku. The photographs shared scenes of everyday life in the beginnings of a new city; images of people digging, fishing, building, as well as portraits and landscape shots spoke engaged with quotidian realities in the rapidly expanding urban areas of Amazonia. Tarapoto itself was home to numerous new “invasions”. Gianela, one of the CBP students who I interviewed, lived in one such settlement, and identified a main goal of her studies as qualifying her for a job that would pay her enough to move her family out of the invasion, where municipal services like water and sanitation were still lacking.



Figure 10: Community Water Tank: photo by Gianela

The *tarapotinos* who attended the museum’s double opening that Thursday reacted hesitantly to the photos. First-time visitors to the museum lingered by the

displays of funerary urns, fossilized bones and ceramic vessels, impressed by the representations of regional antiquity. The mummy drew special attention from her new woven garments and ceremonial re-wrapping by the women of the weaving cooperative. For the women of Warmi Awakuku, this ritual symbolized inclusion in the university/museum space, not as artifacts of an indigenous past, but as contributors whose expertise was called upon for the improvement of a valued piece in the museum collection. This collaboration between the university and the indigenous cooperative received substantial attention. The event was broadcast on television and featured on the front page of the regional edition of the newspaper *Diario Ahora*. Through this event, the museum began to serve as an intermediary between artifacts of regional antiquity and a living, indigenous present. This seems in line with the turn, since Toledo's presidency, of institutional recognition of multiculturalism, not as merely a part of Peru's history, but of current realities.

The photographs received a more mixed response. Most people seemed unsure of their presence – the artifactual nature of the museum's collection seemed to be at odds with the quotidian character of the exhibit's subjects. The sun-bleached t-shirts and mud-splattered rain boots worn by those present in the photos spoke to the uncomfortable reality of urban poverty, rather than a happy revalorization of Kechwa culture through the ritual rewrapping of a mummy by a local, indigenous weaving cooperative. The jarring images stood in contrast to the remainder of the museum's collection that rested in the safe space created by a Plexiglas display case. Despite the sizeable crowd of students, local bureaucrats and community members, the photography did not provoke much interest or discussion from the event's attendees.

As the event was winding down, I ran out to replenish the soda supply, and returned to a small commotion among my close friends and colleagues, the only people who remained at the museum. In my absence, two men had come in and criticized the photos, demanding to know how they had been allowed in a museum and how their content was considered art or anthropology, when all it depicted was criminal activity. One of the men was a local artist, and the other worked for Aguas Ricas,<sup>12</sup> a regional tourism corporation with a number of hotels and resorts in the local area. According to the claims of the man from Aguas Ricas, the pictures of the settlers of Las Brisas did not depict any sort of culture other than a culture of delinquency. Aguas Ricas, as it was, owned a large track of land near the settlement, where future development plans were in the works pending the construction of an international port in Yurimaguas that promised to invigorate a tourist economy in the growing city. The settlers of Las Brisas not only provided an unsightly reminder of the region's grinding poverty, but threatened an expansion of the network of shantytowns on the urban perimeter, potentially spilling over into lands owned by Aguas Ricas and similar corporations.

The man's angry commentary provides an important insight into how "culture" is accepted and institutionalized. Both the mildly indifferent reactions of the majority of museum guests and the livid response of the man from Aguas Ricas demonstrate the everyday culture of regional poverty was not expected as material for exhibition in a museum of anthropology. Despite a turn in Peruvian anthropology that has focused investigations on structural inequalities, political violence, and social conflict, it seemed

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<sup>12</sup> Not its real name

that the museum was a space where it was still acceptable, paraphrasing Orin Starn, to 'miss the revolution' (1991).

