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The influence of culture and arts on the development of Peruvian children

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A Thesis

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The Influence of Culture and Arts on the Development

Of Peruvian Children

by

Rebecca Church

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

Master of Liberal Studies

Dr. Charles Beatty-Medina, Committee Chair

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An Abstract of

The Influence of Culture and Arts on the Development of Peruvian Children

by

Rebecca Church

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Masters Degree in Liberal Studies

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The following is the study of Peruvian culture, habitual behaviors, current trends, and arts and how they influence the development of the children of the country. It is a reflection of how traditional stories are often utilized to impart moral and ethical lessons to young children. Culture is deeply rooted in Peru, but as modern technologies become more accessible, and the struggle to become a more successful people becomes more urgent, the continuing of traditions amongst the people seems to be diminishing. I will discuss the humanities of Peru, exploring the art, music, social science, and history of the country and its people, touching on the impact each has on their children in an effort to discover if it is possible for a Peruvian child to gain a better life while preserving the culture of their forefathers.
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Preface

Born in Yorkshire, England, my father was raised in an environment rich with culture, history, ruins, and legends of the past. I grew up hearing stories of how he and his friends made use of the castle ruins as their playgrounds, often reenacting legendary battles. Replacing the ancient weaponry with snowballs, each child drew upon their ‘military tactics’ to throw snowballs at an opposing group of children until they had exhausted themselves with play and laughter. Though the use of the ruins was entertaining for the boys, they were careful to avoid sacred areas, as well as vicinities that had legend of being haunted. These stories led me to think considerably about the things children learn in their culture, and how it helps mold who they become as adults. While volunteering my time with the children of Peru, I noticed similar behavioral patterns to those of my father and his boyhood friends.

Peru, known for its many ancient ruins and historical culture, is overflowing with tradition. These traditions involve customs from the early indigenous people of Peru, as well as cultural customs from those emigrating from places such as Europe, Africa, and the Caribbean. Traditional behavior that makes up the rich culture found in Peru is revealed in the clothing, food, religion, social life, entertainment, and arts, among other things. The children of
this country are inundated with stories of their ancestors, lifestyle customs, and
descriptions of ancient ruins. They are reared knowing and respecting their
heritage, as well as their culture. Several children of Peru grow up to carry on
those traditions, usually living out all their days in small villages in the
mountains. They are true to the knowledge of their ancestors, and though they
may live in poverty, they persevere, eventually teaching their own children the
ways of their ancestors. Other children, though they may also learn of their
ancestors, are born into (or sent to) families who can offer what are seen as better
opportunities, while others yet are born into wealthy families, making it possible
for them to attain better education, and thus better lives. Though children of Peru
may be raised under different circumstances, they have their country, its history,
and its culture in common. There is a seeming danger of Peruvian children,
especially those in the highlands, leaving behind their rich culture in an effort to
obtain a life of expediency. To understand their struggle for a better life, one
must understand the culture, and what is deemed positive versus what is
deemed negative. Though most of this study explores these characteristics in the
Peruvian people living in and around the Andes Mountains, I will explain some
areas in broader terms as well.

Children hold dreams in their minds, and endless possibility in their eyes.
Peruvian children have dreams of their own, but with an added touch of color, in
my opinion. There is a seeming creative sensibility as well as patterns of behavior
amongst Peruvian children, much of which are learned and passed down by
generations before. In this study, I have made an effort to point out some particular anthropological aspects of a child growing up in Peru in which these patterns are developed: culture, education, creative abilities, religious influence, social pressures, and recreation, to name a few. These different aspects make children the people they become, and with a little hope in their future, they will continue to enhance these aspects and carry on some of the beautiful and fascinating customs found in their country. There is a tendency for the children to reject the cultural customs and beliefs practiced by their families in an effort to integrate themselves with those that are living a more contemporary and accepted lifestyle. Technologies, still not available in some remote areas of the Andes Mountains, appeal to the children, and pull them toward a life in which they disregard their heritage. I believe that if the children of Peru could find a balance between the modern-day world and maintaining their cultural heritage, they would benefit greatly. This balance, I believe, can be related to the balance of science and art. They are separate entities, but much more powerful when working together. As a Peruvian child grows, their culture acts as a creative foundation, which can be stabilized further by understanding modern advancements. The two can create an intelligent, creative and ambitious child. With the creative cultural foundation found in Peru, a child can grasp at new developments with a sense of qualitative experience. This will allow them to maintain and pass on the essence of their culture, while at the same time creating a culture of their own.
Chapter 1

Exploring Child Development

When considering child development, one generally thinks of the progressing stages a child typically encounters. Milestones such as smiling, laughing, crawling, walking, and talking are among those that parents watch for as their child grows. As a child’s personality emerges, they begin to explore the different aspects of the world around them. With guidance from parents and others, a child learns what is appropriate behavior versus what is considered socially bad behavior. In Freedman’s (1972) book, *The Child: His Psychological and Cultural Development*, he speaks of the philosopher Jean Piaget and states the following:

To Piaget, intelligence is but a special instance of biological adaptation within the context of life, which he views as a continuous creative interaction between the organism and its environment. The outer manifestation of this interaction is coping behavior; the inward reflection is the functional organization of the mental apparatus. Adaptive coping continuously reorganizes the structures of the mind. This theory is dissonant with most philosophical systems since Plato, which take the logical structures of space, causality, and time as given rather than as evolving epigenetically. (p. 27)

A child’s ‘coping behavior’ (p. 27) and their development of motor skills and intellect seem to be dependent upon the environment that they are raised in.
While parental and other family influences are evident factors in how a child progresses, culture, media, and religion are also among certain aspects that contribute greatly. Add the necessity of developing social skills into the mix, and peers become major influences as well. Dependent upon several factors, a child’s mind receives a myriad of stimuli during its growing years. Still impressionable in the younger years, children can be easily persuaded to believe and make choices similarly to those individuals that influence them the most (parents usually play this role). By following the examples of the influences they trust, a child can make decisions more clearly.

When taking into consideration major influences in a child’s life, culture tends to have a strong pull. Culture, being known as the social behaviors, customs, and beliefs practiced in a specific nation, shapes a person’s life to be a part of that nation. Culture may also be known to have a meaning that invokes the idea of art, music, literature, and the enlightenment that stems from each of these. Children are reared with the traditions of their surrounding people, and develop creative, artistic, and resourceful thinking through watching things occur around them, whether it be people or nature. The highland people of Peru are no exception to this, as Bolin (2006) relates in her book, Growing Up in a Culture of Respect. “Youngsters grow up observing and experiencing life as a natural process both in their homes and out of doors. “(p. 83) She continues with:
A child’s learning experience within a village, including work, the arts, crafts, song, and dance, has been considered more valuable by a variety of scholars than the knowledge derived from school.

Bolin explains the process of Oscar Nunez del Prado,¹ who in 1983 assisted a small community in Highland Peru to form a school. He later admitted he’d erred in doing this, as the children could “no longer...dedicate time to important traditional teachings and significant cultural practices, such as the art of weaving.” (p. 84)

A Peruvian child’s development has similar needs to those of other nations, i.e. discipline, guidance, and care from their guardians, but seemingly thrive also, as we see from the statement in Bolin’s book, from the lessons of the arts and cultural traditions that surround them.

Peru, rich in cultural diversity, lies peacefully against the Pacific Ocean in South America, and rises gracefully up through the Andes Mountains before its borders reach Brazil and Bolivia. Though considered a third world country, its history spans throughout the ages. A country seen in poverty today, there was a time when the people living in the highlands of Peru had strength, wealth, and vast ingenuity. Since that time, Peru, as a nation, has undergone many changes in populace as well as cultural expression. However, much of the traditions of the highland people maintain a unique distinction from mainstream Peru. The arts

lay firmly in the foundational history of the Andean people, and have spread throughout the land. Their children are raised learning lyrical stories, traditional dances, drawings of their gods, and a respectful embrace of the cosmos.
Chapter 2

Exploring Culture

2.1. General Reflections on Culture

Winston Churchill said the following: “We shape our buildings, and afterwards our buildings shape us.”\textsuperscript{1} Similarly, as humans, we shape our culture, and afterwards our culture shapes us. Elliot Eisner (2002) states in his book *The Arts and the Creation of Mind*,

The term *culture* is said to have hundreds of meanings. Two are particularly relevant to education, one anthropological, the other biological. A culture in the anthropological sense is a shared way of life. But the term *culture* in the biological sense refers to a medium for growing things. Schools, I believe, like the larger society of which they are a part, function as cultures in both senses of the term. They make possible a shared way of life, a sense of belonging and community, and they are a medium for growing things, in this case children’s minds. (p. 3)

A child’s creative and expressive nature is developed by experience. In a Peruvian child’s life, these experiences are gained in such places as the home, the community, and in schools. Children learn valuable experiences that help shape the person they will become. As stated by Eisner, schools play a large role in assisting a child in creating who they are. For the children of highland Peru,

\textsuperscript{1} Quoted from a speech given in the House of Commons in 1943
education proves to be a vital stage in their development. As their community and family educate them in understanding themselves from an anthropological perspective, formal education gives them a chance to share this understanding with others, while giving them basic instruction in the elemental subjects such as reading, writing and arithmetic.