## Conclusions: Interpreting the Ethnographic Palimpsest

When culture and history belong only in a museum, regional histories and identities are submerged below a dual rhetoric of modernization and nostalgic primitivism. Policies that restrict educational spaces that foster critical thought, and promote ones with market-based ideologies create subjects in line with the intentions of this discourse. A uniformed and technologically literate class of *instituto* graduates personify and embody neoliberal values that place an emphasis on the promise of information technology and the ethic of short-term contractual relations rather than a lifetime commitment to a trade or career (Giroux 2009). While the *instituto* does not act as a technology of government *per se*, the proliferation of the *instituto* in San Martín links the post-1992 neoliberal economic policies of the successive governments with the formation of a local, educated class in line with the State's modern and technologically-literate development fantasy. Further, the very accessibility of the *instituto*, its relatively low price, flexible enrollment schedule, and lack of qualifying exams, becomes a viable option for the children of recent migrants (who make up a great part of Tarapoto's rapidly expanding population) to enter the cadres of the educated while avoiding the often terrifying, and always expensive, bureaucratic process of seeking entrance into the National University. As the state universities, haunted by the specter of surveillance, see their budgets cut, policies permitting private education institutions to establish themselves with the organizing principles of a for-profit corporation support an entrance of the free market into the hollows of a decaying public university system. Interpreting the present as palimpsest, we find layers of fear, oppression, and conflict building up to

create the ordered and technocratic snapshot of tertiary education that emerges from the foreground.

In my more long-term and intimate relationships with informants, the armed conflict did come up, unprompted, in conversation. Angela, who is the daughter of Berenice, told me about the *Sendero Luminoso* base that was near their *chacra*, and the rage she accumulated in her mother every time they would come steal chickens or demand food. These days, perhaps not surprisingly, Berenice is an ardent *Fujimorista*. But due to her disapproval, Angela also feared that one of the SL leaders, who she had heard was driving a mototaxi in la Banda del Shilcayo, would one day recognize them, and try and punish them. He was recognizable, she said, by an artificial leg that replaced one that he lost jumping from a plane to advert police capture. Or so the legend goes. Also Antonio, whom I interviewed but whose story does not appear here, talked to me about the armed conflict. His grandfather, a proud socialist who lived in Lima, had been rounded up during the end of Fujimori's term, when he was making mass arrests to enforce his "Apology for Terror" law. Luckily, the grandfather was released without prolonged imprisonment, but the message had been clear: activism was terror. Antonio, of anyone, was most interested in my research, and we continue to maintain an email correspondence, which these days consist mostly of links he sends me about reparations projects, or corruption among the Fujimorista family.

The delicate topic of the armed conflict, violence, and terrorism was safe to emerge in the privileged relationship that I enjoyed with select informants. For the others, however, I was left to interpret an ethnographic palimpsest. Direct memory is not the only way that conflict remains present in contemporary Peru. In the preceding

chapters, I have argued that conflict may also be understood through changing technologies of governance created in reaction to periods of intense violence and conflict. The intervention of the Peruvian State in tertiary education is one such example of this. Neoliberalism, reacting to conflict, has shaped the nature of higher education in Peru. During the height of Peru's armed conflict, campuses of the National University, especially *facultades* of Social Science and Education, became targets of State surveillance and violent intervention in student affairs. In contrast, concurrent neoliberal education reforms encouraged higher education to mold itself in accordance with market logic: in 1996 Peru became the first Latin American nation to offer a for-profit, corporate status to institutes of higher education. As the number of private universities and technical institutes continues to grow, per-pupil State spending in the National Universities continues to decline. The expansion of private universities and *institutos* has shaped the character of higher education with an emphasis on technical and professional courses of study in line with a modernizing rhetoric and neoliberal development model that was promoted as an antidote to the violent social movements that raged throughout Peru in the 1980s and 1990s. Here, in order's negative space the traces of conflict haunt the everyday, reminding us to read past the permeable foreground.

Among those studying in the ISTs of Tarapoto, new, professional identities emerge as promising alternatives to historical inequalities drawn along the lines of ethnicity, gender and class. Wearing a uniform and typing on a computer, these *tarapotinos* may envision themselves in a number of professional identities unimaginable to their parents. Students of the *instituto* proudly promote a modernizing rhetoric espousing order, technology, and individual achievement. In Tarapoto, options for higher

education include few options that challenge this discourse; anthropology is relegated to a museum and a benign space in history. It is in this space where a more oppressive legacy of conflict is emergent. Constraint of spaces created for social examination and critique pushes these discussions away from the public sphere. This is a risky move, the submergence of the promotion of critical thought often breeds the sorts of violent social movements that the Peruvian State sought to dismantle with the creation of these restrictive technologies.

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