In recent years, however, a child’s creative and expressive nature can possibly be suppressed in educational environments in order to make room for logical reasoning, realistic endeavors, and common sense. Referring back to Chapter 1, Bolin’s (2007) example of Oscar Nunez del Prado offers the idea that what we think a child needs (a structured education of scientific facts and logical reasoning, for example) is not always the best pursuit for children growing up in Peru.

Culture, across the board, has seemingly created an environment that tips the scale in favor of science, technology, and a steady, undeviating course toward factual information. Though programs have been established (as in the No Child Left Behind program) in order to maintain a balance between the arts and subjects such as math, reading, and science, we tend to see a decrease of the creative programs due to budget cuts and other unseen circumstances. An example of this is given in Ruppert’s (2006) book, regarding the effects of the No Child Left Behind program:

Schools in some states report the amount of instructional time devoted to reading, writing, math and science has increased, while for the arts it has declined. (p. 6)
In maintaining the culture of the children in Peru, it is necessary to find a balance among their learning environments. Though children in Highland Peru learn a vast amount of their creative ingenuity from their families and communities, it could only be beneficial to re-emphasize the importance of the creative arts by also teaching it in their classrooms.

2.2 Cultural and Creative History in Peru

Historical aspects of culture illustrate a dependence on strength as a nation and power as a people. In order to consistently achieve these goals, nations in general emphasize the importance of education and economic growth, but not much is said regarding creativity. Rarely does one hear about winning a political war with art or music. Though it may seem peculiar to some to even suggest a powerful people that have their strength in creativity, if we stop to analyze, creativity and imagination can be seen as key factors in many leadership strategies. Cunning and wit, along with tactical ideas are marks of creative genius. Likewise, ingenuity in leadership, innovative discoveries, and original weaponry came from inventive, and thus creative, individuals, with a goal in mind. Peruvian history is replete with examples of creative ingenuity.

Peru, before the Spanish Conquest, was inhabited by a variety of indigenous peoples. Cultures such as the Chavin, the Nasca, the Moche, the
Tiahuanaco, and the Huari called specific areas of Peru their home.¹ Best known for occupying the land are the Inca, an indigenous people known to have inhabited the lush Andes and surrounding lands since the 13th century.²

Being an industrious and resourceful people, the Inca had land to cultivate, families to provide and care for, and communities that thrived during a time known as the Inca Empire. Their children were raised knowing the beauties and artistic creations of the land. Religion, as they knew it, consisted of deep mystical beliefs embedded in their psyche at a young age. Pachamama, the goddess of the earth (or mother earth) and Inti, the sun god, were taught to be worshipped and were given thanks for the blessings the Inca received. All human kind were children of the sun, and each day brought hope of a brighter future and a chance to begin anew.³

Throughout the Andes, the Incas traded their goods and worked hard for their achievements. Their armies were formidable as they conquered surrounding cultures and lands. They were skilled in their farming as well, and vastly improved the techniques of other cultures they overlapped and conquered with irrigations systems, skilled farming techniques, as well as scientific knowledge. The Inca Empire prospered throughout the 15th century, as did their


At the outset, the Incas shared with most of their ethnic neighbors the same basic technology: weaving, pottery, metallurgy, architecture, construction engineering, and irrigation agriculture. During their period of dominance, little was added to this inventory of skills, other than the size of the population they ruled and the degree and efficiency of control they attained. (para. 8)

The Inca Empire saw its demise with the influx of foreign explorers like the Spanish Conquistadors during the 16th century. The eventual overrun of the land would have an immense impact on future generations in Peru, which will be discussed further in Chapter 2. Ferreira (2003) explains some of the reasons for this the fall of the Inca:

Since the Spanish conquest began in 1532, the population [of the Inca] dropped dramatically...Such extermination was the result of the social dislocation suffered by the indigenous groups, forced labor, and the arrival of new diseases, such as smallpox and syphilis. (p. 8)

Though the empire collapsed, traces of the trades, skills, and traditions of the early Inca are still found today among the people of Peru. Even the Quechua language is said to have been the dialect of the Inca.1 Certain scholars and other intellectuals indigenous to Peru seem to pardon the more aggressive acts of the Inca, focusing solely on their achievements and skills2, while others of the same influence think it is necessary to study their ways of life in order to improve current hardships in Peru.

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Children are raised knowing the stories of their ancestors, and taught to respect the culture of the gods of their land. As stated in Inge Bolin’s (2006) book, *Growing Up in a Culture of Respect*,

Since the Quechua language did not have a written component as we know it, before and even after the conquest of the Incas children had to learn the complex history, lifeways, and ideologies of their people by listening to stories and legends about their large empire. (p. 70)

This rings true mostly with the Quechua and Aymura people, who reside mainly in the highlands of Peru, although it is often reflected in more urban areas as well. Festivals are held to recognize gods, colorful flags are flown in honor of a city, and symbols are used to represent sacred or memorable history.

2.3 Cultural Studies and Human Development

Symbolism takes center stage when it comes to descriptive cultural expression. The symbolic natures of Peruvian culture stem from their deep-rooted history as well as generations of practiced customs and beliefs. As stated previously, a child reared in Peru will grow up learning the ancient customs and traditions of their ancestors before they are even literate. Speaking especially of peoples living in the Andes, but not specifically to them, symbolism runs high in the daily aspects of life in Peru. The Quechua people, who thrive in the Peruvian Andes, are a prime example of this. Their belief system centers on nature, and what the gods have endowed them with. Animals, which play a surprisingly large part in the spiritual mysticism practiced by the people of the highlands, are
even known to have special abilities that can be drawn upon when needed.\textsuperscript{1} To emulate the puma, for example, they maintain a lifestyle free of frivolities and slothfulness. This symbol is among the most poignant of the traditional symbols of the area. Other relevant symbols are involved in rituals, clothing, dance, and art. Even the architecture, built with creative expertise, will show either the entire layout of the building and town in the shape of an important symbol (usually as symbol from nature or the cosmos), or symbols of their life etched in the stones or built on a smaller scale nearby. Children are reared with this knowledge, and develop their lives with these ideals being intently placed into their minds by mature members of their communities.

A classic symbol often displayed in art pieces sold on the streets of Cusco and other major towns is that of a lone man, playing an instrument. Commonly sketched or done in monochromatic watercolor, these depictions show a man among the hills, clad in unpretentious clothing, more often than not wearing a large brimmed hat and sandals. Some may have an alpaca or other type of animal in the image, taking the role as a companion of sorts. Though beautiful in their skill and artistic technique, these pictures tell a story of symbols found among the people of Peru—a story of the humble farmer, a simple man, knowing only his trade and some musical whims on the carried instrument. Although to my own eyes these pictures are laced with romanticism, it is possible that the

\textsuperscript{1} Gordon, Oakley. (2008) \textit{Andean Mysticism and Healing the Planet}. Speech for Kenosis Spirit Keepers.
stereotype causes a great stir of negative emotion in others. Still, children are made to traverse the more touristy areas in an effort to sell smaller reproductions of the larger paintings their elders sell.

Highland Peruvian people, such as the Aymara and Quechua, have a history of the struggle for adaptation. The stereotypes we see that create an image of culture in ones’ mind of Highland Peruvian people are quite unlike those one would see in mainstream Peru. As in the image of the lone wanderer sold in a drawing, men typically wear loose slacks, sandals, and a loose poncho over a button-down shirt. A flimsy, wide-rimmed hat will often adorn their head. The women and children are typically seen wearing brighter colors. The women, with two long braids falling from underneath a type of bowler hat called a ‘bombin’, are usually seen with a large wrap of colorful, woven fabric around their shoulders, filled with goods or a small child. These same stereotypes are the ones that so many of the younger generations are trying so hard to distance themselves from. In the early days after the Spanish Conquest, there was a definitive distinction between the European people and the indigenous people of Peru. As time passed, and more and more people began to interbreed, the distinction became blurred. As a result of this interbreeding a people known as mestizos evolved, which will be discussed further in Chapter 4. Currently, the distinction is seen mainly between those of high and low status, which has become a defining factor in the struggle for progression in Peru. Those born into
underprivileged lifestyles are more and more seeking out a prosperous life for themselves.

The children of Peru today are being raised in an environment of conflicting expectations. Expectations of parents are often found in desires for the child to claim a life better than the one the parent is currently living, while at the same time, wanting them to preserve their cultural background. For a child, this can be a confusing endeavor. Along with this, many children of the highlands are being more and more influenced by mainstream Peru, thus recognizing the disadvantaged situation they live in.
Chapter 3

The Importance of Maintaining Culture and Arts

3.1 Visual Learning and Its Influence on Child Development

In general, the arts, though often considered merely a leisurely pursuit or hobby, can have an immense impact on a child’s development. Not only are the arts a means in which children can express themselves, but they also teach indispensable skills that are necessary in everyday life. An example of this came to my attention recently with a story regarding my eldest brother’s daughter.

In an effort to free herself from an uninteresting and lengthy car ride, my 9 year-old-niece fashioned a mobile-type creation out of arbitrary bits and pieces found in the backseat of the car. Strips of paper, broken toys, and old pen caps hung gracefully from strings tied to a used straw. While her mother initially saw trash, her father, an illustrator for an advertising agency, placed a hand on her mother’s shoulder and paused to look at the art piece created by his daughter. The handiwork she had fashioned proved to be a representation of her
impressive abilities to not only see beauty in haphazard scraps, but also confirmed her understanding of spacing, depth perception, and precision.

As with my niece, creative actions produce skills such as dexterity, with the use of a paintbrush or pencil (fine motor skills and precision are also developed with these skills); visual communication and creativity, with the experimentation of color (or rhythm, when speaking in musical terms); and problem-solving skills, while making decisions of what medium to use in an art piece, or which musical instrument would best fit their personality. The arts also seem to be a safe-haven amongst cultural differences and social outcasts. A child can be whomever they choose to be while in the mindset of an artist. Elliot W. Eisner (2005), a professor at Stanford University, gives evidence of this in the following:

First, the arts teach children to exercise that most exquisite of capacities, the ability to make judgments in the absence of rules…The rules that the arts obey are located in our children’s emotional interior; children come to feel a rightness of fit among the qualities with which they work…They must exercise judgment by looking inside themselves. A second lesson the arts teach children is that problems can have more than one solution…A third lesson is that aims can be held flexibly; in the arts the goal one starts with can be changed midway in the process as unexpected opportunities arrive. Flexibility yields opportunities for surprise. “Art loves chance. He who errs willingly is the artist,” Aristotle said…The arts also teach that neither words nor numbers define the limits of our cognition; we know more than we can tell. There are many experiences and a multitude of occasions in which we need art forms to say what literal language cannot say…The arts can provide forms of communication that convey to others what is ineffable. (para. 5-8)

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Children who are reared with the arts in their lives seemingly develop cognitive as well as motor skills through creative expression. As such, these same children contribute attributes and strengths to their respective cultures above that of which they would offer without the arts. Cultures are enhanced and enriched through artistic endeavors. In his book, *Art as Experience*, John Dewey (1980) explores this idea by describing the Parthenon. The Parthenon itself is viewed as a magnificent work of art, but to the Athenians that used it, the building was an essential part of their civilization. Their need for a specific building turned into an expression of their culture, as they worked to turn the building into a beautiful, awe-inspiring masterpiece.\(^1\) Dewey later states:

> Even in the caves, human habitations were adorned with colored pictures that kept alive to the senses ... Structures that housed their gods and the instrumentalities that facilitated commerce with the higher powers were wrought with especial fineness. But the arts of the drama, music, painting, and architecture thus exemplified...were part of the significant life of an organized community. (p. 7)

A personal example of this comes from a young Quechua girl I came in contact with while on a tour in Peru. She had been raised in a typical Quechua community, learning the stories from her past and implementing the cultural lifestyle. She was taught the art of spinning alpaca wool into yarn, the process of dying it with natural resources, and using it to create rugs, clothes, dolls and other textiles. This girl, in her early teens, was one of the main educational stopping points on the tour. She stood facing us in a small outdoor alcove surrounded by clay and iron pots, bowls full colorful powders, and baskets

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containing unknown wooly materials. She wore a simple, mid-length black skirt, sandals, and a colorfully embroidered vest over the top of a white blouse. A small red hat lay on her head and strapped around her chin, and she covered her shoulders with a brightly woven blanket. She spoke excellent English, as well as Quechua and Spanish, and mastered the art of captivating an audience with her lessons, as she described things such as making dyes by crushing dried out natural resources (berries, leaves, flowers) and adding them to boiling water.

Speaking briefly with her after the presentation, she informed me that she had realized the impact tourism had on her country, and to her people in particular, and in turn used the skills she had acquired from her community to her advantage. Commending her on her excellent English, I was amazed at the artistic capabilities, as well as the intelligence, this girl had acquired, me not even being able to pronounce her Quechua name.

The arts not only assist in the development of necessary skills in a child’s life, but they also may give those outside their world the ability to glimpse at their culture from the distinct point of view of a person living in it. Viewing a culture from both the outside and the inside perspectives has come to be known as emic and etic. Originating from linguistic anthropologist Kenneth Pike, they are derivatives of the words phonemic and phonetic. The emic perspective is in regards to the members of a given culture or society, while the etic perspective comes from those observing the society. ¹

The arts are a window into the cultural realms of different groups. As younger individuals try their hand at creating, a better understanding of their own culture, the emic perspective, comes into play. Artwork can also have beneficial effects for others attempting to understand the life of that artist, allowing them to play the etic role. The objective perspective of one artist can turn into a subjective perspective by studying work of an artist from a separate culture. Referring to the contribution that the study of art can give to history, G. Ellis Burcaw (1997) makes a profound statement regarding amateur artists in his book *Introduction to Museum Work*:

Xavier de Sala’s...has pointed out that the works of minor artists can be revealing for sociological study. While the great masters were usually highly innovative (even radical and individualistic), the artists of lesser stature were more subject to the influence of their situation and, therefore, produced work more truly reflective of their times. (p. 77)

Educating children about their culture and the arts that are involved with it can be very beneficial to not only the child, but to outside cultures and future generations alike. Even if children do not seem inclined to enjoy it, it will at the very least expose them to the idea\(^1\) that there are ways to create color, beauty, and expression.

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3.2 The Impact of Music

The influence of music on a child’s life is similar to that of art. Music is a way for a child to learn certain skills, while developing a creative side. Children in Peru are raised with music, learning songs from their parents and grandparents. In Highland Peru, children are said to begin singing and creating their own songs by age three.\(^1\) Folkloric Andean music, a typical style in Peru, has become a strong part of the nation’s culture. The style originated some time in the 1950’s from Peruvian musicians traveling between the major cities of Argentina and France. The style is one in which several different instruments combine to create a well rounded and rhythmic sound that we may even be familiar with. In fact, the background track for the popular song *El Condor Pasa/If I Could*, by Simon and Garfunkel, came from a folkloric Andean style of music called Urubamba\(^2\). Instruments used in these melodic tunes, and popular among highland musicians, include the trumpet, mandolin, drums, guitar, whistles, and different types of flutes. Children, who learn mainly from observing older members of their families, often develop instrumental skills at a very young age. In time, they learn to cultivate their skill level to a point where they can perform publicly for tourists, or for local entertainment. Much of the music is a conglomerate of many styles in the area, as stated by Turino (2008).

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The Andes remains one of the richest and most diverse musical areas of Latin America. Unlike places where newer musical styles replace older traditions that then fade from memory, in southern Peru it seems that each new musical layer gets added, recombined, and performed alongside earlier musical traditions—new innovations only adding to the richness of the whole. (p. xxi)

A university student I met in Cusco spoke with me of his love for music. Juan was a member of a band that played folkloric Andean music for tourists on the weekends. Juan’s instrument was the pan flute. He explained to me the details of how the pan flute makes music, telling me that while the guitar and drums offer background beat and foreground rhythm, the pan flute tells a story, like a dream. When I finally had the opportunity to hear a band play the folkloric music, I understood what the student had explained to me. He told me of how he grew up in a family whose life revolved around music, of a grandmother that always had a tune on her lips, and of a father that taught him to appreciate the pan flute. As a child, music helped this student appreciate his culture, while also teaching him an indispensable skill that he was able to turn around and market. He spoke of how he took the techniques his father taught him, and used them to create a unique sound of his own.

Juan also taught me about a style of music referred to as “Chicha”. In the 1980’s many of the children born in Lima to highlander parents struggled with identity issues. Born in Lima, they were not considered highlanders, and yet
being children of highlanders, they were likewise not fully considered Limenos¹. It was from these children, the second-generation Andeans born in Lima, that the style of music known as Chicha was born. Chicha was a mix of the traditional folkloric music combined with the more urban style of guitars and percussion. This style of music allowed these children to develop a new identity, while still identifying with the traditions of their ancestors. Turino states:

The power of music for articulating new, complex social identities is that these different musical signs can be combined into a single coherent whole—a single song—exactly paralleling the ways the different aspects of the second generation’s identity was a combination of highland background, urban residence, lower-class standing, and youth within the whole of a single person. (p. 120)

Children today are still found listening to Chicha, as well as learning to play the music style. Though radios are scarce in poorer communities of Peru, popular musicians still make their way into the hearts of the children.

The music of Peru has a surprising history, in that before Chicha and other combination styles of music were introduced, music was regionally different. The people living in the highlands of Peru learned their traditional tunes, while those in more urban areas were influenced by Spanish music, other Latin American countries, as well as Caribbean and African styles.² As time passed, and the blend of people from the highlands into the lowlands began to occur,


with it came discrimination. With this occurring, there was reluctance, and sometimes shame, in playing folkloric music in the cities. Today, with migration from the highlands becoming pervasive, it is far more common to see and hear the music of the Andes in the local urban markets and main city squares.¹ Children recognize the folkloric styles, and are often part of large celebrations that include dancing to such music.

Chapter 4

The Influence of Tradition, Society, and Progression

4.1 Family

For several years, Peru’s generally accepted format of family was of the conventional kind. As stated by Hudson (1993):

The roles of the different family members and sexes tend to follow rather uniform patterns within social class and cultural configurations. In terms of family affairs, Hispanic Peruvian patterns are strongly centered on the father as family head, although women increasingly occupy this titular role in rural as well as urban areas, amounting to 20 percent of all households...Families are patricentric, and the male head of household is considered the authority. His wife follows him in this respect, yet exercises considerable control over her own affairs with respect to property and marketing. This gender and lineage hierarchy is to be seen as families walk single-file to market, each carrying their bundles, the husband leading the way, followed by his wife and then the children. (p. 43)

For those in the rural areas that have strong family ties, there is an expected structure of life that is followed. They maintain a work ethic that far surpasses that of many I have encountered in the United States. Laziness is not an option in the life of most families, as their life depends upon their work. The father of the
household will have some form of work, while the women, unless they also have a job, will look after their home, and their children will perform their essential duties. The children are often taught proper work ethics at a young age, given daily chores and responsibilities, with lessons learned by watching the adults.

This is not to say that the children do not play. It is quite the contrary. When they are expected to complete some chore, they turn it into a game, or tell jokes to the other children while performing the task. Parents teach their children that diligence is the key to accomplishment, while laziness causes problems. Work ethics for the highland people of Peru are found in providing for their family and endurance to finish the job, unlike those of the cities where working 9-5 for a salary is standard. As was true in Inca times, work is still an expression of pride. The Inca greeting ‘Ama llulla, ama suwa, ama qella’ (Don’t lie, don’t steal, don’t be lazy) attests to the deep concerns of the Incas, which are still manifested by present-day populations.

In other cases, families are far from this basic structure. Children are often beaten, given to adoption agencies, or sent out on the streets. Seligmann (2004) quotes a woman in the markets of Cuzco who states:

My father was a cattle dealer. He earned lots of money and then he would spend it all. He brought us money when we were little. But once we got older, nothing. My mother said [to him], “The worst is if you die and no one will support me. Better that you stay at my side because a family

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without a father has no meaning.” The children [end] up being delinquents, vagabonds, pickpockets. Because, really, they pay no attention to their mothers. (p. 64)

Due to poverty, disease (and lack of proper medical care), and abuse, many children die\(^1\) before the age of 5 (see Table 1, Goals 5 and 6), while others simply run away in an attempt to escape a damaging family situation. Many end up on the streets of Lima and other big cities, making a family out of the other unfortunate street-children they encounter.

Many diverse cases of family-life occur in Peru today. Corruption, terrorism and poverty have created a difficult life for many of the children of Peru, while on the other hand, there are several internal and international organizations that are working tirelessly to change the situation for children. Opportunities are scarce, but many parents of these children make do with what they have, work diligently, and open windows of opportunity for their children.

Seligmann (2004) states the following:

The children of vendors who have been successful at the retail and wholesale levels often extend their reach internationally and become entrepreneurs and students in Argentina, Bolivia, Venezuela, the United States, and different parts of Europe, especially the northern countries. They acquire a valuable comparative perspective on race relations that they can then share with their parents. (p. 158)

Given the opportunity to study in other countries, children of Peru have been able to experience life from the etic perspective. This perspective allows a child to

develop an open-minded view of other cultures, while also learning valuable skills in communication, courtesy, and business. The children in turn are able to teach the skills they learn to their family members back home.

4.2 Games and Sports

Apart from all the work, ritualistic dancing, and art, one will also find traditional games played amongst the children in the Andes. Being young and precocious, children in this culture are similar to children found in any other nation. A child’s mind is full of imagination and carefree liveliness. Minds of youngsters quickly and easily soak up any offered and observed information. Peruvian children are no exception to this, as they are often imitating the work of their community, of their mothers, and of the stories they hear by creating smaller model scenes of their reality. Small-scale villages are built out of smooth stones, while imaginary farmers till the ground. Imaginary weaving looms are used to create beautiful make-believe fabrics.\(^1\) Toys are scarce, due to poverty in many communities, but with the creativity found in the children, and due to their ignorance to their needs, they remain in happy play with the toys they have. The children typically fashion dolls out of straw and used clothing, or tops which are made by hammering a nail into a piece of wood and attaching a string around the nail top. A common activity is the popular game of hide and seek,

called ‘paka paka pukllay’, as well as a pushing game called ‘takanakuy’.¹

Though takanakuy may sound as if it could be aggressive, it is quite uncommon for children in the Andes to play aggressively, as stated by Bolin (2006).

With the exception of soccer games, which were introduced into [Peruvian] society from Europe, children’s games and virtually all play activities are largely non-competitive. This attitude is reflected throughout the society.” (p. 68)

Soccer has become a beloved sport of all ages among Peruvian people. Young boys grow up watching their older brothers, fathers, and uncles participate in local ‘pick-up’ games. Known as futbol, it has become a part of Latin American culture. For the poor people of small villages and communities, soccer is a way to emulate pro-athletes without sacrificing money or demanding any excess. It is a way to relieve the stresses of a poverty-stricken life for some, while others see soccer as the doorway into a better world, as professional soccer scouts are sometimes sent into these poorer areas to glean from the games.

Children grow up praising great Latin American futbol professionals such as Teofilo Cubillas and Hugo Sotil, swearing to emulate them when they are grown.

Though still an immensely popular game in Peru, the professional teams have seemingly gone downhill, having not qualified for a tournament in roughly 25 years, according to the FIFA World Cup Archives². Still, the popularity of the game grows in Peru, with more and more spectators attending games yearly.


² Statistics retrieved from: http://www.fifa.com/worldcup/archive/
This is said to be giving the economy a bit of a boost\(^1\). Children are seen playing the game at any given opportunity with anything resembling a ball. Creativity comes into play here, with children kicking small rocks and aluminum cans, but also fashioning mini balls out of discarded paper scraps tied with string or tape.

With an opportunity to attend a pro-soccer game in Cusco, I was shocked to see that the professional players did not have the skill that I had seen in the pro-games in the U.S. A week later, while wandering the streets of Aguas Calientes with a friend, we stumbled upon a makeshift futbol field, hidden behind buildings down a one-way road. We stopped to enjoy the spectacle for a while. Being far more entertained with this pick-up game played by the locals, we realized that their skills far surpassed those of the professional players. This differentiation in skill level is occurring today due to a lack of funds for the futbol clubs. With a weakening economy, as well as crime and other violent acts, and the lack of a complete staff due to these issues, professional clubs in Peru are in danger of closing\(^2\). Open tryouts are held, but are not easily accessed by some, due to distance of location, and lack of funds to get there. Also, in the case of the head of the house, it can be culturally viewed as irresponsible for a male to leave

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his family in an attempt to fulfill his lofty dreams, especially in a poverty-stricken state.¹

This type of thinking occurs repeatedly throughout the nation, as men in Peruvian communities become cognizant of the importance of their family unit. Their dreams slowly diminish as they take on the tasks and natural responsibilities of supporting a family. This is emphasized in Leinaweaver’s (2008) article:

> These moral connotations, in turn, make sense only when viewed in the context of the family group, the community, or even the nation. In other words, getting ahead is an imperative of improving oneself where “self” includes close kith and kin. It is felt that farmers who merely scrape by cannot have more than a neutral impact, whether socioeconomic or affective, on their children, extended family, and larger community. The luxury of dreaming of something beyond merely subsisting is often something reserved for one’s children—making this a generational and relational imperative. The idea of getting ahead is thus at once technical and moral. Certainly, it pushes poor Peruvians to improve themselves, survive, scrape by, but there is something more at stake. The greater end is found squarely within the family, neighborhood, and community: it is not a wholly self-centered act but one that draws on and reinforces generational relationships in a social context. (p. 4)

Community pressures can be troublesome for younger generations, who are often struggling as it is with pressures of development. As they watch their parents or other community members struggle, they seek solace elsewhere. Games and sports are often ways to release the pressures of reality and delve into a livelier state of mind. These games also give children a way to express themselves athletically, while enhancing team building, cooperation, and

communication skills, according to a 2010 article in *Science Daily*. While on the field, a child also has the ability to express their own individuality by exhibiting creative techniques in dribbling, passing, and shooting. Fancy kicking tricks or evasive maneuvers are conceived, and then shared with their teammates. However, as they grow, they are expected to give up their games, to continue in their faith, and marry in the church.

**4.3. Religion**

It is interesting to note that, like the Peruvian people themselves, their spiritual beliefs tend to be either that of Catholic influence, Inca ritualistic tradition, or a mixture of both. In my experiences with the people, though the most openly practiced religion is Catholicism, it is very common to see them employing ancient mystical practices in conjunction with a cross.

Catholicism, introduced during the Spanish conquest in the late 1500’s, has grown immensely. Since that time, several Catholic cathedrals have been built, many in place of ancient Inca ruins. People in the Andes remain very pious, attending mass regularly, and participating in Catholic celebrations—one of the most famous being Corpus Christi, celebrated yearly, and most impressively, in

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Cusco. “Corpus Christi [is] a holiday that can occur between May 20 and June 23. This holiday is based on the moon; thus there is moonlight every year for the fiesta.”¹ These celebrations are practiced within urban as well as rural homes, as the Catholic influence has become a strong foundation in the structure of Peruvian society.

While walking through a small village near an Incan ruin known as Ollantaytambo, I noticed small figurines placed securely on the rooftops of the local homes. On every home I passed was a small cross with a bull figurine (or several bulls) next to it. Those two items were consistent, but other items varied. Some had bowls, and some bottles, among other things. After inquiring to the meaning behind this, I was informed that each item represented a desire the respective home wanted brought into their household.

(see image 1)

The bulls represented prosperity, good luck, and protection from evil, while the other items represented items needed for contentment. An empty bowl could symbolize the need for food, or for a good harvest. Bottles often referred to the desire for beer, or chicha. Among all these traditional beliefs, though, stood the cross, the symbol of Christ. Dating as far back as when the Spanish priests came over the seas to spread Catholicism, a combination of the two belief systems has been a very common and accepted practice.

Regarding this conjunction of spiritual beliefs, a Quechua-born man named Raul related a story of his grandmother to me. As a child, he often watched his grandmother embody the idea of this conjunction. When a loved one was ill, in following an ancient custom, his grandmother would crack a raw egg into a cup, swirl it around the inflicted person’s head while uttering the necessary incantation, then toss the egg out onto the street. After doing this, Raul’s grandmother would gingerly put the cup down, and while solemnly making the sign of the cross over her chest, would recite the words, ‘In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.’ Not being much a man for spirituality in general, Raul voiced the humor he found in this. I asked him the meaning behind the egg practice. He informed me that after reciting the prayer, that Pachamama (mother earth) would supposedly hear the prayer according to the person’s faith in the practice, and would release the illness into the egg. Once the egg was thrown onto the street, as the story goes, the next person to walk by that did not heed the warning of the egg would contract the illness from the egg.

Many children throughout Peru are raised on spiritual information like that of the Quechua man I met. The mystical beliefs of the ancient Peruvian natives are still applied today, and are based mainly on their connection to nature and the cosmos. Everything plays a specific part in the make-up of their existence, and though Catholicism has had a great impact upon them, their traditional mystical beliefs also have their place in the development of their children. The children of Peru are expected to understand and accept specific
ways of knowing, or understanding. According to old tradition, people recognize three distinct tactics of life, all having to do with certain parts of the body.¹ The first is the yachay, located in the head, being the center of mind and intellect. Next is the munay, or the heart, being the center of love. Last is the llankay, which is slightly below the navel, being the center of the physical body. This is especially relevant to the people that live in the Andes, as they are a very holistic people. The Andes people try to gain strength in manipulating the physical world, using the llankay for work and service, in turn focusing more on the munay, while at the same time trying to understand the joy of being through the wisdom of the Inca. From this wisdom, an inner awareness occurs, incurring the munay. The ways of the heart are essentially what make reality somewhat irrelevant in their world. They trust in their gods and pay homage and respect through deep love for the earth and for the creator’s handiwork (being, as it were, human kind, the earth, and animals alike).² This respect is likewise important for growth in oneself. “Truth and love are essential to the Inca way of life. Speak the truth and act with love and you nurture the Divine spark within you.” (Delgado 150) The traditions are that of familiarity, to be experienced, not analyzed.


Though it is true that the adults indigenous to the Andes are more likely to believe, as well as practice, the long passed down traditions of their ancestors, the influence has caused a great impact on the children raised within the environment. Like games and family life, religion is a part of life for a child of the highlands. These are cultural aspects in which the children begin to create who they are. Their development is based on how they are raised, and the environment they are raised in. Eisner (2002) states:

It is a process that is shaped by culture, influenced by language, impacted by beliefs, affected by values, and moderated by the distinctive features of that part of ourselves we sometimes describe as our individuality. We humans give simultaneously both a personal and a cultural imprint to what we experience; the relation between the two is inextricable. (p. 1)

Though they influence each child differently, the aspects that shape the development of a child in highland Peru are connected in the sense that they first shape the child’s culture.

4.4 Current Educational Issues

Considered a third world country, Peru has come a significant distance in developing and improving education for its people, highland and lowland alike. While history shows that those of Spanish descent received a more distinguished education than those who were descendants of indigenous cultures¹ (Spanish descendants were provided with better teachers, classrooms, resources, and

materials), the mix of races throughout the years has proven to be advantageous to the highland people. The mestizos, those born of mixed Spanish and native Peruvian blood, have opened small windows of opportunity for their indigenous cousins. Legally, all people of Peruvian citizenship are allotted the right to equal and fair treatment in searching for an occupation and procuring an education for themselves.¹ Yet the discrimination is still very apparent. As quoted in Fenster’s (1999) book, Gender, Planning and Human Rights,

Today, nearly half a century after the United Nations’ Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaimed that ‘All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights’, the freedom, equality, dignity and rights of much of the world’s population continues to be compromised by law, custom or deed. (p.111)

While speaking briefly with a woman born and raised in Lima, Peru, I became conscious of the stark realities of inequality. In her mid-40s, and seemingly successful due to her polished appearance and crisp attire, she spoke excellent English, with only a hint of an accent. Presumably an impressive woman, I inquired of her background. She was a social worker living in southern California and had obtained an advanced degree from a prestigious school in the United States in order to obtain the position. Intrigued by this, I pressed further. She gave me a brief history of her life in Lima, and spoke lamentably about her people and the city they called their capital, and which she called home.

According to this woman, she was one of the few very fortunate people that

lived in Lima and the surrounding areas. She came from an upper-class family. Her father had become a part of a successful business distributing goods to other countries, and thus created for himself and his family a world of opportunity. His daughters were sent to private schools in Peru, which made it possible for them to pursue higher education in the United States. They learned to speak English at a young age, which presented them with greater opportunities. In her opinion, it was made possible more by their status than it was by wealth. Though they had money to provide a comfortable living, her father was not an overly wealthy man, but he did work for a very successful company. Thus, the opportunities allotted to her were more due to her name and its ties to this company than to money. Still, though she indicated that she loved her country, Lima was a place she was eager to leave.

An upper-class status had been this woman’s open door, while education was the path to what she knew as a successful life. Her opportunities began due to attending a private school, first and foremost. According to her, public schools, which are run by the government, are available to all, but did not offer proper education, nor did they present many opportunities for higher education.

Still, education among the Peruvian people has been at a steady incline. Literacy has grown immensely among the adults as well as the children. Children are more readily provided the ability to achieve a primary education.

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(see Table 1, Goal 2). Even the most basic of education can offer an immense advantage to the livelihood of the Peruvian people, which has been a realization over the last decade. Leinaweaver (2008) states,

Becoming educated is perhaps the heart of improving oneself; [one young girl explained] that she moved to Ayachucho from her small community “because of my studies, so I could improve myself (superarme), in search of la superacion.” The kind of education referred to here is a superior public-school education; small towns have significantly inferior schools or none at all. Such an education will ideally set young people on the road to acceptance into university (a cutthroat and competitive process) and a coveted contract as a public employee. Formal education is key in permitting the transformation required by the philosophy of getting ahead. (p. 4)

The people of Peru are becoming more and more aware that education is the key to improving their lives. They believe it may be the only way to escape their poverty-stricken lives.¹ Literacy is becoming an ever-present necessity, while learning English is a high priority as well. Near the orphanage where I volunteered, I noticed a brick-wall with these words painted on it: “ALFABETIZACION ES JUSTICIA SOCIAL,” being translated, says, “Literacy is social justice.” Peruvian societies, especially those who are the most destitute, recognize literacy as a social responsibility. Parents often see themselves with no hope in learning, but strive to give their children any and all opportunities that they themselves missed. Freire (1987) comments the following regarding literacy in culture:

With this dominant discourse, illiteracy is not merely the inability to read

and write, it is also a cultural marker for naming forms of difference within the logic of cultural deprivation theory. What is important here is that the notion of cultural deprivation serves to designate in the negative sense forms of cultural currency that appear disturbingly unfamiliar and threatening when measured against the dominant culture’s ideological standard regarding what is to be valorized as history, linguistic proficiency, lived experience, and standards of community life. (p.3)

Education has become a known and sought after way to increase the standard of living for several Peruvian communities and their children. (see image 2) The problem, it seems, is that this focus has harmful consequences on their culture.¹

Giving children a better education is far easier said than done, especially when funds are scarce. There have recently been programs developed in an effort to make children cognizant of the cultural environments occurring throughout the world, and compare them to the deeply embedded culture of the children of Peru. Non-profit organizations helping with these programs include Circles of Learning, Peru’s Challenge, and Kid’s Earth Fund Australia. One influential program is called ‘Our World Through Children’s Eyes’². Through this program, children that are raised in the poorer areas of Australia and Peru are brought together in an effort to educate them in an understanding of each other’s life through art. When asked why art was used to portray this lesson, Phil Pittman (2008) writes,

In a multi linguistic world, art provides a common language in the global community. The program encourages children to interpret, through their


artwork, images that are realistic and have a personal touch. It provides children, regardless of their geographical, social or cultural background, with simple tools to navigate and make sense of their world. (para. 13)

The idea behind programs such as ‘Our World Through Children’s Eyes’ is that it will help the children glance outside their own world. They will develop an appreciation of what life is like in other countries. They will be exposed to the lifestyles and creative ideas of other cultures, while in turn sharing their own cultural creativity. For a child, learning these significant traits of communicating with those of other cultures can possibly seem not much more than an exciting endeavor. However, as stated in Pittman’s (2008) article, these programs could be planting a seed that will benefit the country in the long run.

Developing an understanding and increasing our younger generation’s awareness of ecological processes and natural systems will enhance the whole community’s quality of life, now and in the future. (para. 16)

Language is another aspect of intercultural education that is of the utmost importance to many Peruvian natives. While the main dialects of the country are Spanish, Quechua and Aymara, there is a separation amongst many of the indigenous people. English has also become a prominent language in the major communities, as tourism has flourished over the past few decades. Quechua communities work hard at sending their children to schools that will teach Spanish. In the minds of Quechua parents, who teach their children Quechua at home, learning Spanish at school is the only way that their children will be
allotted opportunities outside their community.¹ If a child is fortunate, he may go on to learn English, which offers even better opportunities.

While volunteering in Peru, I had the opportunity to meet with a local young man named Tomas for an hour daily. For two weeks I met with Tomas, roughly 25 years of age, in an effort to assist him in learning to speak English fluently. In turn, he assisted me with my learning to speak his language, Spanish. We would talk of many things, first in English, and then in Spanish. The exchange of learning was offered by a local educational facility in Cusco called Maximo Nivel, and was an opportunity of utmost importance to the local youth, as well as to adults in the area. While several students from all over the world also used this facility to assist them in their study of the Spanish language, it was clear to me the impact it had on the local people. This impact was one of hope and possibility. Tomas saw the chance to learn English as a doorway into a brighter future, as he was studying to be a lawyer. He spoke of his family with pride, though informed me of their struggles living in poverty. He knew that he could make a difference in their lives if he were to choose a promising profession. He knew also that learning English would place him in a far better position than one who knew only Spanish. The university he was attending in Cusco also encouraged it, as they supported the idea of students furthering their education in the United States. Though not even yet fluent, Tomas had already

experienced a mark of intelligence placed upon him by classmates and family members due to his abilities to speak English. This learning of another culture, especially one of influence, as the U.S. has become in Peru, helped him gain understanding of the world outside his own country, and thus be more open-minded to the differences between them.

4.5 Influential Peruvian Life and Economic Burdens

Indigenous societies found in Peru are generally aesthetically and socially conservative. For example, while the Spanish cathedrals tend to be elaborate and ornate, even garish in their architectural structure, the ancient Inca buildings were made to be structurally sound, and beautified mainly to please their gods. This same idea reigns true within the people as well. People are polite, use proper etiquette, and are often reserved, yet very kind. The children are, for the most part, well cared for and looked after by all members of the community. They are raised at their own pace, which tends to be tranquil. The children, as a result, are fairly well behaved.

Parents from earlier generations have worked hard to introduce their children to education and outside knowledge. Though it is important to them to keep their heritage passing to each generation, it is apparent to children as they age that they live lives of poverty and seclusion. As was discussed in section 4.4, Quechua speaking people are today pushing their children to learn Spanish, and if possible, English as well, in order to secure a better life for their children when
they are matured. Through the assistance of non-governmental organizations such as the Ministry of Education in Lima\(^1\), teaching Spanish to the Quechua people has been occurring for some time now in an effort to accomplish this. Sadly, the indigenous peoples are still treated as inferiors, mainly because of their status in society. For the past decade, organizations have been coming into the nation in an effort to change this behavior, and teach Spanish as well as Quechua in the schools. In the 1970’s, as quoted in Maria Elena Garcia’s (2005) *Making Indigenous Citizens*, a man in a Quechua community called Montoya describes his sentiments on the matter:

> Because we are Quechua, because we speak our language and live according to our customs, and because we don’t know how to read and write, we live in the world of the night. We have no eyes, and we are invalids like the blind. In contrast, those who know how to read and write live in daylight. They have eyes. It is senseless to stay in the world of darkness because we must progress to be like those who go to school and have eyes. Going to school, we open our eyes, we awake. (p. 87)

The organizations that have been attempting to change things for the better for highland Peruvian people in some cases are gratefully accepted, as in the above account. On the other hand, there are many indigenous people that want to rid the burden of being Quechua completely. They see their lives as outcasts, and would rather leave behind the things that make them so, like the Quechua language. In the minds of some of the highland people, to have their children learn the language of their forefathers (i.e. Quechua and Aymara) is sentencing

them to be an outcast forever from mainstream Peruvian people. These individuals and families push for their children to learn Spanish and English only, as evidenced in Garcia’s (2005) book regarding children’s growth.

Teach children only in Quechua, parents seem to say, and they remain in the same marginalized space and place they are now; teach them Spanish and they acquire the means to contest this marginalization. Some might argue that indigenous parents’ desire for Spanish was a symptom of their colonial position. They were seeing themselves...through the eyes of their oppressors. In other words, they were the familiar victims of false consciousness, unable to see clearly the source of their misery or the way to escape from it. (p. 101)

As things continue to change, organizations continue to help, and children begin to see the outside world, the indigenous people will hopefully gain the respect they have earned as a culture with much to offer, full of hope, creativity, honor, and stamina. This respect has already seemingly been established amongst tourists. Though tourists may see things from a romanticized point of view, they are fascinated with the customs and stories found in the Andes Mountains. At the same time, however, when visiting some of the villages in the highlands, it can seem as if one is taking a step back in time. Though an interesting trek for visitors, this lack of modernity can be seen as an obstruction to development in the eyes of foreign corporations as well as modern markets in Peru.

Paralleling the issue of inequality, there are also several children who lead lives of hardship on the streets. Street children, as they have come to be known, live their days simply trying to survive. The vast majority of them found in
Lima\textsuperscript{1}, these children are often a mix of orphans, runaways, or children sent to the streets by their own families to beg for food or money. Often times, whole families take to the streets daily in order to survive. While speaking with a social worker from Peru, I learned that several of the children one would see working on the streets are sent there by their parents to earn money for the family.

According to this social worker, some children learn specific abilities to perform, like juggling, or learning to play an instrument, in order to attract tourists and their money. Others master the art of making traditional clothing, or painting to sell. In Grigg’s (2004) book, *Cry of the Urban Poor*, he states:

> Over the last decades there has been a conversion of the economy of the city from a more formal industrial economy (of legally incorporated businesses) to an informal, unofficial street economy. Main players are typically street vendors, or self-managing vendors, with the whole family participating in the economic enterprise. This unofficial sector represents 67.4 percent of the total productive economic activity of Lima. (p. 54)

These street vendors are mainly local peoples that have legally acquired licenses for such selling, although there are many who brave selling on the streets without the required permits. I witnessed one woman quickly gathering up her neatly placed wares in the blanket they were lain upon, fear upon her face. I looked in the direction her fear was coming from to find two local policemen approaching. They were not kind to her when the reached her, even breaking some of the items she was trying to sell. Everyone else on the street seemed very

\textsuperscript{1} Grigg, V. (2004). *Cry of the Urban Poor*. Waynesboro, Georgia: Authentic Media.
unaware of the misfortune of this woman, and went their way as if everything was normal. When later I questioned a local friend regarding the occurrence, I was informed that those who did not have a permit to sell on the streets were fined, and were not given much sympathy by anyone, least of all those enforcing the law.

Many, but not all, of the people found on the streets of the big cities of Peru are originally from the highlands. Some come daily, leaving their homes in the highlands early in the morning to sell their wares, then return to the mountains at night. Others, as in the case of the street children, have forgotten the mountain people and live daily off of what the city streets can offer. Both have a draw to the modern way of life, and have seen the success that some have found in it. The issue is the disregard of their heritage. As the knowledge of modern-day advancements spread further into the rural areas of the Andes, the people are gradually more willing to give up their family history, customs, and culture in an effort to be a part of the contemporary life they see in the cities.

### 4.6 Politics

Though a people of seemingly simple living, politics have existed among the indigenous peoples of Peru since the time of the Inca. A type of socialism was the dominant way of life at the time, as all were brought up in a genuine effort to support their neighbors and fellow community members. As stated by Bakewell (1997),
People were expected to lend their labor to cultivate neighbors’ land, and expected that neighbors would help them in due course. All capable people were collaborated to support the incapable—orphans, widows, the sick—with food and housing. (p. 26) The community was based around survival of the group as a whole. They referred to this as ayni. Ayni is a system developed to exchange labor. That is to say, if someone assists another, they can expect help in return. Ayni is a system still practiced today, to maintain community survival. To accomplish this task, each individual adopted a lifestyle of selfless perseverance.

Since that time, technological advances have widened the gap between the wealthier people and the peasants. Political battles have been waged with the indigenous peoples fighting for rights and honor. Feeling like strangers in their own country, many have died in political rebellions and uprisings, fighting for a life they once knew. In 1915, for example, a man by the name of Teodomiro Gutierrez took upon himself the Quechua name of Rumi Maqui, led a revolt in an attempt to restore the ideals of the Inca Empire, which failed in its ultimate goals, but helped to push back the building of haciendas on local community lands. Though in recent years the government of Peru has granted equality amongst all Peruvian people, the discrimination continues. There is a struggle for

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a sense of belonging for Peru amongst other nations, but there is an even deeper struggle among Peru’s own people.

As stated in Kraay’s (2007) book, Negotiating Identities in Modern Latin America:

Maria Elena Garcia’s study of Peruvian...parents who reject the intercultural and bilingual education offered to their children by the ministry of education – apparently one of the victories of the international indigenous movement – likewise points the way to more nuanced thinking about identity politics and its relationship to peoples’ senses of self and their interests. (p. 13)

Quechua was the once dominant language of Peru (spoken long before even the Inca). Today, that has long since passed. Though Quechua is still spoken by many of the indigenous peoples, Spanish is the language that is used amongst the people of power, government and politics. Bilingualism has become a necessity for several highland people simply to earn a living, while some traverse even further and realize the impact North America has on their country, and learn English as well. As mentioned earlier, generally the people that are trilingual have opportunities far surpassing those who can speak only one language.

While living in a world devoid of modern technologies, the Inca people still lived lives rich in culture. In modern times, as innovations and progress of the world outside the Andes inundate the communities of the highland people, a quest for a better life has begun. Children are raised in an environment of two worlds: a world of their past (their ancestry and historical customs and traditions) and the contemporary world (that of development and progress), which is much different from the traditional Andean life. Progress has taken a
vastly different turn from the ways of the Inca, who were the progressive innovators of their time. The indigenous peoples have fallen behind in the technology race, and now grapple for any hope or help they can get in order to secure themselves a better life. In Williamson’s (2006) book, *Latin America: Cultures in Conflict*, it states:

Progressive politics attracts, if to varying degree, urban labor, peasants, and the indigenous. Charismatic, even authoritarian leadership helps, but the message, usually antiestablishment, is essential. A classic example is APRA (American People’s Revolutionary Alliance) in Peru, founded in 1924 by Haya de la Torre, who urged a national program for all Peruvians, that is, recognition of the indigenous. The party finally came to power with Alan Garcia. By entering into coalitions on both the left and the right, APRA had a significant effect on politics in Peru and beyond its borders. Hardly surprisingly, a minority party is rarely able to overturn the status quo. (p. 74-75)

Though the Peruvian government provides basic needs and services to the lower classes, the people often create their own windows of opportunity. Parents raise their children with ideas of seeking for a more prosperous livelihood. Often sending their children to live with relatives in the city, they have high hopes that the influence will be a positive one. In an essay regarding the youth of Peru, Jessica Leinaweaver (2008) states the following:

Under these conditions of desperate and excruciating poverty, simple subsistence is heroic and victorious. Subsistence represents making do or getting by, epitomizing the respectable and ethical…peasant lifestyle of hard work engaged in by the parents of many of the young people…Yet even when subsistence is achieved, the untimely combination of too many pressing needs (such as feeding hungry children, scraping together the money for school supplies, and paying back a debt) can result in desperation as well. The tactic of child circulation—sending a child to someone who is better positioned and who therefore can offer [the child] a better position in life—is one means, for the child and [their] home cluster
of family, toward ultimately overcoming a humble, subsistence-based background. (p. 62)

Leinaweaver goes on to say that pulling oneself out of poverty not only offers a better economic situation, but also provides a moral and ethical pride and respect for oneself. Children that are sent to urban areas to live with relatives often take advantage of the opportunity to escape poverty, a socially unaccepted background, and a non-progressive lifestyle. The relatives living in such urban areas are usually willing to assist their underprivileged family members in an hopes that the younger generations might make something of themselves, and in turn help the remaining family members. These children are known to work hard in order to achieve a life of acceptance and, even more so, a life more beneficial than the one their parents could offer.¹ This seems to be a good scenario when one has relatives in better financial situations. The problem, again, is how easily the child is willing to forget their traditions. Provided that the relative has pride in, and respect for, their cultural heritage, they can still teach the child the traditions of their ancestors, thus making child circulation a beneficial resource for poverty stricken families.

4.7 Case Studies

In an effort to provide the reader with examples of children currently living in Peru, I have provided two case studies from my personal experience in the country. These examples exhibit the life of young children from a small orphanage in Enaco, a city on the outskirts of Cusco. The first reveals the creative nature in the imagination of youngsters, as well as a glimpse into the perspective of the lowlanders regarding the culture of those living in the Andes (viewed by lowlanders as a less fortunate way of life). The second explains the dire situations in which people live, having to give up their children in many cases, due to a lack of money and sustenance. This second study also shows the sacrifices made in behalf of the children. Sacrifices made by religious organizations (in this case, members of the Catholic church) and those in the community selfless enough to offer their time, and sacrifices made by many mothers to give their child a chance to survive when they could not provide for them properly.

Both of these case studies show the abject poverty found in Enaco, and similar scenes are found throughout the surrounding areas of Cusco, and even more so in the communities of the highlanders.

Case Study 1:

On a sunny weekday afternoon, I watched two young boys, no older than ten, play contentedly on the grass outside their orphanage. With nothing but a stick for each of them, they romped around laughing and joking, re-enacting a sword-fight. On a separate day, I watched them play a rough game of futbol
(soccer), with a worn-out, nearly flat soccer ball, donated to them by a volunteer of the orphanage. These boys either did not recognize the difference their ball had from a new one, or they simply did not mind. They were content to have any type of ball. Their park was little more than a strip of patchy grass at the bottom of a hill, butting up against a crude brick wall that divided the grass from a large sewer. The gutter that ran along the wall was ridden with flies and discolored water. Two cows grazed apathetically to one edge of the park. Toward the center was a well of water, in which the people of the neighborhood washed their clothes, then draped them on the grass to dry in the sun. The children paid little attention to this, as it was quite the norm to them. In their minds, they lived in the city, which made them that much more advanced than the people of the mountains.

(see image 3)

I understood this as an expression of innocence in the children. From my point of view, the park was not the best place for a child to play, seeing as how there were live animals and most-likely harmful bacteria in the sewage. As I came to more fully understand the way in which the children subsisted day by day, I began to appreciate the park as an open area in which the children could run and play freely, without worrying if they would have food to eat, or a place to lay their heads at night. Living in a more urban part of the country, though still decidedly more rundown than other more affluent cities, was a form of wealth to these children, and they accepted in with open arms. They did not
have much as far as possessions go, but their creative sensibilities allowed them to still create an entertaining environment for them to play.

Case Study 2:

While volunteering at an orphanage outside Cusco, I made acquaintance with some amazing people, all under the age of twelve. Some of these children came from broken homes and were removed from their parents’ care by the government. Some had mothers who knew they could not provide the necessary care for them, and placed them there on their own. Others had not known their parents at all, and had been there since they were mere toddlers. Being a Catholic organization, the orphanage was run by only two middle-aged women, whom the children referred to as Hermanas (Sisters). These women devoted their lives to the service of the Catholic Church, and yet faced overwhelming daily responsibilities in caring for the children. Volunteers worked alongside them through humanitarian organizations. Members of the church also offered their time for the children. Two in particular made an immense impact on the children…and likewise on me. Two brothers, ages 16 and 18, would come to the orphanage twice a week. Both had part-time jobs, while also attending school, and yet made time to visit the children. Speaking to them regarding their selfless efforts, they mentioned their understanding of the children’s need for affection, as well as the boys’ needs for male role models. They felt like their own lives were changed for the better by making even the smallest difference in the lives of
the children. These two brothers gave the children examples to look up to. The brothers spoke to the children of working hard and following their dreams, as well as being kind and helping others.

I, as well, noticed the impact that I had on the children. The children craved affection as well as structure to learn and grown. Assisting them in their readings, mathematics, and history assignments gave us both a purpose. Artistic projects were also completed. The children and I shared skills in origami, drawing and color schemes as I assisted them in making handmade cards for the bishop of their church. The children in this orphanage attended school daily, either in the morning or in the afternoon. I spoke to them of the classes they were taking and what their desires were for the future. One boy spoke of his dream to be a professional soccer player. Another wanted to be a doctor. An older girl spoke of becoming a hair stylist. I encouraged them in their dreams, telling them to work hard in school. These children knew their life was not that of the stars they watched on television (the one day a week they were allotted to watch television), and yet they believed it was possible to find a better life than what they had.

I took note of the types of jobs that young people held that lived in and near the city. Several were vendors in local markets, working alongside what were most likely family members. Others worked on the city buses, calling out stops and collecting fares, while others I saw doing manual labor. They seemed so young, but worked hard. I could not help but think that they should be in
school. Still, opportunities that are offered some are not possible for others. This was a truth I recognized in the rural areas of Peru. The children I worked with in the orphanage knew that their education was important in order to fulfill their dreams. Also well known to them was the idea that learning to speak English would enhance their opportunities. On their own accord, the children would often ask me to say a particular word in English, which they would then repeat. Toward the end of my stay, I caught on to the importance in their minds of learning English. Together, the children and I developed a game to assist them in learning English while still studying other subjects. Motivated by small pieces of candy, I pointed a Spanish word in their book that they would then have to translate into English. Several of the children wanted to speak English to find good jobs in the tourist industry. One told me she wanted to speak English so she could go to Hollywood. Their dreams were motivated by what they saw in their own life, as well as by the influence they saw from other countries. The children were intelligent, creative individuals, who had potential to become great people if given the means and the support.
Chapter 5

Influence of U.S. Culture

5.1 Tourism

Wearing what is considered ‘traditional’ clothing, several of the indigenous Andean peoples can be seen walking the city streets and selling their wares. Children are taught the impact their traditional clothing has on tourists. Their brightly colored wraps and sweaters attract attention of travelers, and the children know that survival can lie in the selling of their art or other products to such travelers. These are not the only people that sell on the streets, however. Many families work daily as street vendors from the early hours of the morning until evening.¹

Tourism has created enormous growth in the economy of Peruvian people, as the traditions of the highland people are often seen as archaic in comparison to the vast economies in other nations. The Caucasians, or ‘gringo’ as they are often referred to, initially would come to the Andes “because of an interest in cultural practices,” as stated by Zorn (2004) (p. 48)

Today, that interest has spread throughout the world, in turn opening up opportunities for the people of the Andes Mountains to share the great cultural richness they have. Guided tours of the remains of Inca architecture are given by those that have been trained in the history of Peru, weaving demonstrations are shown by women of the highland villages, presentations of traditional Quechua music and dance are performed (usually by children), and samples of mata de coca, a local tea made from the coca leaf, are passed out. More often than not, the tour guides are required to speak English and Spanish (some requiring Quechua as well) in order to translate to for the many different people visiting the country.

Tourism has also allowed for the indigenous people to learn from outsiders, and gain understanding of other cultures unlike their own. The children of the Quechua people are growing up with hope for a bright future, with more opportunities for education and employment. The older members of the society are able to sell their wares at an inflated cost, allowing them to establish business ventures. Zorn states,

Commercializing textiles has become intertwined with tourism because, despite scarcities of raw materials and time, selling textiles can produce a profit. (p. 159)

Tourism has allowed for job opportunities for many of the local Peruvian people. Those who have worked hard at learning and understanding their culture, while also striving for higher education, have been able to secure jobs as tour guides. Several of them speak English. Others, who have understood the impact of tourism on their country, have developed businesses offering tours to visitors.
There are also several humanitarian companies (for example, Maximo Nivel) that enable tourists to come as service volunteers, and for a considerable fee, are given tours of famous areas, as well as being housed and fed by.

Opportunities such as these are beneficial to not only the local people, providing jobs and interaction with other cultures, but to the other cultures as well. The humanitarian organizations, especially, give special attention to the needy children of the areas, knowing the influence that more affluent outsiders can have on them.
Chapter 6

Conclusion

The youth of today are the leaders of tomorrow. If change is what we want to see in the future, then knowledge needs to be accessed today. There’s something to be said about believing in what is not culturally acceptable to believe in; about believing in the power of the cosmos, as the people indigenous to the Andes Mountains do. There is a sense of protection in believing in higher forces watching out for you. There is hope in believing in oneself. After exploring the several different aspects of a Peruvian child’s life that allows for him/her to develop into the person they become, I have seen a pattern of behavior in the majority of them. They know their culture, but do not appreciate it. In many cases they see the culture of the highland Peruvian people as one of embarrassment. There is a stigma of poverty, old-fashioned behaviors, and indignation placed upon the highlanders. Because of this, their culture is slowly becoming obsolete in their minds.

The children of Peru have the capabilities to become great in their own right, if only given the opportunities to grow and develop. Learning about their own lands, their own history, and their own culture can have an immense effect
on their adulthood. The children in the Andes begin to recognize a struggle in their lives when comparing themselves to those in mainstream Peru. There is truth in this, as many of these children are raised in a far less opportune environment than others. However, the children of the highland cultures have stamina for living that is rare in children, as I see it. I have a tendency to relate them to people that lived during the Great Depression in the United States. Like many living during the hard times of the 1930’s, the highland people work in their farms to support themselves; children find joy in their imaginations and homemade toys; they depend on their families and communities for support. Just as the people of the Great Depression were considered survivors, I place the same description on the children of the Andes. There is a resilience about them that creates character in a person, regardless of cultural background. I am not in a place to assume, nor do I think it right for any to assume, that I know best for these children, or for these people, having never experienced a life like that of a Peruvian child. I do not know poverty, nor have I ever been in a state of continuous struggle for survival. Yet, I have lived among them briefly, and have developed a respect for their standards, for their conservatism, and for their culture. I have seen it firsthand, and understand it well enough to see a country rich in culture, which offers vast opportunities for a child to develop skills, talents, and resourceful abilities long since lost in other areas of the world. Granted, their government and its history of corruption is an ever-present roadblock, but individually, a child’s ability to learn is the most important aspect
I can see in development. Education is on the rise, which is a positive thing, but it seems as though a child in Peru should also be educated in maintaining their cultural skills, if for nothing more than the simple fact that they will allow for more opportunities in the tourist industry. Culturally traditional skills involve not only weaving, music and dance, and stonework, but also skills in farming, in service to others in their community, of maintaining their faith in a higher power, and of learning and relating stories of their ancestors to others. Many of these skills can be cultivated and marketed in order to create opportunities for the child as they grow, while others can teach them important values such as diligence, loyalty, endurance, compassion, and resourcefulness.

The continual search for a successful and fulfilling life is an understandable one for people of all nations. Survival of the fittest comes to mind. The children of Peru, though some are simply trying to survive at all, have much to give the world around them. Their cultural foundation, along with its artistic and creative aspects, is one that I have an immeasurable respect and fascination for. In years to come, I believe that children in Peru will have a much more positive life if they find a balance between holding on to the richness of their culture and following the technological advancement of our age.
Images and Tables

Image 1

![Image](image1.png)

**Table 1**

Current progress towards MDGs in Latin America and the Caribbean, as reported in United Nations (2007b)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MDG</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Expected to meet target?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger</strong></td>
<td>Reduce extreme poverty by half</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reduce hunger by half</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education</strong></td>
<td>Universal primary schooling</td>
<td>Yes*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empowerment</strong></td>
<td>Equal girls enrollment in primary school</td>
<td>Yes*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women’s share of paid employment</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women’s equal representation in national parliaments</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goal 4: Reduce child mortality</strong></td>
<td>Reduce mortality of under-5-year olds by 2/3</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Measles immunization</td>
<td>Yes*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goal 5: Improve maternal health</strong></td>
<td>Reduce maternal mortality by 3/4</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases</strong></td>
<td>Halt and reverse spread of HIV/AIDS</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Halt and reverse spread of malaria</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Halt and reverse spread of tuberculosis</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability</strong></td>
<td>Reverse loss of forests</td>
<td>No+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Halve proportion without improved drinking water</td>
<td>Yes*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Halve proportion without sanitation</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Improve the lives of slum-dwellers</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goal 8: Develop a global partnership for development</strong></td>
<td>Youth unemployment</td>
<td>No+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Internet users</td>
<td>Yes*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Met or close to meeting; +No progress, deterioration or reversal.*
References


http://faculty.irsc.edu/faculty/jlett/article%20on%20emics%20and%20etics.htm


